

## RECOMMENDED HISTORY READINGS

(texts not provided)

### For History:

- Ch'oe, Yŏng-ho, Peter H. Lee, and Wm. Theodore de Bary, eds. *Sources of Korean Tradition, Vol. 2: From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Centuries*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.
- Eckert, Carter J., Ki-baik Lee, Young Ick Lew, Michael Robinson, and Edward W. Wagner. *Korea Old and New: A History*. Seoul: Korea: Ilchokak, Publishers, 1990.
- Hwang, Kyung Moon. *A History of Korea*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- Lee, Peter H., Wm. Theodore de Bary, Yŏng-ho Ch'oe, and Hugh H. W. Kang, eds., *Sources of Korean Tradition, Vol.1: From Early Times Through the Sixteenth Century (Introduction to Asian Civilizations)*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.
- Oberdorfer, Don. *The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History*. New York: Basic Books, 2013.
- Robinson, Michael E. *Korea's Twentieth-Century Odyssey: A Short History*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007.
- Schirokauer, Conrad, and Donald Clark. Chapters 3, 9 (section 2), 12 (section 2), 14 (section 3) and 18 in *Modern East Asia: A Brief History*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2008.

### Anthologies and Translations:

- *Early Korean Literature: Selections and Introductions*. Edited and translated by David McCann. Columbia U Press, 2000.
- *Modern Korean Fiction: An Anthology*. Edit by Bruce Fulton and Young Min Kwon. Columbia U Press, 2005.
- *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Korean Poetry*. Edit by David McCann. Columbia U Press, 2004.
- *Questioning Minds: Short Stories by Modern Korean Women Writers*. Edit and trans. by Young Hee Kim, U of Hawaii Press, 2010.

## CLASSICAL KOREAN LITERATURE

### *From Ancient to End of Chosŏn Dynasty (1392-1910): Traditions*

*The first set of readings presents a selection of poetry and prose from the era before Modern Korean Literature emerged in the early twentieth century. While classical Chinese was the official written language of government and scholarship, the invention of an indigenous script, han'gŭl, by King Sejong and his court in the mid-fifteenth century laid the foundations for vernacular literature.*

*Remnants of the Three Kingdoms (Samguk yusa, 1285) is a compilation of legends, songs, histories, and stories by Buddhist monk Ilyŏn, from the earliest times. Two segments selected from this book are the legend of Tan'gun, the mythical founder of the first kingdom on the Korean peninsula, and Song of Ch'ŏyong, a son of Dragon King with mysterious healing power. These readings provide a glimpse of various belief systems and socio-cultural structures that shaped ancient kingdoms in Korea.*

*These earlier examples show commonalities and contrasts to readings selected from the Chosŏn dynasty, whose dominant Confucian ideology pervaded various literary forms. Established as official ideology by the dynastic founders, Confucianism profoundly influenced and shaped politics, society, and culture. The following selections provide examples that reflect the Confucian values, (e.g., loyalty and filial piety), as well as currents that challenge them. In spite of Confucian hegemony during Chosŏn, indigenous customs and ideas (e.g., hereditary aristocracy) persisted, and personal conflicts (e.g., romance) also led to confrontations with prevailing norms.*

*Sijo, a three-line verse form, was the most popular type of poetry during Chosŏn. The subject matter ranged from politics and philosophy to romance and nature. The poets, likewise, came from a broad spectrum of backgrounds. The following selections, among the best known in the traditional corpus, were composed by Yi Pang-wŏn and Chŏng Mong-ju, early Chosŏn political figures; Hwang Chin-i, a kisaeng (female entertainer); and Yi Sun-sin, a military hero.*

*Prose also proliferated in vernacular han'gŭl and in classical Chinese scripts. Hŏ Kyun's "The Tale of Hong Kiltong," often touted as the first Korean novel, tells the adventures of a Robin Hood-like protagonist. "The Story of Master Hŏ" is a political satire from a reform-minded Confucian ("Sirhak") scholar Pak Chi-wŏn. The Song of a Faithful Wife: Ch'unhyang, Korea's most famous romance, celebrates young love, and has been rendered in numerous forms of performance including p'ansori (traditional operatic story telling), films, and dramas.*

[13<sup>th</sup> c.] "Tan'gun" In *Early Korean Literature: Selections and Introductions*, edited and translated by David McCann. New York: Columbia University, 2000. pp. 16-17.

