A Study of the Pre-Modern Korean Novels Held at the University of California, Berkeley

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A STUDY OF THE PRE-MODERN KOREAN NOVELS
HELD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Yong-su Jeong

1. Introduction

The collection of the East Asian Library at the University of California, Berkeley, contains many pre-modern Korean documents. The largest portion of the pre-modern Korean works are in the collection known as the “Asami Library,” named for Asami Rintarō (1869-1943), who traveled throughout the Korean peninsula collecting manuscripts during the colonial period (1910-1945).

The first bibliographical notes on the Asami collection were published in The Asami Library: A Descriptive Catalogue (hereafter, Descriptive Catalogue) compiled by Chaoying Fang, which was initiated in 1955 and published in 1969 under the editorship of Elizabeth Huff. More recently (July 17 – August 18, 1995), scholars from the Korean Bibliographical Society (韓國書誌學會 Han’guk sŏjihak-hoe) investigated the collection and published Haeoe chŏnjŏk munhwaje chosa mongnok (海外典籍文化財調查目錄 Catalogue of the investigation of books as cultural properties overseas; hereafter KBS Catalogue) as part of the larger Project for Investigating Korean Books as Cultural Properties Overseas (韓國海外典籍文化財調查事業 Han’guk haewoe chŏnjŏk munhwaje chosa saŏp).

The KBS Catalogue divides the Asami Library holdings into two broad categories of “Korean Books” (4,013 fascicles in 839 books) and “Korean Rubbings” (155 sheets). The scholarly value of the collection is confirmed by the fact that it contains many rare books, among which are those works that are now only extant abroad. The collection is particularly useful for the qualitative value of historical volumes, literary works, and, perhaps surprisingly, rubbings. Moreover, the collection contains many varieties of metal-type printed works found only in Korea. Among the collection, 102 books have been microfilmed and are thus more widely available in academic circles. Moreover, the National Library of Korea has copied sixty-seven of the books and all of the rubbings. Several scholars specializing in Korean studies have included such material in their research. However, as most of the collection has not yet been microfilmed, it is not easily accessed. Moreover, the above mentioned Descriptive Catalogue, compiled beginning nearly fifty years ago, has a substantial number of mistakes concerning the content of the collection that have not been corrected.

It is now imperative that these errors be corrected in conjunction with creating a more comprehensive study of the Asami Library in general. The present paper will therefore re-examine the pre-modern Korean novels held at the University of California, Berkeley and of particular importance examine two newly found Korean novels kept at the East Asian Library. Additionally, the paper will investigate the bibliographical notes on the pre-modern Korean novels in possession of the Berkeley libraries.

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2. Categorization of the Pre-modern Literature and New Additions

2.1 Present Categorization

The pre-modern works under investigation in this paper are categorized in the Descriptive Catalogue and the KBS Catalogue as detailed in the following table.

**Comparison by Catalogue**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>TITLE (Collection Number)</th>
<th>Descriptive Catalogue</th>
<th>KBS Catalogue</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kuunmong (38.1/38.2)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sassi namjônggi (38.3/38.4/38.5/38.6)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Namjông-gi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ch‘angson kamūt-rok (38.7/38.7a)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Inyŏng-jŏn (38.8)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Hongbaekha-jŏn (38.9/38.21/38.22)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Kyesun-jŏn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ch‘ŏnye-rok ch‘o (38.10)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Chang Paek-jŏn (38.11)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Imgam-nok (38.12)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ch‘ŏnggu yadam (38.13/38.19/38.20)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Haesang ch‘ŏngun (38.14)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Haedong ijŏk (38.15)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Illyŏmhong (38.16)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Yonghamok (38.17)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>P‘asu-rok (38.18)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Chŏndung sinhwa kuhae (38.23)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Sesŏl sinŏ po (38.24)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Hanjung mallok (22.29a/22.29/22.30/22.31/22.32)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Úphyŏl-lok</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Kangdo mong-yurok (36.15)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Kyogŏ sweap‘yŏn (36.19)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Sŏsang-gi (42.1)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Ŭu yadam (36.10/36.11/36.22)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Ŭu ch‘orok</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Ch‘ŏn’gun pon’gi (26.39)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Hanjŏng-rok (36.21)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen above, there are some differences in the categorization of works in the Asami Library according to the different investigators. The basic cause of this is how the two catalogues (i.e., Descriptive Catalogue and KBS Catalogue) classify certain works into the categories of sosŏl (小説 novel), p’ilgi (筆記 random notes, literary musings) and p‘aesŏl (稗說 folk tales, short narratives).  

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3 The KBS Catalogue introduces thirty-five novels (twenty-one different titles) in either Korean script or Chinese characters, forty-two p’ilgi and p‘aesŏl (thirty-eight separate titles) as historical documents, and thirty-six literary collections (of this, twenty-one sup’il [隨筆 essays] and p‘aesŏl with a total of twenty titles, one chapch’an [雜纂...
The works under purview in this investigation can be examined as outlined below.

2.1.1 P’ilgi and P’aesŏl: Haesang ch’ŏngun (海上清云 Clear sayings from above the seas), P’asu-rok (破睡錄 Notes written to chase away sleepiness), Kyogŏ swae’p’yŏn (鄰居瑣編 Trifling notes from a country dwelling), Hanjŏng-nok (閒精錄 Record of Hanjŏng), Hanjung mallok (閑中謬錄 Record of leisure)

The first text above, Haesang ch’ŏngun (海上清云), is regarded as a novel in both the Descriptive Catalogue and the KBS Catalogue, but it is actually best classified as a p’ilgi. The bibliographical works describe it as


Haesang ch’ŏngun. N.d. 1 vol. Manuscript.
A fascicle containing three collections of notes and short stories, namely, Haesang ch’ŏngun on twenty leaves, Il Tong imun (日東異聞) on twenty leaves, and Nansŏng swaerok (蘭省瑣錄) on thirty-two leaves. The last-named contains stories chiefly from Chinese sources. The author does not explicitly give his name, but at one place he mentions that a granddaughter of Cho To-bin (b. 1665. mungwa of 1702) was his classificatory aunt (really something like a third cousin once removed). Hence the author was of the Cho family in the chin (or hyŏn) generation. Cho Chonghyŏn (b. 1731. mungwa of 1768) is one of the possibilities.

