Story of the Eastern Chamber:
Dilemmas of Vernacular Language and Political Authority in Eighteenth-Century Chosŏn

Sixiang Wang

The earliest extant playscript in Korea stands as an enigma. It is an anonymous work written to celebrate a wedding arranged by King Chŏngjo. Called Story of the Eastern Chamber, *the play evokes not only the Chinese* Story of the Western Chamber *through titular reference but also the Chinese vernacular tradition as a whole. Written entirely in Chinese characters, the text weaves vernacular Korean words into the syntax of Chinese* baihua *vernacular, an unusual form which upsets the conventional diglossic binary of literary Chinese (*hanmun*) and vernacular Korean (*hangŭl*). This essay situates the text in a late Chosŏn discourse of linguistic difference marked by pronounced anxieties about the temporal and spatial contingency of language. Some late Chosŏn writers, including the text's putative author, Yi Ok, embraced difference to carve out a localized literary space in Chosŏn Korea. For King Chŏngjo, it threatened the textual foundation of royal authority.* Eastern Chamber *spoke to these dilemmas by imagining a linguistic space where vernacular Korean usage could be represented as a literary language in the Chinese script, reconciling kingly authority with local specificity.*

Keywords: diglossia; vernacular; late Chosŏn; Yi Ok; King Chŏngjo

Korea's earliest extant playscript, and one of only three written entirely in sinographs (i.e., Chinese characters, *hanja* 漢字),[1] *Tongsanggi* 東廂記/東床記 (*Story of the Eastern Chamber*), is a text of many contradictions. Rather than the literary Sinitic (*hanmun* 漢文) idiom typical of Chosŏn period (1392–1910) literary prose,[2] its text interweaves Korean colloquial expressions with the syntactical and lexical habits of vernacular written Chinese.[3] Ostensibly a script, complete

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with stage directions and character roles, it was never performed and unlikely ever intended for performance. Its story celebrates virtuous kingship, possibly written to curry royal favor, but it flouted the very linguistic order espoused by the king. At stake was not simply linguistic convention, but the literary orthodoxies at the basis of royal assertions of authority at the Chosŏn court under King Chŏngjo 正祖 (r. 1776–1800). *Tongsanggi* presents a poignant, if subtle, challenge to these orthodoxies by presenting an alternative set of relationships between authority, language, and writing, a move that becomes clear when the text is situated against broader debates about language in the period.

Tongsanggi embellishes actual events from the summer of 1791. To encourage proper social mores, King Chŏngjo ordered the city government of Seoul to arrange weddings for unmarried individuals. One pair, Kim Hŭijip 金喜集 and a certain Lady Sin 申氏, was too destitute to hold proper wedding rites, despite their elite pedigree. In a show of royal munificence, the court opened its own coffers and storehouses to sponsor their rites.[4] According to *Tongsanggi*'s preface, news of these unusual events broke the spell of idleness suffered by its author. The weariness of "ancient prose and poetry" and his usual soporific reading material had left him aimless and apprehensive, but the marriage of Kim Hŭijip inspired him to try his hand at a new form, a "play" (*kŭk* 劇).

The play tells its story in four acts. The first act introduces us to the unwed and childless Kim Hŭijip. Kim spends the bulk of the act bemoaning his poverty, his advanced age of thirty, and his dim prospects of finding a spouse. His lamentations are interrupted by a government functionary who arrives to demand his name, place of ancestry, and age—information to be added to a register of bachelors and spinsters in preparation for a series of government-arranged weddings.[5] The second act turns to two state functionaries charged with these weddings. Together, they sing the praises of the reigning king, extolling the royal sponsorship of these weddings as yet one more of his grand accomplishments. They investigate the register of the unwed and discover Kim Hŭijip, as well as a twenty-four-year-old Lady Sin. They verify their astrological compatibility (*saju* 四柱) and a match is made. In the third act, a functionary of the Board of Personnel describes the preparations for their wedding. In the meantime, ritual implements, marriage costumes, wedding gifts, and banquet victuals arrive from various government offices, showcasing the material and ceremonial splendor of a court-sponsored wedding. In the fourth and final act, the officials pay the now married Kim a visit. They proceed to amuse themselves at Kim's expense, placing him under a mock judicial interrogation in which Kim Hŭijip is forced to "confess" the circumstances of his wedding. Once his confession is complete, Kim is reminded of the magnitude of the royal favor he has received and is released. Kim orders his attendant to prepare fine wine for his guests. They drink a series of toasts honoring the king and the heir apparent, ending the play.

The immediate backdrop of *Tongsanggi* is clear, but locating the text within broader cultural, literary, and historical contexts is another matter. For one,

there is the outstanding question of authorship. The preface to *Tongsanggi* implores the reader to refrain from "asking who its creator is," which has not stopped later scholars from trying to answer the question.[6] One proposed contender, the royal librarian Yi Tŏngmu 李德懋 (1741–93), had composed on royal orders a short prose piece, "The Story of the Couple Kim and Sin" (*Kim Sin pubu chŏn* 金申夫婦傳), to commemorate Kim Hŭijip's wedding.[7] The piece, however, differs from *Tongsanggi* on several key details.[8] Other scholars have closed the case in favor of Yi Ok 李鈺 (1760–1812), partly because *Tongsanggi*'s style resonates with the literary innovations Yi espoused elsewhere in his oeuvre, leading to speculation that he had composed it on the same royal orders while a student of the Royal Academy.[9]

Both attributions connect *Tongsanggi* to controversies about the relationship between literary form and moral-political authority. In the 1780s and 1790s, King Chŏngjo enacted a series of policies on literary style, dubbed the literary rectification (*munch'e panjŏng* 文體反正) movement by modern scholars.[10] Decrying the influence of late Ming and early Qing popular fiction and literati prose, he targeted in particular Korean writers of a genre of literary vignettes, which he called the *sop'um* (literally "minor works" [Ch. *xiaopin* 小品]).[11] In 1792, he ordered these writers, who included Yi Tŏngmu, to compose essays of self-criticism (*chasongmun* 自訟文) forswearing this deviant style.[12] Among Chŏngjo's other victims was Yi Ok, who, lacking strong political connections, arguably suffered the most for his infractions. In 1796, Chŏngjo discovered Yi Ok had passed a preliminary civil service exam, but disqualified him for writing in the despised *sop'um* style.[13] He was exiled as punishment and never returned to take another exam, foreclosing the potential for an active political life.[14]

No historical record identifies which of Yi Ok's works Chŏngjo found so distasteful. If Yi Ok is indeed its author, *Tongsanggi* would certainly be a candidate. At the time of Kim Hŭijip's wedding, Yi Ok was a student at the National Academy. It was therefore possible that a piece commemorating the event would have come to the king's attention. If so, the king would have balked at its use of vernacular written Chinese, which the king had "branded as heretic[al]" elsewhere, for instance in Pak Chiwŏn's 朴趾源 (1737–1805) *Jehol Diary* (*Yŏrha ilgi* 熱河日記).[15] The question remains, however: why was the king so concerned with literary style in the first place?

In his literary proscriptions, Chŏngjo lumped deviant Ming-Qing prose together with religious heterodoxy, namely Catholic doctrines and Buddhist texts. This move makes sense if, as Gregory Evon has argued, Chŏngjo understood "the problem of heterodox religious beliefs [to be], at root, a literary problem." In this logic, "bad writing" reflected "heterodox reading habits," which potentially weakened the resolve of the Chosŏn elite and opened the way to more dangerous heresies.[16] In Chŏngjo's words: "Once someone turns to *sop'um* [and the like], they have entered the [gates of] heterodox learning."[17] But for King Chŏngjo, the problem of deviant literature went beyond its purported function as a gateway to heterodoxy.

Unlike the Chinese works Chŏngjo objected to, such as *Story of the Western Chamber* (*Xixiang ji* 西廂記) with its celebration of erotic sentiment or *Water Margin* (*Shuihu zhuan* 水滸傳) and its stories of rebel bandits, *Tongsanggi'*s subject matter was not in itself subversive. Its celebration of marital mores and eulogy to kingship seems to shore up orthodoxy, not harm it. Deviance was therefore not reducible to a text's content but was inherent to its very *form*. The king reserved his greatest vitriol for deviant literary styles, insisting they "posed a threat even greater than heterodox learning."[18]

The intimate link between form and ideology then raises the question: what precisely can "improper" form do? If "proper" form shored up orthodoxy, and heterodoxy is by definition what orthodoxy excludes, then understanding deviant literary styles in terms of their impropriety can tell us what they undermined, but not what they sought to create. What needs to be understood instead is how the *form* of *Tongsanggi* relates to the moral and political stakes surrounding language and literary style in the late Chosŏn. Focusing on form, to be sure, cannot settle the question of authorship, but does free us from relying on a biographical anchor to provide contextualization. How *Tongsanggi* fit into its putative author's life becomes less critical once our attention shifts to what the *form* of the text says about how language, writing, politics, and morality related to each other.