[13<sup>th</sup> c.] "Ch'ŏyong and Manghae Temple", *ibid*, pp. 20-22.

- [14<sup>th</sup> c.] “The *Sijo* Exchange between Yi Pang-wŏn and Chŏng Mong-ju.” In *Early Korean Literature: Selections and Introductions*, edited and translated by David McCann. New York: Columbia University, 2000. p.32.
- [16<sup>th</sup> c.] HWANG Chin-i. “I will break the back of this long, midwinter night...” and “Jade Green Stream...” In *Early Korean Literature: Selections and Introductions*, edited and translated by David McCann. New York: Columbia University, 2000. pp.56-57.
- [16<sup>th</sup> c.] YI Sun-sin. “By moonlight I sit all alone ...” In *The Bamboo Grove: An Introduction to Sijo*, edited and translated by Richard Rutt. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1998. No.9.
- [16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> c.] HŎ Kyun. “The Tale of Hong Kiltong.” Translated by Marshall R. Pihl. In *Anthology of Korean Literature: From Early Times to the Nineteenth Century*, compiled and edited by Peter H. Lee. Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1981. pp.119-147.
- [18<sup>th</sup> c.] PAK Chi-wŏn. “The Story of Master Hŏ.” In *Early Korean Literature: Selections and Introductions*, edited and translated by David McCann. New York: Columbia University, 2000. pp. 86-96.
- [19<sup>th</sup> c.] Anonymous. *The Song of a Faithful Wife: Ch’unhyang*. Translated by Richard Rutt. Seoul: Royal Asiatic Society, 1999.

## MODERN KOREAN LITERATURE

### *Japanese Occupation Period (1910-1945): “Colonial Modernity”*

*The annexation of Korea as a Japanese colony in 1910 brought an end to centuries of self-rule and ushered in a humiliating period of foreign subjugation. Korean writers grappled with the issue of colonialism and produced many works that promoted the spirit of national independence. The Japanese occupation period also witnessed another major transition – the birth of modern Korea. Whether through the advent of industrial capitalism or Western-style education, old ways yielded to the new in the first half of the twentieth century. Literature was no exception, as new forms of poetry and prose made their appearance.*

*The poems of Kim Sowŏl and Han Yong’un are anthologized in the Korean canon not only as pioneering works of modern verse but also as literary monuments to nationalism. In what ways do the following selections express the anti-colonial, national spirit of the Koreans under Japanese rule? In what ways are the poems open to other readings?*

*Nationalism during the Japanese occupation eventually developed into two opposing camps. The so-called “cultural nationalists” advocated a gradual approach toward independence that emphasized education and economic development. In contrast, the radical nationalists, inspired by Marxism, sought immediate liberation through armed struggle and social revolution. Yi Ki-yŏng’s “A Tale of Rats” is a literary representation, of the latter (“socialist”) strain of Korean*

*nationalism. In contrast, Hyŏn Chin-gŏn and Yi Hyo-sŏk, through their masterful story-telling in “My Hometown” and “When the Buckwheat Blooms,” evokes nationalism through nostalgia and by reminding readers of what is taken away from Korean people during this colonial occupation.*