This work was catalogued under the title Haesang ch’ŏng-un, but actually must be classified as three separate manuscripts: Haesang ch’ŏng-un, Il Tong imun, and Nansŏng swaerok. Being an anonymous manuscript, the exact date of composition is not known, but considering that Kim Cho-sun (1765-1831) and Yi Sang-hwang (1763-1841) are referred to as “my friends” in the text, then if (as Asami judged) its author was Cho Chong-hyŏn it might have been compiled around the onset of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, since both Kim and Yi were thirty years junior to Cho, it is unlikely they would have been his friends. Thus, future research must determine whether a single individual wrote these three works or the works of three authors were combined into one volume. Such research will require detailed investigation of the stylistic characteristics and contents of the three works.

There are sixty-six commentaries on poetry (詩話 sīhwā) contained in Haesang ch’ŏng-un, including those written before what is thought to have been the author’s lifetime. Yet others, such as those concerning Hong Tae-yong, An Sŏk-kyŏng, Sin Kwang-su, Sin Kwang-ha, Mok Man-jung, and Yi Sang-hwang are thought to have been the author’s contemporaries, if in fact the author is the aforementioned Cho Chong-hyŏn. Il Tong imun consists of forty stories and features accounts and anecdotes concerning various oddities encountered by the author in every region of the peninsula. Nansŏng swaerok is comprised of seventy-three stories, which mostly record anecdotes of Chinese emperors and famous personages, lifestyles, manners, and seasonal customs of the new year, and paintings accompanied by poems.

literary miscellany], and seventeen books with a total of fifteen titles). On the other hand, the Descriptive Catalogue describes seventeen works of fiction, twenty-three works under the classification of ‘miscellaneous notes,’ one under the heading of ‘songs and drama,’ and one under the heading of ‘Confucianism.’

4 Hereafter, the entry in the KBS Catalogue will be presented first and followed by the entry in the Descriptive Catalogue.
Next, P’asu-rok (破睡錄) and Haedong tjök (海東異蹟 Wonders of the eastern country [i.e., Korea]) are classified as novels in the Descriptive Catalogue, while they are considered as p’ilgi in the KBS Catalogue. First, let us examine the descriptions of P’asu-rok in the two catalogues.

38.18-P’asu-rok. Attributed to Cho Un-p’yo. 1 vol. Manuscript. 11 lines, the number of characters per line is not regular.

P’asu-rok, by Cho Un-p’yo? N.d. 1 vol. Manuscript. *Notes Written to Chase Away Sleepiness*. This fascicle contains anecdotes about the author’s family and acquaintances and ends with a history of the political parties of the Yi dynasty. The author describes himself as a cousin of Cho Un-ik (b. 1765, mungwa of 1801) and a son of Cho Hong-jin (b. 1743, mungwa of 1783). Hence the author was probably Cho Un-p’yo.

This work should be categorized as a p’ilgi as it mentions the history of the author’s family, some episodes concerning his acquaintances, and his views on party strife. Both catalogues are in agreement with the possibility that Cho Un-p’yo may be the author of this work.

Conversely, Kyogŏ swaepyŏn (鄰居瑣編), Hanjong-nok (閒精錄), and Hanjung mallok (閑中謬錄) are classified as novels in the KBS Catalogue but not in the Descriptive Catalogue. The notes for Kyogŏ swaepyŏn and Hanjong-nok are

36.19 Kyogŏ swaepyŏn, Im Sangwŏn (1638-1697). 3 kwŏn, 3 books. Manuscript (19th cent.). 10 lines of 24 characters.


*Kyogŏ swaepyŏn* is said to record “the strange and queer episodes of our country and China.” However, the first fascicle contains Ch’ŏngmyŏng chunjŏl (清名峻節 Record of probity and noble fidelity), written by Cho Sik, and thus should be considered a work in the genre of p’ilgi.5 *Hanjung-nok* is surely in the p’ilgi genre since it mainly consists of Chinese stories about such items as the lives of literati in retirement.

Hanjung mallok (閑中謬錄) has five different versions and the bibliographical contents are as follows:


22.29a-Úphyŏllok (泣血錄 Record of bitter weeping). Hyegyŏng-gung Hongssi. 1 kwŏn 1 vol. Korean manuscript. (19th cent.). 10 lines, number of characters per line not regular.

22.30-Hanjung mallok. Hyegyŏng-gung Hongssi. 6 kwŏn 6 vols. Manuscript. (Hanmun hyŏnt’o, 19th cent.). 10 lines, 18 characters per line.

5 To classify this work as a novel is not groundless; however, the preface states that this work contains folk narratives.
22.31-Hanjung mallok. Hyegyŏng-gung Hongssi. 1 vol. Korean manuscript. (19th cent.).

22.32-Hanjung mallok. Hyegyŏng-gung Hongssi. 1 kwŏn 1 vol. Manuscript (Mixed script, i.e., han'gul and Chinese characters, 19th cent.). 10 lines, 16 characters per line.

Various versions of Hanjung-mallok have been preserved as there seems to have been concerted effort to pass the work down to later generations. This is reflected in the title of pojang (寶藏), meaning, “treasure.” The work is an autobiographical book of essays written by Lady Hong (1735-1815) of Hyegyŏng-gung Palace, the mother of King Chǒngjo (r. 1776-1800) and the wife of Crown Prince Changhŏn (1735-1762). Lady Hong looks back upon the tragic death of her husband and her own adverse fortunes. The work was written in four stages: The first book was written at the time of Lady Hong’s sixtieth birthday (1795) while the other three books were written from the first year to the fifth year of the reign of King Sunjo (1800-1834).

The first volume is a series of recollections from Hong’s early childhood, when she was selected as princess at the age of nine, and her fifty years in the royal court with special mention of her natal home. The second volume chronicles the reasons for her exclusion from her mother’s maiden home, discloses the despotism of Hong Kuk-yŏng, who destroyed her father Hong In-han, and finally expresses her grief at the death of her younger brother Hong Nag-im (1741-1801) on a false charge, and anticipates the day when his honor will be restored. The third volume describes the regret of King Chǒngjo towards his mother’s maiden home and records the king’s filial piety in his later years. The fourth volume reveals the circumstances of Crown Prince Changhŏn’s tragic death, details the complicated circumstances of the conflict between King Yongjo (r. 1724-1776) and his son Crown Prince Changhŏn and the political intrigue that played a major role in the troubles, and finally absolves her maiden home of being involved in the tragedy. It is thought that Lady Hong wrote these accounts to convince King Sunjo, her grandson, of the falsity of the accusations against her natal home after her brother Hong Nag-im was executed in 1801.

