

RESEARCH NOTE

# Translating Korean Poetry: History, Practice, and Theory

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There are various ways in which it is possible to talk about ‘Translating Korean Poetry’, it might be best to combine several in this paper. First, I will evoke some of the earliest pioneers in the field and then put on record some of the main stages in my own career as a translator. Next, something more theoretical and general can be added, before ending by offering a translation of one poem.

To begin with, I will survey the early history of the translation and publication of Korean poetry into English. The first English translations of Korean poems to be ‘published’ were those made by James Scarth Gale and either included in issues of the monthly *Korea Magazine*, which he edited from 1917 to 1919, or inserted into his *History*, which was printed in monthly installments in the review *Korea Mission Field* in the late 1920s. These were not at all widely distributed magazines, and it is safe to say that the poems remained completely unnoticed in the world beyond Korea. James Scarth Gale was born in Canada in 1863; he left Canada for Korea in 1888. His models and references in English poetry were, inevitably, ‘Victorian’, and the style of his poetry translations shows this. He was, however, a very remarkable scholar; his interest in and ability to translate the Classical Chinese poetry written in Korea was certainly far above that of any other foreign missionary of his time. Gale left Korea, retired to Bath (UK) in 1927, and died there in 1937. He left a very large corpus of unpublished translations, which have only now begun to be published thanks to Professor Ross King of UBC and his colleagues. In his lifetime Gale could only find publishers for translations of

literary prose. *The Cloud Dream of the Nine* and *Korean Folk Tales* were published overseas, but no poetry was published.

Neither the name Joan Grigsby nor the title *The Orchid Door* will be familiar to many readers, yet official lists of published volumes of English translations of Korean poetry usually begin with her name and that title. *The Orchid Door* was published in 1935 in Kobe. It was bound in traditional Japanese style: the pages were printed on thin paper on one side only and folded. *The Orchid Door: Ancient Korean Poems Collected and done into English verse by Joan S. Grigsby* contains English versions of more than 50 Korean poems originally composed in Classical Chinese, almost all of which were written in the Goryeo and Early Joseon periods, as well as a selection of anonymous Gisaeng poems.

Joan Grigsby was born in Scotland as Joan Rundall, and under that name she wrote and published two volumes of rather fanciful ‘Celtic revival’ poems: *Songs of the Grey Country* (1916) and *Peatsmoke* (1919), both published in London. Born in 1891, Joan Rundall married Arthur Grigsby in 1912. In about 1921, they moved to Canada, and in 1924 they arrived in Japan, where Arthur worked as an accountant for Ford Motors. Early in 1929 they moved to Seoul where they stayed until late in 1930. Instead of returning to England, they moved to Vancouver, where Joan Grigsby died of cancer in 1937 and her husband took charge of the Vancouver Art Gallery. Joan Grigsby wrote poetry and a collection of her own poems, mostly about Japan but with a few about Korea, *Lanterns by the Lake* (1929), was printed in Japan by J.L. Thompson (in Kobe) but co-published by a London publisher, Routledge Kegan Paul. That was followed by *The Orchid Door* (1935), printed and published in Japan by the same J.L. Thompson, mainly thanks to the help of the American artist Lilian May Miller. *The Orchid Door* was essentially a private publication, without commercial distribution, since Routledge Kegan Paul, who had published *Lanterns by the Lake*, seem not to have been interested in taking any more such titles. They also turned down James Gale’s translations of Yi Gyu-Bo at the same time.

As the mysterious wording of the title, “Collected and done into English verse,” implies, Joan Grigsby was not the original translator of the poems from Korean originals. She certainly knew no Classical Chinese and had only very little spoken Korean; the source of almost all the poems she reworked was the translations of Korean poetry that the Canadian missionary James Scarth Gale had published previously, as indicated above. Clearly, Joan Grigsby did not like the style Gale had used and decided to ‘improve’ the poems freely. Gale left Korea shortly before the Grigsbys arrived.

