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# K-Book Trends

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## TOPIC

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# “Book of the Year” Suggests the “Direction” of the Era

## 2024 Books of the Year in Korea

Written by Kim Sheen (Publishing critic)

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### 2024 Books of the Year selected by different media outlets

The act of recommending a book to another person may seem like a simple and easy thing to do, but it can also be a very complex and thought-provoking act, depending on how you think about it. A straightforward question, “Why this book to me?” is all it takes to understand this: sometimes a book given to a lover can be a declaration of love, a confession of one’s whole soul, or, a book given by a parent to a child who is moving out on his or her own as an adult is meant to be taken to heart as a life lesson. The act of recommending a book can also convey disdain or mockery. A person might suggest a childish or poorly written book to convey the message, “I consider you to be of this

intellectual level,” or they might mock an expert by suggesting something like a basic introduction to their field. While some leaders have used their own reading lists to guide the direction of their countries, others have revealed their philosophy of governance by declaring that they don’t read or have a disdain for reading. So, recommending a book can be as simple as suggesting a book you enjoyed to a friend, but it can also be a high-level political act. At the end of every year, major media outlets and bookstores select and announce the “book of the year.”

During a single year, well over 70,000 new titles are published in Korea. This list, the best of the many, is compelling for those who want to read and understand the times in depth. However, it’s just too many. There are about 80 titles on the “Book of the Year” lists of more than a dozen major media outlets and bookstores. When there are too many words, the message is often diluted or lost. In such cases, focusing on repeated words is a good idea. Similarly, when there are too many greats, it’s a good idea to pick the “best of the best” again. So, now, let’s take a look at the “books of the year” selected by major media outlets and bookstores.

**2024 “Book of the Year”**  
selected by major media outlets and bookstores in Korea

Media	Title	Author
Kyunghyang Shinmun	<i>The Ulsan Dystopia: The Unsettling Future of the Manufacturing Powerhouse</i>	Yang Seung-Hoon
	<i>Genes Rule Our Society</i>	Choi Jung-Kyun
	<i>Tyranny of the Minority</i>	Steven Levitsky, Daniel Ziblatt
	<i>Kafka’s Last Trial</i>	Benjamin Balint
	<i>Foreshadowed Coup: The August Faction Incident</i>	Kim Jae-Woong
	<i>The Rise and Fall of the Neoliberal Order</i>	Gary Gerstle
	<i>Animal Madness</i>	Laurel Braitman
	<i>Fully Equal and Strictly Discriminatory</i>	Kim Won-Young
	<i>The Okinawa Spy</i>	Kim Soom
	<i>The International for Two</i>	Kim Ki-Tae
Dong-A Ilbo	<i>The Anxious Generation</i>	Jonathan Haidt
	<i>Nexus</i>	Yuval Noah Harari
	<i>All the Beauty in the World</i>	Patrick Bringley
	<i>Small Things Like These</i>	Claire Keegan
	<i>The Heat Will Kill You First</i>	Jeff Goodell
	<i>The History of Manners</i>	Seol Hye-Shim
	<i>One of Them is a Lie</i>	Kim Ae-Ran
	<i>The International for Two</i>	Kim Ki-Tae
	<i>Stalin’s Library</i>	Geoffrey Roberts
<i>Exercised</i>	Daniel E. Lieberman	
Munhwa Ilbo	<i>The International for Two</i>	Kim Ki-Tae
	<i>Korean Women’s Literature Collection</i>	Women’s Literary History Society
	<i>The Sociology of Care</i>	Chizuko Ueno
	<i>Fully Equal and Strictly Discriminatory</i>	Kim Won-Young
	<i>The Birth of Korean Scientists</i>	Kim Geun-Bae, Lee Eun-Kyung, Seon Yoo-Jung
	<i>Conservatism</i>	Edmund Fawcett
	<i>Monsters</i>	Claire Dederer
	<i>The Class Ceiling</i>	Sam Friedman, Daniel Laurison
	<i>Tyranny of the Minority</i>	Steven Levitsky, Daniel Ziblatt
<i>Their Korean Empire 1897-1910</i>	Kim Tae-Woong	

Media	Title	Author
Chosun Ilbo	<i>The Anxious Generation</i>	Jonathan Haidt
	<i>Ein Falsches Wort</i>	Rene Pfister
	<i>How Do Poor Kids Become Adults</i>	Kang Ji-Na
	<i>One of Them is a Lie</i>	Kim Ae-Ran
	<i>Things I Will Write About</i>	Choi Jin-Young
	<i>Gedichte</i>	Reiner Kunze
	<i>All the Beauty in the World</i>	Patrick Bringley
	<i>The Fifth Republic</i>	Kang Won-Taek
	<i>Material World</i>	Ed Conway
Hankyoreh	<i>Jang Il-Soon Biography</i>	Han Sang-Bong
	<i>The History of World Philosophy 4: Frontiers of Post-Modern Ideation</i>	Lee Jung-Woo
	<i>Purun Pure Korean Dictionary</i>	Choi Han-Sil
	<i>The Greenhouse Repair Report</i>	Kim Geum-Hee
	<i>The Ulsan Dystopia: The Unsettling Future of the Manufacturing Powerhouse</i>	Yang Seung-Hoon
	<i>Once Upon a Bridge on the Kwai River, There Were Koreans</i>	Cho Hyung-Geun
	<i>The Moment of Constitution</i>	Park Hyuk
	<i>The International for Two</i>	Kim Ki-Tae
	<i>The Analects of Dasan: Korea's Confucian Analects Vol. 1, 2</i>	Kim Hong-Kyung
	<i>Small Things Like These</i>	Claire Keegan
	<i>Linguist Kim Soo-Kyung Goes to North Korea</i>	Ryuta Itagaki
	<i>The Sociology of Care</i>	Chizuko Ueno
	<i>Ten Myths about Israel</i>	Ilan Pappé
	<i>The Oxford Illustrated History of the Book</i>	James Raven and others
	<i>Ghost Town</i>	Kevin Chen (陳思宏)
	<i>White Holes</i>	Carlo Rovelli
	<i>Food and Joseon</i>	Lim Chae-Sung
	<i>Carbon Colonialism</i>	Laurie Parsons
	<i>How States Think</i>	John J. Mearsheimer, Sebastian Rosato
	Hankyung Business	<i>Poor Charlie's Almanack</i>
<i>Same as Ever</i>		Morgan Housel
<i>Seven Meanings in Life</i>		Thomas Hylland Eriksen
<i>Happiness Is a Choice You Make</i>		John Leland
<i>Why Are You Living For Others</i>		Ko Yoon
<i>Understatement</i>		Matthias Nöllke
<i>Be Your Future Self Now</i>		Benjamin Hardy

Media	Title	Author
Korea Economic Daily	<i>One of Them is a Lie</i>	Kim Ae-Ran
	<i>The International for Two</i>	Kim Ki-Tae
	<i>A Little Failed Love</i>	Kim Ji-Yeon
	<i>Dictee</i>	Cha Hak-Kyung
	<i>Though I'm Not Quite in Tune With the World</i>	Jin Eun-Young
	<i>Kafka's Last Trial</i>	Benjamin Balint
	<i>Light and Melody</i>	Cho Hae-Jin
	<i>Le Jardin D'Hyacinthe</i>	Henri Bosco
	<i>520 Fridays</i>	Recorders of the 4.16 Sewol Ferry Tragedy
	<i>Once Upon a Bridge on the Kwai River, There Were Koreans</i>	Cho Hyung-Geun
	<i>Poor Charlie's Almanack</i>	Charles T. Munger
	<i>The Journal of a Film Pirate</i>	Han Min-Soo
Winners of The 65th Korea Book Awards organized by Hankook Ilbo	<i>[Academics] The Embroided Days</i>	Seo Bo-Kyung
	<i>[Liberal arts] The Moment of Constitution</i>	Park Hyuk
	<i>[Children &amp; Young Adult] Things to Do Today</i>	Kim Dong-Su
	<i>[Translated] The Matter of Everything</i>	Suzie Sheehy, translated by Noh Seung-Yeon
	<i>[Edited] Sakyejul Democracy &amp; Human Rights Picture Book Series (total 8 volumes)</i>	Sakyejul Publishing
Aladin	<i>Small Things Like These</i>	Claire Keegan
	<i>One of Them is a Lie</i>	Kim Ae-Ran
	<i>My Don Quixote</i>	Kim Ho-Yeon
	<i>Eternal Heaven</i>	Jeong Yoo-Jeong
	<i>The Disappeared</i>	Andrew Porter
	<i>Marigold Mind Photo Studio</i>	Yun Jung-Eun
	<i>Tell Them You Love Them Right Now</i>	Kim Chang-Ok
	<i>All the Beauty in the World</i>	Patrick Bringley
	<i>A Very Personal Thought About His Fate</i>	Rhyu Si-Min
<i>Same as Ever</i>	Morgan Housel	
YES24	<i>Small Things Like These</i>	Claire Keegan
	<i>The Use of History, Again</i>	Choi Tae-Sung
	<i>A Very Personal Thought About His Fate</i>	Rhyu Si-Min
	<i>My Don Quixote</i>	Kim Ho-Yeon
	<i>One of Them is a Lie</i>	Kim Ae-Ran
	<i>Same as Ever</i>	Morgan Housel
	<i>Parents' Vocabulary</i>	Kim Jong-Won
	<i>The Anxious Generation</i>	Jonathan Haidt

Media	Title	Author
YES24	<i>All the Beauty in the World</i>	Patrick Bringley
	<i>Omniscient Fubao Perspective</i>	Song Young-Gwan
Millie	<i>Small Things Like These</i>	Claire Keegan
	<i>The Money Book</i>	TOSS
	<i>Understatement</i>	Matthias Nöllke
	<i>Minimum World History for Adults Today</i>	Lim So-Mi
	<i>All the Beauty in the World</i>	Patrick Bringley
	<i>Love In the Big City</i>	Park Sang-Young

### The best of the best:

#### “Book of the Year” among the “Books of the Year”

Multiple overlaps were noticeable when looking at the “Book of the Year” lists of 8 news outlets and 3 bookstores. For example, 10 titles - Charles T. Munger’s *Poor Charlie’s Almanack*, Rhyu Si-Min’s *A Very Personal Thought About His Fate* (Think Road Publisher), Matthias Nöllke’s *Understatement*, Kim Ho-Yeon’s *My Don Quixote* (Namu Bench), Chizuko Ueno’s *The Sociology of Care*, Jonathan Haidt’s *The Anxious Generation, Tyranny of the Minority* by Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, Kim Won-Young’s *Fully Equal and Strictly Discriminatory* (Munhakdongne Publishing), Yang Seung-Hoon’s *The Ulsan Dystopia: The Unsettling Future of the Manufacturing Powerhouse* (Bookie), Benjamin Balint’s *Kafka’s Last Trial*, and Cho Hyung-Geun’s *Once Upon a Bridge on the Kwai River, There Were Koreans* (Hankyoreh Publishing Company) – were selected as the “Book of the Year” in 2 platforms. And, Morgan Housel’s *Same as Ever* was selected in 3 places.



*A Very Personal Thought About His Fate; My Don Quixote; Fully Equal and Strictly Discriminatory*



*The Ulsan Dystopia: The Unsettling Future of the Manufacturing Powerhouse; Once Upon a Bridge on the Kwai River, There Were Koreans*

There were 4 titles that were selected in 5 of the 11 places - Claire Keegan’s *Small Things Like These*, Patrick Bringley’s *All the Beauty in the World*, and Kim Ae-Ran’s *One of Them is a Lie* (Munhakdongne Publishing) and Kim Ki-Tae’s *The International for Two* (Munhakdongne Publishing). All 4 of these books were truly worthy to be called the “Book of the Year” among “Books of the Year.”

\* *K-Book Trends Vol. 74* – Go to the interview with writer Kim Ki-Tae [www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/interview.php?ptype=view&idx=1461&page=1&code=interview](http://www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/interview.php?ptype=view&idx=1461&page=1&code=interview)

## Books that make readers reflect on their lives

While Claire Keegan's *Small Things Like These* was also selected by both *Dong-A Ilbo* and *Hankyoreh*, it was the most-voted book on bookstores and e-book platforms, including YES24, Aladin, and Millie, where readers took part in the voting. Following the book's publication in 2021, Irish author Claire Keegan won the Orwell Award the following year and was shortlisted for the Booker Prize. It is said to be the shortest novel ever shortlisted for the Booker Prize. It has also been made into a movie, which has been garnering attention from audiences and critics around the world. According to the 2023 National Reading Survey in Korea, the "reading rate," which is the percentage of people who read at least one paper, e-book, or listened to an audiobook in a year, was 74.5% among the 20s and 68% among the 30s, higher than the middle-aged, who remained in the 10-40% range. As the 2030s continue to move toward e-book platforms, new forms of reading, such as audiobooks, have also become popular in Korea. For example, *Small Things Like These* on Millie was a big hit in Korea in 2024, earning acclaim for its immersive content with realistic voice acting.

Patrick Bringley's *All the Beauty in the World* has been chosen as the Book of the Year on 5 different platforms, including newspapers *Dong-A Ilbo* and *Chosun Ilbo*, online bookstores Aladin and YES24, and e-book platform Millie. The book is an autobiographical essay by Patrick Bringley. It is a detailed

and engaging account of the author's real-life experiences and reflections. Yang Eun-Kyung, editor of Korea University Press, selected the book as *Dong-A Ilbo's* Book of the Year, saying, "There are stories in the world that are destined to be bestsellers. It's a story about facing the greatest loss, escaping to the most beautiful place in the world, and discovering true elegance."