2.1.2 Novels

When comparing the two catalogues, we can note differences in classification and also cite those works that should be added to the various categories of the collection. For example, the KBS Catalogue includes Chinese-character novels Kangdo mongyurok (江都夢遊錄 Dream record of Kangdo) and Ch’ŏn’gun pon’gi (天君本紀 Record of the heavenly prince) under the classification of novels, while the Descriptive Catalogue does not regard the works as such. On the other hand, the Descriptive Catalogue lists Haedong ijŏk (海東異蹟 Wonders of the eastern country [i.e., Korea]) as a novel whereas the KBS Catalogue does not. In addition, even though Xi xiang-ji (西廂記 Kor. Sŏsang-gr; Record of the western room), Shi shuo xin yŏ bu (世説新語補 Kor. Sesŏl sino-bo; Collected anecdotes of contemporary luminaries) and Jian deng shenhua (剪燈新話 Kor. Chŏndŏng sinhwa; Tales told by a brightened lamp) are Chinese works, they must be included in the category of novels as they are Korean editions. Bibliographical explanations of these works will be mentioned below.

2.2 Additional Works

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6 Hong Nag-im was arrested in the Catholic Persecution of 1801 (Sinyu pakhae). He was exiled to Cheju Island where he was subsequently forced to commit suicide by drinking poison.
There are three additional works that the present writer has uncovered but not yet mentioned: Sŏnyu mundap (船遊問答 Questions and answers while boating [subtitle: Hwangrung myononggi (皇陵墓夢記 Dream record of the imperial sepulcher]), Insanggyuk puja samch‘wi-gi (任相國夫子三娶記 The Record of prime minister Im, father and son, taking three wives), and Yi Hyŏn-gyŏng-jŏn (李賢卿傳 The tale of Yi Hyŏn-gyŏng). Sŏnyu mundap is bound together with the aforementioned Kangdo mongyurok but since it is a separate work, it should be considered as an individual entry in the catalogue. The other two works above are held in the East Asian Library of Berkeley.7

Though mentioned in the Descriptive Catalogue and the KBS Catalogue, these novels are introduced as either p’ilgi or p’aesŏl, which seems a misclassification. Further, the bibliographical explanations differ in both the classification of the works and in individually explaining their bibliographical features. This demonstrates an ongoing problem for the researcher of classical Korean literature, that being how to treat genres such as p’ilgi and p’aesŏl. For example, it is difficult to regard works such Ch’ŏnggu yadam (青邱野談 Unofficial histories of the green hills [Korea]) or Ōyu yadam (於子野談 Unofficial histories by Ōyu) as novels in that they are documentary literature focusing on actual records. This study, however, is focused on investigating the classification of pre-modern Korean literary works held at the University of California at Berkeley, and thus further discussion on the use of classifications such as p’ilgi and p’aesŏl will be need to be addressed in the future.

3. Examination of the Bibliographical Descriptions of the Novels

1) Kuunmong (九雲夢 A dream of nine clouds)
   The bibliographical notes concerning Kuunmong are as follows:

   38.2-Kuunmong. Attributed to Kim Man-jung. 3 kwŏn, 3 vols. Manuscript. Title on cover, Hwanhwa-rok.

Kuunmong. 6 kwŏn, attributed to Kim Man-jung (1637-1692). 1803. 3 vols. Woodblock. A novel attributed to Kim Man-jung and revised by Kim Ch’un-t’aek (1607-1717). In readable Chinese, the story has a typical Chinese theme of the man of letters who enters officialdom by passing the examinations, rises to a high position in the government, and during his career acquires a harem. The setting is in T’ang dynasty China and the hero, Yang So-yu, finally marries two princesses who generously permit him to keep all his old loves.

The novel was translated by James S. Gale under the title Cloud Dream of the Nine (London, 1922).


The same novel as the preceding but in three decorated manuscript fascicles. Each of the six end-papers is an ink painting that does not seem to have any relation to the story. The seal, Kwangsan sega, indicates that this copy was made and kept by a member of the author’s family. The title on the cover is Hwanhwarok. Asami probably misread the

7 Consisting of eighty-six chapters (10 lines of 20 characters each), Im sanggyuk samch‘wi-gi (collection no. 5973.49.2461) is a novel transcribed in Chinese characters with the subtitle Im sanggyuk puja samch‘wi-gi. Yi Hyŏn-gyŏng-jŏn (collection no. 5973.49.0918) is a novel transcribed in Korean, consisting of 104 chapters (10 lines, mainly of 20-24 characters each). This work has a subtitle of “Imjanap wŏl-il kai” at its front.
character 
hyŏn
(Maema, p. 257).

As seen from the above, the two versions of Kuunmong—a woodblock print and a transcribed version—in the Asami Library show difference in the number of volumes. The woodblock version carries a phrase at its conclusion indicating it is a Kyehae edition (癸亥本), widely circulated in 1803. The manuscript version mentioned above is more valuable for research though its exact date of transcription is not known, in that its structure is the same as that of the woodblock edition, but also bears the title of Hwanhwa-rok (幻化錄), contains six subject poems (題畫詩 chehwa-si) and the collector's stamp of Kwangsan sega (光山世家). The first poem, for example, explains an introductory part of Kuunmong as being a Buddhist narrative. Like this manuscript version, an alternative edition of Kuunmong was widely circulated because it was considered useful for broadening its interpretation. Also notable is the use of illustrations in the work. In addition to the versions mentioned above, the East Asian Library annex also holds another version of Kuunmong.

2) Sassi namjŏnggi (謝氏南征記 Record of Lady Sa’s trip to the south)

The bibliographical notes for Sassi namjŏnggi inform,

38.4-Sassi namjŏnggi. Attributed to Kim Man-jung. Translated by Kim Ch’un-t’aek. 2 kwŏn 2 vols. Manuscript. 12 lines of 24 characters. About 39,000 characters.
38.5-Sassi namjŏnggi. Attributed to Kim Man-jung. Translated by Kim Ch’un-t’aek. 2 kwŏn 2 vols. Manuscript. 12 lines of 24 characters. About 31,000 characters.
38.6-Sassi namjŏnggi. Attributed to Kim Man-jung. Translated by Kim Ch’un-t’aek. 2 kwŏn 2 vols. Manuscript. 12 lines of 24 characters. About 37,000 characters.

Sassi namjŏnggi. 2 kwŏn, attributed to Kim Ch’un-t’aek (1670-1717). N.d. 2 vols. Manuscript.