The potential of form in *Tongsanggi* hinges on the stability (and plasticity) of the "character," the sinograph (字), as a reference for meaning. For one, *Tongsanggi* connects script and language in a manner that demands us to rethink our understanding of late Chosŏn linguistic space. In a conventional diglossic model, literary Sinitic and vernacular Korean represent two distinct linguistic zones onto which value-laden binaries of "cosmopolitan" and "local," "high" and "low," are mapped. *Tongsanggi,* with its juxtaposition of literary Sinitic, vernacular written Chinese, and Korean colloquialisms, fits poorly within such a scheme. This concurrence of several distinct registers will also jar a modern reader accustomed to firm boundaries between national linguistic spaces and the urge to achieve correspondence between speech and text—that is, the *telos* of *ŏnmun ilch'i* 言文一致.[19] Not only is it impossible to typologize *Tongsanggi'*s text along either diglossic or national categories, the very task of typology may be unnecessary. More productive, instead, is to embrace *Tongsanggi'*s linguistic idiosyncrasies as a case study in what Si Nae Park and Ross King have called the "ecology" of Chosŏn linguistic practice.[20]

These linguistic idiosyncrasies, which boil down to whether sinographs are used as calques or rebuses, that is for semantic or phonetic reference, challenge the privileged position of literary Sinitic as the authoritative paradigm for the script's use. Divesting the sinograph of putatively intrinsic meaning threatened King Chŏngjo's literary and political vision, where royal authority was expressed by enforcing orthodoxies whose very possibility required consistent and authoritative interpretation of the classical past. *Tongsanggi*, however, also provides a rebuttal to this potential objection. It sought to reconcile the moral prerogatives

of the Confucian kingship with cultural specificity, local difference, and historical change. The Korean king could remain a steward of Confucian civilization, but rather than depend on the authority of tradition, he drew his legitimacy from the immediacy of the present and the local—a turn to a vernacular vision of political authority.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE *TONGSANGGI*: BEYOND DIGLOSSIA

The question of form connects the use of language with matters of genre and style. At first glance, *Tongsanggi* is a play, incorporating aural and dramaturgical elements that hint at the potential for performance. The text, however, undercuts that possibility; its admixture of multiple linguistic registers leaves the identity of the language it represents ambiguous. This interdeterminacy upends the ready overlap between vocalization and text reflected in the modernist conceit of *ŏnmun ilch'i*. But if we dispense with this conceit, then the question of how sound relates to the text guides us not toward the identity of the represented language but to something more fundamental about the culture of language and its discourse in premodern Korea.

Tongsanggi's preface, already reticent about authorship, implored the reader to refrain from inquiring into "the text's form and style" (文之為何體裁).[21] Nevertheless, the Chinese *Story of the Western Chamber* stands out as its most obvious inspiration,[22] a connection alluded to in the play's introductory poem:

> Poverty afflicts him greatly; he sighs humbly in the southern quarter;
> The ministers preside over a wedding by the western wall.
> An aging maiden hears of this affair by the northern gates;
> A good husband and wife render thanks for blessings of the eastern bed (*tongsang*).

> 窮措大南洞竊歎
> 諸尚書西城主婚
> 老處女北關徹聞
> 好夫婦東床感恩[23]

The Korean reading of "eastern bed" (Ch. *dongchuang* 東床) as *tongsang,* homophonous with "eastern chamber" (Ch. *dongxiang* 東廂), provides the play with its most well-known title, *Story of the Eastern Chamber*, and points to the piece's matrimonial themes.[24] A number of paratextual references to *Western Chamber*, though likely later insertions, reinforce this association.[25]

We also see parallels with *Western Chamber* in the form of *Tongsanggi.* The introductory poem mentioned above functions as the *zhengmu* 正目, a feature present in the *Western Chamber* and prevalent in Chinese Yuan period (1271–1368) *zaju* 雜劇, whose dramaturgical conventions *Tongsanggi* appropriates.[26] Among these are the indication of stage directions and acting cues (*ke* 科). New personages[27] are introduced with a self-introduction in the form of a quatrain

or couplet (i.e. Ch. *shangchang shi* 上場詩).[28] As in *zaju,* the protagonists' lines alternate between aria (Ch. *chang* 唱) and recitative segments (Ch. *bai* 白), which are in turn organized in song suites (Ch. *qupai* 曲牌).[29]

In keeping with the *zaju's* linguistic conventions, *Tongsanggi* employs a vernacular register of written Chinese, especially in its recitative sections. A literate Chosŏn Korean audience would have recognized the characters 了, 的, and 麽 sprinkled throughout the text as grammatical elements drawn from the vernacular register of Chinese, for they appeared frequently in Chinese popular fiction and the exegetical texts of Song Confucians, even if they seldom appeared in Korean sinographic compositions.[30]

The proximity of *Tongsanggi's* language to vernacular written Chinese, however, is deceptive. Character combinations such as 渠們 or 這個們, which contain individual morphemes characteristic of late imperial Chinese written vernacular, are illustrative. In the above examples, the graph 們 acts, as it does in Chinese vernacular, as a plural marker. Whereas 渠們, as a third-person plural pronoun, does appear occasionally in vernacular Chinese texts, the combination of 這個 們, where a plural marker is attached to a demonstrative pronoun, does not.[31] Instead, this usage parallels the use of plural markers in Korean, such as the modern particle *tŭl* 들. There are also sentences in which Korean nouns, such as terms of polite address like *toryŏng* 도령 (honorific for unmarried men), *sŏbang* 서방 (honorific for married men) and *agissi* 아기씨 (honorific for young women) are represented in the graphs 都令, 書房, and 阿只氏, respectively.[32] As a result, Chinese vernacular diction such as the first-person pronoun 俺 and idiomatic constructions such as 怎般的 and 可得 occur in the same sentence as the Korean word 阿只氏: "As for me—I have pondered a thousand times over about a plan to find an in-law family for myself. What sort of magic could get me a young lady?"[33] Using sinographs to represent Korean lexemes, either as rebuses (using characters for their semantic value) or as phonograms (for their sound value) had ample precedent in Korea.[34] But *Tongsanggi* takes this convention further by incorporating them in literary prose alongside vernacular Chinese.

The interweaving of Korean lexical elements, represented in sinograph-based phonograms and rebuses, still leaves the text largely in the guise and style of vernacular Chinese composition. Take, for example, Kim Hŭijip's self-introduction:

> Kim enters:
>   "'A wanderer without a family in the land of the Great Ming;[35]
>   A monk with hair[36] amid the T'aebaek mountains.'
>   "—this lowly scholar is named Kim Hŭijip. I hail from a downtrodden branch of the Kyŏngju Kims. I was never far away from a ribbon crown. Hairpins and hatstrings [i.e., the regalia of scholars] are passed down from generations before. All in the neighborhood, whether high or low, call me Scholar Kim. But because my family's fortunes have fallen on hard times, I am so poor I can only eat nine times a month and dress up once in ten years. This is exactly the life of one fated to 'delight in poverty.'[37] This small abode by the city wall is about as narrow as a crab's shell!

"There is a folk saying: 'poverty brings embarrassment even to a Dragon's Spring.' It is indeed hardship that has brought me here. In youth, my studies were disrupted; in old age, I have no work. I am neither literatus nor warrior. I have no talents and no virtue. I'm already twenty-eight years of age, and for these reasons finding an in-law family is harder than reaching the azure skies. I will be thirty years of age two years hence, and still I can't rid myself of the label of 'bachelor'!"

[金上] 大明天地無家客 太白山中有髮僧
　　賤生姓金名喜集 家世慶州金氏白邊 冠冕不遠 簪纓相傳 洞内上下 皆以金秀才呼稱 但因家計倒裂 也似貧窮 三旬九食 十年一冠 正是樂貧的生涯 城底小屋 蟹殼殼也窄窄 俗談 艱難醜龍泉 果然俺艱難所致 早歲失學 中年無業 非文非武 無才無德 居然二 十有八歲 因此上所謂仗家難於上青天 人生三十明日再明尚未免都令的稱[38]

Kim Hŭijip's lamentations of destitution, frustrated career prospects, broken family line, and his general failure as a member of the male Korean elite—all would have been readily comprehensible to a literate Chinese audience, especially members of the gentry who shared similar anxieties about downward mobility. But to illustrate this point, Kim employs a Korean saying, a *soktam* 俗談: "Hardship brings embarrassment even to a Dragon's Spring." This saying is converted lexically and syntactically to fit with a vernacular Chinese text, making its recognition as an existing idiom possible only if the reader is already acquainted with the Korean expression.[39] The Korean term for "bachelor," *toryŏng* 都令, would also have puzzled a Chinese reader, but its meaning may nevertheless be surmised from the context.

There is no mistaking the cultural context of the *Tongsanggi*. Familiarity with its Korean setting is most necessary in the third act, where the city officials prepare the marriage banquet. For the wedding, they identify numerous foods, garments, decorative accessories, and ritual paraphernalia to be furnished.[40] The items, some referred to by sinographic compounds that reflect Korean usage, grant the *Tongssangi* a distinctly local color, amplified by appropriations from Korean performance traditions. A case in point are the following lines, spoken at the end of the fourth act, when the characters address the Korean king and the heir apparent:

Today, your lowly servant will with this cup of wine bless our King. I will not forget this royal favor even until the end of my life. As the earth is broad and boundless, and the sea deep; as the heavens are high and lofty, and the red sun eternal, we wish the sage of the Eastern Kingdom [i.e., the king of Chosŏn] long life for ten thousand years without end. *Ŏŭlssigona chŏŭlssigona.*

今日小臣酒一觴誠心祝我王 我王恩終身不可忘 地茫茫碧海深 天高高紅日長 願東國 聖人萬壽無疆 魚乙氏古囉 低乙氏古囉.[41]

Again, a reader familiar only with Chinese texts would have recognized the above as a subject's felicitations to his ruler, but would also have found inscrutable this

string of characters: "魚乙氏古囉 低乙氏古囉." This string, along with another one capping the felicitations addressed to the crown prince—"低乙氏古囉 鳥乙氏古囉"—are meaningless if read according to their semantic value. They are, however, instantly recognizable as the common refrain in *p'ansori* and other traditional Korean folk music forms: *ŏŭlssiguna chŏŭlssiguna, chŏŭlssiguna choŭlssiguna* 어얼씨구나 저얼씨구나, 저얼씨구나 좋을씨구나.[42] The capacity of the cosmopolitan sinographic script to represent the vernacular register had now been expanded, also deployed to describe a wide range of local specificities—place-names, forms of address, clothing, food, popular sayings, and even local performance traditions.[43]

What consequences did the union of Korean and Chinese vernacular practices have for its legibility? Although written as a play, Chosŏn Koreans would have most likely engaged with *Tongsanggi* as text to be read rather than a script to be performed, if the reception history of Chinese plays in Korea is any indication.[44] Chinese plays, most notably *Western Chamber*, circulated in both Chinese editions and Korean vernacular editions, but they were never performed.[45] By the time *Western Chamber* approached the height of its popularity in Korea during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it was treated, even in Qing China, as "desk literature" (案頭文學). The *zaju* form it represented had long been defunct as a staged drama; when *Western Chamber* did take the stage in China, it was through adaptations in other operatic forms. Not surprisingly, Chosŏn readers occasionally misunderstood, or simply disregarded, dramatic conventions such as stage directions (*ke*) and the distinction between aria (*chang*) and recitative (*bai*) when reading *Western Chamber*. In some cases, these stage directions were even completely omitted.[46]

Literate Koreans familiar with Chinese popular literature could understand the play as text. But that does not make the questions of vocalization and aural comprehension irrelevant. After all, *Tongsanggi* makes explicit use of dramaturgical conventions, while its conspicuous admixture of Korean and Chinese vernacular registers invokes the possibility of orality. When a set of Chinese characters pointed to a Korean expression, would the hypothetical actor have said the lines using a native Korean word in its place, or should he have rendered the characters in contemporary Sino-Korean pronunciation? What about a vernacular Chinese expression?

