



SEOL Wontai (설원태, 薛原泰)
Ph.D.
Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)
Advisor/ Professor
International Journalism Faculty of
Uzbekistan State World Languages University
seolwontai3121@daum.net

A SHORT HISTORY OF KOREAN MEDIA AND JOURNALISM

Continuation (See Beginning in #1, 2016)

Мазкур мақолада Josun сулоласи давридан то ҳозиргача бўлган вақт оралиғида корейс ОАВларининг босқичма-босқич ривожланиши ёритилади. Унда қирол саройидаги коммуникация, корейслар томонидан чиқарилган дастлабки китоблар, Хангыль (한글 – корейсча ёзув), биринчи газета, япон мустамлакачилик даврида корейс матбуоти устидан ўрнатилган назорат, корейс ҳукуматининг ОАВни назорати қилиш тажрибаси ва ниҳоят 1987 йилдан кейинги нисбий матбуот эркинлиги мавзулари кўриб чиқилган. Консерватив оммавий ахборот воситаларининг кескин таъсирида қолган ижтимоий фикр бозори корейс жамияти учун муаммолигича қолмоқда.

Эта статья посвящена эволюции корейских СМИ от времени династии Josun по настоящее время. В статье рассматривается коммуникация при королевском дворе, первые книги, изданные корейцами, создание Хангыль (한글 – корейская письменность), первой газеты, контроль корейских газет в период японского колониального господства, контроль СМИ корейским правительством, и, наконец, относительная самостоятельность СМИ после 1987 г. Но тот факт, что рынок общественного мнения в подавляющем большинстве занимают консервативные СМИ, остается проблемой для корейского общества.

This paper looks at how Korean media (or mass communication) have evolved from the Josun Dynasty till currently. The paper touched on communication at the royal court, first books published by Koreans, creation of Hangeul (한글, Korean writing system), first newspapers, control of Korean newspapers under Japanese colonial rule, news media controlled by Korean governments, and finally, relative independence granted on media after 1987 democratization movement. But the fact that public opinion market is overwhelmingly occupied by conservative media remains a challenge for Korean society.

Калит сўзлар: корейс медиа/журналистика, Хангил тарихи, корейс босма матбуотининг тарқалиши, Josun Илбо, Донга Илбо, ОАВ/журналистика, назорат, консерватив оммавий ахборот воситалари, либерал газета, Хангере Синмун, Кенхян Синмун.

Ключевые слова: история корейских СМИ/журналистика, Хангыль, корейская Доставка прессы, Josun Ильбо, Донга Ильбо, контроль СМИ, консервативные СМИ, либеральные газеты, Хангере Синмун, Кенхян Синмун.

Key words: history of Korean media/journalism, Hangeul, first Korean newspapers, Josun Ilbo, Donga Ilbo, media control, conservative media, liberal newspapers, Hankyoreh Shinmun, Kyunghyang Shinmun.

I. An Overview: Convoluted Path from Controlled to Free Media

Modern Korean journalism began with the “forced” gate-opening of the Josun Dynasty in the late 19th century. The Korean media had a strong reformist and nationalistic flavor from the beginning to protect the country from Western plots to encroach upon its sovereignty, but faced continued attempts at political control or outright censorship during most of the 20th century, that is, under the Japanese colonial rule (1910~1945) and initial authoritarian Korean governments (1948~1987). However, since the “1987 democratization process” started, Korean media have been enjoying ever-increasing freedom of the press. However, while Koreans have seen vicissitudes in the governments over several decades after the democratization movement, from conservative (1948~1998) to liberal(1998~2008), and back to conservative (2008~present. Currently, Koreans have a conservative government under President Park Geunhye, whose term of office ranges from 2013~2018), there still linger controversies as regards to what extent Korean media should be independent from the government or to what extent the government can exert pressure or intervene (or “request cooperation” from the media) in the editorial processes. At any rate, the long history of Korean media could be characterized as being one of strenuous efforts and fierce struggles to obtain free and independent media. It was indeed a long and rocky path from controlled media to free media.

The South Korean media consist of several types of public communication of news and information: newspapers, television, radio, magazines, books and Internet-based Web sites. In this paper, the focus is placed on journalism. The paper offers a short history of Korean media and journalism. Because “media” is a term with a larger concept than “journalism” to look at history of communication in Korea, the writer mostly used the umbrella term “media” and in some cases “journalism” to specifically discuss journalism.