### Books that brilliantly capture our time

Kim Ae-Ran's *One of Them is a Lie* was chosen as the Book of the Year by *Dong-A Ilbo*, *Chosun Ilbo*, *Korea Economic Daily*, *Aladin*, and *YES24*. Kim's first full-length novel in 13 years, *One of Them is a Lie* tells the story of three high school sophomores, Ji-Woo, So-Ri, and Chae-Woon, who become aware of each other through a coincidental event, gradually grow closer, and go through unforgettable times. The title of the novel, "One of Them is a Lie," is the name of a "self-introduction game" made by their homeroom teacher. It is a game in which students introduce themselves at the beginning of a new semester by describing themselves in five sentences, but one of them must contain a lie, so that the other students can guess what is real and what is not. The three protagonists develop a strong attraction to each other after discovering each other's secrets, while at the same time being suspicious of each other, which in turn unfolds an exciting story. Jeong Eun-Sook, CEO of Maumsanchaek Publisher, who participated in the selection of *Dong-A Ilbo's* Book of the Year,

commented on *One of Them is a Lie*, saying, “It is a story about secrets, absence, and sadness in the world of three high school students. (...) Their coming of age, developing their identity, through a loose but tight friendship is painfully poignant.” The book was also voted No. 1 in Kyobo Book Center’s “Novel of the Year Selected by 50 Novelists.”

The year 2024 was also a good year for author Kim Ki-Tae. His short story collection, *The International for Two*, was selected as the “2024 Book of the Year” by 5 different outlets: *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, *Dong-A Ilbo*, *Munhwa Ilbo*, *Hankyoreh*, and *Korea Economic Daily*. Every work Kim has published since his debut has been a viral sensation on Social Media, and in 2024, he even won two of Korea’s most prestigious literary awards, the Shin Dong-Yup Literature Award and the Dong-In Literary Award. While *The International for Two* is Kim Ki-Tae’s first novel, it is said to be the first time (since the reorganization of the Dong-In Literary Award in 2000) that an author’s first short story collection has won the Dong-In Literary Award. *The International for Two* was also voted second in the “Novel of the Year Selected by 50 Novelists” by Kyobo Book Centre. It was described by fellow writers as “a novel that exceptionally portrays the current era based on meticulous research, while at the same time demonstrating the will and optimism to solve real-life problems, thus making it a pleasure to read.”



*One of Them is a Lie; The International for Two*

### “Book of the Year” is a message to society as it is

The “bestsellers,” or the list of the most purchased books, symbolize the “deficiencies” of the time. On the other hand, the “Book of the Year,” which is selected by opinion leaders such as scholars and journalists, as well as by the active reading public, often suggests a solution to the identified social deficiency, or the “direction” for the era. In this respect, the “Book of the Year” is a powerful social message and agenda in itself. The various parties that select and announce books of the year every year are well aware of this, so they delicately and intelligently implant their intentions in the lists. Therefore, if you want to be a wise and discerning reader of the times, you should not simply consume the lists of books of the year that are meticulously selected and published by various media outlets with great confidence. We need to aggregate and analyze the various lists and try to read the agenda of the times behind them.

## SPECIAL PROJECT

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[New Ways of Walking Through Cities ②]

# A City Where the Past and Future Meet: Tokyo

Written by Choi Ha-Yeong

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Korea and Japan are countries that are both close and far away at the same time. They are located in East Asia and have similar climates, four seasons, and no time difference. Even the cityscapes look similar at first glance. Seoul and Tokyo both feature a mix of skyscrapers and traditional architecture. However, if you look a little deeper, you start to see the subtle differences between them. Whereas tradition and modernity blend together naturally in Korea, the two seem to be more starkly separated in Japan. For example, Gyeongbokgung Palace in Seoul seems to blend into the modern cafes and shops surrounding it, but in Tokyo's Asakusa neighborhood, the shrines

and temples are quiet reminders of a time gone by.

When you first step foot in Tokyo, you feel like you have just walked into a giant puzzle. While bright neon signs and sleek skyscrapers soar into the sky, quiet shrines and traditional gardens sit serenely in the background. Snacks from street vendors give a sense of the city's unpretentious daily life, while Ginza's high-tech malls prove that Tokyo is a global trendsetter. Amidst the city's fast-paced changes, Tokyo remains a special place where the past and future coexist. So, what stories do Tokyo's two faces have to tell?



## A journey towards solidarity and healing



*Juliana Tokyo*

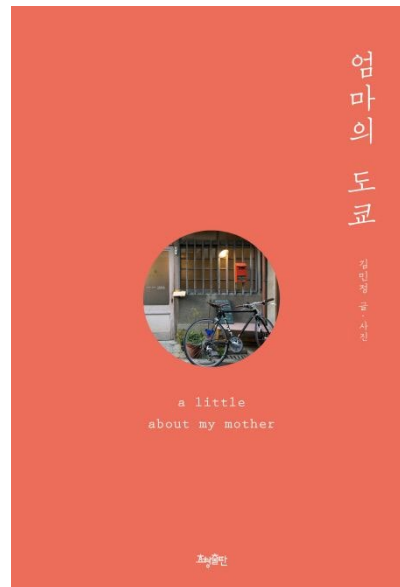
*Juliana Tokyo* (Swimmingkul) by Han Jung-Hyun is set in the real-life club Juliana Tokyo, which existed from 1991-1994. The story unfolds as characters who never actually experienced the club connect. It explores the intertwined histories of Korean and Japanese women, the isolated lives of LGBTQ people, and the nature of hate. It tells the story of people seeking connection and healing amid pain and loneliness. Hanju, the protagonist of the story, is subjected to constant violence in the name of love, and as a result, she develops foreign accent syndrome and loses her native Korean language. She meets Yukino, a fellow bookseller in Tokyo, who becomes an important companion on her journey. As an LGBTQ person, Yukino has faced discrimination and prejudice, but through their shared pain and understanding of

each other, they find hope that makes the stagnant time pass.

“The snow fairy must be following you, because it usually doesn’t snow much in Tokyo since it is a port city,” Yukino muttered, then asked, as if something had struck her, “Do you like snow, Hanju?” Hanju, who had been watching the passersby outside the window, quickly replied, like a person suddenly awakened from a light doze. “I don’t like snow.” - from chapter *Hanju’s Story*, *Juliana Tokyo*

Beginning with the above conversation, the two embrace each other’s loneliness and spend time finding their favorite things together, but Yukino’s sudden disappearance sends the story in a different direction. The author suggests the possibility that we can connect with others beyond our personal wounds, and believes that solidarity can be achieved. A perfect winter read, *Juliana Tokyo*, is a novel that comes to mind on a snowy day, demonstrating the power to live anew through solidarity and healing, even in the face of personal wounds and the imperfections of love. It also reminds us what it means to experience deep connection with others, and helps us move closer to understanding our own and others’ suffering.

## A timeless story of a mother and daughter in Tokyo



*A Little About My Mother*

*A Little About My Mother* (Hyohyung Book) is the story of a mother and daughter who left Korea and lived in Tokyo for twenty years. In the story, the mother, who worked as a DJ in a music bar in Seoul when she was young, loses her husband after less than ten years of marriage and moves to Japan with her two children. Raising her two children alone while running a late-night restaurant in Shinjuku, Tokyo, she was a strong single mother and a stunning woman who always maintained a slim and attractive figure. However, just a month before her 60th birthday, she unexpectedly gets diagnosed with oral cancer.

“Tokyo feels empty without my mom, no matter how bustling it gets. I look for my mom everywhere I go. Nowhere is my mom anymore, but her breath is everywhere in Tokyo. I walk around Tokyo looking for traces of her. That’s how my journey of letting go of my mom began.” - from prologue, *A Little About My Mother*

With her mother’s death approaching, the author, her daughter, recalls her precious memories of her mother in Tokyo. The book is organized into four themes: Taste, Space, Traces, and Travel, and each chapter is filled with heartwarming recollections of moments with her mother. The book is interspersed with photographs of everyday life in Tokyo, taken by the author herself, which evoke nostalgia for those who have traveled to Tokyo, and familiarity for those who have yet to experience the city. As the reader travels through the alleys of Tokyo over a 20 years time span, the reader is drawn into the moments of the mother and daughter. Reminiscing about family love and life, this book is a record of life’s highs and lows, set against the backdrop of Tokyo.

## A compass that charts new pathways



*Tokyo Trend Insight 2025*

The last book introduces how to prepare for the future by looking at Japan today. *Tokyo Trend Insight 2025* (One&one books) presents 5 key trends identified in Japan in the face of societal challenges of low growth, aging, and changing consumption, and corresponding business strategies. Among them are the strategies of Japanese companies that are redefining their markets and finding new customers even in times of low growth, and changing the consumption patterns of Japan's Generation Z, who view consumption as a frugal virtue. Meanwhile, changes in space create greater opportunities. In Japan, commercial spaces that maximize the consumer experience and emphasize data collection, such as “shops that don't sell,” are flourishing. This has lessons for businesses around the world in the post-COVID-19 era.

“New commercial facilities springing up in Tokyo are focused on providing a space for brands to promote their products, rather than filling the space with stores selling goods. In short, the “mediaization” of brick-and-mortar spaces is taking place in Tokyo.” - from the chapter *[Space]* *The Changes in Use, Tokyo Trend Insight 2025*

Moreover, Japan’s various attempts to address the aging population, such as utilizing abandoned homes and pet services, provide valuable insights for other countries. Last but not least, how retailers have developed survival strategies through technology, PB product development, and targeted marketing in the face of population decline and changing consumption is a good model for business innovation. This book provides practical ideas and insights for Korean companies to prepare for the changing times through the case of Japan. It is a worthwhile read for anyone interested in shifting consumption patterns and expanding their perspective.





Tokyo is not just a tourist destination, but a place where you create your own story through new experiences. Despite the fast-paced rhythm of the city, anyone can enjoy Tokyo at their own pace. Some discover Tokyo's charms through shopping and gourmet cuisine, some through serene strolls, and some through new encounters. Depending on the time of day and how you look at it, Tokyo will always be different. You might encounter the past in a traditional alleyway one day, and walk the streets of cutting-edge technology the next. These are just a few of the many faces of Tokyo that came to mind while flipping through the book. I wonder what Tokyo will look like next?

## EXPORT CASE

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# Crafting Connections Through Korean Literature: Books Curated and Translated by BACA Publishing House

Written by Dian Pranasari (Former Editor of BACA Publishing House)

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In 2016, Han Kang became the first Korean author to win the International Booker Prize for her novel *The Vegetarian* (Changbi Publishers). This triumph also marked a milestone for BACA, a young but feisty publishing house from Indonesia. In February 2017, just a month before celebrating its first birthday, BACA took a bold step by publishing *The Vegetarian*, followed by *Human Acts* (Changbi Publishers), another brilliant novel by Han Kang. From that point on, BACA began to consistently publish K-books, initially focusing on literary fiction, including *The Hole* (Moonji Publishing) by Pyun Hye-young, *The Hen Who Dreamed She Could Fly* (SAKYEJUL PUBLISHING) and *The Dog Who Dared to Dream* (imazubooks) by Hwang Sun-mi, among others. The themes in contemporary Korean literature resonate deeply with

Indonesian readers. These novels delve into the complexities of human experience, exploring psychological depth, emotional intricacies, and societal pressures. Such universal themes strike a powerful chord with Indonesian audiences, who grapple with their own challenges related to tradition, family expectations, and societal roles.



*Human Acts and The Vegetarian*

But then, the COVID-19 pandemic changed everything. In a time of uncertainty, isolation, and the haunting grief of losing loved ones, BACA understood that the readers craved something comforting and uplifting. At the same time, healing fiction—feel-good novels with a touch of magical realism, often set in familiar places like department stores, bookshops, and salons—began to rise in Korea and quickly gained popularity. One title,

in particular, stood out: *Dallergut Dream Department Store* (Sam & Parkers) by Lee Miye. Without hesitation, BACA published this whimsical and heartwarming novel, translating it as *Dallergut: Toko Penjual Mimpi*. Sweet, mostly episodic, and easy to read, healing fiction offered escapism—a gentle refuge after long, exhausting days. It was exactly the kind of coziness the readers needed. And as expected, the book became a massive success, selling over 12,000 copies.



Korean Literature Published by BACA (*Janes Magical Salon*; *Umong a Youngman Became a Homemaker*; *I'll Eat Your Story*; *The Jolly Psychopath*; *Memory Bookstore*)

Of course, these successes wouldn't be possible without a strong promotional strategy—particularly the power of social media platforms such as Instagram, X, and TikTok. Thanks to the

valuable support of bookstagrammers and resellers, BACA's books have reached and resonated with a broader audience. After that, BACA felt compelled to expand the genres of K-books they published, hoping to offer a richer and more diverse reading experience, ranging from psychological thriller, YA, slice-of-life, essay, and even a graphic novel. Most recently, BACA released a historical fiction titled *The Story of Geoncheong Palace* (Gyoyu Books) by Park Yeong-Kyu (translated as *Maharani Myeongseong: Jurnal Istana Geoncheong*). This novel is based on a diary believed to belong to Empress Myeongseong, the most influential female politician in the Joseon era.



*The Story of Geoncheong Palace 1, 2*

Yet, ultimately, literary fiction will always hold a special place at BACA. In September 2024, I represented BACA in Seoul, fulfilling

an invitation from LTI Korea to attend the 2024 K-Literature Fellowship. During this trip, I was fortunate to meet Han Kang and share a warm conversation, primarily about *The White Book* (Munhakdongne), which BACA will publish in 2025.