Four copies of a novel in Chinese. The setting is in sixteenth-century China, and the heroine, Sassi, suffers from the intrigues of her husband’s concubine. After spending some time as an outcast, she is finally reunited with her husband; meanwhile the concubine is proved unfaithful and is discarded. The story is obviously a covert description of the case of King Sukchong, who dethroned his queen, Min, the author’s aunt, in favor of one Changssi.

The novel has several versions. The first of the four manuscripts, in two fascicles, consists of some 42,000 characters. The second, in one fascicle and with the seals of one Yi Ch’ŏn-sŏk, is about 3,000 characters longer. The third is the shortest, with about 31,000 characters; the fourth has about 37,000 characters. The story, too, varies somewhat in each version.

It is known that Sassi namjŏnggi was written by Kim Man-jung in Chinese characters

8 The reference to Maema refers to, Maema Kyōsaku, Kosen sappu (Tokyo: Toyo Bunko, showa 19-32 [1944-1957]).
9 The manuscript edition consists of three books and three volumes, but does not differ in content from the woodblock print version of six books and three volumes. Rather, in the process of transcription it seems to have been bound into three books perhaps due to influence from the Kyehae edition. Thus, the manuscript must have been completed after 1803 when the woodblocks for the Kyehae edition were engraved.
and translated into Korean script by Kim Ch’un-t’aeck. As seen above, the four copies are identical in terms of characters and lines per page but differ significantly in overall length and also in structure of the narrative. The difference in overall length is a result of differing contents and a precise character count will reveal the varying features of the four works. The character count in all four versions is an estimate and the count seems incorrect in even the shortest version; thus, this is a shortcoming that should be rectified. These are described as the different editions in the Descriptive Catalogue and the KBS Catalogue but the differences in the character counts bring that into question.

3) Ch’angsŏn kamŭi-rok (信善感義錄 Record of good deeds resulting in prosperity)
The bibliographical notes for this work are

38.7 Ch’angsŏn kamŭi-rok. 3 kwŏn 3 vols. Attributed to Kim To-su (d. 1742). N.d. Manuscript (18c).

38.7a Ch’angsŏn kamŭi-rok. 3 kwŏn 1 vols. Attributed to Kim To-su. N.d. Manuscript (19c). 16 lines, number of the characters per line is not regular.

Ch’angsŏn kamŭi-rok 3 kwŏn, Attributed to Kim To-su (d. 1742). N.d. 3 vols. Manuscript. A novel in Chinese attributed to a grandson of Kim U-myŏng (1619-1675). The setting of the story is in sixteenth-century China, but the political and social background seems to be that of seventeenth-century Korea. The theme is that good deeds bring just rewards. Perhaps the author was telling a story that had something to do with his own family. This is an old manuscript. Asami’s note in red ink states that compared to the other manuscript copies, the Chinese of this one is in a better style. The author’s ability in written Chinese is indeed better than average, and the story seems to be more reasonable and realistic than those of most older Korean novels. The handwriting also seems to be superior to that of most copyists of such works.

There is a second manuscript copy in the Asami collection, in one fascicle, which differs only in a few minor details.

The plot and depictions in this work are elaborate and thus it ranks along with the aforementioned Sassi namjŏnggi as a model of literary excellence for Chosŏn period novels. The author is thought to be either Kim To-su who lived during the reign of King Yŏngjo (1724-1776), or either Cho Sŏng-gi or Chŏng Chun-jong who both lived during the reign of King Sukchong (1674-1720). Thus, authorship of this work has been debated in scholarly circles. However, this writer believes the author to be Cho Sŏng-gi (1638-1689, pen name Cholsuujae), and this is supported in the records of his activities during his lifetime. The work features a theme of rewarding good and punishing evil through the rise and fall of the Hwa family. The main problems of this large family in Ming China are the consequence of polygamy. For example, an episode describes a plot by the first wife and her eldest son to kill the son of a second wife out of their jealousy of him.

Kuunmong and Sassi namjŏnggi were presumably written in the same period as this work, so excellent transcription skills cannot be used as a yardstick to distinguish between an authentic piece and a copied edition.

4) Unyŏng-jŏn (雲英傳 The tale of Unyŏng)
The bibliographical notes for Unyŏng-jŏn are

Unyŏnggiŏn. N.d. 1 vol. Manuscript
A fascicle containing two anonymous stories, the longer one. Unyŏnggiŏn, about a scholar in whose dream a woman of a princely household relates her love affairs, and the second, Nogǔin-jŏn (緑衣人傳 Tale of the person dressed in green), a short story about a ghost woman in green. The book has the collector’s seals of Yi Kyo-jin, who was one time magistrate of Imch’ŏn.

Unyŏng-jŏn deals with the secluded lives of court ladies including the love affair between a court lady and a scholar. The backdrop for this work is Susŏng Palace, the private palace of Grand Prince Anp’yŏng (1418-1453), and thus the setting for the work is sometimes called a “dream record of Susŏng Palace.” The work might belong to the dream-record genre (夢遊錄 mong-yurok) insofar as its plot presents what happens in a dream, but it has often been considered the first work of fictional tragic love inasmuch as it focuses upon the disastrous love affair of a court lady and a scholar.

5) Illyŏmhong (一捻紅)
The bibliographical notes for Illyŏmhong relay

38.16 Illyŏmhong. N.d. 1 vol. Manuscript (the period from the late Kwangmu [i.e., 1905-1907] and Yunghŭl [i.e., 1907-1910] years). 12 lines with an irregular number of characters per line.

A novel in Chinese of sixteen chapters, written sometime between 1905 and 1910 and concerning a young Korean couple who, after studying abroad, returned to find that they were resented by old officials and would have been harmed if the Japanese minister had not come to their rescue.

This novel was written by Ilhak-sanin and serialized in the Taehan ilbo newspaper in 1906. It is acclaimed as the first hyŏnt’o-style novel (i.e., Chinese characters accompanied by grammatical cues in Korean script). The work reveals the social realities of the author’s time by bitterly criticizing corrupt officials, featuring the protagonist’s study abroad, and arguing for equal rights for the sexes.

6) Yonghamok (龍含玉 The dragon with the jade)
The bibliographical notes for this work are

38.17 Yonghamok. N.d. 1 vol. Manuscript (from the late Kwangmu era [i.e., 1907-1910]. 12 lines, number of the characters per line is uncertain.