In some respects, these issues are inherent to the sinographic script's (Kr. *muncha* 文字) relationship with spoken language. Logographic rather than phonographic, a string of sinographs possesses a fundamental "plasticity as a *read* sign" that accommodates distinct regional and national traditions of enunciation (as well as different conventions across time); there is no fundamentally "authentic" or "correct" way of speaking a written text.[47] Therefore, no particular language is inherent in the script itself; accessing language from text depends on a set of hermeneutic conventions, such as syntactical analysis via Japanese *kundoku* 訓讀 and Korean *t'o* 吐, combined with regular phonological rules, to create meaning,

assign sounds, and enable enunciation.[48] The possibility of language in the text depends on established practices and authoritative traditions for mapping visual signs to aural and semantic referents.[49] In the case of *Tongsanggi*, a regime of vocalization is suggested only in one late edition of the text, printed in 1918. This version employs the *t'o* system, which appends syntactical elements in the Korean alphabet to the original sinographic text. This technique, however, is absent in the text's earlier renditions.[50]

The difficulties a text such as *Tongsanggi* presents for analysis are in many respects an artifact of conventional understandings of Chosŏn linguistic space as "diglossic"—that is to say, where the cosmopolitan written language of literary Sinitic was conceived as diametrically opposed to Korean oral traditions and writing in vernacular Korean script.[51] The standard diglossic model divides linguistic practices according to a series of binaries in: script (Sinoscript vs. Korean alphabet), register (cosmopolitan vs. vernacular), gender (male vs. female), and finally, space and audience (public vs. private). This model is tempting because Chosŏn Koreans also employed binary linguistic categories, but not all binary linguistic distinctions are strictly diglossic. When used rigorously, "diglossia" provides a "synchronic typology" of sociolinguistic contexts where we observe an *internal* split between H(igh) and L(ow) varieties of the *same* language that are respectively bound to particular social spaces or functions. As variants of the *same* language, the two registers should also be genetically related, possessing a "diachronic, evolutionary" relationship with one another. The coexistence of "cosmopolitan Chinese" and "vernacular Korean" does reflect an H/L division to be sure, but the two registers are not genetically related.[52]

The problem is not simply of emic Chosŏn and etic linguistics categories, because, as Ross King has argued, diglossia is also a misleading characterization of any Chosŏn perspective. The binary categories in the Chosŏn discourse of language are only vaguely diglossic in how they sort different registers of language according to social and moral value. For instance, writing in the Korean alphabet was referred to as *ŏnmun* 諺文 (vernacular writing) or *ŏncha* 諺字 (vernacular script), which was counterposed to writing in literary Sinitic (Kr. *muncha* 文字). The term *ŏn* 諺 indexed a register of the spoken or the local; though usually translated as "vernacular," it may better approximate the sense of "colloquial." Korean words, even if rendered in sinographs, and not the Korean alphabet, could still be referred to as *iŏn* 俚諺 (colloquialism). "Local" (*hyang* 鄉 or *t'o* 土) deviations from the "standard" (Kr. *chŏng*, Ch. *zheng* 正) or the "elegant" (Kr. *a*, Ch. *ya* 雅), fit under the rubric of *sok* 俗 (Ch. *su*), the "vulgar" or the "vernacular." Not exclusive to language, the category of *sok* encompassed many senses of the local, referring to Korean habits as well as Chinese customs. These binaries therefore do not correspond to diglossic categories or even describe a diglossic linguistic situation.

When these emic pairings are examined in toto, instead of as individual pairs, what emerges is an understanding of language that is typologically multidimensional. Mapping notions such as "local" and "standard," "vernacular" and
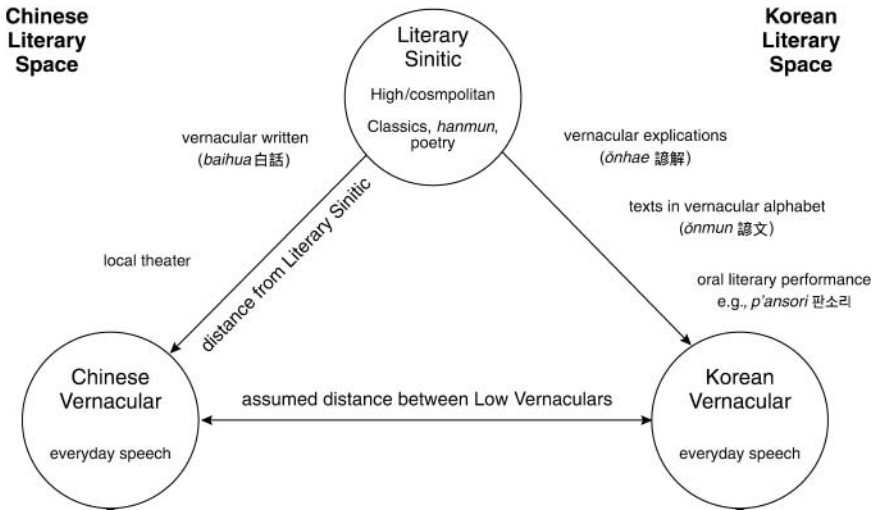
Figure 1. Diglossic model: distance between Korean and Chinese Vernaculars mediated by literary Sinitic

"literary," along a continuum (which is the conceptual structure implied by diglossic understandings of Chosŏn linguistic space) leaves much unexplained, in particular the place of vernacular written Chinese in Chosŏn Korea. The continuum model presumes that literary Sinitic provided the common point of contact between Korean and Chinese literary and cultural forms. That is to say, a literary Sinitic repertoire and the common classical culture it represented supposedly accounted for whatever overlaps there may have been in Korean and Chinese vernacular forms. The more distant a genre or text was from the literary language, the closer it was to everyday speech—implying spoken varieties of Chinese and Korean occupied points of furthest distance from one another. Literature in the Korean script and vernacular written Chinese would thus be disconnected, lying on opposite ends of this gradient.

But where, for instance, would *Tongsanggi* fit in such a scheme? Forged at the juncture of two different "local" linguistic spaces—vernacular written Chinese and Korean—*Tongsanggi* does more than simply blur the boundaries between Korean and Chinese. It also collapses the distance between them by treating their differences as incremental rather than fundamental. The language of *Tongsanggi,* by using written vernacular Chinese forms as a vehicle for Korean vernacular expression, results in what Yun Chiyang describes as an unprecedented and experimental "Korean *baihua*." It was a constructed vernacular register where the lexicon of the Korean everyday was embedded in the syntax of vernacular written Chinese.[53] Rather than a hybrid of "Chinese" with "Korean" elements, it was a vernacular register of sinographic writing that textualized Korean as a new type of Sinitic vernacular.
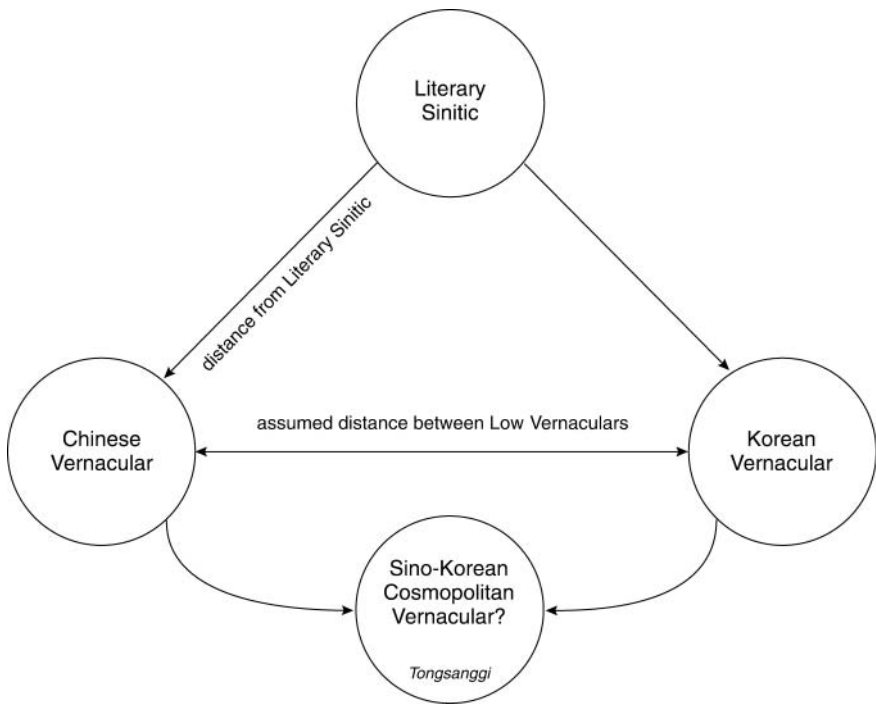
Figure 2. *Tongsanggi* collapses the distance between Chinese and Korean vernaculars.