Gale, then, was the first true translator of Korean poetry into English, but he could never find a publisher for any of his translations, and none were

issued except as revised by Joan Grigsby. We have to look elsewhere for the first published volume of translated Korean poetry. That is a roneotyped collection entitled *Songs from Korea* by Y.T. Pyun, in an old-style tied-thread binding, dated 1936, which begins with 102 translated 'old songs' and then continues with a substantial set of Pyun's own poems in English. The same book was later republished in a more modern-style printed edition in Seoul in 1948. Pyun Yung-Tai was born in 1892, died in 1969, and served as Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea (1951–1953) throughout most of the Korean War before becoming Prime Minister from June 28, 1954, until July 31, 1955. In 1946 he also published *Tales from Korea*, equally roneotyped, and in 1954 he published *Korea My Country*, a collection of his speeches and articles since 1945. Y.T. Pyun was educated in Korea and Manchuria. He returned to Korea in 1916 to teach high school English and became an English professor at Korea University following the end of the Japanese occupation. He ran against Park Chung-Hee in the 1963 presidential elections, bankrupting himself and ruining his health in the process. He is thus the first Korean to translate older Korean poetry into English, and so far the only literary translator to have served as Prime Minister of Korea. During the Japanese period, Lee In-Su (1916–1950) was the first Korean known to have studied English literature at the University of London. He translated a variety of poems by modern Korean writers but did not publish them.

The first published volume containing English translations of works by a modern, living Korean poet was the volume *Before Love Fades Away* (1957), containing poems by Cho Byung-Wha. This was soon followed by *Selected Poems of Kim So Wol* (1959), both volumes being translated by Dong-sung Kim (1890–1969) and published in Korea. Kim was a Korean comic artist, translator, journalist, and politician. He left for America in 1908 and studied journalism at Ohio State University. It was in America that Kim became deeply invested in comics and the medium's significance and value. Kim returned to Korea in 1919 and was a founding member of the *Donga-Ilbo*. In his later years, he became involved in politics and was the Minister of Culture in South Korea's first government in 1948.

Peter Hyun published *Voices of the Dawn: A Selection of Korean Poetry from the Sixth Century to the Present Day* with John Murray (London) in 1960, the first western publication of translated Korean poetry. In 1964, Kevin O'Rourke published *Anthology of Korean Poetry: From the Earliest Era to the Present* with John Day of New York. From the start of the 1970s, translating became a slightly more popular activity, with Jaihyun Kim and Edward W. Poitras joining the other pioneering figures among the early translators of modern Korean literature in the 1970s and 80s. At the same time, Kim Jong-Gil, inspired by the example of

his Korea University mentor Lee In-Su, began to publish individual translations of Korean poems in various magazines but he never published a full collection.

I arrived in Korea in May 1980 and found myself living in French at home with other brothers of our community, and in English everywhere else, since I knew no Korean. I even taught Basic French to Korean students using English. I enrolled in the Yonsei Korean-language programme in the summer of 1980 and began learning Korean. In 1984, I began to teach Chaucer and Shakespeare and general English Literature in the English Department of Sogang University, using English as the classroom language, and I continued to do so for the next twenty years. My English style improved considerably, largely thanks to Jane Austen and Seamus Heaney, as well as Hamlet and the Wife of Bath, John Donne, and Milton.

One day in about 1988 I said to a Korean colleague that, since I was teaching Koreans about British literature, I would at least like to learn a little about Korean poetry. My colleague suggested that I should start to read and translate poems by the poet Ku Sang, some of whose works she had herself tried to translate when they were together in Hawai'i. He was Catholic and spiritual, and his poems were written in a very simple, almost childish manner. He was therefore rather looked down on by the literary establishment, who reckoned that good poetry ought to be difficult and mannered. I began to produce translations on a typewriter after various hand-written drafts. It is hard now to realize what it was like to have to re-type an entire page when one word was found to be wrong (or mis-spelled).

One day, I noticed in an issue of the *Times Literary Supplement* a little advertisement for Forest Books, London, 'publishers of poetry in translation'. Brenda Walker founded Forest Books after numerous publishers had rejected her translations of Romanian poetry ('it won't sell') and she, being resolute, decided to do her own publishing. She quickly encountered other translators of 'obscure' languages (Bengali, Hungarian, Irish, and now Korean) with the same difficulty, and by the time she called it a day and retired, she had published 100 volumes, including two of my Ku Sang collections, one by Kim Kwang-Kyu, and one by So Jong-Ju. It was thanks to her that I became a published translator of Korean poetry.