Yonghamok. N.d. 1 vol. Manuscript.
An early twentieth-century novel of thirty chapters in Chinese. The plot concerns a sixteenth-century Chinese who was charmed by a prostitute and reunited with her after many episodes.

This novel was written by Kŭmhak-sanin (Pang Chun-gyŏng) and was serialized in the Taehan ilbo newspaper in 1906. Confucian morality themes run through the work and are seen in
concepts such as female chastity, male loyalty to country and king, rooting out injustice, and males aiding weak females. This work seems mostly likely to have been adapted from well known seventeenth-century romance novels such as Wang Kyŏng-ryong-jŏn (王慶龍傳 The tale of Wang Kyŏng-ryong) and Okdanch'un-jŏn (玉丹春傳 The tale of Okdanch'un) and reflects the conditions of the late nineteenth century.

7) Ch’ŏnggu yadam (靑邱野談 Unofficial histories of the green hills [Korea])

The bibliographical notes are

38.13 Ch’ŏnggu yadam. N.d. 1 vol. Manuscript. 17 lines of 26 characters.
38.19 Ch’ŏnggu yadam. N.d. 10 kwŏn. 10 vol. Manuscript (19c). 10 lines of 20 characters.
38.20 Ch’ŏnggu yadam. N.d. 1 vol. Manuscript (19c). 14 lines of 24 characters.

Ch’ŏnggu yadam. N.d. 1 vol. Manuscript.
A collection of short stories.

Ch’ŏnggu yadam. 10 kwŏn. N.d. 10 vols. Manuscript.
Country tales of Korea, a collection of short stories. There are various collections known by the same title. This copy is in 10 kwŏn and contains well-edited versions of over 200 short stories written in readable Chinese literary style, compiled early in the nineteenth century. According to Yi Pyŏng-gi, who selected five stories from the Chungang Tosŏgwan copy of Ch’ŏnggu yadam in his Yorowŏn yahwagi, that copy was in twenty fascicles (one lacking); and the fascicle number he furnishes for each of the five stories indicates that the sequence of the stories in that copy is entirely different from that in the Asami copy. This can only mean that the two copies were assembled at different times and probably not from the same sources. Another manuscript copy of the same title in one fascicle contains only seventeen stories. Asami made some notes in it.

There is a third manuscript collection of short stories by the same title in the Asami collection (38.13) that probably had nothing to do with the others, for most of the stories in it are short jokes and satires involving sex.

It is generally thought that Ch’ŏnggu yadam, a collection of “unofficial” historical tales, was edited sometime during the reign of King Sunjo (1800-1834), in late Chosŏn, between 1826 and 1835.10 Although there is another version with a preface to the work, the actual authorship is not presently verifiable.

8) Hongbaekhwa-jŏn (紅白花傳 Tale of the red and white flowers)

Hongbaekhwa-jŏn is described as

38.21/38.22 Hongbaekhwa-jŏn. N.d. 3 kwŏn. 3 vol. Korean Manuscript (18~19c). 9 lines of 14 characters. Copy: Kyemyo year, first month.
38.9 Kyesun-jŏn (The tale of Kye and Sun). N.d. 1 vol. Chinese Manuscript (18c). 12 lines with an irregular number of characters per line.

An eighteenth-century novel of ten chapters, in Chinese. The plot is similar to that of other works of the period – the story of an official who in the course of his career finally obtains high positions at court and the women in his life. Our copy was written in a pyŏngsin year, probably 1716 or 1776. The Asami collection also has a Korean translation of this novel in han’gûl in three fascicles, dated in a kyemyo year, perhaps 1783 or 1843.

The story of two girls and a boy who later married both of them. This copy was probably made in the eighteenth century. The same story is also circulated under the title Hongbaekhwa-jŏn.

This work describes the love between various characters with special reference to the male protagonist Kye Il-ji and female heroines Sun Chik-so and Sŏl So-chŏ. It is also referred to as Nak-yang samjŏlok (洛陽三節錄). The historical backdrop extends from the founding to the third emperor of the Ming Dynasty (i.e., 1368-1424), and it is faulted by some Korean scholars as being too “Chinese” in its description of settings and official positions. However, it is highly regarded for emphasizing the activities of female characters and for relying more upon logical necessity than coincidence. The work seems to have been composed in the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries, but arriving at a more concrete date is somewhat difficult at this time.

9) Chang Paek-jŏn (張白傳 The tale of Chang Paek)

The bibliographical notes for this work are

38.11 Chang Paek-jŏn. N.d. 1 vol. Woodblock. (19e). 15 lines of 28 characters. Copy: Muja year (1888), seventh month, sixth day; of the house of Yi Nam-yang.

Chang Paek-jŏn. N.d. 1 vol. Woodblock.
A novel in han’gûl about the son of a high official in the Yuan dynasty who, after many years’ separation from his younger sister, is finally reunited with her on a battlefield. Our copy is from a woodblock edition and has been used so much that the faded characters on the first leaf had to be traced over in heavy ink. It was evidently owned by a clerk or a butler who cut open a double leaf and kept accounts on it under dates in 1907.

This work is a heroic novel set in ancient China. Many scholars agree that the work has the general structure of wartime heroic novel in describing the life of the protagonist. The somewhat peculiar narrative tells of a hero named Chang Paek who forces the Yuan emperor to surrender and hand his Imperial seal to a new emperor named Taizu, the actual founder of the Ming dynasty. This episode is not found in any other wartime novel. In this respect, this work can be considered to express the Confucian notion concerning the Mandate of Heaven, that is, that revolution and usurpation are the result of the will of heaven and not human volition. An additional feature of the plot concerns the two main characters (a brother and sister), whose separation and reunion differs from the more common theme of a hero being estranged from his lover and encountering various obstacles to their marriage.

10) Kangdo mongyu-rok (江都夢遊錄 Dream record of Kangdo)
The bibliographies describe Kangdo mong-yurok as

Kangdo mongyu-rok. N.d. 1 kwŏn. 1 vol. Manuscript.
A fascicle containing more short stories than serious notes. The first story, from which the fascicle takes its title, is about a Buddhist monk's dream of a visit to Kangwha, where he listens to the ghosts of the women and girls who lost their lives in 1636 during the Manchu invasion.