*The White Book*

A month later, the Swedish Academy announced that Han Kang won the 2024 Nobel Prize in Literature. This wonderful news sparked curiosity among Indonesian readers, leading to a surge in demand for *The Vegetarian* and *Human Acts*. They also insisted on the immediate publication of *The White Book*. At the end of the day, every book has its reader. And it is our responsibility to bring them together.

## BOOK TRIP

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[A Trip to Literary Museums ⑩]

# Two Masters of Modern Literature Who Spent Their Entire Lives Completely Immersed in Their Works

**Nonsan-si, Chungcheongnam-do: Kim Hongshin House and  
Ganggyeong Mountain Salt Literary House**

Written by Kim Young-lhm

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Any city has a history that builds up over time, like the rings of an old tree. Cities grow and transform like organisms, and along the way, they develop many stories. Those stories, in turn, are the source of an area's image, energy, and sentiment. Nonsan-si, located in the hinterland of Chungcheongnam-do, is home to many cultural heritage sites, including the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Donam Seowon, Jonghagdang, and Myeongjae Historic House. There are also many other attractions, such as the beautiful Ganggyeong Port, which still retains traces of its prosperity through the years of modernization, and Tapjeong Reservoir and Suspension Bridge, where you can experience the feeling of walking on a lake. These places would have been a

strong source of memories and sentiment for those who spent much of their lives here. As a result, Nonsan has produced two masters of modern Korean literature, Kim Hong-Shin and Park Bum-Shin. It has established its status as a literary city by building a literary house where visitors can delve into and appreciate their literary world.



Kim Hongshin House seen from outside

### **A house built with the wishes of Korea's first million-selling author Kim Hong-Shin: Kim Hongshin House**

Nonsan is full of quiet and secluded vibes. This makes travelers feel more relaxed and peaceful as they embark on their journey. Although Kim Hongshin House is also located in the city center of Nonsan, it is set in a quiet residential complex, making it a great place to satisfy your literary senses. The charm of the house

is that there is no fence, meaning that anyone can enter the literary museum with ease and intimacy. Kim Hongshin House, which opened in 2019, is the epicenter of Kim Hong-Shin's works, who became the first Korean author to become a million-seller with his novel *Human Market* (Hainaim Publishing). Though the museum is not large in size, it features an archive of Kim Hong-Shin's works to help visitors better understand his literature, as well as various exhibits, videos, and the author's notebooks that provide a detailed look into and understanding of his representative works, *Human Market* and *Kim Hong-Shin's Great Balhae* (Arisaem).

In particular, the author's works displayed in the book gallery on the first floor are enormous in quantity and magnificent in design, fully demonstrating the stature of Kim Hong-Shin's literature. The author's books, which fill an entire wall of the high-rise building, are a testament to the life that Kim Hong-Shin has lived, and they provide visitors with the same emotional impact as reading his novels. If you want to deepen your understanding of the novel, *Human Market*, you can also sit back and watch related videos and immerse yourself in the author's interviews. There is also an area in the exhibit that recreates the author's writing room, equipped with manuscript papers, fountain pens, and copies of his handwritten manuscripts. You can even feel like you are in the presence of the author, with a few props placed on his small desk.



The archive featuring the author's works, including *Human Market*, and the recreated writing room

When you finish browsing the exhibition area and head upstairs to the second floor, you will find a collection of manuscript papers where visitors can leave their impressions or write messages to the author, thereby creating a connection between the author and readers. Another not-to-be-missed space in the House is the anvil exhibition, set in the center of the building's courtyard. An anvil is used in a blacksmith's shop as a support for hammering hot metal with a hammer, and Kim Hong-Shin

is said to have written his works with this “anvil spirit” in mind. Looking at the pair of anvils on display, you can imagine what Kim Hong-Shin’s life as a writer has been like in the nearly 50 years since he began in 1976; the emotional impact of this small space cannot be overstated.



Visitors' messages and the anvil sculpture that has become a symbol of writer Kim Hong-Shin.



The outside view of the author's writing room, alongside the Kim Hongshin House.

Since Kim Hongshin House is a living writer's literary museum, there is an impressive space that you won't find anywhere else: the author's actual writing room next to the House. The writing career of Kim Hong-Shin, who has published more than 130 titles, including *Human Market*, a landmark in Korean contemporary literature, *How to Live Your Life* (Hainaim Publishing), *One Everlasting Love* (Hainaim Publishing), and his latest work, *Mourning for the Time Gone* (Hainaim Publishing), is still ongoing here. Kim Hong-Shin is a prolific writer of a wide range of genres, from novels to essays to children's books. Kim once said, "I will write with my fountain pen until my last breath." This is why you can still feel his creative spirit burning brightly in his writing room, standing alongside the House.

### A cinematic encounter with enchanting moments in novels and landscapes: Ganggyeong Mountain Salt Literary House and Ogyeobong

There is no such thing as wasted time. Time only changes depending on how we remember and record it. Since nothing stays the same, even a place that once flourished is bound to decline through the weathering of time. However, as long as it remains in memory, it will forever exist in the present. A place that reminds us of this truth is Ganggyeong-eup, Nonsan. Now a small port known for its *jeotgal* (salted seafood), Ganggyeong was once a thriving place during the Japanese occupation when modernization was rapidly occurring. Its proximity to the Geum

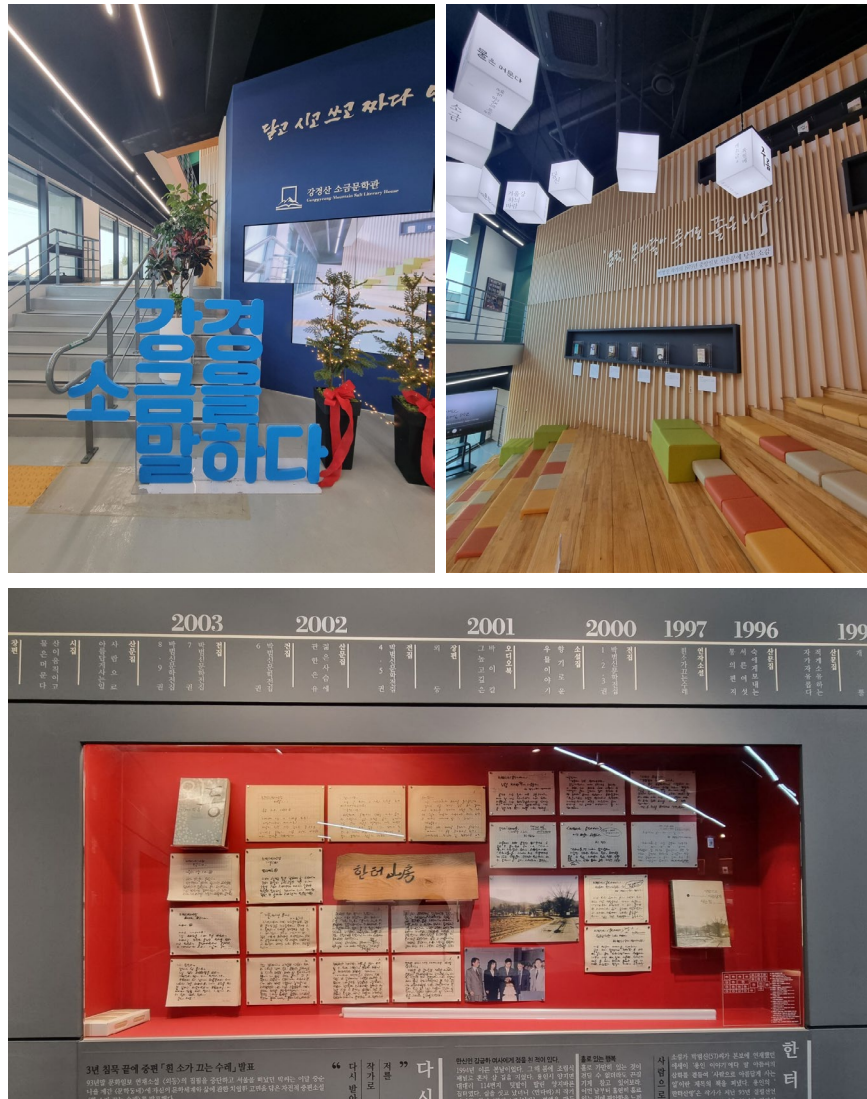
River provided fertile land that produced a wide variety of goods, and the ease of transportation by boat on the river made it a perfect location for development.



The outside view of the Ganggyeong Mountain Salt Literary House, which is being used as a cultural complex

Marking a new cultural renaissance in Ganggyeong, once remembered as a small port, the Ganggyeong Mountain Salt Literary House opened its doors in 2021. Overlooking the Geum River, which embraces Ogyeobong, the inspiration for Park Bum-Shin’s novel *Salt* (Hankyoreh Publishing Company), the House was established with the goal of becoming a “roofless museum, a warm cultural space that nurtures people.” It exhibits Ganggyeong’s history and culture alongside a space that deeply delves into Park Bum-Shin’s literary works, and has

become a representative landmark of Ganggyeong. In particular, Park Bum-Shin's 40th full-length novel, *Salt*, released on the 40th anniversary of his debut, is not only set in Ganggyeong, but also bears a special connection between the author and Ganggyeong. *Salt* is a work written by author Park Beom-shin after returning to his hometown, Nonsan, and it is set once again in the Ganggyeong area, following his novel *Dirty Desk* (Munhakdongne), which won the Manhae Literary Prize.



Exhibits featuring Park Bum-Shin's works and a multi-purpose space

So, if you want to immerse yourself in the literary world of Park Bum-Shin, a writer who had a deep affection for his hometown, visit Ganggyeong Mountain Salt Literary House. Since its establishment, it has become a hub for local art, hosting a wide range of activities demonstrating just how influential a writer can be. Since it is not only a literary house, but also a multi-functional cultural complex, the space is composed of a gallery, multipurpose hall, workshop, and open library. Visitors can also get a deeper understanding of Park Bum-Shin's literature by taking a look at his works, exhibits, and various excerpts from his novels.

Once you have finished exploring the Literary House, you might want to take the walkway behind it to Ogyeobong. This path was often walked by writer Park Bum-Shin, and it's a unique experience to walk in his footsteps. Ogyeobong is also famous for its sunset views, and the summit offers a panoramic view of the lazily flowing Geum River. You can also look down on the salt house, which was the setting for the novel *Salt*, and feel like you have stepped into a scene from the novel. If you sit in front of the salt house where the main character of *Salt* - which depicts the violence of capital - lived, and look at the Geum River, which Park Bum-Shin described as a "motherly river," you will definitely feel the same emotions as from the novel. Slowly take in the scenery of his hometown, which the author once confessed was "my literary womb," and indirectly experience the sensitivity and inspiration he must have felt. In the landscapes of

Ganggyeong, blended with the Literary House, you will be able to spend a special time getting closer to his literary world.



The salt house recreated in Ogyeobong



Geum River seen from Ogyeobong

**A thousand-year-old temple where you can encounter the compassionate smile of Maitreya Bodhisattva: Gwanchoksa Temple**

Not too far from Kim Hongshin House is Gwanchoksa Temple, a temple built during the Goryeo Dynasty with a thousand-year

history. Close to the city center of Nonsan, this much-visited temple has long served as a spiritual center for the people of the region. It may not be large, but it is home to a must-see national treasure: the Stone Statue of Mireuk Buddha of Gwanchoksa Temple, which stands tall in the center. This statue exudes a sense of peace with its large face and benevolent smile, rather than delicate carvings. The Stone Statue of Mireuk Buddha, depicting Buddha in a friendly, approachable mood, makes viewers feel comfortable enough to lay down their burdens and offer prayers. There's hardly a better place to take a moment to lean on the Buddha's benevolence and relieve your worries.

If you climb up to Samsunggak, the highest point within Gwanchoksa Temple, you will have a panoramic view of the city of Nonsan. The moment you confront the national treasure, the Stone Statue of Mireuk Buddha, smiling softly at you from the temple's vantage point, is an extra special highlight of your trip to Nonsan. Not only that, but Gwanchoksa Temple is also filled with precious heritage items that exemplify the essence of Buddhism, such as the stone lanterns, which are designated as treasures for their simplicity and balance, the *baeryeseok* (a stone carved with a beautiful lotus flower pattern for incense lighting), and the stone gate, which is said to bring enlightenment just by passing through. Taking a leisurely stroll through the grounds while reflecting on the values of this glorious culture can be an extraordinary way to deepen the impact of your trip, even if you are not a Buddhist.



Gwanchoksa Temple, where you can enjoy various aspects of Buddhism such as the national treasure “Stone Statue of Mireuk Buddha of Gwanchoksa Temple”

The fact that Nonsan has produced Kim Hong-Shin and Park Bum-Shin, two of the most beloved and best-selling authors in Korean contemporary literature, is enough to indicate its high cultural level. In addition, the two writers continue to show the true spirit of literary masters by establishing a literary home with their love for their hometown. Their unstoppable will to write is leading to the revival of the small town, fostering cultural energy in quiet and serene Nonsan. Nonsan is an example of how literature not only exists as a work, but also creates various social and cultural values as its centerpiece.