II. A Pre-history of Korean Media and Communication

1. Court communication during Josun Dynasty (1392-1910): “Direct communicators”

From the start of the Josun Dynasty in 1392, Koreans emphasized the importance of opening up “the path of the speech (언로, 言路).” The king emphasized the importance of direct communication with high-ranking court officials in order to grasp what is going on in the government and the country. In this vein, three important government agencies were installed separately from the whole of governmental structure in order to convey the true wills of the people and opinions of officials directly to the king. The three posts were called “Three Sa <3 사(三司): Sahunboo 사헌부; Saganwon 사간원; Hongmoonkwan 홍문관>.” These three agencies may be termed “direct communicators” for the king. One of

the current Korean media scholars wrote that the reason why the Josun Dynasty lasted more than 500 years is ascribable to this system of direct communication between the ruler and the ruled (Jo Maengki, *Understanding of the History of the Korean Press*. 2011, p 16. 조맹기, 한국언론사의 이해).

2. Publication of First Books and Creation of Hageul (한글, Korean writing system)

1) Jikji(직지), oldest extant movable metal print book in the world, published in 1377

Baegunhwasang Chorokbuljo Jikjisimcheyojeol (shortened to *Jikji*, Anthology Teachings of Zen Buddhist Priests. 백운화상 초록불조 직지심체요절, 줄여서 “직지”) is the world's oldest extant movable metal print book. It was published in 1377 (during Goryeo Dynasty, 918–1392, which precedes Josun Dynasty. 고려왕조), 78 years prior to Johannes Gutenberg's "42-Line Bible" printed during the years 1452-1455. The *Jikji* comprises a collection of excerpts from the analects of the most revered Buddhist monks throughout the successive generations. Buddhist monk Gyeonghan compiled it as a guide for students of Buddhism, then Korea's national religion during the Goryeo Dynasty. The text propounds on the essentials of Seon <선(禪)> Buddhism, the predecessor to Japan's Zen (禪) Buddhism.

The *Jikji* consists of two volumes. The metal-print *Jikji* that was published in Heungdeok Temple is kept in the *Manuscripts Orientaux* division of the National Library of France, with the first page of the last volume (Book 1 in Chapter 38) torn off. A wood-carving print of *Jikji* published in Chiamsa Temple contains the complete two volumes. This is kept in the National Library of Korea and Jangsagak and Bulgap temples as well as in the Academy of Korean Studies. The ancient books were returned to Korea by the French in the form of “eternal lease” in 2011.

UNESCO confirmed *Jikji* as the world's oldest metalloid type in September 2001 and included it in the Memory of the World Programme. The greater part of the *Jikji* is now lost, and today only the last volume survives, and is kept at the Manuscripts Orientaux division of the National Library of France. It was written in Chinese characters, which was used by then-intellectuals.



Jikji, Selected Teachings of Buddhist Sages and Seon (Seon Buddhism) Masters, the earliest known extant book, was printed with movable metal type in 1377. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris. It was returned to Korea in the form of “eternal lease” in 2011. (from Google, Wikipedia)

2) Hunminjeongeum [훈민정음(訓民正音), Korean writing system] created in 1446

In 1446, “Hunminjeongeum <훈민정음(訓民正音): It literally means the right sound teaching the people>” was created and promulgated by King Sejong, the fourth king of the 'Joseon Dynasty' and scholars of 'Jiphyunjeon'. This text describes the promulgation of 'Hangeul (한글, Korean writing system)', which is the basis for the modern Korean writing system. In 1997, the Hunminjeongeum was inscribed into the UNESCO Memory of the World Register. It consists of two parts: 'Hunminjeongeum Yeibon' (the body) and 'Hunminjeongeum Haerebon' (explanations). In the introduction, King Sejong declared the purpose of creating the Hunminjeongeum was for the benefit of the ordinary people, who may not know Chinese characters. The king wrote even in the newly created Korean writing system of his own:

The Korean language differs from Chinese and cannot communicate. Therefore, many people cannot express what they want to say in writing. I regard them to be pitiable, and so I created 28 letters. I want the people to easily learn the writing and use the letters with convenience. (Seol’s shortened English translation is based on the original Chinese characters, Middle Korean writing and modern Korean version as shown below).”

*Version 1

-Classical Chinese (Original): Purpose of creating Hunminjeongeum is declared as following.