This work belongs to the dream-record genre (夢遊録 mong-yurok) of novels and features the horrific scenes of the Manchu invasion of 1636 narrated through a dream. The bibliographical notes of the KBS Catalogue contain some errors. The number of lines per page is correct at 12, but the number of characters per line varies between 20 and 27. In addition, there is no alternative name for this work. Another work, Sŏnyu mundap (船遊問答) is added to Kangdo mongyu-rok as an appendix. It is clear that P'isaengmyŏng mong-rok (皮生冥夢録) is simply bound together with this work and is not an alternative title for Kangdo mongyu-rok.

11) Ŭu yadam (於于野談 Unofficial histories by Ŭu)

Űu yadam is described as

36.11 Ŭu yadam. Yu Mong-in. 3 kwŏn. 3 vol. Manuscript. 10 lines of 17 characters.
36.22 Ŭu yadam. 1 vol. Manuscript (17–18 cent.). 12 lines of 24 characters.

Miscellaneous notes and anecdotes by Yu Mong-in mungwa of 1589. Yu was well known as a writer in the Chinese literary style and had been sent to China on a mission in 1609. A few years later he retired from government service because of his objections to the policies of King Kwanghae-gun. In 1623, after that king was dethroned, Yu still preferred retirement to serving the new king, for which he was accused of treason and executed. The case was always regarded as a miscarriage of justice, yet it was not until 1794 that his name was posthumously cleared of all charges and whatever could be traced of the family properties, including the descendants of some slaves, was restored to his family.

This manuscript copy of Yu’s notes and anecdotes in one fascicle (36.10) seems to have been made in the seventeenth century. It does not contain any of the anonymous anecdotes inserted in later manuscript copies. One such corrupt copy is in 3 kwŏn with the same title (36.11) and includes several anecdotes containing post-1623 dates, obviously written by someone else. Another version, in one fascicle, is here numbered 36.22.

Ôu yadam is a work in the genre of unofficial histories compiled by Yu Mong-in. Its exact date of publication is unknown. The contents of the work reveal a variety of episodes related to individuals and events of the times. The Descriptive Catalogue has no separate entry for 36.22.

12) Im-Kap-rok (任甲録 Record of the years Im and Kap)
The bibliographical notes for this work are

38.12 Im-Kap-rok. N.d. 1 vol. Manuscript (19c). 11 lines, number of characters per line is
not regular.

Two legends, one titled *Imjin-nok*, about the Japanese invasion from 1592-1598, and the other, *Kapchin-nok*, about Yujöng and his mission to Japan in 1604. The legends were probably written by someone not quite familiar with the Chinese script, or may even have first been written in *han'gul*, for it is otherwise hard to explain such mistakes as Sungjong imjin (崇禎 壬辰) for Mallyŏk imjin (萬歷 壬辰) and Samyŏngdang (四明堂) for Samyŏngdang (四溟堂).

This work is titled *Im-Kap-rok*, and carries two subtitles of *Imjin-rok* (壬辰錄 Record of the year Imjin) and *Kapchin-rok* (甲辰錄 Record of the year Kapchin). The plot of the former describes a hero who won victory during the Japanese invasion of Chosón in 1592. From a historic standpoint, the invasions resulted in a great level of humiliation and loss of national pride for the Koreans, but this novel attempts to recover national esteem by rewriting the historically distasteful incident into a victorious event.

*Imjin-rok* opens with a story related to Kwanun-jang who appears in a dream of King Sŏnjo (r. 1567-1608) and helps Chosón by advising the king to kill Japanese monks then in the country. The narrative minutely retells the roles of meritorious subjects during the invasions and how the Ming general Li Rusong, crazed with ambition and greed, was driven out the country. In particular, this section mostly contains tales concerning Kim Tŏk-ryŏng.

*Kapchin-rok* presents tales of the monk Sŏsan taesa (1520-1604) and the monk general Samyŏngdang (1544-1610) who played great roles in defeating the Japanese troops. Notable is that this work closes with a narrative retelling of a Chosón victory in battle with the Japanese. Samyŏngdang’s role in bringing the Japanese emperor to his knees is especially salient in this part.

The work has suffered a bit of revision in the process of transcription, judging from the fact that it does not retell the process of Li Rusong going to war and contains an episode about the concubine, a *kisaeng* named Hwawŏl from P’yŏngyang, of Kim Tŏk-ryŏng. However, some of the obvious errors alluded to in the *Descriptive Catalogue* should be considered as fictional inventions.

13) *Ch’ŏn’gun pon’gi* (天君本紀 Origin record of the heavenly prince)

The bibliographical notes are as follows:

*Ch’ŏn’gun pon’gi*. N.d. 1 vol. Manuscript.
This manuscript consists of thirty-six double leaves of the philosophical novel *Ch’ŏn’gun pon’gi* and thirty-eight double leaves of memorials copied from the collected works of Yi I (1536-1584). The novel is in the style of the biography of an emperor. In fact it is an exposition of the properties of the mind (*sim* 心) in the philosophy of Neo-Confucianism, although the character *sim* is not once mentioned. The author is not identified in our copy, but the book has been attributed to one Chŏng Ki-hwa of the Sunjo period (1800-1834).
(Maema, p. 1414).

Chŏn 'gun pon 'gi is a work that personifies moral nature. This work is not traditional in the sense that it does not fictionalize personify an object of nature or an animal. Rather the personification of moral nature is embodied in a human and retold in the form of an "origin" narrative, most commonly associated with the foundation of a dynasty. Most scholars agree that Chŏng Ki-hwa who flourished during the reign of King Sunjo (1800-1834) is the author of this work.

14) Chŏnye-rok ch’o (天倪錄抄 Excerpts from record from the edge of the heavens)

This work is described as

38.10 Chŏnye-rok ch’o. N.d. 1 vol. Manuscript (late Chosŏn). 16 lines of 22 characters. Alternative title, Haedong ijŏk (Strange traces from the land east of the sea [i.e., Korea]).

Chŏnye-rok ch’o. N.d. 1 vol. Manuscript
A collection of short stories. The title on the cover, Haedong ijŏk, seems to be a misnomer. The last story, titled “Yorowŏn yahwagi” (Tale of Yorowŏn), has been attributed to Pak Tu-se (b.1650, mungwa of 1682).

The title of this work and the subtitle refer to different work. If we examine the contents of this work and compare them with Chŏnye-rok (天倪錄 Record from the edge of the heavens), known to have been written by Im Pang, it is reasonable that this work be called Chŏnye-rok ch’o. The present work contains excerpts of various works and then offers a critique of these characteristics. Additionally, if we further examine the excerpts critiqued in Chŏnye-rok ch’o it is difficult to say that all the narratives of Chŏnye-rok, including “Yorowŏn yahwagi” (要路院夜話記) were examined in this work.