The next decisive early moment was when Kim Young-Moo, a friend who was teaching in the English Department of Seoul National University, showed me a volume of poems by Kim Kwang-Kyu he had just edited, selected from the poet's first three collections. Kim Kwang-Kyu was celebrated among dissidents for his gently satirical poems that targeted the dictators and other social evils. Again, here was a poet who chose to write in a straight-forward style, like the German satirists he had begun to translate into Korean—Heine, Brecht, and Gunther Eich. I was happy to find European-style satiric humor in Korea, and I moved on from

Ku Sang, who was also in some ways a satirist, as I began to translate Kim Kwang-Kyu's poems. One day I mentioned that a student had been talking about a Korean poet who read poems at anti-government demonstrations, and 'You mean Ko Un!', Kim Young-Moo cried; 'Yes, of course, you must translate Ko Un', and thus the first translations of Ko Un's poetry to be published in the West, 'The Sound of my Waves', saw the light of day in 1991.

Meanwhile I was being urged by a conservative colleague in Sogang to translate Seo Jeong-Ju, the most highly approved official poet in Korea, nominated every year by the pro-government Korean PEN for the Nobel Prize. He had never once dissented from anything that had been said or done by any of the powers-that-be. As I translated his work, which was so very highly regarded in Korea, I could not help feeling that no matter how hard I tried, my English translations would never produce a similar level of adulation. A translator can produce translations but he cannot single-handedly re-create a reputation. Koreans often seem convinced that a good translation will automatically provoke the same response overseas as the original has in Korea. I saw that it could not be so. Seo Jeong-Ju's earlier poems, those most admired, were ornate, sensuous lyrics depending for their effect on the choice of vocabulary and imagery, as well as their originality, being rooted in a strongly oral lyric tradition without any parallel in English, explained in part by the poet's origins in the south-western Jeolla region, in Gochang, home to many famous *p'ansori* singers. It amused me to be struggling to translate at the same time the leading dissident spokesman, Ko Un, and this politically most conservative poet, both born in the same region, yet so very different.

The most important moment in those years, however, was a technical one, the moment when I switched from a typewriter to a computer and floppy disks. To be able to change a word over and over again, trying various possibilities freely without having to retype the whole page, brought a freedom without which I cannot now imagine translating. WordPerfect later gave way to MS Word, but one other major computerized blessing only came later, on the day when the online Naver Korean-English dictionary was complete enough to make it unnecessary to pick up a thick paper dictionary and flick through hundreds of pages every ten seconds. Such are the building blocks of a translator's career, much more than the moments when some brilliant solution to a particular crux flashes into mind.

Undoubtedly the most significant choice I made, unconsciously, at the very start, was to translate large numbers of poems by each of 'my poets', either whole collections or at least a wide selection, in order to give non-Koreans an insight into his (or her) work as a whole, in all its variety. The publication of a few carefully polished masterpieces did not, I felt, offer the possibility of representing adequately a Korean poet's entire work. Almost all of Ku Sang's poems

at the start, almost all of the poems of Cheon Sang-Byeong, and ten volumes of work by Ko Un are one result. The complete works of Kim Young-Nang and the complete first four volumes of Seo Jeong-Ju's *opus*, as well as Shin Gyeong-Nim's first collection, 'Farmers' Dance', and a selection of poems by Mah Jong-Gi are others. More recently I have published substantial selections of poetry by popular, easily accessible poets such as Jeong Ho-Seung and Do Jong-Hwan, as well as collections or selections from the work of Lee Si-Young, Kim Soo-Bok, Ko Hyeong-Ryeol, Kim Jong-Gil, Oh Sae-Young, to say nothing of Lee Seong-Bok and Shim Bo-Seon in close collaboration with my colleague Chung Eun-Gwi. At the same time, I must be blamed for failing to observe a balance in my choice of poets. Kim Seung-Hee is still the only female name in my list of book-length publications, with one other, the senior writer Yoo An-Jin, waiting for a publisher to show interest.