國之語音
 異乎中國
 與文字不相流通
 故愚民 有所欲言
 而終不得伸其情者多矣
 予爲此憫然
 新制二十八字
 欲使人人易習便於日用"耳"(
 矣)



*Version 2
 -Mix of hanja (classical Chinese) and Hangeul (Eonhaebon):

國·국之장語:엥音흙이
 異·잉乎嚮中동國·국호야
 與·영文문字·종로 不·불相상流를通通홀·씨
 故·공·로 愚翁民민·이 有:을所:송欲·옥言언·호야·도
 而싱終중不·불得·득伸신其평情·정者:장 | 多당矣:왕·라
 予영 | 爲·왕此:충憫:민然연·호·야
 新신制·정二·싱十·셋八·뵘字·정·호노니
 欲·옥使:송人인人인·으·로 易·잉習·셋·호·야 便뵘於평日·싫用·용耳:싱니·라

便 :사·새·내 :문 무 니·이 文 나
 安 :록·로·이 흥·츰 르 런 字 랏
 安 :마·스·룰·노 :내·고 르 전 字 :말
 便 :키·다·물·을·미 제 저·츄·와·쓰
 安 :히·여·을·하·브·흥·로·로·미
 便 :고·여·들·야·니·들·배 어·린 서·르·중
 安 :저·수·들·자·어·라·시·이·린 서·르·중
 安 :홍·빙·니·겨·날·로·부
 安 :사·루·미·니·라·부·메
 安 :니·려·퍼·디·도·이·아·아
 安 :니·호·씨

*Version 3
 -Rendered into written Korean
 (Eonhaebon, Middle Korean writing):

III. First Korean Newspapers Appeared in Late Josun Dynasty

1. Hansung Sunbo [한성순보(漢城旬報)] started publication in 1883

Hansung Sunbo is the first modern newspaper printed for one year (issued every 10 days, later every week) in the Korean history. It was launched on October the first of 1883 (by lunar calendar)

and was printed three times a month (1st, 11th, 21st). It was published in Bakmunkuk which was an official printing office. It was written in Hanja (한자, Chinese characters). A delegation headed by an intellectual Park Younghyo fetched several Japanese journalists and printing personnel after realizing the urgent need of enlightening ordinary people, while he was staying on exile in Japan in 1982, after a failed political “revolution.” News stories consisted of stories of domestic affairs and neighboring countries. Domestic stories included official gazettes and private reports, and foreign news included wars and conflicts between powerful countries and weak countries, modern military weapons, and advanced civilizations. Foreign news were largely translated from Chinese and Japanese newspapers (Accessed February 13, 2016. Online Naver Knowledge Encyclopedia written in Korean, 네이버 지식백과).

[[Here, it may be intriguing to note the first publication of newspapers in Uzbekistan’s journalism history. According to Google’s Russian version, anonymously uploaded, the first newspaper in Uzbekistan, formerly called Turkestan, appeared on April 28, 1870. Uzbekistan’s first newspaper called “Turkestan Gazetasi” (translated, “Turkestan Newspaper”) predated Korea’s first by 13 years. This newspaper was born as the official organ of the Turkestan governor-general. Turkestan Gazetasi had two kinds of news: formal, which contains printed orders and instructions; informal, which contains articles and notes related to history, geography, cultural life, and statistics, and so on. These sentences come from an international journalism student’s translation from the following Russian information into English. Words of thanks to the student named Musaeva Sevara, 2nd grader at State World Languages University. From Russian version of Google (accessed April 13, 2016):

http://www.archive.gov.tatarstan.ru/magazine/go/anonymous/main/?path=mg:/numbers/2011_3_4/09/01/]

2. Dokrib Shinmun(독립신문, The Independence Newspaper) published in 1896

Launched in 1896, it was the first private daily newspaper in the Korean history. It was also the first newspaper written in Korean writing system, i.e., Hangeul (한글). It was made up of Korean (Hangeul) version and English version. It started as a newspaper printed every two days but developed into a daily. Seo Jaepil, a Korean modernizer, returned to Korea after an exile and amnesty from the government due to his aborted political revolution for modernization in 1885. Seo was convinced that the failure of his political revolution was due to lack of popular support, and that a newspaper was urgently needed to enlighten the people.