- [1925] KIM Sowŏl. “Azaleas,” translated by David McCann. In *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Korean Poetry*, edited by David McCann. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004. pp.18-19.
- [1926] HAN Yong’un. “Your Silence,” translated by Sammy Solberg. In *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Korean Poetry*, edited by David McCann. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004. pp.27-29.
- [1926] YI Ki-yŏng. “A Tale of Rats.” In *A Ready-Made Life: Early Masters of Modern Korean Fiction*, edited and translated by Kim Chong-un and Bruce Fulton. Honolulu: The University of Hawai’i Press, 1998. pp.23-31.
- [1931] HYŎN Chin-gŏn. “My Hometown”.  
([http://www.korean.arts.ubc.ca/b\\_tb/tb\\_410/kohyang\\_tran.pdf](http://www.korean.arts.ubc.ca/b_tb/tb_410/kohyang_tran.pdf))
- [1936] YI Hyo-sŏk. “When the Buckwheat Blooms.” In *A Ready-Made Life: Early Masters of Modern Korean Fiction*, edited and translated by Kim Chong-un and Bruce Fulton. Honolulu: The University of Hawai’i Press, 1998. pp. 133-142

### ***National Division, Democracy, Totalitarianism: 1945-1987***

*The euphoria that followed Korea’s liberation from Japanese colonial rule at the end of World War II was short-lived, as the Korean War (1950-1953) and national division soon followed. In the north a totalitarian communist state was established that continues to this day. In the south a succession of dictators eventually gave way to democracy, and the country also emerged as a global economic powerhouse.*

*The selections below offer examples of literary engagement with various settings in South Korea throughout post-colonial, post-war, and authoritarian regimes. “Cranes” is a story of two childhood friends divided during the Korean War and reunited across the ideological divide, whereas “Kapitan Ri” features a medical doctor who survives the Colonial era and Korean War through cunning adaptation. Written by an author from a generation of Koreans who grew up in liberated Korea, “Seoul, 1964, Winter” is hailed as a masterpiece from the post-colonial and post-war era. Selected from the 1970s and the 1980s respectively, and although vastly different in their setting and style, Cho Se-hŭi’s *The Dwarf* and Yi Mun-yŏl’s *Our Twisted Hero* both can be seen as allegory that probes the psychology underlying authoritarianism in South Korea.*

- [1953] HWANG Sun-wŏn “Cranes.” Translated by David McCann. *Azalea: Journal of Korean Literature and Culture* Volume 1. 2007, pp. 305-312

- [1962] CHÖN Kwang-yong. "Kapitan Ri" In *Land of Exile: Contemporary Korean Fiction*, edited and translated by Marshall Pihl and Bruce and Ju-Chan Fulton. Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1993. (A new edition available through Routledge.) pp.58-83.
- [1965] KIM Süng-ok. "Seoul, 1964, Winter." In *Modern Korean Fiction: An Anthology*. Edit by Bruce Fulton and Young Min Kwon. Columbia U Press, 2005. pp. 163-180.
- [1975] CHO Se-hüi. "Knifeblade." In *The Dwarf*. Translated by Bruce and Ju-chan Fulton. University of Hawaii Press, 2006. pp.12-32.
- [1987] YI Mun-yöl. *Our Twisted Hero*. Translated by Kevin O'Rourke. New York: Hyperion, 2001.

***Contemporary Korean Literature (1990s-present): New Era, New Generation***

*The fall of the Berlin Wall and the Eastern bloc in 1989 reverberated around the globe, but the moment was especially poignant for Korea, for the country transitioned to "real" democracy and drew global attention with the first direct presidential election in 1987 and the successful 1988 Seoul Olympic Games. In South Korean literature, this post-Cold War environment brought major changes in subject matter (personal lives), diverse modes of representation (in contrast to the dominance of realism up to this point), and the rise of a new generation of writers that included a majority of women. The selections below by Pak, Yun, and Kim are examples of these changes, where talented young authors wrote with humor and irony about alternative family models and lives of youth in the twenty-first century. Also in the background of these three stories is the "IMF Crisis", the Asian Financial Crisis of the mid to late 1990s, which shook the structures and hierarchies inherent in society and family.*