As a translator, I am obliged to negotiate the perilous crossing between faithfulness and readability. The source of my greatest concern is my limited knowledge of Korean, a language which is often challenging, even for people who are virtually bilingual. I have always tried to find Korean collaborators who will help me avoid at least the worst errors. I make the initial draft and then ask for corrections. In some cases, mainly when working with Professor Chung Eun-Gwi, the original first draft is made by her, and then I am able to produce a final English version with the assurance that I know what the Korean means. I hope always that my final versions will be both accurate and readable, but I do not readily accept modern western ideas of 'creative translation' in which the exact sense of the Korean text is considered more a problem than a duty.

Now, let us turn to some more general, more or less theoretical thoughts about the role of the translator of poetry. First, a simple question requires an answer: What is a poem? Surely everyone knows a poem when they see one, yet it seems very difficult if not impossible to provide an adequate general definition. Each verbal artifact called 'a poem' is always, inevitably, perfectly unique. Any given poem is by definition quite unlike any other, being composed of different words arranged in different patterns, yielding different sounds, resulting in different rhythms and different meanings, performing different literary and social functions. A poem is recognized as such, usually, simply by being designated as a poem by its composing poet or by its publisher. A poem may be long or short, its lines broken as 'verse' or presented as prose, and using any of the world's existing languages, or none. Each of the poems written by any given poet will be different from all the rest, and critics or students usually have to struggle hard to identify common features allowing them to make general statements about a poet's work. They are often reduced to grouping poems by theme or to viewing the poems in

the chronological order of their composition, in the hope of revealing some kind of progress, evolution, pattern, or decline, whether thematic or structural.

The one essential feature common to every poem ever written is that it aspires to possess and provide its reader with the experience of the property or quality known as ‘poetry’. A poem entirely devoid of any aspiration to poetry (whatever that word might mean) could hardly be termed a ‘poem’. It would merely be a collection of verbal debris. What, then, is ‘poetry’? We might quote the opening lines of Octavio Paz’s *The Bow and the Lyre* (1955):

Poetry is knowledge, salvation, power, abandonment. An operation capable of changing the world, poetic activity is revolutionary by nature; a spiritual exercise, it is a means of interior liberation. Poetry reveals this world; it creates another. Bread of the chosen; accursed food. It isolates; it unites. Invitation to the journey; return to the homeland. Inspiration, respiration, muscular exercise. Prayer to the void, dialogue with absence: tedium, anguish, and despair nourish it. Prayer, litany, epiphany, presence. Exorcism, conjuration, magic. Sublimation, compensation, condensation of the unconscious. Historic expression of races, nations, classes ... and much more.

‘Poetry’, then, is not simply a general term for a literary genre embracing all the poems of the world or of a particular historic moment (‘Elizabethan poetry’), but a vital quality that is perceived to be present in (or absent from) each individual poem, and which is also recognized within other works of art, such as paintings, sculpture, buildings, music, and perhaps even individual people. However, the issue is complex, since probably no one poem exists that is universally recognized as possessing ‘poetry’, as being ‘truly poetic’. The discernment of the poetry of a poem is entirely subjective, it seems. Poems are ‘works’, things made. ‘Poetry’ manifests itself through the work, but not through every poem-work and not to every reader. Works which in times past were felt to have intense poetic power are often now found lacking, trite or artificial, obscure and antiquated. Fixed forms of meter that were formerly necessary for the poetry of a poem to be felt are now considered obstacles.

Put briefly, in its essence, poetry is the breath by which a poem comes alive. ‘A poem must live ... Better a live sparrow than a stuffed eagle’, as Edward FitzGerald once wrote. However, one person’s ‘great poem’, felt to be alive and vibrant with poetry, is perfectly capable of being another person’s ‘bad poem’, lying there lifeless and inert. The poetry residing in a poem, we might suspect, is impossible to define and also clearly defies translation, explanation or paraphrase (that is indeed the meaning of Frost’s phrase about ‘poetry is what is lost in translation’) and that is also surely the reason why we try to translate it. Some people might claim that we translate poems because we have nothing better to do, but we prefer

to think that we do it as a service to humanity, attempting to build fragile bridges across the gulfs that separate language from language, culture from culture, mind from mind. If we did not think that what we call the 'poetry' of a poem had a very considerable intrinsic toughness, so that it can somehow survive the trauma of translation, we would surely not make the effort to translate poems as poems. A prose translation of the literal meaning of the words would be sufficient. They would not be very poetic.