On April 07, 1896, the first issue of the Dokrib Shinmun (literally meaning The Independence Newspaper) was published on four pages with the tabloid size of 22cm × 33cm. Page 1, 2, 3 were printed in Hangeul and page 4 was printed in English under the banner of “The Independent”. This newspaper tried to educate and enlighten the people by focusing on modern nationalistic thoughts, democratic thoughts, and self-reliant modernization thoughts. This paper published the last issue on Dec 04, 1899 (Accessed February 13, 2016. Online **Naver Knowledge Encyclopedia written in Korean**, 네이버 지식백과).

IV. Japanese Colonial Period (1910~1945): Media under Severe Control

During the Japanese colonial rule, several Korean newspapers were launched but they were under severe control by the Japanese censors. When the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty was signed against the will of Koreans in 1910, the Governor-General of Korea, who was Japanese, assumed direct control of the press along with other public institutions. Following the nationwide March 1st Movement demanding Josun’s independence in 1919, the colonial government loosened their overt control over cultural activities and permitted several Korean newspapers, including Josun Ilbo (조선일보) and Donga Ilbo (동아일보), to be launched and to function while maintaining some behind-the-scenes direction over politically sensitive topics. These two newspapers were published in Korean, but with lots of Chinese characters.

During the 1920s, Korean vernacular newspapers, such as *Josun Ilbo* (Launched in March of 1920) and *Donga Ilbo* (Launched in April of 1920) and intellectual journals such as *Kaebiyok* (개벽. Launched in June of 1920) conducted frequent skirmishes with Japanese censors. (Josun was the name of the Josun Dynasty, 1392-1910. Josun<조선(朝鮮)> literally means “Morning+Clean”. Ilbo means daily newspaper. Donga<동아, 東亞> means East Asia. 개벽<開闢> literally means “opening of the sky and the earth”.)

Colonial authorities prohibited sales of individual issues on hundreds of occasions between 1926 and 1932. However, Imperial Japan’s World War II mobilisation in the ensuing years ended any resemblance of autonomy for the Korean media. All Korean-language publications were outlawed in 1941.

V. Liberation(1945) and U.S. Military Rule (1945~1948): Media under Control

After liberation from the Japanese colonial rule in 1945, there followed a period of military rule on the southern half of the Korean Peninsula by the United States Army, from 1945 to 1948. During this period, when US systems were

imported, Koreans saw a burgeoning of newspapers and periodicals of every description as well as occasional censorship of the media by the U.S. military rulers. Afterwards, most of the subsequent South Korean governments at times attempted to control and influence the news media. (Seol thinks that there exists no single government on the globe which likes critical coverage of itself by the news media. Governments, overtly or covertly, try to control or influence news coverage for some political or policy reasons, and these governments have the real power and resources. The important thing is whether governments have the will to allow opposing views to be circulated through the news media and let the public sphere function properly to form sound public opinion. The well-functioning public sphere implies that the country's democratic processes work well.)

VI. Initial Decades of South Korea (1948-1987): Controlled Media

1. Rhee Syngman's rule (1948.08~1960.04): Media controlled, leftist media outlawed

The Republic of Korea's (South Korea's) first President Syngman Rhee's government continued the US military government's *Ordinance Number Eighty-Eight*, which outlawed leftist newspapers. [People's Democratic Republic of Korea (DPRK. i.e., North Korea) launched in 1948.09. Korea was officially divided into two: North and South, from the year of 1948]. Anti-communist Rhee closed liberal/leftist newspapers and arrested reporters and publishers on numerous occasions. (In April of 1960, Rhee was ousted by people's uprising, rebelling against election riggings by his loyalists and his attempt to hold onto power against people's will. He ruled from 1948 to 1960. A transitional government lasted until military coup by Park Chung Hee in May of 1961.) There followed two interim governments: (1) Post-revolution interim government (1960.04-1961.05) and (2) Post-coup interim government (1961.05-1963.12).

2. Park Chung Hee's rule (1963.12-1979.10): Media under government control

On taking power in 1961, Park Chung Hee's Supreme Council for National Reconstruction closed all but fifteen of Seoul's 64 daily newspapers and refused to register a comparable percentage of the country's news services, weeklies, and monthly publications, while using its own radio and news agencies to promote its official line. The Park government also used the *Press Ethics Commission Law of 1964* and, after 1972, emergency decrees that penalised criticism of the government to keep the media under control. In 1974, the government ordered a number of journalists fired and used the Korea Central Intelligence Agency to force Dong-a Ilbo to stop its reporting on people's opposition to the Park government by intimidating the newspaper's advertisers. Dong-a Ilbo revolted by publishing

newspapers with blank spaces for advertisement, and received people's supportive ads for a while. (Army General Park Chung Hee took power by a military coup in May 1961. His official rule as President started in 1963. He was killed during his presidency in 1979 by Director of Korea Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA), whom he appointed. He is father of the current president Park Geunhye. Her term of office ranges 2013~2018. After his assassination, there ensued an interim government (1979.10-1980.08) ruled by Acting President Choi Gyu Ha. Afterwards, Army General Chun Doo Hwan took power by mobilizing several military divisions during the martial law after Park's assassination.)