## ONE-LINER QUOTES

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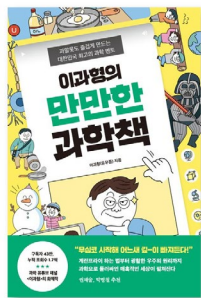
# Wide and Deep Perspectives on the World

Books Picked by a Science Communicator

Written by Kim Jin-Woo (Science communicator, Eunjobz)

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Kim Jin-Woo runs a YouTube channel called “Eunjobz (은근한 잡다한 지식).” Eunjobz is an informational channel that uses 2D illustrations to make the content easy to understand and the videos fun to watch. It recently published a science book, *The Quirky Science Book* (Big Fish), which is a compilation of popular and entertaining topics from Eunjobz.



### Sci-bro's Foolproof Science Book

Sci-bro (Yoo Woo-Jong), Tornado Books

What we really need to trust is not 'it's unconditionally true,' but 'it's not wrong yet.' That's science.



In the middle of a cold winter, when snow falls hard and fast, it's hard not to build a snowman. Sometimes, you lose track of time and forget that your hands are getting numb. When you look at the finished product, you feel unnecessarily proud that you have made something. And, you give him a scarf and gloves, just in case he gets cold. But here's a thought. We put clothes on when we are cold because they warm us up. Snowmen like to be cold because they melt away in warmth. So, wouldn't they hate to be dressed? We dress the snowman for him, but wouldn't this actually make him disappear faster?

People who aren't interested in science might already think it sounds hard. They give up before they even start because they think they won't understand it, even if they read the book. Yet, science is so close to our everyday lives. *Sci-bro's Foolproof Science Book* (Tornado Books) is a book that shows just how relevant science is to our daily lives. The book is appealing to all, including those interested in, struggling with, or not interested in science.

If you read *Sci-bro's Foolproof Science Book*, you can find the answer to the problem of dressing the snowman from above. Clothes don't generate heat. The reason we are warm when we are dressed is because our clothes trap the heat that our bodies generate. This means that dressing the snowman doesn't make him warmer. Rather, because the clothes trap the cold that the snowman gives off, dressing the snowman makes him colder and causes him to melt more slowly than if he were not dressed.

The book's author, Sci-bro, introduces himself as a "Science storyteller." As he explains, science is a very easy and fun field to understand if you can relate it to your life. *Sci-bro's Foolproof Science Book* helps readers become interested in science by asking interesting questions and breaking them down to make science understandable.



*The History of Jobs in the Joseon Dynasty*

Kang Moon-Jong; Kim Dong-Gun; Jang Yoo-Seung; Hong Hyeon-Sung,  
Minumsa Publishing



Thanks to those who did the things that needed to be done, others could live a safe, comfortable, and clean life.

There are so many jobs in the world. Jobs can disappear and be created over time. For example, a creator, a person who makes videos and uploads them to YouTube, is a job that people in the past wouldn't believe if they heard about it. Similarly, there were jobs in the past that we in the present wouldn't believe if we heard about them.

In the Joseon Dynasty, people who committed crimes were sometimes punished by beating. It was an unimaginably painful punishment, so people with money would avoid it by paying the punisher to beat them gently, or they would find someone to take the hit for them. People who were poor and didn't have much

money to spare saw this as an opportunity, and a job was born - a job where they would take the punishment for money. They were called, in Western terms, the “whipping boy (‘매품팔이’ in Korean).” So even if it’s something that everyone hates, if there’s a reward, it might be a different story for someone. Not many people like the idea of going to the army. This was also the case in the Joseon Dynasty. So, people with a lot of money would find someone to go to the army for them. It was also an opportunity for someone to make money, so a job was created for them to go to the army instead. It was called, “substitute soldiers (‘대립군’ in Korean).”

*The History of Jobs in the Joseon Dynasty* (Minumsa Publishing) is a book that introduces the many jobs that existed during the Joseon Dynasty. Some jobs are similar to today’s jobs but in a different form, while others are unique to that era. This book not only introduces the jobs that existed during the Joseon Dynasty, but also explains why they were created. You can say that understanding a job is understanding the era. As you read the book, you will naturally imagine what kind of life people lived and what type of job you would have chosen if you lived in that time.

## KNOWLEDGE

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# AI Digital Textbook Policy and the Publishing Industry

Written by Kim Hoon-Beom (Mirae-N)

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Discussions on implementing AI digital textbooks



Great transformation of Korea's textbook publishing culture



Expected to expand the ecosystem of textbook publishing

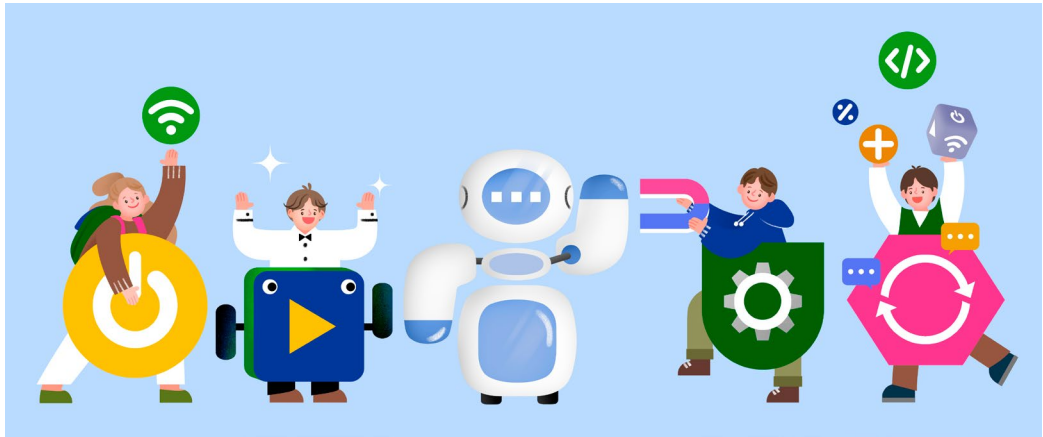
The “AI Digital Textbook” vision: 5 million textbooks for 5 million students!

“5 million textbooks for 5 million students.”

This is the vision set forth by the Ministry of Education, the main policy maker for national education in Korea, in June

2023 when it announced plans to promote AI digital textbooks. AI digital textbooks are textbooks loaded with various learning materials and learning aid features using intellectual information technology, such as AI, to support a variety of customized learning opportunities that match students' abilities and levels. They are an innovative policy focusing on the pure mission of normalizing public education through educational transformation by using textbooks that incorporate AI, the most significant topic of the era.

In accordance with the AI Digital Textbook Promotion Plan, the Ministry of Education promptly announced the AI Digital Textbook Development Guidelines (August 30, 2023), informed the public of the implementation of AI Digital Textbook Authorization (August 31, 2023), and held a briefing session on the AI Digital Textbook Development Guidelines (September 7, 2023); and from this point on, textbook publishers began to develop AI digital textbooks in earnest by collaborating with EdTech companies in line with the Ministry's development plan schedule. The collaboration with EdTech was necessary as most textbook publishers do not possess technologies such as AI and data analysis, which are the core of digital textbooks. The Ministry of Education also encouraged collaboration between textbook publishers and EdTech companies by holding an "AI Digital Textbook Matching Day" in the first half of 2024. This March, exactly 20 months after the development guidelines were announced, the country's first national AI digital textbook, said to be the world's first, will be implemented in schools.



## Controversies over the rollout schedule and textbook status of AI Digital Textbooks

Math, English, and Informatics, the subjects targeted for the first year of AI digital textbooks, finalized the authorization review process in November last year. In early December, the web exhibition of the approved textbooks was launched, and by the time of this article in late January 2025, the on-site adoption of which publisher's textbooks to use by each school should have been finalized. However, late last year, the National Assembly passed an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which created a huge roadblock for AI digital textbooks, changing their status from textbooks that must be used in all schools to educational materials that are left to the autonomy of schools.

The regulation of AI digital textbooks as educational materials rather than textbooks is a different level of problem than the over-immersion of digital devices, decrease in literacy, and hindrance of cognitive development, which have been raised as

adverse effects of the introduction of AI digital textbooks. This is because the Ministry of Education has been promoting the AI digital textbook policy, claiming the guarantee of fair educational opportunities through the realization of individualized education as the greatest value, and the policy was based on the premise that AI digital textbooks have the status of textbooks. On January 17, the National Assembly's Education Commission held a hearing on AI digital textbooks to verify the process and appropriateness of introducing AI digital textbooks, but it only confirmed the tense arguments of those who want to give AI digital textbooks the status of textbooks and leave them to the autonomy of each school for one year to verify their effectiveness, and those who want to give AI digital textbooks the status of educational materials and introduce them in stages after verifying their effectiveness. The government quickly exercised its right of reconsideration request on January 21 on the amendment of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that lowered the status of AI digital textbooks to educational materials, and the bill has now been sent back to the National Assembly.

Although the Ministry of Education has revised the existing policy to postpone the introduction of AI digital textbooks for one year and allow school autonomy, there is a big difference depending on whether it is a textbook or educational material. This is because it is directly related to the key issue of mandatory versus voluntary use in schools and copyright and pricing issues with companies that have applied AI digital textbooks.

## Progress on policies related to AI digital textbooks

Date	Content	Note
June 8, 2023	Announcement of the AI Digital Textbook Promotion Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Start with mathematics, English, informatics, and Korean language (special education) in 2025</li> <li>- Gradually expand subjects to cover all, including Korean language, social studies, and science, by 2028</li> <li>※ Exclude first- and second-year elementary students, optional subjects in high school, music, art, physical education, and ethics, considering students' development stages and subject characteristics</li> </ul>
August 23, 2023	Notification regarding the classification of state-authored/certified digital textbooks for elementary and middle schools under the 2022 Revised Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Classified as certified books</li> <li>※ Elementary informatics, which is not established in the curriculum as a separate subject, is developed as an approved book</li> <li>- Subjects for special education are classified as state-authored books</li> </ul>
August 30, 2023	Announcement of the AI Digital Textbook Development Guidelines	
August 31, 2023	Notification of AI digital textbook certification schedule	Target: A total of 48 books (22 for elementary, 16 for lower secondary, and 6 for upper secondary)
September 7, 2023	Briefing of AI Digital Textbook Development Guidelines	
August 19–21, 2024	Application for AI digital textbook certification begins	To be implemented in 2025 (mathematics, English, and informatics for third- and fourth-years in elementary, first-year in lower secondary, and first-year in upper secondary): A total of 146 books from 21 applicants were applied
November 29, 2024	Announcement of AI digital textbooks that passed certification (on government gazette)	76 titles from 12 applicants passed
	Announcement of (proposed) adjustments to the implementation roadmap of AI digital textbooks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exclude Korean language, technology and home economics from subjects for development</li> <li>- Introduce social studies and science subjects for elementary and lower secondary from 2028 (1 year postponed)</li> </ul>

Date	Content	Note
December 2, 2024	Web exhibit of AI digital textbooks begins	
December 26, 2024	Amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act passed	Regulated as an educational material
January 17, 2025	AI digital textbook validation hearing was held	
January 21, 2025	Reconsideration request for amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act submitted	Restored textbook status
March 2025	Implementation of AI digital textbooks	Schools' autonomy

## The Great Shift in Textbook Publishing Culture: Building a New Development Ecosystem

So far, there has been no case of a full-scale introduction of AI learning systems in public education, and the digital content utilized by some schools is only at the level of supplementing teaching and learning. In this context, the introduction of AI digital textbooks is, in a word, a major shift in Korea's textbook publishing culture. This is because the problems considered as limitations and barriers in education in the past will be effectively incorporated into textbooks with positive changes solved by digital technology, thus establishing a textbook development ecosystem that is significantly different from the existing book-type textbooks.

As demonstrated during the first-year curriculum development process last year, AI digital textbooks use AI to provide personalized learning by analyzing students' learning levels,

provide immediate feedback, and systematically manage learning data; therefore, only the combination of the best technologies and capabilities, such as AI infrastructure, learning content, platforms, and solutions, can produce meaningful results. Also, as the number of subjects for development expands, the ecosystem of textbook publishing will expand further, which will require more cooperative efforts between members. The same is true for changes in the field of textbook publishing, which is directly related to textbook publishing.



### The challenges of AI digital textbooks that global education should pay attention to

While every policy may have some pluses and minuses, there are usually both positive and negative aspects. Therefore, the focus of policy implementation is based on the positive aspects of the policy, while trying to minimize the negative aspects. Now, the

government will give schools a year's grace period to implement, utilize, and verify the effectiveness of AI digital textbooks before the full implementation, and the world's education community will be watching closely as Korea is the first country in the world to introduce AI into public education.

Hence, by proving that the positive features of the policy emphasized by the Ministry of Education are entirely operative, it is hoped that the world's first AI digital textbook will become an important turning point for Korea's educational innovation, going beyond mere digitization to support each individual student's learning to improve classes effectively.

## KOREAN PUBLISHERS

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### Black Fish

The virtuous influence of liberal arts books on raising society's intellectual level



The logo of Black Fish5

Books are more than just a collection of knowledge - in each genre, they play an important role in enlightening readers, instilling life values, and spreading good influence. In particular, liberal arts books are valuable in that they contribute to the development of society as a whole and further enhance readers' knowledge and intellectual level in areas that are closely connected to our lives, such as culture, history, and art. Deeply understanding the importance of these books, Black Fish strives to help readers improve their quality of life through valuable and

meaningful knowledge. It aims to help readers broaden their perspectives on the world and envision a better future, not just to deliver information. Black Fish's books, carefully researched and thoughtfully produced, are designed to help readers gain new insights and satisfy their intellectual curiosity in the smallest moments of daily life.

It's a pleasure to have you with us on *K-Book Trends*. Could you please introduce yourself to our readers along with the meaning of the company's name?