Perhaps the first quality of a good poem could be termed its 'power' or 'intensity', rather than its beauty. 'Beauty' in poetry is a highly debatable quality, especially today. The famous short quote 'No poetry after Auschwitz' by Theodor Adorno includes the affirmation that writing poetry is today a 'barbaric' activity, as well as an impossible one (*nach Auschwitz ein Gedicht zu schreiben, ist barbarisch, und das frißt auch die Erkenntnis an, die ausspricht, warum es unmöglich ward, heute Gedichte zu schreiben*). That 'barbaric' word is certainly aimed at too facile a notion of aesthetic 'beauty' in the poem, but it still seems to leave open the possibility of writing 'barbaric' poetry for a barbaric age. Meaning, too, has changed its meaning since the old systematic certainties faded from view. Poems that show no awareness of *skopsis* have little hope of speaking to the present time.

The 'art for art's sake' view of poetry, which has long been attacked in Korea in the name of social criticism and relevance, can only stand today if the poet's 'art' is an art of focus, of concentration, of compression, of intensity of expression, and of compassion in the presence of ongoing catastrophe. Today's poetry, if it is not written for an uninformed juvenile or incorrigibly sentimental audience, must begin with an awareness of loss of coherence, loss of assured meaning. The impact of the kind of poetry today's world seems to demand should go in the direction of pain, shock, challenge, grief, revolt, rejection, revolution, transformation, not an effete romantic swoon before some pallid, harmonious loveliness wrongly called 'Beauty'. Much Korean poetry is marred by facile sentimentality.

The 'beautiful language' perceived in older poems, those of Keats for example, might be one aspect of their continuing popularity, but no poet can write in that way today, except as parody and pastiche, as kitsch. In a world of lies dressed up as False Truth, 'meaning' is still the poet's great vocation, but today's true meaning is an awareness that there is no certain meaning, or as Paz already wrote in 1955, 'the poem is a mask that hides the void'. Yet a 'shock of meaning' is still what a worthwhile poem is called to produce and it is that shock that we would want our translations to produce too, as one vital aspect of the poems we translate.

The poetry of each poem, then, is its unique essential value, and it is that poem that we are called to transform and reproduce in another language, producing a different poem (which is yet the same poem) to be read in a totally different



place and culture. 'A poem should not mean but be' wrote Archibald MacLeish, in a very splendid poem. Yet words can mean different things in different places, there are backgrounds and contexts that play a vital role in one nation's literature, which are completely unrecognized and unfamiliar beyond its frontiers. Modern South Korean poetry is deeply marked by modern South Korean history and social evolutions, while the works produced in North Korea, using the same language, have completely different presuppositions and contexts. What a poem 'is' in its original being might not be at all what its translation 'is' in another language and context.

One word comes to mind which is closely related to the 'poetry' discussed so far: 'musicality'. But the 'music' of a poem is usually assumed to inhere in its sounds and rhythms when read aloud, in a 'musical' quality of its language as such. But how can we transmit the music of a Korean poem in an English rendering? The languages have so little in common. Here we come close to the topic of 'how to translate the Korean-ness of Korean poetry', with the question of whether the English translation of a Korean poem can ever transmit anything resembling or evoking the music (or the 'poetry') of its original. There is, we might assume, no way in which that can happen directly, because the two languages have such very different qualities of sound and rhythm and discourse. The more a Korean poem is prized for its music, the less it will be possible to translate it convincingly 'as it is'. It will just have to surrender, allow itself to be undressed, stripped to the bone, then refashioned into a completely different English poem, in terms of its music though not, if possible, in terms of the sense of the words. The 'poetry' might largely have to fend for itself. The music of a poem is related to its emotional impact. The Korean poems that Koreans love most tend to be on the poignant, elegiac side. Irony is often lacking. British readers love humour; Koreans prefer melancholy.