Herein lies the significance of employing the literary and cosmopolitan sino-graphic script, instead of the "vernacular" (Korean) script. Whatever its inflections of local specificity, *Tongsanggi* remained within a textual ecumene based on the "same script" (Kr. *tongmun*, Ch. *tongwen* 同文). Following a similar logic to *idu* writing in Korea and Chữ Nôm 字南 in Vietnam (with the exception that *Tongsanggi* did not create new graphs, and thus remained potentially legible to a Chinese audience), the usage in *Tongsanggi* was conceived as but one more variant of (and therefore compatible with) a universal standard.[54]

The language of *Tongsanggi* provides for something akin to a written Sino-Korean cosmopolitan vernacular. It was a mode of writing that maintained textual interoperability between Korean and Chinese vernacular spaces, rendering the difference between "Chinese" and "Korean" a moot point, since in theory all vernacular variations could be accommodated with a common script. This interoperability also obviated the mediating role of classical and literary language, since vernacular written Chinese sufficed as a common medium. In other words, *Tongsanggi* inscribed a set of novel conventions that could serve both vernacular and cosmopolitan purposes. But what are we to make of this move? A vernacular, by being bound to a specific local context, sacrifices the ability to be translocal.

It cannot cross horizontal space as effectively as a cosmopolitan language, but in exchange, it gains the power to define a local space.[55] At first glance, the potential of *Tongsanggi's* conventions to serve as a vernacular seems dubious. With colloquial expressions transposed from another space and time, *Tongsanggi* imagined a Korea where the spoken language followed the syntax of Yuan-period Mandarin, sprinkled with contemporary Korean words. Its text was non-local because it referenced conventions of speech, diction, and syntax that ultimately belonged to nowhere, and thus forwent the power of circumscribing a local space, an advantage normally accorded to a vernacular. Yet, its conventions also appear unsuited for a cosmopolitan language. It belongs to no one locale, but it also depends on local legibility to be comprehensible, jeopardizing its ability to transmit across wider cultural zones.

Despite these apparent handicaps, this experimental cosmopolitan vernacular had more potential than it would first appear. A member of the late Chosŏn elite, somebody familiar with vernacular Chinese literature, spoken Korean, and Korean adaptations of sinographic writing, would still have found *Tongsanggi* an eminently legible text. As an "intermediate inscriptional variet[y]," *Tongsanggi* fits poorly in the teleology of "scripto-nationalist narratives of hangul's triumph over an alien and evil *hanmun*" where vernacularization—the erosion of the "cosmopolitan" language in favor of distinct national linguist spaces—is erroneously assumed to be the inevitable fate of "diglossic" sociolinguistic arrangements.[56] Likewise, it cannot satisfy modernist demands for one-to-one correspondence between text and speech, but the preoccupations of the early twentieth century were not its concern. Though ultimately a path not taken, its linguistic experiment was not, in fact, an obvious dead end at the time, for it commented on distinctly eighteenth-century concerns: the anxieties spurred by an awareness of growing cultural and linguistic distance from both Chosŏn Korea's classical roots and their common heirs in China. Against these anxieties, it will become clear why it was desirable for one written language to simultaneously accommodate both vernacular difference and cross the distance such difference created.

DISCOURSES OF "VERNACULAR" IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY CHOSŎN KOREA

During the late eighteenth century, Chosŏn writers, including *Tongsanggi's* putative author, Yi Ok, often wrote self-consciously about how language was bound to time, location, and social level. Suffusing these discussions was a sense of anxiety about how universal horizons could be maintained against the vicissitudes of time and diversity across space. These sensibilities arose at least in part because of increased travel opportunities to China in the eighteenth century. Laxer Qing and Chosŏn restrictions meant more Koreans could travel to Beijing as members of a tribute mission's entourage. Members of the Chosŏn elite armed with knowledge

of the classics and literary language relished the opportunity for cultural exchange, but also confronted differences in the speech, writing, and intellectual practices of Chinese contemporaries.[57] As regular travelers to China, Korean official interpreters were long cognizant of differences in language and the evolution of Chinese spoken language over time.[58] They were, however, frequently occupied with official business, so the many hangers-on of an embassy such as Hong Taeyong 洪大容 (1731–83) and Pak Chiwŏn often had to make do with whatever spoken Chinese they acquired in leisure or with letter exchanges and brush conversations (*p'iltam* 筆談) in their encounters with locals as they wandered the streets of Beijing.[59]

Linguistic difference emerges as a common theme in such exchanges. For Hong Taeyong, differences between Korean practice, classical usage, and contemporary Chinese convention provided him an opportunity to demonstrate a Korean's superior grasp of standards of prosody. In a letter to a Chinese friend, Hong pointed out a faulty rhyme in one of this friend's poems, a mistake committed because he failed to grasp the difference between contemporary Mandarin pronunciation and the canons of classical phonology. Hong explained he caught the error because the Korean alphabet could accurately notate individual phonemes, corresponding to absolute sounds. Boasting that Korean knowledge was therefore impervious to erosion over time, he implied Korean knowledge of Sinitic phonology was a more authoritative guide than contemporary Chinese speech.[60]

Sound and speech also highlighted the disjunction between cultural literacy and the ability to communicate that translated to other arenas of cultural activity. Korean travelers struggled to understand the lines spoken and sung during performances of popular drama.[61] These visitors, though estranged from the oral immediacy of the theatrical performance, remained keen consumers of its cultural repertoires.[62] Pak Saho 朴思浩 (1784–?), who visited Beijing in 1828, did not understand the speech, but could nonetheless recognize the historical figures, cultural references, and literary significance of the plays he saw.[63] Remarking on how the actors' garb, "imitates the dress of the various ages,"[64] he echoed the observations of Pak Chega 朴齊家 (1750–1815) several decades earlier, who expressed his admiration for the Ming-style dress in the costumes of popular theater. In Korean eyes, the Manchu conquest of China had plunged the onetime center of civilization into barbarity. Costume, as a vestige of Ming practice, was a powerful reminder, not only of the contingency of contemporary practices, but also of the larger stakes of maintaining connections to the past.[65] In one brush conversation with Chinese scholars, Pak Chiwŏn and his interlocutors lamented what they saw to be the decline of shared classical norms that Korea and China supposedly shared.[66] Pak had hoped to learn of *yayue* 雅樂 (Kr. *a'ak*), the elegant music of court ceremony, but noted that even in the imperial palace, it was now the music of popular theater that was in vogue.[67] In their eyes, baser derivations had supplanted classical models, just as the tunes of popular theater had displaced the *yayue*. Not even the music of popular theater could escape the ravages of time: in their words, the once popular *Story of the Western Chamber* "lulled one to

sleep," while the newer *Peony Pavilion* "piqued one's desire to listen."[68] If change was inevitable, how should they, as heirs of the classical past living in the present, recover immutable models from the long arc of time?

The contours of this problem had long been a source of controversy in Chosŏn. The anxieties surrounding local difference and cultural divergence were, for instance, articulated at the very outset of the Korean alphabet's invention. When King Sejong 世宗 (r. 1418–50) promulgated the Korean alphabet in 1443, courtiers such as Ch'oe Malli 崔萬理 (?–1445) accused the king of forsaking a common civilized script (*tongmun* 同文).[69] Ultimately, the king and Ch'oe's disagreements over the value of the new alphabet arose from shared concerns: that divergent cultural and linguistic evolution in Korea and China threatened cultural cleavage from the classical foundations of a civilized order.[70] King Sejong envisioned the alphabet as a tool to "correct the sounds," a useful technology for preserving linguistic stability and a solution to the problem of temporal and spatial distance.[71] In contrast, Ch'oe saw it as a mediator that disrupted Korea's ability to interface with the universals of Confucian civilization. For him, the Korean alphabet followed the footsteps of "barbarians like the Tanguts, Mongols, and Japanese," while he advocated "Chinese" ways as the only sure method to preserve links to the classical past. But could Ch'oe's logic still hold in the eighteenth century, when the Chinese, too, seemed to have abandoned classical models in favor of the vernacular, the fashionable, and the local?

For all their acrimony, Ch'oe Malli and King Sejong also indulged a common conceit about the sinograph—the belief that it possessed an intrinsic meaning tied to "correct" sound values. Hong Taeyong, too, adhered to this premise, believing the Korean script simply granted better access to these truths. Not all his contemporaries were convinced Korean linguistic conventions were superior to Chinese ones, however. Pak Chega, in his *Discourse on Northern Learning* (*Pukhak ŭi* 北學議), wrote that "Chinese spoken language" was still ultimately the basis of "literary writing" (漢語為文字之根本). Unlike Koreans, who had to rely on the mediation of Korean script explications (*ŏnhae* 諺解) to comprehend "literary language," the Chinese had the advantage of using the lexical repertoire of the literary language in their daily speech.[72] He gave the example of the character "heaven" (Kr. *ch'ŏn*, Ch. *tian* 天). Whereas Koreans referred to heaven as *hanŭl* in their everyday speech, but *ch'ŏn* when represented in writing, the Chinese used the same word in both spoken language and text. Proximity meant that even uneducated Chinese might inadvertently blurt out sentences in the diction and syntax of the classics. Koreans, on the other hand, pored over books for many more years and yet "lagged far behind the Chinese." The only way out, Pak argued, was for Koreans to abandon the use of their native language and adopt spoken Chinese in daily life.[73] This not-so-modest proposal spoke to the tensions that emerge when linguistic difference interferes with a cultural identification based on a cosmopolitan written, literary language. Pak's proposal strained to solve this conundrum by erasing linguistic difference altogether.