"Black Fish" is a humanities and liberal arts publishing brand of Bacdoci Co., Ltd., which has been publishing books in the fields of arts, humanities, history, and science in an enjoyable and accessible style, starting with sociologist Oh Chan-Ho's *Not Okay at All* in January 2018. After launching "Hummingbird," a non-fiction label, in 2012 and "Watering Child," a children and parenting label, in 2015, the brand was launched after three years of preparation, and has published more than 60 books to date.

Black Fish aims to offer new perspectives through knowledge and cultural content that are closely connected to the lives of its readers, much like the orca navigating the vast sea. It doesn't leave the humanities and culture as difficult and abstract concepts, but instead presents them in a language that can be easily applied to daily life, fostering communication with readers. Through practical books that help solve everyday concerns

or make better choices, Black Fish seeks to allow readers to experience real change, with the goal of enriching their lives by providing useful yet profound knowledge.

(주) 백도씨 100°C

허밍버드  
Hummingbird



The logos of Baccoci Co., Ltd., Hummingbird, and Watering Child

Black Fish is publishing books in a variety of fields, including history, art, and science. The company's motto is to “publish humanities and liberal arts for a better life.” Could you elaborate on what you mean by “better lives” that Black Fish believes can be achieved through books?

First, we plan detailed and actionable content that goes beyond the simple transfer of knowledge to help readers deepen their understanding of themselves and the world through books and take ownership of their lives. We want to help our readers gain new perspectives and deeper insights by exposing them to knowledge and liberal arts from various fields. For example, history books give us the power to understand the past, analyze the present, and plan for the future. Science books make it easy to understand complex phenomena and contribute to the development of logical thinking. And, humanities books help readers think flexibly and cultivate a challenging spirit.

Second, we value mental well-being and inner growth beyond mere success or material goals. We create content that helps

readers discover their values and find direction in their lives through books.

And, third, we try to provide readers with the opportunity to empathize more deeply with themselves, others, and the world. Such empathy can be translated into action in their daily lives, fueling them to change their lives for the better.

It seems that liberal arts books require careful planning, given their wide range of topics. What does Black Fish focus on when planning a book?

We are most focused on discovering topics that relate directly to our readers' lives. We want our books to provide readers with new insights so they can make real changes in their lives. In this process, we balance the uniqueness of the topic with its applicability. We avoid topics that are too familiar and, therefore, likely to lose readers' interest. Conversely, we stay away from topics that are too unfamiliar, which makes it difficult to connect with readers. These criteria are part of our efforts to strengthen our connection with readers and ensure that our books provide tangible value to their lives.

We also pay close attention to how we deliver the content. Breaking down complex or specialized content in a way that readers can easily understand and enjoy is at the core of our planning - which is why we try to find Korean authors whenever possible. It's because they are able to create content that is

familiar and relatable to our readers' emotional and cultural backgrounds.

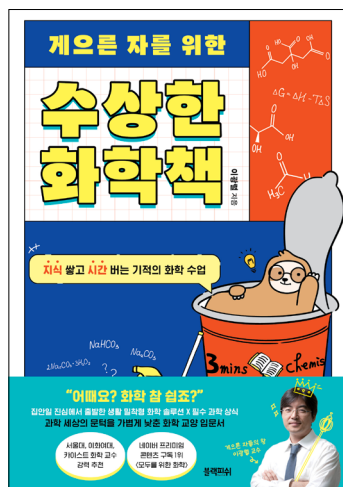
We think that “books that help people become more knowledgeable and cultured in their daily lives” can help us move forward in a positive way. Are there any books published by Black Fish that you would recommend that are particularly relevant to our daily lives today?

Lee Kwan-Gyeol's *Freak Chemistry Book* features science terms that we all learned about in textbooks, such as acids, bases, and neutralization reactions, but had a headache just reading about them. It's a liberal arts book on science that invites readers who know nothing about science to experience the joy of daily chemistry. The author, a professor of chemistry at Korea University and the owner of the “Chemistry for All” channel, the number one most subscribed premium content channel on Naver, entertainingly explains the chemical tricks and principles behind everyday chores that everyone goes through. The book was immediately offered by a Taiwanese publisher upon its release and was published in Taiwan in December 2024.

*How to Use the Vocabulary of a Master* features tips for upgrading your vocabulary from Kim Seon-Young, author of the bestselling book *Adults' Literacy*. This book offers 30 exercises to improve your vocabulary, transforming readers from simple language users to master communicators who can accurately express their feelings and thoughts. Aimed at addressing the growing problem

of declining vocabulary and literacy among people, this book will help readers break free from a monotonous language that relies on “*daebak*” (a slang term used when someone is greatly impressed by something that has happened) and “*heol*” (a slang term used to express mild surprise or shock).

And, last but not least, *Global Environment Lessons With a Calendar* by Choi Won-Hyung is a humanities book on the environment that explains environmental issues in a fun and interesting way using 51 anniversaries around the world. It sheds fresh light on global issues we face, such as heat waves, cold waves, fine dust, pandemics, labor exploitation, sexual exploitation, poverty, and refugees, from an environmental perspective. It asks questions such as, “Is it okay to take animal lives for the betterment of humans?” and “How can the world have equal access to clean water?”, inspiring deep insights and discussions for readers.



*Freak Chemistry Book; How to Use the Vocabulary of a Master; Global Environment Lessons With a Calendar*

We believe that liberal arts are most valuable when they not only help individuals grow, but also attain social value. Could you please tell us what Black Fish is doing to communicate with more readers?

Actively utilizing digital platforms is the most important factor these days. We create content that concisely and visually conveys the core message of the book and interact with readers in real-time on Social Media platforms such as Naver Blog, Instagram, and X. We also plan reader-participation events and programs to provide an interactive experience with the book. We also organize book talks, lectures, historical tours with the author, online lectures, and authors' appearances on YouTube to create opportunities for readers to have a deeper understanding of the book's content and share their thoughts.

Black Fish publishes a wide range of genres, including science, architecture, art, and history, providing an abundance of reading experiences. What do you think is the appeal of each genre?

Science stimulates rational thinking and curiosity in the midst of complex phenomena, offering readers new ways of looking at problems. Architecture makes us think about how to better design human life through space and structure. Art stirs emotions and imagination, and provides aesthetic experiences rarely encountered in everyday life. It also has the power to expand our creativity and foster our own unique perspectives.

History provides insight into the past to understand the present and predict the future. History is not just a recounting of events, but a process of learning life wisdom through human experience and choices.

It's important to produce books across different fields to empower readers to understand the world in different ways and apply methods that work for them. After all, within the larger framework of the liberal arts, they help enrich and diversify the lives of individual readers.

We recently heard that Black Fish's Social Media accounts have been integrated with the "Watering Child" label. Could you tell us a little bit about "Watering Child" and the philosophy behind it, which envisions a "place where mothers and children grow together"?

"Watering Child" centers on content that helps mothers and children grow together. Just like how we water and care for seeds to grow, we seek to provide the environment and lessons for children to grow up healthy and happy. We hope to inspire intellectual curiosity and sensitivity in children through our books, and to provide parents with wisdom on how to communicate with and raise their children.

How does Black Fish stay competitive and differentiated in the face of changing market conditions such as digitalization?

We are actively making not only videos and card-style articles that can convey the message of a book in a short and effective way, but also e-books and audiobooks. Also, we are aggressively introducing the feature of listening and reading books using QR codes. For example, Oh Su-Hyun's *Classical Music With a Story*, winner of the Excellence Award at the Digital K-book Award in 2023, embeds QR codes in the text so that readers can read the story and still appreciate the music at the same time throughout the book. As such, we are maximizing the attractiveness of physical books by making them into books that readers want to keep, with unique designs and special production specifications, to appeal to readers who prefer paper books even in a digital environment.

Several books published by Black Fish have been particularly helpful in promoting and understanding Korean culture. Do you have any recommendations for books you would like to introduce to international readers?

*Art of the Joseon Dynasty* is a one-of-a-kind book that captures both folk and court paintings from the Joseon Dynasty at the height of its culture in one book. The author, Tak Hyun-Kyu, is one of the foremost commentators on ancient art, wowing

audiences with his lectures. In this book, he has selected more than 50 paintings that encapsulate the hallmarks of the late Joseon Dynasty, which enjoyed a period of great prosperity. Featuring works by 7 genius Joseon artists, including Gyeongjae Jeong Seon, Danwon Kim Hong-Do, and Hyewon Shin Yun-Bok, as well as archival paintings depicting court events from the reigns of King Sukjong and King Yeongjo, this is a unique art book that offers a balanced view of Joseon society.

Bae Ki-Sung's *Uncomfortable Korean History* unearths the truth behind the events that changed the course of history from ancient times to Goryeo and Joseon, exciting stories that spark readers' imaginations, and events that don't appear in textbooks but have great historical significance. The stories are based on actual historical records, with the author's imagination adding to the narrative to create an immersive drama.



*Classical Music With a Story; Art of the Joseon Dynasty; Uncomfortable Korean History*

We believe that cultivating a knowledgeable and cultured mind ultimately contributes to raising the standard of society. Could you tell us about the direction Black Fish hopes to take, future goals, and plans for new titles?

Black Fish will continue to release content that stimulates readers' intellectual curiosity through books and contributes not only to individual growth, but also to social values. Our goal is not just to publish books, but to create a future where readers and society grow together through books. We plan to expand our content to engage with readers of different generations and backgrounds beyond our existing readership. In particular, we will actively explore trendy topics and formats that appeal to the younger generation, and strive to make liberal arts accessible to all, rather than being reserved for a certain audience.

In terms of new titles, we plan to cover not only the major genres, such as science, art, and history, but also topics that are currently gaining attention, such as the environment and psychology. We are also very interested in exporting rights through the discovery and development of Korean authors. With dozens of essays exported through Black Fish and its sister brand "Hummingbird," we hope to show that Korean humanities content has the potential to be connected with global readers.

## KOREAN AUTHORS

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### Writer Bak Cham-Sae

A multi-player who expands the reach of literature

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As society rapidly changes and seeks novelty, the scope of what a single medium can cover and expand is becoming increasingly complex. Literature, too, is breaking down existing boundaries, evolving anew, and permeating our lives in an expanded form. Bak Cham-Sae, a writer who has been prolific in the midst of these changes, works with ChatGPT to create original works that go beyond existing literary conventions, introduce new forms of poetry, and create various contents that interpret the theme of literature in different ways. Describing herself as a “writing laborer,” Bak Cham-Sae is breaking new ground in Korean literature through her various writing activities. The following is an interview with Bak Cham-Sae, who is not bound to a specific genre or format, but rather crosses the boundaries of society,

culture, and technology through her writing, providing fresh inspiration to her readers.



© Lee Yong-Seon

It's an honor to have you with us on *K-Book Trends*. Please briefly introduce yourself to our readers.

Hello, I'm Bak Cham-Sae, and I do things around letters. I read and write books for a living. Every time I introduce myself, I feel a bit awkward. It is especially nice to introduce myself in writing.

You started your work in books as a book curator, which led you to become a poet. You described yourself as a “wannabe poet” when you were a book curator - what’s different now that you are a poet?

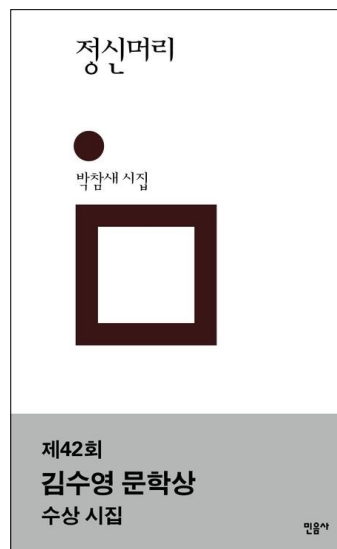
I don’t think anything has changed much; I think I was able to say those things because I didn’t know anything back then. I also think that the structural characteristics of the Korean literary circle made it easier for me to say such unusual combinations of words. I just had to do it if I wanted to - and I only now realize that.

You described yourself as a “writing laborer.” What is the appeal and characteristic of each of your activities, and what is the specific meaning of the term “writing laborer”?

I’m still not sure how to define myself, because the results of my work are often not tangible and hard to quantify - sometimes, I’m not even sure what I’m doing or if I’m doing it right at all. But, in any case, I am “writing” something, or at least continuing a number of activities as a byproduct of it, and that continuity is based on my “labor.” It seems pretty clear to me, and I often introduce myself that way, because it’s a good way to make sense of myself without attaching too much meaning to it.

You garnered attention by winning the 42nd Kim Suyeong Literary Award. The winning poem collection, *The Head and Mind* (Minumsa), shows the dramatic form poems can take, which breaks the traditional poetry style and format. What made you make such an attempt, and what message did you intend to deliver to the readers?

I didn't intentionally try to break away from the poetry style and format. I was just staying faithful to what I wanted to write and what I believed I needed to write, and I think I gave it the right clothes. We don't all wear the same clothes, though we are all the same human beings, right? In the very same way, I tend to believe that each individual poem has its own coat of arms that it needs or deserves, and it's up to the writer to find it.



*The Head and Mind*

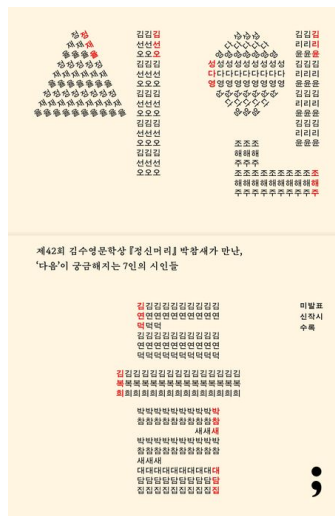
The poem *Defense* in this collection was written in collaboration with ChatGPT, which was a refreshing approach. We are curious to know what the process was like and if you plan to collaborate with AI in the future. Also, what do you think is the ideal relationship a writer should have with AI?