A translated poem has to come alive in its own right, by its own qualities. It owes little beyond the fact of existing to the qualities of the original poem it seeks to transmit and represent. The sense of rhythm and sound values that make the translator select one word rather than another (and there are always multiple possible ways of expressing anything in English) is perhaps something innate and intuitive rather than learned and systematic, though familiarity with the sounds and patterns of poetry written in English must surely help. The quality of a translated poem depends heavily on the translator's sensitivity. Yet an over-sensitive translator may be paralyzed by the impossibility of rendering an original into a foreign tongue 'completely and without loss'. 'Every last nuance' is an unrealistic goal; there is no perfect translation.

The opposite of that excess of respect is the act of appropriation by which a translator (especially one who is also a published poet) sometimes claims the right (in the name of creativity) to produce a ‘version’ of a foreign poem which is very far removed, not only from the form and sounds, but from the direct sense of the original, and which cannot convincingly pass the examination of reverse-translation. Questions already arise when a translator consciously and deliberately seeks to give a translated poem an additional perfusion, a dab of ‘poetry’ behind the ears, over and beyond what emerges naturally in the course of translating sensitively. This is what is done in ‘translation workshops’, where the participants are provided with a ‘literal’ prose rendering or a skeletal outline version of an original poem written in a tongue unknown to them, and invited to ‘turn it into an English poem’. We usually call that ‘domestication’.

Some translators try to augment the poetic quality of their versions by employing words and turns of phrase, linguistic codes, which are characteristic of very specific kinds of English, usually regional dialects, or parodies of poetic styles. Is it right or wrong to make a translated Korean poem speak with a distinctively Irish or Californian or Australian dialect? Does that really bring about an increase of poetry? It will certainly hide the fact that Korean poetry is not the same as western poetry, that the models (the canon) as well as the history and social psychology to which Korean poets are referring are different, and perhaps the expectations of Korean readers, too. But could we ever find a way of making a Korean poem ‘sound Korean’ in English? Perhaps we should not want to. What we should hope is that any poem we have translated will be found, at least by ‘fit readers’, to possess ‘poetry’ in its own right, as a true poem should, and also be found, by Korean readers, to have retained something of the qualities they admired in the original.

To end, here is a recently translated poem by the poet Sin Yong-Mok, revised in dialogue with him. It is the first time that I have worked so intensely with a poet.

## Community

May I use the dead person's name? Since he's dead,  
 may I take his name? Since I gained one more name today  
 the number of my names keeps increasing, soon I'll have  
 all death's register.

Might I be called Heaven and Hell?

Over there  
 where the man's name is being erased from the lips of the  
 woman being soaked in rain, prayers also have lost  
 their way and like the petals being washed away on  
 the floor, now they are being carried a few steps stuck  
 to your shoes ...

I will reply to every falling petal.

If at last, the collector of death,  
 sorrow,  
 even after searching all through the sodden village, is  
 unable to find a welcome so comes to me requesting  
 sleep,  
 a kettle of cold water  
 and one dry towel,  
 I can ask, with a voice climbing up the body's creaking  
 stairs:  
 What more do you need?

But probably I will ask nothing,  
 fearing it might want something  
 like a chorus of flowers resonating then stopping in a  
 garden, in the vestibule's black umbrella  
 above shoulders ... like raindrops  
 drip, drip,

Low eaves, window panes, stretched out hands

Above them

As it takes oblivion's pulse  
then  
says: I want to see him ... want to see him ...  
it might cry.  
Then I'll indicate far off extinguished time and hand over  
his name like a lamp  
in a completely empty register.

I fear I'll probably remain alone. Floating like the sound  
of a flushing cistern in an empty room lent without the  
owner knowing

Soul of water known as cloud, bringing into reality the  
thunder and lightning growing inside my body

In order to steal your name.

Come to think of it, death seems to have planted eyes  
in me, the stone that took away your name is being  
rained on.  
Ears have been added, like rain reading your name above  
a stone.  
Blending Heaven and Hell, am I allowed to be soaked?  
Over there,  
all the petals tapping on death, like the red lips of that  
woman leaving the garden, are praying for me ...  
and here too

If life is possible, just as rain stops and rainbows emerge  
only when summoned,  
if love is possible,  
may I give my name to the dead person? May I call a  
person by my name, once they're dead?