At first blush, *Tongsanggi* seems to actualize Pak's radical vision, albeit only in the imagined space of text. The denizens of this literary depiction of an imagined Korea shift seamlessly from vernacular Chinese to the highly literary register of its arias. But while Pak Chega valued spoken language as a mediator for accessing the semantics, syntax, and phonology of the classics, *Tongsanggi* detaches the sinograph from classical diction through its liberal mixture of rebuses and phonograms. The displacement of classical models echoed more closely Yi Ok's defense of vernacular, local, and spoken linguistic forms in his essay "On the Colloquial and the Vernacular."[74]

In this essay, Yi Ok follows a line of argumentation elevating Korean vernacular into a literary register worthy of written Sinitic. Yi Ok first advances a sense of nominal relativism, demolishing the notion that objects have an inherent, original label. In a very Zhuangzian statement, he writes, "I cannot know whether what others name something is truly its name; [neither] can I know whether what I name it is really its name."[75] Neither Korean, nor Chinese, nor classical names for things were "the names officially decreed by [the god] Pan Gu" after he created the universe by splitting heaven and earth, so there was no reason to privilege ancient or contemporary Chinese usages over Korean ones.[76] That the Koreans called paper *cho[ng]-i* 照意 (a phonogram for the vernacular Korean word for paper), while the Chinese called paper *zhi* 紙, owed to time and place alone, for "they called things whatever they had named them; [just as] we call things whatever we named them."[77] Seen from Yi Ok's perspective, the hybrid uses of the sinograph in *Tongsanggi* were no more than one possible convention out of many and anticipated, for instance the even more radical poetry of Kim Satkat 金삿갓 (1807–63), which not only made creative use of Korean lexica in the form of puns and double entendres, but also incorporated colloquial Korean syntax and grammar into the form of classical poetry.[78]

To unmoor the sinograph from the meanings and readings of the classics was to treat it as a flexible technology rather than a source of authority. Yi does not cast this move as a radical departure, but appeals to hoary, if archaic, traditions in Korea. Venerable figures like the Koryŏ historian Kim Pusik 金富軾 (1075–1151) and the monk scholar Iryŏn 一然 (1206–89) had after all employed sinographs to represent Korean words.[79] They had done so, Yi argues, out of necessity. Some entities, known only by "local sounds" and "unnamed by literary characters [i.e., sinographs]," give the writer no choice but to invent new character compounds.[80] The author otherwise risks absurdity. One Korean poet once referred to a local bird not by its Korean name, but as a *pichwi* 翡翠 (Ch. *feicui*), the kingfisher of classical literature, simply because it, too, had green feathers. The resulting line, "amid flourishing bamboo by a village abode, the kingfisher cries," creates an incongruity, where a bird from the tropics of southeast Asia "now perched in a Chosŏn villager's home."[81]

Like his contemporaries, Yi Ok addressed the problem of how local specificity and temporal change could be reconciled with universal cultural horizons. While

others might insist that a writer should follow the canonical models of the "Airs of the States [of the Zhou], the Music Bureau [of the Han] (樂府) or the Lyrics and Songs [of the Song and Yuan?] (詞曲)," Yi tells us that every dynasty, from the ancient Xia (trad. 2070–1600 BCE) to the more recent Song (960–1276 CE), possessed a poetry unique to its own age. Even in classical times, "each feudal state's poetry [was] different from another's." When the "world transforms in thirty years, and the customs vary with every one hundred leagues," Yi Ok rejects the possibility of eternal orthodoxies.[82] Rather than a follower of models, a writer is better thought of as "the translator of the myriad things of heaven and earth."[83] Just like language translators who "do not change the names of [the Mongol warlord] Naghachu and [the Jesuit missionary] Matteo Ricci simply because their sounds are unfamiliar,"[84] the writer owes the same to the diversity of "heaven and earth," which does not suddenly disappear because one happens to be in Korea.[85]

For all of Yi's embrace of the spatial and temporal contingency of language, he never sought to devalue *muncha* "literary writing" (i.e., sinographic script) or disconnect the act of writing from the classical past. Yi Ok's oeuvre reflects a thoroughgoing involvement with the literary Sinitic tradition, even as he sought to test the limits of generic conventions within that tradition.[86] Conspicuously absent in Yi's oeuvre is any mention of the vernacular Korean script as a potential vehicle for his embrace of the colloquial and the local. The burden of carrying Korea's linguistic difference and local color fell entirely on sinographs. Yi Ok insisted their adaptation to this end would not "usurp" (僭) good taste or "confound" (詭) the text's meaning, but simply "accord with the times," a central theme in Yi Ok's view of literature.[87]

Yi's valorization of the local and the contemporary drew inspiration from the very late Ming authors his king had condemned in the literary rectification campaign.[88] Yi Ok's celebration of the local and the colloquial echoed the lyrical authenticity advocated by the Yuan brothers of the Gongan school (公安派), while "accordance with the times" was a common refrain of intellectuals associated with the Taizhou school (泰州派) such as Li Zhi 李贄 (1527–1602) and Wang Ji 王畿 (1498–1583).[89] Yet, despite the king's condemnation of Yi Ok, and the writing Yi admired, what brought them together was a common awareness of the instability of literary language. What set them apart was how they reacted to this instability—whether to shore up existing models, as King Chŏngjo advocated, or to embrace the possibilities instability enabled, as Yi Ok had done. By insisting that one "does not use the names of ancients to name oneself," but instead one's own "names to name oneself,"[90] Yi also invited a disconcerting relativism, one which undermined a cornerstone of Confucian orthodoxy: the idea that moral edification and social order must proceed from the "rectification of names" (正名).[91] Against the temporal and historical contingency of language, a sense of unchanging universality was no longer possible and with that, the door to moral relativism was opened. If meaning is contingent on convention, then novel literary styles could also posit alternative relations between authority and language.

KINGSHIP AND AUTHORITY IN *TONGSANGGI*

Yi Ok was an advocate of linguistic experimentation, but *Tongsanggi* is exceptional, even in the context of Yi Ok's oeuvre. What did *Tongsanggi* specifically have to say regarding late Chosŏn politics of language and the communicability of the local with the universal? One crucial feature of *Tongsanggi*, which has been hitherto neglected, is its treatment of the civilizing mission of Korean kingship. Its panegyrics to kingship, along with how it dialogues with its literary antecedents, link linguistic innovation to questions of political authority, which was ultimately what was at stake for King Chŏngjo in his literary campaigns. *Tongsanggi,* as did Chŏngjo, envisioned an intimate connection between language and authority, but one with important distinctions from what the king espoused.

King Chŏngjo was hardly alone in identifying imported Chinese texts as the primary vector for moral corruption.[92] Yi Tŏngmu, an avid consumer of these texts, once cast *Western Chamber* as the moral antithesis to the classics. In a letter to his friend Pak Chega, who was then bedridden with illness, Yi warned that recovery demanded the "purgation of the heart and the calming of the spirit." Pak's daily perusal of *Western Chamber*, with its stimulating scenes of romantic love and thinly veiled depictions of sex, would only make his illness worse. In jest, Yi urged Pak to "use [his] brush to slay" the text's redactor Jin Shengtan 金聖歎 (1608–61) and "burn his books by his own hand." For an antidote, Pak should then instead recite the *Analects* every day to effect a speedy recovery.[93]

There are formal and thematic parallels between *Western Chamber* and *Tongsanggi,* but they offer vastly different resolutions to the problem of gender disorder. In *Western Chamber*, the male protagonist, Zhang Junrui 張君瑞, violates gendered boundaries to pursue a premarital romance with his betrothed, Cui Yingying 崔鶯鶯. Their premature consummation jeopardizes their eventual union as a married couple when Cui Yingying's mother discovers their trysts. She allows them to marry under the condition that Zhang redeem himself by passing the civil service exams. Zhang is successful and the eventual marriage retroactively sanctifies their illicit romance. *Tongsanggi* takes no such detour. Kim Hŭijip's frustrated sexuality (even if it provides a modicum of comic relief) is resolved through royal fiat. The state matches the old bachelor with a spinster and corrects the imbalance in the gendered order through the royally sponsored wedding.

Both storylines revolve around the theme of marriage, which according to a Confucian logic, was an archetypal ritual, where the proper expression of emotions it modeled should invite behavioral emulation. As understood through the Mao commentaries (毛詩) of the first piece in *Book of Songs*, "Cry of the Fish Hawks" (關雎), the virtuous behavior of the king's primary consort "established propriety between husband and wife" as the "beginning of moral influence."[94] *Western Chamber* interrogates this relationship between emotions and propriety through its celebration of romance and its depiction of ritual failure; *Tongsanggi*,

on the other hand, validates this vision of ritual's moral power.[95] It shies away from even the possibility of sexual impropriety. Consider the following aria:

> In the bright snow of the winter moon, someone cannot bear the cold.
> The autumn flower may have allure, but with spring gone, who would call it beautiful?
> This cluster of fragrant sorrow bloats one to death.
> Even without asking, one already knows that a silkworm once old can still spin a cocoon,
> A flower once old can still bear pollen, but a virgin once old—what is she to do?