I don't have a specific plan in mind yet, as I don't usually plan things out, but I'm using AI quite a lot in my daily life. It's already been in my life for a long time, so it's probably going to continue to influence me bit by bit. The ideal relationship that a "writer" should have with it is a little bit outside the scope of my imagination. I'd put more emphasis on the individual relationship.

You convey powerful messages through the creative use of language and format in your works. What are some of the most important elements you consider when conceiving and writing your work, and what are some of the special moments or creative drivers that inspire you?

I think the biggest element is whether or not I have thought enough about whatever it is that I'm writing about. That's why I spend so much more time not writing. I feel like it's more about the process of figuring out what I want to write about - thinking about it enough, making decisions about it, or imagining it in a state of limbo without making decisions or judgments about it

- and it's a really long process. I don't think the actual writing is that long compared to this, but the problem is that it's hard to find the end point of the process itself. The decision to write comes very dimly, and that makes me value the feeling itself very much, even if it's a very small one.



*The Poets*

Your interview collection featuring conversations with 7 young poets, *The Poets* (Semicolon Books), drew attention and empathy by giving us a glimpse into their thoughts, values, and worldview. What were the poets you spoke with like and what were you trying to capture in the book?

I think I wanted to remind myself and convey the notion that the idea of “poets” is not so distant and that they are also members of the contemporary world. Poetry, poets, or literature as a whole, is derived from life. I wanted there to be a sense of life in that aspect, a sense of presence. For me personally, it meant a lot just to be able to talk to these wonderful fellows.

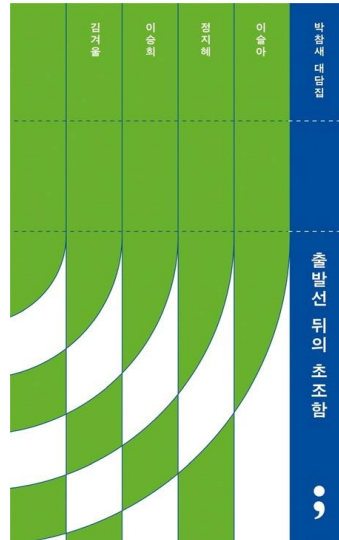
Congratulations on your nomination in the Poet & Essay Selected by Booksellers category for 2024. It must have been particularly meaningful for you as it reflected the voices of the field. We would love to hear what this means to you as the owner of the virtual bookstore “moi.”

There are, of course, inherent differences between having physical space and not, but I think selling books requires a similar mindset. So, I wouldn't say that I know how local booksellers feel about choosing books and presenting them, but I do understand a little bit. I think there are so many things that small bookstores have to give up in order to be able to do what they do. It was such a joy to know that there was always a place and a heart for my books in the corner of the store, and that they were worth being remembered. I hope to have more opportunities to collaborate with local small bookstores this year.

You have published several works since the release of your first book, *Nervousness Behind the Starting Line* (Semicolon Books), in 2022, and gained a lot of attention in a short period of time, winning the literary award. Could you tell us which of your works you would like to introduce to international readers and why?

I think it's probably my poetry collection, *The Head and Mind*. It's probably the clearest and quickest introduction to who I am as a writer, and I have always been very interested in how poetry

can be translated. So, I look forward to that moment when it will be translated.



*Nervousness Behind the Starting Line*

You have been doing a lot of cross-disciplinary work with books, and it seems to be a great example of how diverse the role of books can be and how diverse content can be produced. Please tell us about your plans and goals for the future, and what books you are working on.

Like I mentioned earlier, I'm not a big planner. I just want to be diligent and take care of the things that I need to do now and the things that I need to do in the near future and get them done. And, you know, if I take small steps forward like that, I will be ready - it could be a book, or it could be something else.

## LET'S TRY

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# Stickers: A New Favorite Hobby for You

### Event

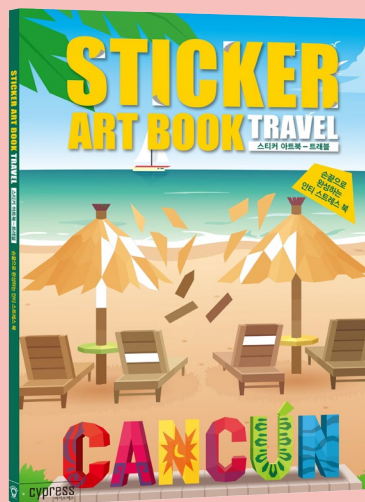
Let's Try introduces various useful, practical books published in Korea every month.

Also, don't miss gift events related to the introduced books!

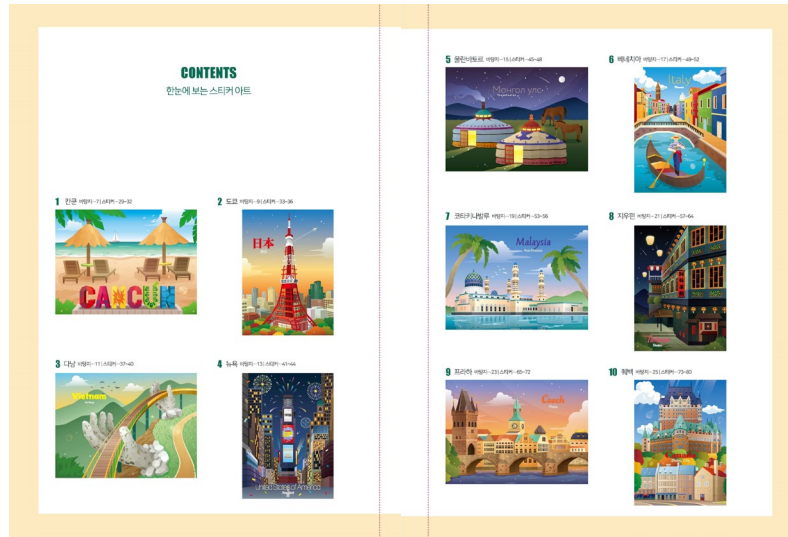
Simply click on the link below and make an entry to the event! Let's Try!

### *Sticker Art Book - Travel*

- Written by the Content Planning Team, published by CYPRESS



Sticker art books are a fun, relaxing hobby for all ages.  
 Make your own artwork with stickers and build  
 a sense of focus and accomplishment!



Holidays and weekends are like honey in the midst of our busy lives. It's even sweeter when you get to spend them with your favorite hobby. What's your hobby among all the many: hiking, reading, watching movies, walking, knitting? Or

perhaps there might not be a specific answer to this question. If you are one of those people who are too tired to take a break from your daily routine, but still want to have a hobby of your own, but don't want to take up a hobby that is too challenging or requires a lot of equipment, then *Sticker Art Book - Travel* could be the perfect hobby for you, no matter what age you are.

The greatest thing about a sticker art book is that you don't need to have any materials at all. Don't worry about not having any drawing skills - just paste the stickers one by one following the numbers, and voila! You will have an amazing, colorful artwork. However, its seemingly simple steps shouldn't be underestimated - consistently following the numbers requires concentration and precision. Remembering the numbers, locating them, and aligning the shapes correctly helps develop memory and motor coordination. So, when you think you need a break, open *Sticker Art Book - Travel* and start sticking! You will experience a sense of pride and accomplishment as your artwork comes together, the comfort of repetitive hand motions, and the joy of immersion.

[Go To Article](#)

[www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/event.php?ptype=view&idx=1536&code=knowledge&category=67](http://www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/event.php?ptype=view&idx=1536&code=knowledge&category=67)

## I READ

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# Beyond Borders: A Foreigner's Perspective on Korean Literature

Reviews of Korean Literature by International Readers

Written by Nazih Mohammed (Reader of *K-Book Trends*)

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This article is a review written by a Moroccan reader of *K-Book Trends* after reading a Korean book.

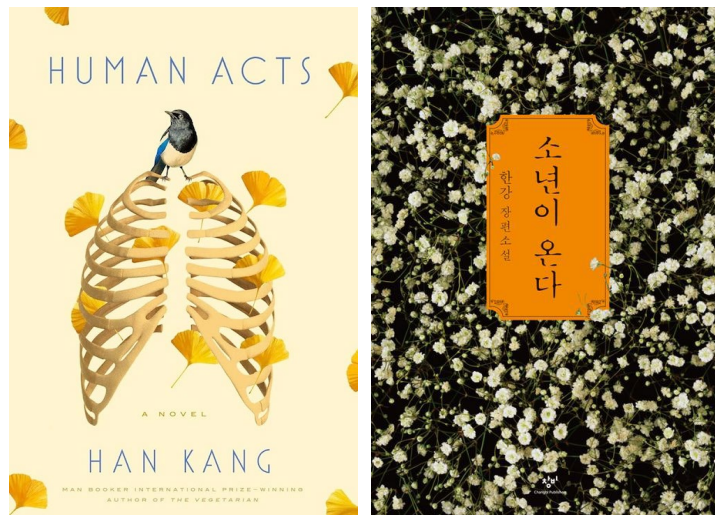
If you want to share your wonderful experience of reading Korean books with other overseas readers, please send us an email!

[kbooktrends@gmail.com](mailto:kbooktrends@gmail.com)

*Human Acts* (Changbi Publishers) by Han Kang

Han Kang's *Human Acts* is a profoundly moving novel set against the backdrop of the 1980 Gwangju Uprising in South Korea. Through interlinked chapters, the book portrays the lives of individuals affected by the brutal government crackdown, including a boy searching for his friend, survivors coping with

trauma, and those bearing the weight of collective memory. The novel is a heartbreaking meditation on the resilience of the human spirit amidst unimaginable suffering.

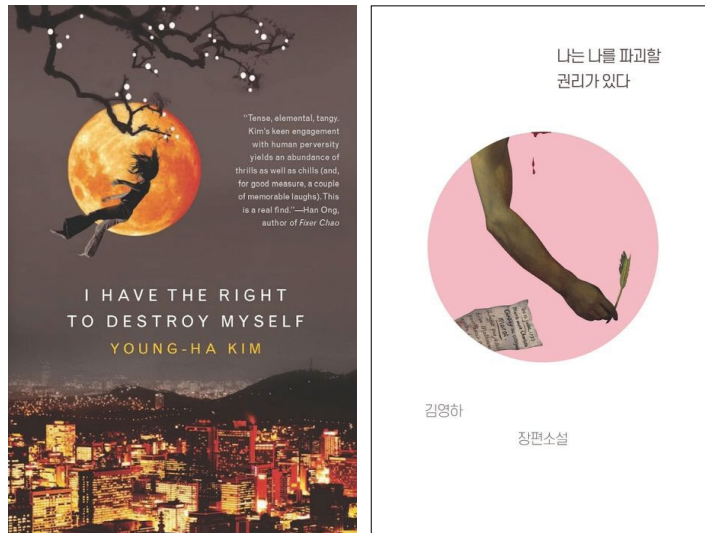


English and Korean covers of *Human Acts*

“Is it possible for the pain of the past to transform into something other than rage?”

Han’s prose is both lyrical and unflinching, capturing the physical and emotional scars of violence while asking vital questions about humanity, memory, and justice. This work of extraordinary depth and power leaves an indelible mark on the reader.

## *I Have the Right to Destroy Myself* (Bokbok Seoga) by Kim Young-ha



English and Korean covers of *I Have the Right to Destroy Myself*

Kim Young-ha's *I Have the Right to Destroy Myself* is a provocative and existential novel that delves into themes of identity, art, and the allure of death. The story is narrated by a mysterious “helper” who assists people in ending their lives. Through his encounters with individuals seeking release, the novel explores the human psyche's dark corners and the search for meaning in a fragmented, urban world.

“Life is a series of choices,  
but some of us are afraid of the responsibility  
those choices bring. So, we drift,  
waiting for someone else to decide for us.”

Kim's writing is stark yet poetic, and the narrative's philosophical depth challenges readers to confront uncomfortable questions about life, freedom, and choice. It's a hauntingly beautiful work that lingers in the mind long after reading.

### *Our Happy Time* (Hainaim Publishing) by Gong Ji-young



English and Korean covers of *Our Happy Time*

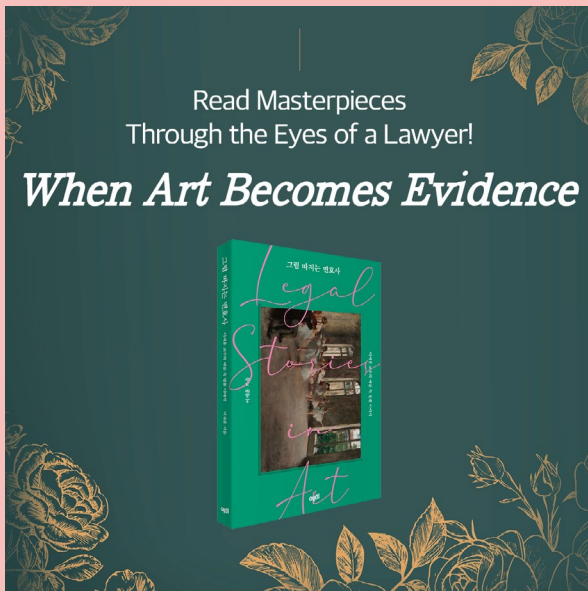
Gong Ji-young's *Our Happy Time* is a deeply moving novel about redemption, love, and the possibility of healing even in the darkest moments. The story centers around Yujeong, a woman burdened by emotional scars, and Yunsu, a death-row inmate with a tragic past. Through their unlikely bond, the two characters confront their pain and find solace in their shared humanity.