3. Chun Doo Hwan's rule (1980.09-1988.02): Media stiffly controlled, stifled

During the Park and the subsequent Chun Doo Hwan administration, the government exercised considerable control and surveillance over the media through the comprehensive *National Security Act*. In late 1980, the Chun government established more thorough control of the news media than had existed in South Korea since the Korean War (1950-1953). Independent news agencies were absorbed into a single state-run news agency called Yonhap News Agency (연합통신), numerous provincial newspapers were closed, central newspapers were forbidden to station correspondents in local cities, the Christian Broadcasting System (CBS) network was forbidden to provide news coverage, and two independent broadcasting companies (commercial broadcasters) were absorbed into the state-run Korean Broadcasting System (KBS), which was officially a public broadcaster but in fact under full control of the government.

In addition, the Defense Security Command, then commanded by former Army General and Chun's close ally Roh Taiwoo, and the Ministry of Culture and Information ordered hundreds of South Korean journalists fired and banned from newspaper work such as writing or editing of articles. The *Basic Press Act of December 1980* was the legal capstone of Chun's system of media control and provided for censorship and control of newspapers, periodicals, and broadcast media. It also set the professional qualifications for journalists.

Under Chun's rule, media censorship was coordinated with intelligence officials, representatives of various government agencies, and the presidential staff by the Office of Public Information Policy within the Ministry of Culture and Information using daily "reporting guidelines" sent to newspaper editors. The guidelines dealt exhaustively with questions of emphasis, topics to be covered or avoided, the use of government press releases, and even the size of headlines. Enforcement methods ranged from telephone calls to editors to more serious forms of intimidation, including interrogations and beatings by the police.

By the mid-1980s, censorship of print and broadcast media had become one of the most widely and publicly criticised practices of the Chun government. Even

the government-controlled Yonhap News Agency noted in 1989 that "TV companies, worse than other media, were the main target of bitter public criticism for their distorted reporting for the government (rather, one-sidedly pro-government reporting) in the early 1980s." Editorials called for abolition of the Basic Press Act and related practices, a bill was unsuccessfully introduced in the National Assembly to the same end, and a public campaign to withhold compulsory TV viewers' fees in protest against censorship by the KBS network received widespread press attention. By the summer of 1986, even the ruling party was responding to the public opinion to some extent.

VII. South Korea with Democratic Media (1987 up to present)

1. Media restraints loosened

In June 29 of 1987, presidential candidate Roh Tai Woo's capitulatory "June 29th Declaration" was a turning point for South Korea's democratization path (Korean social scientists have given a term to mark this turning point: "The System of 1987"). Nation-wide popular protests forced Roh, Chun's apparent successor President, to capitulate to people's widespread wishes for democratization, including direct presidential election. With this, South Korea embarked on a path to democratization in all spheres of society.

The political liberalization of the late 1980s brought a loosening of press restraints and a new generation of journalists more willing to investigate previously sensitive subjects, such as the May 1980 Gwangju Democratization Movement. Roh's eight-point declaration of June 29, 1987, provided for "a free press, including allowing newspapers to base correspondents in local cities and withdrawing security officials from newsrooms of newspapers and broadcasters."

After the loosening of press restraints, the South Korean media began a rapid expansion. Newspapers based in Seoul expanded their coverage and resumed the practice of stationing correspondents in major local cities. Although temporarily still under the management of a former Blue House press spokesman, the MBC television network, a commercial network that had been under control of the state-managed KBS since 1980, resumed independent broadcasting. The number of radio broadcast stations grew from 74 in 1985 to 111 (including both AM and FM stations) by late 1988 and 125 by late 1989. The number of periodicals rose rapidly as the government removed restrictions on the publishing industry.