*Owing in part to the closed nature of North Korean society, little is known outside that country about its literature, and post-Soviet, post-Cold War changes, so dramatic elsewhere including in South Korea, seem to have had relatively little force in the north. One certainty is that all publications are controlled by the state, and memory and history of oppression and threats posed by the outside have been persistent themes. Among the few examples of North Korean literature that have been translated into English, two are offered below as a comparison to South Korean literary trends. While "The Son" comes across as an example of North Korea's idealism projected in a father-son relationship from the 1970s, "A Tale of Music," published three decades later, is a story of reminiscence about a Korean resident of Japan who moves to North Korea and the dramatic transformation that takes place in his life.*

- [2004] PAK Min-gyu. "You don't say? Well, I'm A Giraffe." In *Reading Korea: 12 Contemporary Stories*. Edit by Dahee Kim. Anvil Publishing, Inc, 2008. pp. 204-216.

- [2004] YUN Sǒng-hŭi “Burying a Map at the U-Turn” In *Azalea: Journal of Korean Literature and Culture*. Volume 1, 2007. pp. 81-96.
- [2010] KIM Yǒng-ha. “My Brother is Back.” In *Azalea: Journal of Korean Literature and Culture*. Volume 1, 2007. pp.37-58.
- [1971] KIM Puk-hyang. “The Son.” In *Modern Korean Fiction: An Anthology*. Edit by Bruce Fulton and Young Min Kwon. Columbia U Press, 2005.pp. 195-213.
- [2003] KANG Kwi-mi. “A Tale of Music,” translated by Yu Young-nan. In *Literature from the Axis of Evil: Writing from Iran, Iraq, North Korea, and Other Enemy Nations (Words Without Borders Anthology)*, edited by Alane Mason et al. New York: New Press, 2006. pp.103-129.

### *Women’s Voice*

*The rise of feminism and attention to human rights issues since the 1990s sparked interest in women’s voice in the field of Korean literature. Recognizing stunning achievements by woman writers in recent decades and also the unique, powerful and under-appreciated stories told by women throughout history, this set of readings samples some of the representative works by woman from both the pre-modern and modern eras.*

*In contrast to the lyrical and love-themed poems by female entertainers from pre-modern times, Lady Hyegyǒng’s A Record of Sorrowful Days (Hanchung-rok, 1795-1805) is an autobiographical memoir in han’gŭl of life at court and a rare example of writing by a Korean woman who offers an historical account. Succeeding this tradition of strong-willed women, Na Hye-sǒk, one of the first generation New Women of Korea, wrote a short story titled “Kyǒnghŭi,” which highlights challenges faced by Korean New Women during the Japanese Occupation era, the early, formative stages of modern Korea. Pak Wansǒ’s “Winter Outing” explores the tragedy of the Korean War and its personal legacies through the eyes of three women. “The Gray Snowman” is a post-Cold War era tribute to the men and women, activists and non-activists alike, who lived through political oppression. Finally, Kim Ae-ran introduces changed family and gender dynamics through the lens of a young woman in the twenty-first century.*

- [18<sup>th</sup> c.] LADY HYEgyǒNG. “A Record of Sorrowful Days.” Translated by Peter H. Lee. In *Anthology of Korean Literature: From Early Times to the Nineteenth Century*, compiled and edited by Peter H. Lee. Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1981. pp. 237-244.
- [1917] NA Hye-sǒk. “Kyǒnghŭi” in *Questioning Minds: Short Stories by Modern Korean Women Writers*. Edit and trans. by Young Hee Kim, U of Hawaii Press, 2010. pp. 24-54.
- [1975] PAK Wan-sǒ. “Winter Outing.” In *Land of Exile: Contemporary Korean Fiction*, edited and translated by Marshall Pihl and Bruce and Ju-Chan Fulton. Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1993. pp.150-164.

[1992] CH'OE Yun. "The Gray Snowman." In *Modern Korean Fiction: An Anthology*. Edit by Bruce Fulton and Young Min Kwon. Columbia U Press, 2005. pp.345-370.

[2005] KIM Ae-ran. "Run Dad!" *Azalea: Journal of Korean Literature and Culture*. Volume 1, 2007. pp.227- 239.