“Pain doesn’t disappear just because you ignore it; it waits quietly until you face it, growing heavier every day.”

The book's exploration of forgiveness and the human capacity for connection is both heartrending and uplifting. Gong's writing is lyrical and introspective, capturing the fragility and resilience of the human spirit.

NEW BOOKS

When Art Becomes Evidence



Things can have many different interpretations depending on how you look at them.

And, yes, masterpieces are **no exception**. So, how would it be if we looked at them **through the eyes of a lawyer?**



## **A unique collaboration** **of art and law!**

The author, a lawyer, presents fresh perspectives and insights through legal interpretations of famous paintings.



A fascinating adventure into the secrets of masterpieces by artists like Van Gogh and Vermeer, revealed by legal reasoning!

**A whole new**  
**experience**  
**that blurs**  
**the boundaries**  
**between law**  
**and art begins.**



## **Have you ever wondered** **about these things before?**



Is Van Gogh's painting, The Langlois Bridge at Arles with Women Washing, legally appropriate?

Are pearls in Vermeer's paintings considered jewelry or precious metals by law?



## **Appreciate paintings** **from a logical perspective!**

This book breaks down the boundaries between appreciation and logic, reinterpreting the masterpieces through the eyes of a lawyer, from the trivial daily lives to the most serious cases.



This is not just an art commentary.  
The book offers a new take on the stories from classic masterpieces through a legal perspective, providing readers with fresh insights and joy.

Discover the joy of analyzing masterpieces  
through law in *When Art Becomes Evidence!*



A refreshingly unique perspective that  
looks at art through law!



***When Art Becomes Evidence***

Lee Jae-Hoon, Yemmibooks

**BEST SELLERS**

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**3rd Week, January 2025**

Best seller Trends in the Three Biggest Online Bookstores in Korea

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It's the third week of January, the height of winter, but the weather in Korea is still milder than usual. Meanwhile, it was a time of confusion as various social issues continued, and thus, it was also a time to read books to calm the mind and develop the strength to make more accurate and rational judgments.






While Han Kang's *Human Acts* still holds firm at the top of the best seller list, there were several changes in the overall rankings, possibly reflecting the start of a new year. Perhaps inspired by the new year's resolutions and the desire to study harder, *Choi Tae-Sung's Korean History Exam 2025: Advanced (Level 1, 2, 3) Vol. 1* and *2* by Choi Tae-Sung, one of the leading instructors of Korean history, came in third and fourth. These books are the bible for test takers who want to prepare for the Korean History Proficiency Test as they are well organized and concise. Also, *Hackers TOEIC Vocabulary: TOEIC VOCA*, a prep book for TOEIC,

ranked ninth, indicating that the “cramming mode” is making a big impact on the publishing market. In the business category, *US Stocks Investment Bible*, which quickly took the fifth spot, is a book designed for individual investors who often see profits come and go, and feel anxious and nervous when picking stocks. It offers practical information for investors on all aspects of investing in the US stock market.

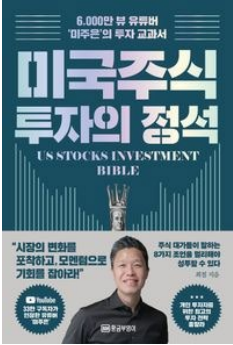

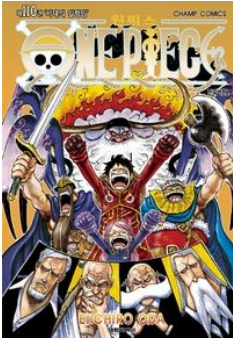
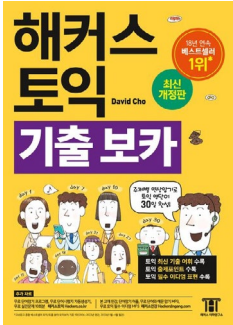
The political turbulence in Korea has been a powerful motivator for people to pick up relevant books. The desire to make rational judgments about politicians and to understand the Constitution has brought them to bookstores. For example, Noh Han-Dong’s *The Lie That You are Working for Your Country*, which topped the best seller list in the political and social category, is a book written by a former secretary official at the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism that offers a sharp analysis of the public service. Also, *Constitution Transcribing Note*, which came in at third place, enhances people’s understanding of the Korean Constitution by guiding them through the process of reading and writing it correctly. The fourth-place book, *Between Light Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, philosophically analyzes, criticizes, and draws attention to political issues that have emerged as the most sensitive and serious problems of our time.

\* The rank of best sellers below was organized after integrating domestic best sellers in the third week of January from the three biggest online bookstores in Korea – Kyobo Bookstore, Aladdin, and Yes 24.

Top 10 best sellers for the 3rd week of January

1		<p><b><i>Human Acts</i></b></p> <p>Author   Han Kang          Publisher   Changbi Publishers          Genre   Fiction</p>
2		<p><b><i>The Buddha's Voice Reinterpreted in Modern Words</i></b></p> <p>Author   Han Kang          Publisher   Changbi Publishers          Genre   Fiction</p>
3		<p><b><i>We Do Not Part</i></b></p> <p>Author   Han Kang          Publisher   Munhacdongne          Genre   Fiction</p>
4		<p><b><i>Han Kang: Special Edition</i></b></p> <p>Author   Han Kang          Publisher   Munhacdongne          Genre   Fiction</p>
5		<p><b><i>We Do Not Part</i></b></p> <p>Author   Han Kang          Publisher   Munhacdongne          Genre   Fiction</p>

Top 10 best sellers for the 3rd week of January

<p>5</p>		<p><b><u>US Stocks Investment Bible</u></b></p> <p>Author   Choi Cheol          Publisher   Golden Owl          Genre   Business</p>
<p>7</p>		<p><b><u>The Vegetarian</u></b></p> <p>Author   Han Kang          Publisher   Changbi Publishers          Genre   Fiction</p>
<p>7</p>		<p><b><u>One Piece 110</u></b></p> <p>Author   EIICHIRO ODA          Publisher   Daewon C.I.          Genre   Humanities</p>
<p>9</p>		<p><b><u>Hackers TOEIC Vocabulary: TOEIC VOCA</u></b></p> <p>Author   David Cho          Publisher   Hackers Education Group          Genre   Foreign Language</p>

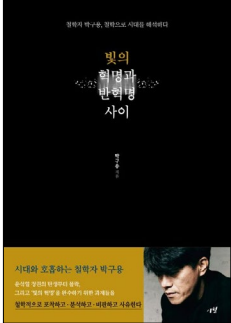
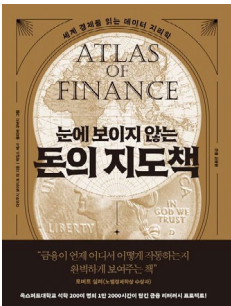
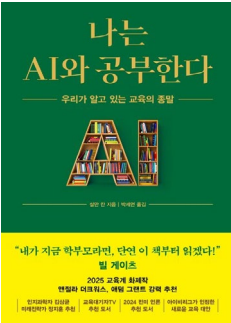
Top 10 best sellers for the 3rd week of January

10		<p><b><i>Adult Happiness is Quiet</i></b></p> <p>Author   Taesoo          Publisher   Page 2 Books          Genre   Poetry / Non-fiction</p>
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Top 5 politics/society books for the 3rd week of January

1		<p><b><i>The Lie That You are Working for Your Country</i></b></p> <p>Author   Noh Han-Dong          Publisher   Sideways Publishing</p>
2		<p><b><i>Nexus</i></b></p> <p>Author   Yuval Noah Harari          Publisher   Gimm-Young Publishers</p>
3		<p><b><i>Constitution Transcribing Note</i></b></p> <p>Author   The Republic of Korea          Publisher   The Human</p>

Top 5 politics/society books for the 3rd week of January

<p>4</p>		<p><b><i><u>Between Light Revolution and Counter-Revolution</u></i></b></p> <p>Author   Park Gu-Yong          Publisher   Poemoon</p>
<p>5</p>		<p><b><i><u>Atlas of Finance</u></i></b></p> <p>Author   Dariusz Wojcik          Publisher   Willbooks</p>
<p>5</p>		<p><b><i><u>Brave New Words: How AI Will Revolutionize Education</u></i></b></p> <p>Author   Salman Khan          Publisher   RH Korea</p>

## #K-BOOK

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## #History

**KPIPA Introduces K-Books for Global Publishing Markets through K-Book Platform**

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### *Wind Blowing on Mudeungeewat*

#### 1. Publication Details

Title | Wind Blowing on Mudeungeewat

Author | Kim younghwa

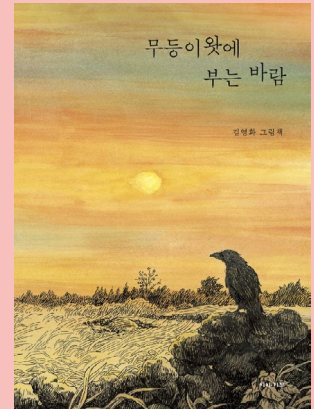
Publisher | IYAGIKOT PUBLISHING

Publication Date | 2022-08-08

ISBN | 9791192102115

No. of pages | 80

Dimensions | 148 \* 209



#### 2. Book Intro

'Jeju 4·3', what should we do to avoid repeating the sad history of innocent people dying? Memories and records... The stories of 'A Gift from a Lost Village' and 'The Wind Blowing on Mudeungeewat' are told so that people here and now can remember the people there and then.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=8027](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=8027)

## Kind Korean History

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Kind Korean History  
Subtitle | The History Study From My Point of View  
Author | Shim Yonghwan  
Publisher | SAKYEJUL PUBLISHING LTD.  
Publication Date | 2022-05-27  
ISBN | 9791160949377  
No. of pages | 272  
Dimensions | 152 \* 221



### 2. Book Intro

Whenever we learn our history or the history of other regions, whenever we read so many characters and cases throughout quite a long period of time, we cannot help being stuck by all these thick books of history. ‘How can I memorize all these things...?’ Likewise, history became quite an annoying subject for students with less importance than major subjects like Korean, English, and Math. Sometimes, we tend to regret not studying our history when we hear the saying, “There is no future for the people who have forgotten history.” However, what if we can easily understand history without memorizing chronological charts?

History is a quite useful tool to live today. However, we just forget that while focusing on other subjects for exams. The writer, Shim Yong Hwan, who was seen in various media such as broadcasting, publishing business, lectures, and YouTube to resolve current affairs with historical imagination, became a Korean history teacher for teenagers. In his new book titled, ‘Kind History’, he suggests changing the way to study history in an active and experimental way. Not being stuck by cliché and typical characters and cases, he leads us to start history study from data research to interpretation from our point of view and makes us realize a special sense of forgotten history. Of course, we do not have to be sharp and nervous. This is a kind of history class where we can slowly begin our study. Let’s ease ourselves and follow a kind teacher, Shim.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=7874](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=7874)

## *Joseon People Confess Their Lives*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Joseon People Confess Their Lives

Author | Woobong Chung

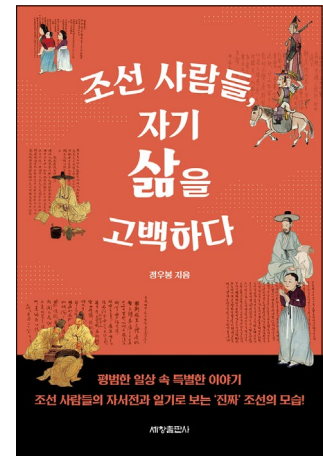
Publisher | Sechang Publishing Co.

Publication Date | 2021-08-30

ISBN | 9791166840487

No. of pages | 332

Dimensions | 142 \* 215



### 2. Book Intro

Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube... In contemporary times, we chronicle our daily lives through various platforms. But did such a culture of writing suddenly arise in the 21st century? Even in the Joseon Dynasty era, there were diaries where people jotted down their daily events, and autobiographies in which people looked back on their lives. The lives and feelings of the Joseon people contained therein are not very different from the ones we record in our journals today. This book consists of stories of ordinary Joseon people who have not been known before. What would the real Joseon look like in the writings of the Joseon people themselves?