> 冬月明雪裏 人嫌冷
> 秋花妍 春去誰稱美
> 一叢香愁 令人脹死
> 不問可知 蠶老了猶能室
> 花老了尚能子 處女老了奈何爾.[96]

Here, the official charged with planning the wedding speaks through the tropes of youth and beauty wasted, themes reminiscent of a standard boudoir lament (Kr. *kyuwŏn*, Ch. *guiyuan* 閨怨). But here—spoken through a male, not female, voice—ephemerality threatens not the loss of romantic favor, but fertility. With Shin's womanhood thus reduced to reproductive potential, redemption comes only through her wedding with Kim Hŭijip. Whereas in *Western Chamber* the female protagonist, Cui Yingying, has her own speaking roles and voices her own perspective, her Korean counterpart is completely effaced, with her proxy, the male official, *imagining* what Sin must feel instead. Indeed, Sin is absent from the play entirely. Without a spunky maid like Hongniang 紅娘 to facilitate secret meetings, the two betrothed never meet before the royally sponsored ceremony, let alone commence an illicit affair. In the pristinely bounded gender spaces of *Tongsanggi*, state officials replace Hongniang as the couple's go-betweens.[97]

If *Western Chamber* is seen more broadly as representative of a tradition of romantic drama and fiction in China, then *Tongsanggi*'s repudiation of its antecessor's themes counts also as a counternarrative to the themes of romantic love and sexual license so prominent in not only *Western Chamber*, but a group of late Ming and early Qing texts typical of the "cult of emotion" (*qing*).[98] *Tongsanggi* does not elevate emotional expression above social convention, as is characteristic of such texts and what they inspired in Korea.[99] Instead, everything returns to the classical ideals of ritual, reaffirmed by a virtuous king's intervention in the rite of marriage.

Tongsanggi, in this direct, if crude, eulogy to a living king, reoriented the issues of romance, sex, and propriety in the service of virtuous kingship. The royal regulation of marriage rites, once critical to Korea's "Confucian" social transformation, remained a core expression of its civilizing mission.[100] In *Tongsanggi*, royal sponsorship of marriage is compared to other instances of royal activism. In the

second act of the play, an official extols the "countless great and virtuous deeds accomplished by the state."[101] He praises how the king "cared for and nurtured the people" by opening granaries during a famine as parallel examples of "the king's beneficence."[102] These royal acts not only rescued the "common people of the northern provinces,"[103] but also saved Kim Hŭijip from never "knowing what it is like to have in-laws" even after "his hair has turned white as Chinese silk."[104] Treating these two acts in the same vein resonates with a Mencian view of benevolent government. One passage in *Mencius* recounts how Mencius explained to King Hui of Liang that sexual desire in and of itself brings no harm to the ruler, so long as "there were no spurned women or unmarried men" in the kingdom. What mattered was that "the common people [enjoy] what the king delights in." In subsequent passages, fulfillment of sexual desire through the regulation of marriage becomes analogous to providing for the livelihood of the common people in a broader program of benevolent kingship where both the material and psychological needs of the people were paramount priorities.[105] Encouraging marriage ensured the king's subjects could satisfy their natural human desires without violating propriety.[106]

This vision of a benevolent and activist kingship converges with both Chŏngjo's views of the monarch's role in governance and his literary policies.[107] As scholar An Taehoe has argued, it is inadequate to construe Chŏngjo's literary rectification campaign simply as the convulsions of a conservative king, afraid of novel and foreign ideas. Chŏngjo was certainly a traditionalist, but he was also a radical. His support for the orthodox position that "literature should serve as a vehicle for the Way" (*mun i chaedo* 文以載道) was not unique, but his politicization of literature owed in part to an unusually centralized vision of royal authority that emerged as a response to factionalism at court. The king was "the bright moon that illuminates ten thousand streams," an "august pivot" that could balance disparate and contending interests.[108] Through rectifying literary style, Chŏngjo asserted a royal primacy that could manage political factions at court, but also tend to the health of his kingdom—only with the monarch's tireless intervention could his kingdom be saved.[109]

To stanch moral and cultural corruption, King Chŏngjo's core strategy was to erect proper literary models ready for emulation. Reinforcing orthodoxy here was meant to ensure "the continuity of knowledge" with the classical past, a continuity threatened, as Gregory Evon argues, by linguistic innovation.[110] The recently popular works of the late Ming and early Qing "harmed moral order"; their influence was why modern prose lacked the "great workmanship" of the "Grand Secretariat" (無館閣大手筆), a reference to the literary style of the early Ming grand secretaries.[111] Associated with political encomium, this style suited the king's needs as he patronized writers in his version of the Secretariat, the Kyujanggak Academy (奎章閣), to write in the service of good government and political ideals.[112] Through them, Chŏngjo ordered a comprehensive reprinting of Zhu Xi's writings and commissioned *Embroidered Words of the Garden of Letters* (*Munwŏn pobul*

文苑黼黻), a collection of memorials, edicts, and policy proposals penned by famous officials of the past to serve as models for the present.[113] Chŏngjo also encouraged writing about model officials, such as Ch'ae Chegong's 蔡濟恭 (1720–99) "Tale of the Loyal General Pak Yŏngsŏ" (*Ch'ungjanggong Pak Yŏngsŏ chŏn* 忠壯公朴永緒傳), which, as Youme Kim puts it, depicts a "morally healthy ruling class." He also propagated moral models for the population at large, when he commissioned works like *Illustrated Guide to the Five Virtues* (*Oryun haengsil to* 五倫 行實圖), which celebrated the virtuous actions of commoners and aristocrats alike.[114] Crafting exemplars above for emulation below reflected a top-down understanding of moral authority, with the Chosŏn court as its source.

Tongsanggi, despite its eulogy to royal authority, offers a rather different vision of moral and political authority. The antagonistic views of Chŏngjo and Yi Ok on literature provide a useful point of departure. Their difference revolves in part around a central tension regarding the place of moral suasion. If we adopt Chŏngjo's position, that "learning without benefit to the orthodox way" is "without useful purpose,"[115] then Yi Ok's interests in language, literary history, and Chinese popular fiction are obvious departures from "self-evident Confucian moral and political purposes."[116] But if we do not adopt Chŏngjo's premise, we see that Yi's echoes of classical poetics present a view no less bereft of moral content than the orthodoxy Chŏngjo championed. Since Chŏngjo and Yi Ok drew from the same classical wellspring, the differences between their approaches are better understood along different views of literature's moral function. Yi's work often lampooned misbehaving elites, such as the philandering and cheating student Sim, for falling short of declared moral standards.[117] In contrast to Chŏngjo's preference for encomium, where praise of authority erected positive models, Yi Ok turned to satire.

The two modes of encomium and satire are complementary in the Mao commentary on *The Book of Songs.* This classical formulation describes literature's moral function as follows: "those above use Airs [or: exert literary influence] (*feng* 風) to transform those below; those below use the Airs [or: satirize] to censure those above."[118] In *The Book of Songs,* the folk songs of the Airs of the States fulfilled the latter function. Their eulogies of virtue and verses of critique provided moral lessons through their faithful reflection of local conditions. Whereas Chŏngjo sought to influence society from above, Yi Ok arrogated the power of moral suasion by censuring from below. When Yi Ok asks rhetorically, "How is it that we, who live in the years of the Qianlong reign of the Great Qing and who dwell in the city of Hanyang in Chosŏn dare to stretch out our necks and open our thin eyes, and speak idly of the Airs of the States . . . the Music Bureau, and the lyrics and songs?," he not only implied that his own works *were* the current version of these classical forms.[119] By doing so, he also made a moral case for the representation of local specificity. Since the moral force of these lyrical genres drew from the directness of their emotional expression, the literary use of colloquialism and local language was desirable in the service of this authentic expression.[120]

These ideas were not necessarily antithetical to kingly authority, but they did pose a challenge to the king's top-down visions of moral influence and literature's social function. The deeper subversion of Yi's vision emerged less from claims to provoke his ruler through literature (after all, *The Book of Songs* permitted such provocations as a form of loyal remonstrance) than from how it implicitly undercut the diachronic claims of royal authority. The raison d'être of Confucian kingship lay in its ability to channel universal moral norms rooted in a classical past and manifest in the lessons of history.[121] Yi Ok, by tying the project of literature to the changing circumstances of the times, dispensed with the stability of tradition, and questioned its very possibility.[122] If moral lessons could be readily drawn from local experiences, and expressed and represented through vernacular examples, if not in vernacular language, what would be the role of king as sage ruler? What need would there be to maintain an unbroken line of succession to the classical past? What would be the purpose of a sovereign authority that rested on its ability to represent universal ideals and models drawn from that past? What room was there for the civilizing prerogatives of the sovereign and the moral models it sought to raise?

Tongsanggi, as a text, stands between the king and the exile to offer possible answers, with the potential to reconcile them. *Tongsanggi,* by taking the "old" bachelor Kim as the butt of light humor, highlighted the plight of fallen *yangban* who struggled to maintain their status despite material deprivation.[123] Whatever social critique this provided was ultimately resolved through kingly intervention. Kingship remained the lynchpin of moral order, fulfilling the fundamental charge of "correcting mores" (移風俗), as delineated in *The Book of Songs*. The text also deflected the potential charge that deviance from classical styles causes moral corruption. *Tongsanggi* showed that colloquial language and vernacular culture could serve as a vehicle for moral edification and the court's civilizing influence. Kingship could maintain its position as civilizer, even within a vernacular literary space (but with the caveat that this space be circumscribed by the sinograph). Linguistic deviation from past models no longer threatened moral corruption; instead it offered a new source of moral authority, actualized through the embrace of local specificity.

* * *

Tongsanggi, through anachronism, a conflation of space, and the mixing of linguistic registers, blurred national, temporal, and stylistic boundaries. It combined the forms and diction of literary Chinese with the dramaturgical language and format of the Yuan period *zaju* drama. It also made use of colloquial speech, mixing contemporary spoken Chinese and Korean vernacular words, all the while placing Korean lyrical forms with archaic Chinese colloquialisms on the same page. Examining these features brings to the fore yet again how reductive modern-day diglossic views of the Chosŏn linguistic space are and suggests the urgency of a serious and comprehensive reexamination of Chosŏn Korea's linguistic ecology.