2. Changes in media: news functions revived, media outlets multiplying

There also were qualitative changes in the South Korean media. The *Christian Broadcasting System (CBS)*, a radio network, began to broadcast news again as well as religious programming in 1987. In the same year, the government partially lifted a long-standing ban on the works of North Korean artists and musicians, many of whom were of South Korean origin. A newspaper named Hankyoreh Shinmun

(한겨레 신문. Liberal-leaning as compared with other several conservative establishment newspapers) run by dissident journalists began publication in 1988. A number of other new dailies also appeared in 1988.

Many of the new weekly and monthly periodicals began to provide careful analyses of political, economic, and national security affairs to smaller and specialised audiences. Observers noted a dramatic increase in press coverage of previously taboo subjects such as political-military relations, factions within the military, the role of security agencies in politics, and the activities of dissident organisations. Opinion polls dealing with these and other sensitive issues also began to appear with increasing regularity. Journalists at several of the Seoul dailies organised trade unions in late 1987 and early 1988 and began to demand editorial autonomy and a greater role in newspaper management.

In 1989, South Korea's four largest dailies such as *Chosun Ilbo* (조선일보), and *Donga Ilbo* (동아일보), *Joongang Ilbo* (중앙일보), and *Hankook Ilbo* (한국일보) had a combined circulation of more than 6.5 million. In contrast, the anti-establishment and liberal *The Hankyoreh Shinmun*, had 450,000 readers, less than the major dailies or other papers like *Kyunghang Shinmun* or *Seoul Shinmun*. All the major dailies were privately owned, except for the government-controlled (or, pro-government) *Seoul Shinmun*. Several other daily publications had specialised readerships among sport fans and youth. Two English-language newspapers were published: the government-subsidised *the Korea Herald*, and the *Korea Times*, which is affiliated with the independent *Hankook Ilbo*. These English newspapers were widely read by foreign embassies, foreign businesses and some Korean intellectuals.

The Yonhap News Agency provided domestic and foreign news to government agencies, newspapers and broadcasters, both central and local. The Yonhap also provided news on South Korean developments in English by computerised transmission via the Asia-Pacific News Network. Additional links with world media were facilitated by four satellite link stations. The International Broadcast Centre, affiliated with KBS and established in June 1988, served some 10,000 broadcasters for the 1988 Seoul Olympics. The government-subsidised KBS radio network broadcasts overseas in twelve languages. Two private radio networks, the Asia Broadcasting Company and Far East Broadcasting Company, serve a wide regional audience that included the Soviet Far East, China, and Japan.

The South Korean government supported *Naewoe Press* (내외통신), which dealt solely with North Korean affairs. Originally a propaganda vehicle that followed the South Korean government line on unification policy issues, *Naewoe Press* became increasingly objective and moderate in tone in the mid-1980s in

interpreting political, social, and economic developments in North Korea, and finally incorporated into the Yonhap News. *Vantage Point*, an English-language publication of *Naewoe Press*, provided in-depth studies of North Korean social, economic, and political developments.

3. Liberal/progressive newspaper founded: Two liberal newspapers functioning

South Korea's principal anti-establishment and liberal/progressive newspaper, *The Hankyoreh Shinmun* (한겨레신문), began publication in May 1988. It was founded by dissident journalists who were “purged” by the government in the early 1970s or in 1980s; many of the paper's reporters and editorial staff left their positions on the established mainstream newspapers to join the new venture. It was launched by collecting shares from the grassroots people on a national scale. The structure and approach of the newspaper reflected the founders' view that in the past the South Korean news media had been “too easily co-opted” (i.e., persuaded to cooperate) by the government. The newspaper was founded by the “people’s shares.”

The paper had a human rights department as well as a mass media department to keep an eye on the government's press policy and to critique the ideological and political biases of other mainstream newspapers. The paper's nationalism and interest in national reunification were symbolically represented in the logotype, which depicted Lake Cheonji at the peak of Baekdu Mountain in North Korea. The Lake is regarded as a national symbol of Koreans or the source of the Korean spirit in the North and the South; in the exclusive use of the Hangeul (Koreans’ unique writing system. This paper does not use Chinese characters on its pages to exhibit its “Koreanness”); and in the type font in which the paper's name was printed, which dates from a famous Korean publication of the eighteenth century. At that time the country was not divided (after the liberation from the Japanese colonial rule, the Korean Peninsula has been divided).