This book consists of four chapters. The first chapter examines the records left by those who survived wars and turmoil such as the Qing invasion, the Musin rebellion, and the French campaign against Joseon. In particular, Byeongja Diary, the first diary written in Hangeul, has great historical significance that provides a glimpse into the life of an independent woman who managed to survive while evacuating from place to place at the time of the Qing invasion of Joseon. In the second chapter, through the diaries and letters of those who were exiled, you can witness the harsh lives of the exiled and the injustices they felt. The sad record of a wife of a royal family who was banished with her two young sons because of a conspiracy at the palace was written from the heart of a caring mother and still draws great sympathy from its readers today. The third chapter shows the poor and miserable lives of brothers who were born to a noble family as sons of a concubine, as well as an unfortunate story of a man who got on a boat to take a government official exam only to meet a storm and drift to Japan and China but finally made his way home. In the fourth chapter, you will read the diary of a husband who lost his wife to an illness and wrote in tears every day as he missed his wife. In addition, you can see a love story told by an official who had relationships with several women while supplying pottery to the palace. When you look at the records of lovers' quarrels from this period, you will sense that the lives of people in the Joseon era and people in modern times are not so different.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=6705](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=6705)

## *I'm Chumseongdae, a calendar made of stone*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | I'm Chumseongdae, a calendar made of stone

Subtitle | The story of the Silla Dynasty told by Cheomseongdae

Author | Han Young-Mi; Yi Yong-Kyu

Publisher | GAEAMNAMU

Publication Date | 2020-04-27

ISBN | 9788968305764

No. of pages | 72

Dimensions | 210 \* 260



### 2. Book Intro

There are lots of amazing secrets of Cheomseongdae. The observatory is built with 362 bricks, which is the average number of days in a lunar year. It has the same number of layers as the number of months in a lunar calendar. What do these characteristics mean, and why did the people of Silla choose to build this observatory? This book tells stories of why Queen Seondeok decided to construct Cheomseongdae and describes what events happened around the observatory in Gyeongju with delightful illustrations. By providing an engaging account of the history of this period from the time of Silla's founding, readers can learn more about this period of Korean history easier and get a better appreciation of Korea's cultural heritage. This entertaining, informative book will broaden your insights and knowledge regarding the history of the Silla period.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=5729](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=5729)

## *Korean Palaces*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Korean Palaces

Subtitle | Always Ben Here

Author | Park soo hyun; Jo eunji

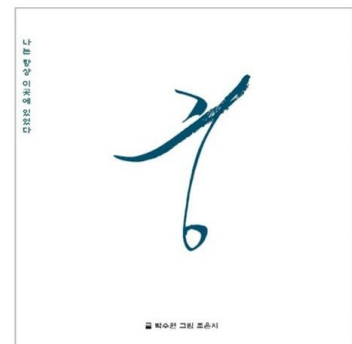
Publisher | BARAMGIL

Publication Date | 2019-03-22

ISBN | 9791196078638

No. of pages | 123

Dimensions | 200 \* 200



## 2. Book Intro

Palaces are a space which were protected by people over over 500 years in the Joseon era. There are five palaces in Seoul: Gyeongbokgung Palace, Changdeokgung Palace, Changgyeonggung Palace, Deoksugung Palace and Gyeongheegung Palace. Korean Palaces is a story with a different perspective, featuring the people and buildings of the Joseon Dynasty rather than focusing on the architectural characteristics of the palaces.

Korean Palaces is an easy travel book introducing the five palaces in Seoul. As the subtitle, “always been here”, says, these palaces have lived in this world for more than 600 years and remember the time they spent with Korean ancestors. Over the course of time, the palaces were burned, disappeared, and were restored, and in that sense, palaces are a history of Joseon. Understanding Joseon through these palaces will help people understand the future of Korea. The stories about buildings in this book feature quotes from the *Annals of the Joseon Dynasty*. In the case of Gyeongbokgung Palace, it was burned down during the Japanese Invasion of Korea in 1592 and was left as a ruin for 273 years until King Gojong rebuilt it. Changedeokgung Palace and Gyeongheegung Palace undertook the role of main palace until it was rebuilt and later, when the Korean Empire was declared, Gyeongungung Palace (Deoksugung Palace) acted as the main palace. Through stories of what happened, who was born, who died and what kind of political order was in place, readers will be able to understand the 519 years of the Joseon Dynasty. The palaces are shown in water paintings rather than photographs, generating the sensation of reading a picture book, and “Giwa” (tile) and “Dancheong” (multi-colored painting on wood) are colored with a modern interpretation rather than their original colors. This book helps the reader to understand the history of Joseon and its palaces, perhaps making them feel a little closer to the old buildings.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=1337](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=1337)

## *A Cultural History of the Streets of Myeongdong*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | A Cultural History of the Streets of Myeongdong  
Author | Yamamoto Joho  
Publisher | The Academy of Korean Studies Press  
Publication Date | 2019-02-25  
ISBN | 9791158664572  
No. of pages | 200  
Dimensions | 135 \* 210



## 2. Book Intro

Myeongdong is the most visited place in Seoul by tourists, and to experience Myeongdong is to experience the vibrant dynamism of Korean culture itself. But Myeongdong is also one of the few spaces in Seoul where Japanese and Chinese are spoken regularly, and for Koreans it is a place to experience what is almost a foreign country. It is, in other words, a global space where Korean culture meets foreign cultures. But Myeongdong is not merely a trendy neighborhood to Koreans. It is where the legendary Myeongdong Cathedral is, where the streets overflow with tourists, a place that is “past its glory days.” This book interrogates from a cultural restoration perspective how Myeongdong should be remembered, and repurposes its sense of being a global cultural space where diversity reigns. The first part focuses on the historical formation of Myeongdong’s sense of place, how it looked when it used to be a neighborhood of cinemas, and the theme of women and labor. In the second part, the multicultural diversity of Myeongdong is highlighted through discussion of the Chinese community and the various religions present there. In the third part, Myeongdong’s symbolism in the eyes of foreigners is examined through Chinese and Japanese guidebooks about Seoul. The storied history of Myeongdong’s streets is surveyed and an image of Myeongdong of a global cultural space comes together.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=2461](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=2461)

## *The Civilization Story of Zigzag Kingdom*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | The Civilization Story of Zigzag Kingdom

Author | Seo Hyegeong; Kim Yonggil

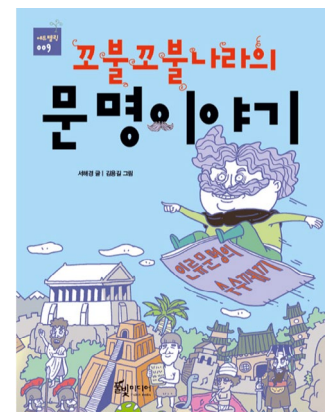
Publisher | Pulbit Media Publishing Co

Publication Date | 2018-11-26

ISBN | 9788967340957

No. of pages | 188

Dimensions | 153 \* 224



### 2. Book Intro

King Beard will go a trip through human history thanks to a pamphlet that “Lucy” gives him. Departing from Africa, the homeland of mankind, and passing through the Paleolithic and Neolithic periods, let’s explore the areas where the ancient Mesopotamian, Indus, Egyptian, and Hwang civilizations blossomed. You’ll also arrive in ancient Greece, the root of Western civilization, and the mysterious ancient Maya.

Since the first appearance of human ancestors in Africa, modern people have evolved and developed civilization. It is an ongoing process. After reading this book, you will see that not all of our technology, things we use, etc., are made in a moment. So let's experience with King Beard how the ancient civilizations of mankind began and evolved.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=2065](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=2065)

## *Goguryeo, the Beginning of the Korean Wave*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Goguryeo, the Beginning of the Korean Wave

Author | Jeon hotae

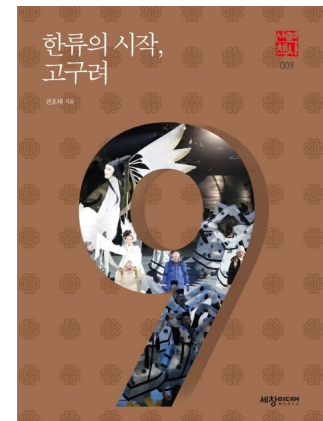
Publisher | Sechang Publishing Co.

Publication Date | 2018-09-20

ISBN | 9788984115400

No. of pages | 184

Dimensions | 128 \* 174



### 2. Book Intro

Thanks to the advanced ICT (Information and Communications Technology), the opening and closing ceremonies of the 2018 Pyeong-Chang Winter Olympics presented a variety of smart-shows including dance of the Goguryeo Dynasty, mural paintings of “Envoy” and the “Bird with Human Head,” and contemporary K-pop performances. Dating back 2000 years or so ago, Dongmaeng of Goguryeo was also a festival filled with a variety of events. Dongmaeng was composed of religious rituals, court trials, and entertainments. On one side, a group of people would be discussing important issues about the country; on the other side, people were bargaining at the market, presenting all sorts of goods and products. Right next to the market, there was a place for recreational activities. Dongmaeng was a place where the people of Goguryeo gathered together to look back on the life of the year and to plan ahead for the next year. Those entertainments, dances, songs, skills, and physical activities of the Goguryeo people were their power source and fountain of life. The dancing and singing during the Dongmaeng festival gave the people a sense of unity, and the entertainment of recreational activities in their daily lives helped them see tomorrow beyond today.

This book examines the characteristics of Goguryeo festivals, specifically, focusing on Dongmaeng, the representative national event. The Goguryeo festival is a mixture of rituals and playful elements. There were musical performances, plays, and physical competitions such as archery and wrestling. The most noticeable aspect of Dongmaeng is that it was a place where people from all different walks of life

gathered together and exchanged freely with one another. Many festival scenes remain represented in the mural arts of the Goguryeo dynasty period, which give us a glimpse into the reality of the festival.

Through this book, the reader will be able to learn about Goguryeo's Dongmaeng and the unique aspects of Goguryeo's culture through dance, music, and play. By exploring the festival culture of Goguryeo whose legacy is found in contemporary Korean pop culture, the reader will also find certain characteristics of Korean culture regardless of the times.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=4343](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=4343)

## *When Spring Comes to the DMZ*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | When Spring Comes to the DMZ  
Author | Lee Ukbae  
Publisher | SAKYEJUL PUBLISHING LTD.  
Publication Date | 2010-06-25  
ISBN | 9788958284918  
No. of pages | 48  
Dimensions | 250 \* 245



### 2. Book Intro

The demilitarized zone (DMZ) symbolizes the division of the country. It refers to an area between the barbed-wire fences built 2 km away from the 248 km long military demarcation line between the north and south. The line stretches from the mouth of Imjingang river in the west to the sea at Goseong, Gwangju Province in the east. This space is a forbidden land that nobody is allowed to enter.

Although DMZ means an “unarmed area,” over a million soldiers armed with various weapons stand guard at its borders, staring at each other across the divide. Paradoxically, many plants and animals that have disappeared or on the verge of extinction live in the DMZ and the surrounding areas because the entrance of people is restricted.

*When Spring Comes in DMZ* talks about nature in the DMZ and people. Otters, elks, wild boars and mountain goats abound in the DMZ and various types of birds nest and breed there. A school of salmon returns here to spawn and migratory birds fly freely overhead. But people can't live there. As the seasons change, only soldiers march by for training, to fix the rusty barbed-wire fences or just on guard duty. Tourists and displaced people can just go up the observatory to look out over the DMZ with binoculars.

Each season, a grandfather goes to the observatory to look out over the DMZ with his grandson. At the observatory, the grandfather looks vacantly at the northern land or blankly at the empty north sky. Repeating this for several decades, he does not want to go up the observatory any more. If spring comes again, he wants to open wide the tightly closed iron gates of the DMZ and walk in to lie down on the sunny grass and look at the blue sky because that's the hometown he misses so much. This wish isn't only his. It's the wish of all the old men and women who left their hometowns on the other side of those barbed-wire fences and the wish of everybody living in North and South Korea.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=1200](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=1200)

## *Gyeongbokgung Palace, the home of everyone*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Gyeongbokgung Palace, the home of everyone

Subtitle | The Story of the Joseon Dynasty Told by Gyeongbokgung Palace

Author | Jung Hae Won; Jung Kyeong A

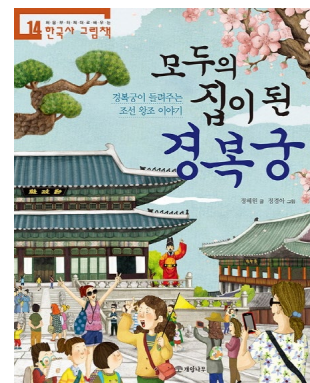
Publisher | GAEAMNAMU

Publication Date | 2018-12-17

ISBN | 978896830490388

No. of pages | 88

Dimensions | 210 \* 260



### 2. Book Intro

In this book, an anthropomorphized Gyeongbokgung Palace helps readers appreciate the story of the Joseon dynasty. The events and stories witnessed, seen, and experienced by the palace in all its many halls, are told to readers, especially how they relate to the kings of the Joseon era. The palace reminisces over how it was burned to the ground during the Imjin Japanese invasion, how Heungseon Daewongun rebuilt the palace, and how it was unable to celebrate Korea's independence even after it was liberated from the Japanese colonialism. These events are told in vivid terms by the palace. The candid, conversational dialogue will seem friendly and accessible for young readers who might find history a bit intimidating. In fact, the book makes history easier to understand. The book furthermore illustrates the value of Gyeongbokgung Palace and its place in history as a witness to the rise and fall of the Joseon dynasty. It shows us that the palace, a former home to kings and royalty, is now a home to all of us.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=5778](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=5778)

## INFO

# KPIPA Organizes “Korea Rights Centre” at the 2025 London Book Fair



This March,  
**The Korean Rights Centre will be organized at the London Book Fair, the biggest international book fair of its kind in the English-speaking world.**




The Centre, organized to support Korean books' advancement into English-speaking markets, will assist Korean publishing companies' with export consultations and promotional activities.

## **Korea Rights Centre at the 2025 London Book Fair**

**Objective** Boost export of Korean publishing content and support capacity building of Korean authors and publishers

**Schedule** March 11 - March 13, 2025 (3 days)

**Venue** Olympia London, UK



We ask for your continued interest in the **"Korea Rights Centre at the 2025 London Book Fair"** organized to support Korean publishing content's overseas export and promotion through copyright export consultations at the London Book Fair!

Inquiries: K-Book Export Support Team, KPIPA ([kbook3@kpiipa.or.kr](mailto:kbook3@kpiipa.or.kr))