

# Editorial Note

The term *Early Korea* correlates to the categories of *kodaesa* (ancient history), *wōnsa* (protohistory), and *sōnsa* (prehistory). Currently, only a mere handful of Early Korea scholars exist in North America. Since the retirement of Jonathan Best and the passing of Sarah Nelson and Hyungil Pai, there are only a few tenured/tenure-track faculty in North America. The field of Korean studies would not be complete without the understanding of the Korean Peninsula's ancient period. This issue begins with a special section titled "International Early Korean Studies: Prospects, Challenges, and Opportunities." This special section, which was spearheaded and edited by Jack Davey, was based on a conversation hosted by the GW Institute for Korean Studies to encourage dialogue on Early Korean studies. As the special section shows, Early Korean studies (or Early Korea) brings together various disciplines such as history, archaeology, art history, religious studies, and linguistics. This special section includes the conversations scholars had during the workshop. It covers various themes such as defining "Early Korea," the state of the field, challenges in international Early Korean studies, the challenge of pseudohistory, a transnational approach to Early Korean studies, and prospects for the future. As an editor who suggested this special section, I hope the conversations included in this issue will lead to an active intellectual dialogue discussing the field of Early Korea.

As part of the special section, Andrew L. Logie continues the conversation in his essay about a controversial issue related to the Korean pseudohistory of early Korea that claims ancient Korea to have built an expansive continental empire in Northeast Asia. The advocates of this pseudohistory reject the view of colonial historiography, which they think favors China and Japan. Logie discusses how this controversy between advocates of pseudohistory and scholars of colonial historiography affected the government funding of Early Korea projects outside South

Korea and how it continues to have a huge influence in the popular domain in South Korea. He proposes two solutions to this problem. The first is to focus more on scholarly analysis that extends regional space covered in Early Korea to challenge the pseudohistorical narrative of the continental empire. The second is to make an effort to reach an audience beyond academia, engaging with the general public utilizing various mediums.

In addition to the special section, this issue also includes four general articles and six book reviews. In the first article, Owen Stampton explores the intersection of literary studies and cultural geography through Ch'oe Namsŏn's T'aebaek poetry. Stampton shows how Ch'oe's poetry was shaped by his usage of geography as a tool to construct territorial consciousness to build national unity. By analyzing "Mount T'aebaek" from various angles, the author argues that Ch'oe utilized the mountain to build his nationalist project that continued to influence his writings. In the next article, Ria Roy explores the rise of *munhwaŏ*, or cultured language, in North Korea during the 1960s to show the relationship between *munhwaŏ* and the charismatic language of the leader. Roy uses the notion of "linguistic ritualization of charisma" to analyze the leader's rhetoric represented in a "sacred text," which functioned as a manual on how the leader should articulate public speech to address the people. By tracing the "rhetorical turn" in North Korea during the Cold War, Roy discusses how *munhwaŏ* manifests the intersection of language and culture and how North Korea's linguistic modernity diverged from that of the Soviet Union.

Hye-Kyoung Kwon explores the historical roots of K-beauty by analyzing South Korea's AmorePacific, which is among the top ten global cosmetic companies. By using AmorePacific's archives, Kwon traces South Korea's cosmetic industry since 1945 and throughout the Park Chung Hee regime. She demonstrates how AmorePacific maneuvered Park's new economic policy and how women played a critical role in the development of the cosmetic industry. In the final article, Heekyoung Cho analyzes a blog serial of Hwang Sŏgyŏng's *Evening Star* to examine South Korea's literary production using digital media that brought significant changes in the literary landscape during the 1990s and 2000s. Cho shows how digital literature shaped a new environment in virtual space regarding authorship, readership, and publication and how it created a variety of participatory cultures in the making of the blog serial.