The paper are printed (i.e., the sentences are written) horizontally, from left to right, rather than vertically like other Seoul dailies. At that time, sentences in Korean newspapers were mostly written horizontally, from top to bottom, like Japanese sentences in Japanese newspapers. But these days most of Korean newspapers adopted horizontal writing after the *Hankyoreh Shinmun led in writing Hangeul horizontally* (Korean sentences can be written both horizontally, from left to right, and vertically, from top to bottom. Young Koreans these days learn from books written horizontally. Therefore, it seems that this newspaper adopted horizontal writing to suit youngsters’ tastes. Seoul’s comment)

In other innovations, *The Hankyoreh* relied on sales revenues, private contributions, and the sale of stock, rather than advertising revenues from major corporations, in line with its claim to be "the first newspaper in the world truly

independent of political power and large capital." The newspaper has tried to maintain and reflect liberal views, thus making itself differentiated from other establishment-oriented conservative newspapers. However, in reality, this paper has had to rely on advertising revenues to a certain extent.

In recent decades, the *Hankyoreh Shinmun* and the *Kyunghyang Shinmun* have followed liberal editorial lines, thus playing a relatively minor liberal counter-weight in an overwhelmingly conservative newspaper market. The *Kyunghyang* took turns in being opposition paper and pro-government paper over the decades since its beginning. However, these recent several decades, this paper has kept to the liberal line.

4. Dual ownership allowed by Media Act(2009): Media market more conservative?

The ruling Grand National Party (한나라당) railroaded a new media law allowing several conservative newspapers and pro-government news agency to obtain and operate cable television channels additionally. For a long time, Korean newspapers could not own television channels because of the bans. In contrast to several conservative newspapers that applied for additional television channels to increase revenues, two progressive newspapers did not apply for additional television channels, probably because of lack of funds to obtain and operate television channels. The outcome is a media market overwhelmingly occupied by conservative media. Some media scholars expressed worries that media landscape of Korea does not allow room for diversification of voices and that this can pose a serious obstacle in forming a healthy public sphere.

V. Conclusion: From Control to De-control of Media. Yet, Problems Linger?

This paper looked at roughly four periods of Korean media/journalism diachronically: First, pre-modern period of the Josun Dynasty, when independent officials communicated wishes of officials and ordinary people directly to the king; Second, a period when media was under full control of the Japanese colonialist rule; Third, initial decades of South Korea, when media were under full government control; Fourth, relatively independent and independence-expanding period from the "democratization movement in 1987" until today. This was a long and convoluted path from complete government control of media to media's relative independence from the government.

However, it may be undeniable that the recent Korean governments also tried to control or influence the media in various overt and covert manners, and that it is also true that media oftentimes co-operate(d) with these governments passively or actively. It appears that a mechanism of government control versus media cooperation/resistance works throughout the history of Korean journalism, and probably in journalisms in all other countries, too.

This paper has also shown that with democratization proceeding starting in 1987, other forms of news media, i.e., liberal media, appeared on the horizon of the Korean journalism. This signifies that Koreans currently have relatively “a bit” more diverse media, and more diverse voices than under authoritarian governments. However, it needs to be emphasized that Korea’s media landscape is so overwhelmingly occupied by conservative media that there are concerns expressed by scholars that liberal voices are not appropriately represented and Korea’s public opinion market is not sufficiently diversified.

In fact, one of the major reasons why Korea achieved democracy is that Koreans got better-off than half a century ago. Many domestic and foreign experts say that South Korea may be one of few examples, where democratization and economic growth were achieved simultaneously. In this respect, political democratization and media’s independence or de-control of media may be tautological. A brief overview of media history of Korea illustrated this point.

*Note: How was this paper written? Seol accessed Google on Feb 10, 2016, and punched in the search word “Journalism in South Korea.” Then, Google search linked Seol to Wikipedia, the free online encyclopedia. Once into Wikipedia, appeared “Media of South Korea.” Seol clicked on this title and there appeared a reservoir of information entitled “Media of South Korea.” Seol added Korean words and Chinese character, added corrections onto Wikipedia article, did some redactions, added news information and then made this into a new paper with a new title. The original paper was completed in February 23, 2016 with the title “Media and Journalism in South Korea” and was presented in front of professors of journalism on February 24, 2016 at World Languages University. The longer original paper was later divided into two articles (“Current Status and Issues in South Korean Media Landscape” and “A Short History of Korean Media and Journalism”), and supplemented and refined for FLEDU.UZ publication.