## Translations by Brother Anthony

### Poetry

1. Ku Sang. *Wastelands of Fire* (Wasteland Poems). Forest Books 1990 / DapGae, 2000.
2. Ku Sang. *A Korean Century* (*Christopher's River; Diary of the Fields*). Forest Books, 1991.
3. Ku Sang. *Infant Splendor*. Samseong, 1991.
4. Kim Kwang-kyu. *Faint Shadows of Love*. Forest Books, 1991.
5. Ko Un. *The Sound of my Waves*. Cornell EAS, 1991.
6. So Chong-ju. *Early Lyrics*. Forest Books 1991 / Cornell—DapGae, 1998.
7. Ch'on Sang-pyong. *Back to Heaven*. Cornell EAS 1995 / Cornell—DapGae, 1996.
8. Ko Un. *What?*. Parallax (Berkeley), 2008.
9. Shin Kyong-nim. *Farmers' Dance*. Cornell—DapGae, 1999.
10. Kim Su-young, Shin Kyong-nim, Lee Si-young. *Variations*. Cornell, 2001.
11. Ku Sang. *Even the Knots on Quince Trees Tell Tales*. DapGae, 2004.
12. Ku Sang. *Eternity Today*. Seoul Selection, 2005.
13. Kim Young-Moo. *Virtual Reality*. DapGae, 2005.
14. Kim Kwang-kyu. *The Depths of a Clam*. White Pine Press, 2005.
15. Ko Un. *Ten Thousand Lives*. Green Integer, 2005.
16. Kim Kwang-Kyu. *A Journey to Seoul*. DapGae, 2006.
17. Ko Un. *Flowers of a Moment*. BOA, 2006.
18. Chonggi Mah. *Eyes of Dew*. White Pine Press, 2006.
19. Poems by handicapped children. *Poems for Planting Love*. Seoul Selection, 2008.
20. Ko Un. *Songs for Tomorrow*. Green Integer, 2009.
21. Kim Yeong-Nang. *Until Peonies Bloom*. MerwinAsia, 2010.
22. Kim Seung-Hee. *Walking on a Washing Line*. Cornell EAS, 2011.
23. Ko Un. *ChaRyong's Kiss*. Ba-u-sol, 2011.
24. Ko Un. *Himalaya Poems*. Green Integer, 2011.
25. Ko Un. *First Person Sorrowful*. Bloodaxe, 2012.
26. Hong Yunsook. *Sunlight in a Distant Place*. Ohio State University, 2013.
27. Ynhui Park. *Shadows of the Void*. Seoul Selection, 2014.
28. Lee Si-Young. *Patterns*. Green Integer, 2014.
29. Ko Un. *Maninbo: Peace & War*. Bloodaxe, 2015.
30. Kim Soo-Bok. *Beating on Iron*. Green Integer, 2015.
31. Anthology of 20th-century Korean poetry. *The Colors of Dawn*. University of Hawai'i, Manoa, 2016.
32. Do Jong-Hwan. *No Flower Blooms Without Wavering*. Seoul Selection, 2016.
33. Oh Sae-Young. *Night Sky Checkerboard*. Phoneme Media, 2016.
34. Shim Bo-Seon. *Fifteen Seconds without Sorrow*. Parlor Press, 2016.
35. Jeong Ho-Seung. *A Letter Not Sent*. Seoul Selection, 2016.
36. Jeong Ho-Seung. *Though Flowers Fall, I Have Never Forgotten You*. Seoul Selection, 2016.
37. Ko Hyeong-Ryeol. *Grasshoppers' Eyes*. Parlor Press, 2017.
38. Lee Seong-Bok. *Ah, Mouthless Things*. Green Integer, 2017.
39. Ko Un. *Poems by Ko Un*. Asia Publishing, 2017.
40. Ahn Do-Hyun. *Poems by Ahn Do-Hyun*. Asia Publishing, 2017.
41. Kim Jong-Gil. *A Black Kite*. MerwinAsia, 2017.

*Fiction*

1. Yi Mun-yol. *The Poet*. Harvill Press 1994 / Vintage, 2001.
2. Lee Oyoung. *The General's Beard / Phantom Legs*. Homa & Sekey, 2002.
3. Ko Un. *Little Pilgrim*. Parallax (Berkeley), 2005.
4. Yi Mun-yol. *Son of Man*. Dalkey Archive, 2015.