15) Haedong ijŏk (海東異蹟 Strange traces from the land east of the sea [i.e., Korea])

The notes for Haedong ijŏk state

38.15 Haedong ijŏk. 1 kwŏn, compiled by Hong Manjong (fl. 1637-1707). N.d. 1 vol. Manuscript.

This novel centers on the activities of an eccentric individual. The work was compiled in 1666 and has a postscript written by Song Si-yŏl (1607-1689) in 1670. However, this version has somewhat different contents when compared to another version in Korea. 11

16) Xi xiang-ji (西廂記 Kor. Sŏsang-gi; Record of the western room)

The bibliographical notes for Xi xiang-ji are

42.1 Xi xiang-ji (Kor. Sŏsang-gi). Written by Wang Shi-fu and annotated by Jin Sheng-tan. (Transcription during the reign of King Kojong [1864-1907]). 5 volumes.


11 Hong Manjŏng jŏnjip [Collected works of Hong Manjong], 2 vols. (Seoul: T‘aehaksa, 1980).
A Manuscript copy of the Chinese drama *Hsi-hsiang-chi*. The writing was done in an *ulmi* year, probably 1895.

This Chinese novel retells the love affair between the Confucianist Zhang and Cui Ying-ying, the daughter of the prime minister. Cui Ying-ying also appears in a Tang-era romance entitled *Ying-ying-chuan* (鴛鴦傳 Tale of Ying-ying). The original version has an aristocratic tone revealed in the narrative told from a male viewpoint, presenting a woman’s tragedy in which the heroine abandons her true love and marries another man. However, in the oral tradition that circulated after the Sung dynasty, the outcome transformed to one where Ying-ying winds up with her true love in spite of the conventional morality of the period; moreover, in the oral rendition Zhang also succeeds in life by recording the highest score on the state examination. In the late Ming dynasty, as publishing houses flourished, scores of different versions showed up. Since the version by Jin Sheng-tan appeared in the Qing dynasty, it is the version most widely read. Jin’s version deletes four sections in the latter part of the work and highlights the tragic parting of Zhang when he leaves for the capital in order to sit for the examination. The version in the Asami Library consists of five fascicles in two volumes, and belongs to the category of “non-original” editions. While the *Descriptive Catalogue* includes this work under the category of “Songs and Drama,” it has long been considered a novel.

17) *Shi shuo xin yo bu* (世說新語補 Kor. *Sesŏl sinŏ po*; Collected anecdotes of contemporary luminaries)

The bibliographies reveal


*Shi shuo xin yo bu* (Kor. *Sesŏl sinŏ po*). 20 kwŏn, by Liu I-ch’ing (403-444) and Ho Liang-chûn (fifteenth century). Late seventeenth century? 7 vols. Movable type.

Korean edition after the 1586 Chinese edition of *Shih shuo hsin yü pu* (*Shi shuo xin yo bu*), which included Liu I-ch’ing’s original text and Ho Liang-chûn’s supplements, and which was edited by Wang Shih-chên(1526-1590), in twenty *chüan* (kwŏn). This complete set of the late seventeenth- century moveable-type edition was printed with the same kind of type as the *Hyŏnjong sillok* (顯宗實錄), a typeface sometimes called the *sillokcha* (實錄字). (Asami inserted a note saying that he could not identify the font.)
The collector’s seals have all been excised except one on the last leaf of the sixth fascicle. That seal reads Toyun, which is a *ho* of Sŏ Mun-jung (1634-1709); if the seal is his, we have a definite clue to the time of printing.

This is a work which Wang shih-chên (Wang Shi-zhen) supplemented on the basis of *Shi shuo xin yo bu* written by Liu I-ch’ing (Liu Yi-qing), a representative writer from Sung during the time of the Chinese Southern and Northern dynasties (CE 420-588). The present work can be surmised to have been printed in 1708, the same year as the *Hyŏnjong sillok* (Veritable records of King Hyŏnjong). Also at that time other versions of this work were printed and are now in possession of Yonsei University (20 kwŏn in six books), and Korea University, National Library of Korea, and the Academy of Korean Studies (all sets are of twenty kwŏn in seven
books.
This work is made up of 20 kwŏn in seven books. The KBS Catalogue mistakenly states that it consists of 20 kwŏn in one book.

18) Jian deng shenhua (剪燈新話 Kor. Chŏndŭng sinhwa kuhae; Tales told by a brightened lamp)

The notes for Jian deng shenhua are


Korean edition of a collection of short stories by a Chinese author. Our copy seems to be from an edition of the middle of the eighteenth century.
These short stories became a prototype of fiction writing and remained so for a long time in Japan and Korea.

This work was revised by the early Chosŏn literary man Yun Ch’un-nyŏn and then annotated by another Korean, Su Ho-ja. based on the original work of Jian deng shenhua by Qu Yu. Other editions of this work contain two postscripts written by Koreans (Su Ho-ja and Yun Ch’un-nyŏn), not Chinese of the Ming dynasty.

19) Sŏnyu mundap (船遊問答 Questions and answers while boating)

In this work, Kyeyang, Kyungam, and Sŏnong demonstrate the priority of Confucian realism by catechizing and disputing the ideology of the “three religions” (i.e., Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism). It is notable that quite a few female historical characters play an important role in the scene of the Imperial sepulcher.

This work is interesting in that the dream-record genre (夢遊錄 mong-yurok) serves as a meeting space for historical personages to debate and reminiscence. This work broadens its literary sphere by extending the space of historical figures into a long distance trip as well as by arranging an actual “river” as another place for historical discourse. The work was presumably created before the late eighteenth century, judging from the points that dream sequence is altered by arranging a spatial extension through a long distance trip in a historical sense and that it reflects a special concern towards an Imperial sepulcher in the eighteenth century. Some recent scholarship has categorized this work as a novel featuring fictional social criticism based on the feminine discourse present in the narrative.

Sŏnyu mundap was bound as an appendix to Kangdo mongyurok (江都夢遊錄 Dream record of Kangdo) and carries the subtitle Hwangrung myononggi (皇陵墓夢記 Dream record of the imperial sepulcher). This is an anonymous transcription and the number of characters per line is not regular (12 lines of 19-23 characters).