What emerges from *Tongsanggi* and contemporary discussions about the temporal and spatial contingency of language was a dilemma that was a basso continuo in Chosŏn's literary, intellectual, and political history. That is, how Chosŏn particularity should be recognized against universal horizons—for instance, how continuity could be maintained through cultural change and linguistic difference. To the author of *Tongsanggi*, whether Yi Ok or a different individual, the text was less a challenge to royal authority than a proof-of-concept, a vision of literature and politics that could embrace Chosŏn Korea's local context and still accommodate the demands of royal authority. But when novel literary works like *Tongsanggi* embraced local colloquialisms, they still unhinged linguistic signs from putatively stable meanings, shaking the foundations of textual authority, which notions of Confucian universalism and the late Chosŏn vision of kingship depended on for their articulation. For Chŏngjo, who saw the stewardship of cultural continuity as the most urgent task of kingship, even the insinuation of relativism counted as provocation.[124]

In Chosŏn Korea, debates over such questions are often overlooked because they are expressed in a common Confucian discourse. But a common discourse does not translate into shared views. When confronted with the problem of change and distance, Chŏngjo hoped to reinforce the stability of the written word. Some of his contemporaries, including the author of *Tongsanggi*, offered a different resolution. They tried to embrace vernacular language, linguistic change, and Korea's local specificity and argued for their essential compatibility with the broader program of Confucian civilization. Among them, Yi Ok even suggested that writing in contemporary popular genres and local language can function as the new classics of the day. Chŏngjo, of course, balked at this notion. He once wrote, "[There are those] who compare *Water Margin* to Sima Qian's *Histories* and the *Story of the Western Chamber* to the Mao commentaries to the *Book of Songs*. This is truly ridiculous. If they really love [popular literature] only because it resembled the [classics], why don't they just read the *Histories* and Mao commentaries directly?"[125] For Chŏngjo, the classics were not only timeless, but also irreplaceable.

NOTES

    1. Sim, "'*Tongsanggi*' ŭi hyŏngsŏng kwajŏng kwa chuje ŭisik," 273–96, esp. 274.

2. For the terms "literary Sinitic" and "sinograph," see Mair, "Buddhism and the Rise of the Written Vernacular in East Asia."

3. "Colloquial" refers to a spoken, local lexicon rendered in writing. I use "vernacular written Chinese" to refer to what is commonly termed "*baihua*" 白話. Following Shang Wei, baihua, far from representing everyday speech, was really a standard *written* register that could evoke and incorporate local, colloquial, and spoken elements—hence a "vernacular written," rather than a writing of "vernacular." See Shang, "Writing and Speech"; see also Hymes, "Getting the Words Right."

4. *Chŏngjo sillok* 32:33b [1791/3/10#1]; 32:36b [1791/3/23#1]; 32:60a [1791/06/02#2].

5. Hereafter I cite the *Tongsanggi* (henceforth TSG) in vol. 4 of Yi O., *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 291–315. Where relevant, textual analysis is based on the version most likely to be closest to the original composition, *Tongsang kisŏ* 東廂奇書, a manuscript edition held by the Academy of Korean Studies. For discussion of extant versions and reprints of *Tongsanggi,* see Yŏ, *Tongsanggi*, 13–26; esp. 250–96. For attribution to Yi Ok, see note 9.

6. TSG, 292: 作者之為誰某.

7. Yi Tŏngmu, *Ch'ŏngjanggwan chŏnsŏ*, vol. 20 in Han'guk munjip ch'onggan (hereafter HMC), 257:284b–286c. For the Yi Tŏngmu ascription, see Yŏ, *Tongsanggi*, 23–26.

8. In Yi's account, Kim had been unable to marry because of the social discrimination he suffered as a secondary son (*sŏja* 庶子) of a *yangban* father. *Tongsanggi,* on the other hand, blames poverty, rather than social discrimination, for Kim's late bachelorhood. Yŏ, "'Kim Sin pubu chŏn' kwa 'Tongsanggi' ŭi changnŭ chŏnyong"; Sim, "'Tongsanggi' ŭi hyŏngsŏng kwajŏng," 275, 278, 281–82.

9. Yun C., "'Tongsanggi' e nat'ananŭn munch'e sirhŏm ŭi yangsang koch'al," esp. 436n1; Youme Kim, "Life and Works of Yi Ok," 58–59, 95–96, 150; for reservations regarding the Yi Ok attribution, see Sim, "'Tongsanggi' ŭi hyŏngsŏng kwajŏng," 275–76.

10. Chŏng O., *Chosŏn hugi munhak sasangsa*, 93–101; An, "Chŏngjo ŭi munye chŏngch'aek."

11. *Chŏngjo sillok* 36:17a–18a [1792/10/19#1]; 36:21a–b [1792/10/24#3]; for discussion of this genre in late Chosŏn, see An, *Chosŏn hugi sop'ummun ŭi silch'e*; for Chinese origins, see Chou, *Yüan Hung-tao*, 91–93.

12. Kang, "Yi Tŏngmu sop'ummun yŏn'gu."

13. For an account of these events, see Evon, "Tobacco, God, and Books," esp. 650–51.

14. Pak Chiwŏn, though also targeted, was only required to write a letter of self-criticism. Chŏngjo protected writers like Pak because of their ties to the powerful Noron faction. Yi Ok, however, was unaffiliated. See Youme Kim, "Life and Works of Yi Ok," 34–35, 49–50; for his singling out of Yi Ok, 44–46, 52; for a comprehensive discussion of Yi's subsequent life, see 50–63. See also *Chŏngjo sillok* 36:18a [1792/10/19#1]; *Chŏngjo sillok* 36:21a [1792/10/24#3].

15. Eggert, "Dramatic Art and Performativity in Pak Chiwon's Travel Narrative," 615.

16. For Chŏngjo's crackdown on "heterodox" books from 1785 to 1791, which included popular fiction and Buddhist writings, and its link to the suppression of Catholicism, see Evon, "Tobacco, God, and Books," 642–43; for what Chŏngjo banned, see Evon, "Tobacco, God, and Books," 647–48; and *Chŏngjo sillok* 24:33b [1787/10/10#1]; for Catholicism, see Baker, "Different Thread."

17. Yi San, *Iltŭngnok* 日得錄 4 in *Hongjae chŏnsŏ* 弘齋全書, vol. 164 in HMC, 267:216c: 一轉而入於邪學; *Chŏngjo sillok* 33:46b [1791/10/24#1]; Evon, "Tobacco, God, and Books," 650, 648.

18. Kang, "Munch'e wa kukka changch'i"; Yi San, Iltŭngnok 4 in *Hongjae chŏnsŏ*, vol. 164 in HMC 267:216c: 予嘗言小品之害 甚於邪學.

19. For the construction of this mythology, see King, "Nationalism and Language Reform in Korea"; for Meiji Japanese origins of *ŏnmun ilch'i* (Jp: *genbun'itchi*) and a critique, see Ueda, "Competing 'Languages.'"

20. For the notion of linguistic ecology and difficulties with typologies, see Park, "Textual Study of *Tongp'ae Naksong*," 312–86; King, "Ditching 'Diglossia.'"

21. TSG, 292.

22. The titular association with *Western Chamber* was likely a later editorial intervention, since the playscript portion of *Tongsanggi* text in fact is dubbed "Record of the Couple Kim and Sin's Decreed Marriage" (*Kim Sin pubu sahon ki* 金申夫婦賜婚記). The earliest surviving manuscript copy, the National Library of Korea version, uses the title *Tongsanggi* but includes both the play and Yi Tŏngmu's prose essay, "Story of the Couple Kim and Sin." This arrangement parallels *Western Chamber*'s relationship with its source text, Yuan Zhen's 元稹 (779–831) "Story of Yingying" (*Yingying zhuan* 鶯鶯傳). For *Western Chamber* and *zaju*, see Wang, *Story of the Western Wing*. For a reprint of the National Library of Korea copy, see Yŏ, *Tongsanggi*, 248–316; for Yuan Zhen's story, see Owen, "Conflicting Interpretations."

23. TSG, 292.

24. Both the "eastern bed" and "chamber" refer to the space occupied by a son-in-law when he is received at his in-laws' (i.e., as in the *tongsangnye* 東床禮), a metonym for the son-in-law.

25. Later permutations of *Tongsanggi* reinforced its association with *Western Chamber*. One copy, a twentieth-century manuscript version held at Seoul National University, identifies the author of *Tongsanggi* as the Seventh Talented Man of Green Jade Hall (*Ch'ŏngoktang chech'il chaeja sŏ* 青玉堂第七才子書), a name derived from the Ming period Jin Shengtan edition of *Western Chamber,* which used the title *The Sixth Talented Man's Story of Waiting for the Moon in the Western Chamber* (*Di liu caizi daiyue xixiang ji* 第六才子 待月西廂記). Yŏ, *Tongsanggi*, 14.

26. Some differences remain between *Tongsanggi* and *zaju*. *Zhengmu* in Yuan *zaju* are typically in four eight-character lines, but the prosody of *Tongsanggi*'s *zhengmu* uses seven-character lines with an irregular caesura after the third character. Kim H., "Tok 'Tongsanggi,'" esp. 175–76. Unlike *zaju*, *Tongsanggi* uses multiple song suites in one scene and allows multiple characters to perform arias in a single scene, which bears the mark of Ming *chuanqi* 傳奇. Most notably, the *zaju* usually features only arias for one character in any one of its four scenes, but *Tongsanggi* allows multiple characters to perform arias. Unlike *zaju*, Kim, the protagonist, is not the only character with aria sections. Scholars debate whether these deviations reflect imperfect emulation of the *zaju* or creative appropriation of the dramatic tradition. For a formal comparison of Yuan *zaju* and *Tongsanggi*, see Kim I., "*Tongsanggi* wa *Sŏsanggi* ŭi pigyo yŏn'gu"; and Yŏ, "Hanmun hŭigok 'Tongsanggi' ŭi Chungguk hŭigok suyong kwa pyŏnyong pangsik," esp. 236–45. For song suites and rhymes, see Kim H., "Tok 'Tongsanggi,'" 176–79, 180. For the arias, see Yŏ, *Tongsanggi*, 55; Kim H., "Tok 'Tongsanggi,'" 176–79. For discussion of emulation versus creative appropriation, see Kim H., "Tok 'Tongsanggi,'" 176–79; Yŏ, "Hanmun hŭigok 'Tongsanggi' ŭi Chungguk hŭigok suyong," 245–55; Yŏ, *Tongsanggi: Hanmun hŭigok,* 47–48; Yun I., "Hanmun hŭigok 'Tongsanggi,'" esp. 257–58, 261–62.