The following two novels are held at the East Asian Library:
20) *Insangguk puja sameh* wi-gi (任相國夫子三姪記 The Record of prime minister Im, father and son, taking three wives)

The date and author of this manuscript in literary Chinese is unknown. The plot unfolds during the reign of the Emperor Taizu (1368-1398) of the Ming dynasty. The narrative line relates that Im Hong, of the Beiping region, studied exceptionally hard in addition to caring for his widowed mother Lady Wei, and in his teens won fame in the academic world. Finally, he came to hold political power by performing a meritorious deed in the war to found the Ming dynasty. After the death of his first wife, Lady Yo, he went to Chosŏn as an envoy, marrying his second wife Lady Chu, who ultimately bore him a son. However, he returned home without ever having seen his son and married his third wife Lady Sŏl in China before dying. Later, Chamyŏng, his son from his second marriage, journeyed to China in order to meet his father, little knowing that his father was already deceased, and in order married three women, Lady Wei, Lady Chŏng and Lady Kyŏng. He lived a happy life and recovered from an illness through the help of a sage. While being cured from his illness, he met his son, borne by Paekku in his dream. Since his son came to China looking for him, he was criticized by others and thus he returned home to Korea with his children. After that time, he retired to the mountains where he lived in retirement without aspiring to high honors. Finally, he founded the Im family in Korea. In his later years, he lived as a hermit with his three wives, heavenly fairies, on Mt. Mu.

This novel recounts how Prime Minister Im and his son each married three times. Though featuring characteristics of a heroic novel, it only briefly describes conflicts without featuring discourses on such matters as military expeditions and strategies, which generally appear in heroic novels. The narrative lines about the foundation of the Im family as the result of a Chinese man returning to his mother’s maiden home of Korea and the retirement of Im and his son reflect the mindset of Chosŏn that held Ming China in high esteem. The work consists of eighty-six chapters with 10 lines of 20 characters each.

21) *Yi Hyŏn-gyŏng-jŏn* (李賢卿傳 The tale of Yi Hyŏn-gyŏng)

Neither the author nor the date that this Korean script work was written is known. The basic narrative line centers on Yi Hyŏn-gyŏng, a daughter of the vice-minister Yi Yŏng-do of Ch’ŏngju who lived in Ming China. The heroine demonstrates outstanding talent in her early years and determining to succeed in life like a male, she grows up in men’s clothing. She is ultimately revealed as a woman, but instead she wins the admiration of the emperor and finally marries a school inspector who loves her. Despite being forcibly separated after a homicide resultant from a feud with her husband’s mother and his concubines, she and her husband are reunited at the end of the story and enjoy a happy life.

The work is generally appraised as a heroic novel with a female protagonist. However, some scholars believe the work should be considered as a romance narrative centering on home life, especially in light of the relationship between the female protagonist and her husband. There are two editions: *Yi Hyŏn-gyŏng-jŏn* and *Yi Sang-sŏ-jŏn* (李尚書傳 The tale of Yi Sang-sŏ). Judging from extant transcriptions dated in 1889 and 1905, and a printed edition dated 1918, this work seems to have been widely circulated in the late nineteenth century.

4. Conclusion: Historical Significance of the Present Research and Problems

This study has investigated the two catalogues—KBS Catalogue and Descriptive
Catalogue—covering the pre-modern Korean literature held at the University of California, Berkeley. Each of these two works has been widely used in its respective market: the Descriptive Catalogue in Western scholarship and the KBS Catalogue in Korea. The present investigation has demonstrated that there are significant differences in how the two catalogues have classified the pre-modern literary works in the Asami Library. These differences are outlined in both the above commentary and table.

It can be surmised that such differences are the result of differing concepts of what constitutes the novel genre by the respective compilers. This tendency mainly arises in the works that belong to p’i’i or p’aes’ol genres, such as Haesang ch’ŏng-un (which while well known by this title, actually consists of three works Haesang ch’ŏng-un, Il’dong imun, and Nansŏng swoerok), P’asu-rok, Hanjŏng-nok, Kyogŏ swaep yŏn and Hanjung mallok. The present study has further demonstrated that the University of California at Berkeley has a total of twenty-one pre-modern Korean novels including two additional works that had been misclassified. The contents of these works and number of volumes are explicated above; Sŏnyu mundap, Yi Hyŏn-gyŏng-jŏn, and Imsangkuk puja samch’wi-gi are also included here.

As stated above, the number of pre-modern Korean novels held at the University of California, Berkeley is not great, but nevertheless they arouse interest because of their unique literary value. Most of these works are also present in collections in Korea, but these are largely different editions. Moreover, there are cases where the work held at the Berkeley Library is the only edition available. Thus, the collection at Berkeley can be appraised as highly valuable despite similar materials sometimes being available in Korea.

This research effort often experienced difficulties in using the materials in Korea as it was problematic to directly identify the materials in Korea and the quality of the works on microfilm in Korea were often not in good condition. Thus, the literary value of these works cannot be fully and properly evaluated. Consequently, the overall value of the works held in Korean collections may suffer a bit in comparison with the materials found in the Asami Library.

It is further clear that the two bibliographical works on the Asami Library have played important roles in making available heterogeneous cultural materials to other cultures. In particular, the Descriptive Catalogue by Chaoying Fang represents a remarkable achievement by a non-Korean at a time when the field of Korean literature had not itself come into its own, and thus his work can never be devalued. However, in light of contemporary research it is evident that much of this pioneering work is in need of reevaluation. Since the present modest study has already identified some errors in the two bibliographical analyses on the pre-modern Korean novels held at Berkeley, it is clear that deeper investigations of the other works in this collection must be made as soon as possible.

The field of Korean literary studies faces unique challenges that demand all of the investigative techniques that modern scholarship has to offer. To name just one such challenge, unlike the literary works of China and Japan, most Korean works bear no marks informing of the date of transcription or, in cases where they do have such indications, have old stamps or reflect inexact dates. Thus, the cultural significance of Korean works is often nearly impossible to determine pending detailed scholarly study of individual works. In the absence of such investigations, proper recognition of the value of these works is impeded, and the works may be degraded to valueless documents destined for mere preservation and storage. Thus it is quite timely that in-depth studies of individual works in the Asami collection be undertaken.
and widely publicized. The present study further demonstrates that mistakes in Descriptive Catalogue should be corrected. This investigation of the bibliographical notes on the pre-modern literary works held by the University of California, Berkeley, particularly the Asami Library, suggests one promising new direction that Korean literary scholarship should attempt with respect to its basic bibliographical tools.