27. *Tongsanggi* deviates from the *zaju* by replacing the traditional character role types (i.e. *sheng* 生, *dan* 旦, *jing* 淨, *chou* 丑) with character names in the text. When Kim Hǔijip makes his appearance, he is noted as Kim 金 in the text. The other characters are identified as "Official in charge" (任掌), "official" (吏), "main [official]" (大), or "minor [official]" (小), following conventions of the Ming period edition of *Western Chamber* collated by Jin Shengtan 金聖歎. *Tongsanggi*'s author likely followed Jin's example. Yun I., "Hanmun hǔigok 'Tongsanggi,'" 262–64, 270–75.

28. Yun I., "Hanmun hǔigok 'Tongsanggi,'" 264–66.

29. Yun I., "Hanmun hǔigok 'Tongsanggi,'" 266–67.

30. For examples, see Yun C., "'Tongsanggi' e nat'ananǔn munch'e sirhǒm," 443–60. For Chosǒn Koreans, vernacular elements were reminiscent of the "oral record style" (*ǒrokch'e* 語錄體) of Song period philosophical dialogues. See King, "Out of the Margins," 9–12.

31. "這個們" does not appear in the *Zhongguo suwen ku* 中國俗文庫 database, while "渠們" is attested in, for example, the *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類. See 1821, 2929.

32. Yun C., "'Tongsanggi' e nat'ananǔn munch'e sirhǒm," 460–62.

33. 如俺 且講俺自家入仗家方略哩 千思萬想 怎般的妖術 可得一個阿只氏. TSG, 294.

34. Evon, "Conservation of Knowledge," esp. 5–6.

35. Identification of Chosǒn as part of the Ming imperium was common, well after the fall of the Ming. See Haboush, "Contesting Chinese Time, Nationalizing Temporal Space."

36. One who lives in celibacy, as a monk does, but without having taken the tonsure.

37. An allusion to the *Analects,* "Xue Er," no. 15.

38. TSG, 292–93.

39. Yun I., "Hanmun hǔigok 'Tongsanggi,'" 268; Yun C., "'Tongsanggi' e nat'ananǔn munch'e sirhǒm," 461.

40. TSG, 305–08; Sim, "'Tongsanggi' ǔi hyǒngsǒng," 284–87.

41. TSG, 313–14.

42. In addition to *p'ansori*, *Tongsanggi* also makes references to other elements of contemporary Korean popular culture. It also incorporates themes and even lines from other popular songs, notably the *kasa* "Song of the Old Maid" ("Noch'ǒnyǒ ka"). Sim, "'Tongsanggi' ǔi hyǒngsǒng," 282–84; For a discussion of *p'ansori* and its conventions, see Pihl, *Korean Singer of Tales*.

43. The range of Korean vernacularisms in *Tongsanggi* is nearly identical to what is recorded in *yadam* stories of the period. Park, "Textual Study," 332–86. Vernacularisms were already regularly represented in the Korean script; what is novel is the extent of their presence in a sinographic text. Elsewhere, Yi Ok explores regional variation within Korea by rendering lexica from local topolects in sinographic compounds. See Yi O., *Wanyǒk Yi Ok chǒnjip,* 4:110–11, 171–72.

44. Yun I., "Hanmun hǔigok 'Tongsanggi,'" 258–62.

45. The first Korean vernacular edition, which has been attributed to Kim Chǒnghǔi (院堂金正喜諺解本), dates to 1811, while Chinese character versions date to, at the latest, 1669. A Manchu-Chinese bilingual text also existed in Korea (滿漢西廂記). Gao, "'Xixiangji' zai Hanguo de chuanbo wei jieshou," esp. 55–58.

46. Stage notations were completely omitted from some editions, such as the aforementioned vernacular Korean edition, where the translated text takes the form of a narrative. Gao, "'Xixiangji' zai Hanguo de chuanbo wei jieshou," 60.

47. King, "Ditching 'Diglossia,'" 4–6.

48. Kornicki, "Having Difficulty with Chinese?," 41.

49. For further discussion of Chinese script and linguistic theory, see Lurie, "Language, Writing, and Disciplinarity," esp. 257–67.

50. See the 1918 Hannam sŏrim edition, *Tongsanggi ch'an,* printed in movable type. See also reprint in Yŏ, *Tongsanggi,* 179–211.

51. Cho, "Diglossia in Korean Language and Literature," 3.

52. Rather than diglossic, the place of literary Sinitic in Korean society was more akin to a condition of "societal bilingualism," with the caveat that this bilingualism was reflected more in text and script than in spoken language per se. Chosŏn Korea is not the only case where the notion of diglossia has been misapplied. The term is inappropriately used for drastically different sociolinguistic, historical, and functional contexts. For a comprehensive discussion of diglossia and its distinction from societal bilingualism, which more closely resembles the Chosŏn case, see Hudson, "Outline of a Theory of Diglossia."

53. Yun C., "'Tongsanggi' e nat'ananŭn munch'e sirhŏm," 442. Note the appearance of a handful of similar texts later in the nineteenth century. See Tonggo ŏch'o, *Puksanggi.*

54. Phan, "Lacquered Words"; Phan, "Rebooting the Vernacular in Seventeenth-Century Vietnam."

55. Pollock, *Language of the Gods,* 10–30.

56. King, "Ditching 'Diglossia,'" 11; Hudson, "Outline of a Theory of Diglossia," 32–37.

57. Ledyard, "Korean Travelers in China."

58. Wang, "Sounds of Our Country."

59. Hong Taeyong had prepared for his trip to Beijing by studying the textbooks used by the official interpreters. Pak Chiwŏn on the other hand relied on a slave who had traveled frequently to China for help with basic conversation. Ledyard, "Hong Taeyong and His Peking Memoir," 65–66; Pak Chiwŏn, *Togangnok* 渡江錄 in the *Yŏrha ilgi* 熱河日記 from *Yŏnam chip* 燕巖集 14, HMC, 252:148b.

60. Hong Taeyong, *Tamhŏnsŏ oejip* 湛軒書外集 2 in HMC, 248:127c. See Marion Eggert's translation, "Friendship with Foreigners," in Haboush, *Epistolary Korea,* 209.

61. Ledyard, "Korean Travelers in China," 16.

62. Pak Chiwŏn, for example, described the dramatic performances he saw in China, including those held at the Qianlong emperor's court. Pak Chiwŏn, *Sanjang chapki* 山莊雜記 in the *Yŏrha ilgi* from *Yŏnam chip* 14, HMC, 252:275a–275d; Im, *Yŏnhaengnok chŏnjip* 燕行錄全集 (hereafter YHNCJ) 54: 598–601.

63. Pak lists the plays performed on a given day, according to the time period of their subject matter. See Pak S., *Yŏnhaeng chamnok, Simjŏn'go,* 901a–901b. See also Youme Kim, "Impact of Korean Ambassadors' Encounters," 207–8, 212–13.

64. Pak S., *Yŏnhaeng chamnok, Yŏnhaengnok sŏnjip,* 901b.

65. Pak Chega, *Chŏngyu chip,* 412; See also Ge, "Da Ming yiguan jin he zai?"; and Youme Kim, "Impact of Korean Ambassadors' Encounters," 211–12.

66. Pak Chiwŏn, *Mangyangnok* 忘羊錄 in the *Yŏrha ilgi* 熱河日記 18 from *Yŏnam chip* 30, HMC, 252:245c–257d. See also YHNCJ.

67. Pak Chiwŏn, *Mangyangnok,* from *Yŏnam chip* 14, HMC, 252:248b–248c; YHNCJ vol. 54, 32; HMC, 252:250b–c; YHNCJ vol. 54, 43. For the significance of *yayue,* see Lam, "Huizong's Dashengyue." In addition to literary rectification, Chŏngjo was also interested

in reforming Korean court music. For the relationship between the two campaigns, see Song Chiwŏn, "Chŏngjo ŭi akp'ung panjŏng yŏn'gu."

68. Pak Chiwŏn, *Mangyangnok,* from *Yŏnam chip* 14, HMC, 252:245d–246b; YHNCJ, 54:16–19.

69. *Sejong sillok* 103:19b–22a [1444/02/20#1].

70. For a comprehensive discussion, see Ledyard, *Korean Language Reform of 1446*.

71. See the alphabet's preface in *Sejong sillok* 113:36b [1446/09/29#4]. For discussion of the alphabet's significance in Chosŏn self-identity, see Chŏng T., "Yŏmal Sŏnch'o."

72. For *ŏnhae*, see Kornicki, "Having Difficulty with Chinese?"; and King, "Ditching 'Diglossia,'" 5–6.

73. Pak Chega, *Chŏngyu chip*, 412.

74. Yi O., "Iŏn" 俚諺 in *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 4:273–83; See Youme Kim's discussion of this essay in "Life and Works of Yi Ok," 90–93.

75. 吾未知彼之所名者 果其名耶 我之所名者 果其名耶? Yi O., "Iŏn" in *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 4:281. Cf. Zhuangzi, *Xiaoyao you*: 天之蒼蒼其正色邪. For a discussion, see Soles and Soles, "Fish Traps and Rabbit Snares," esp. 153–60.

76. 既非盤古氏即位初年欽差賜名者.... 我何必棄我之所名者 而從彼之所名者乎 彼則何不棄其所名者 而從我之所名者乎. Yi O., "Iŏn," in *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 281.

77. 彼草織而籍者 古之人 中國之人 則曰 席 我與子 則曰 兜單席 彼架木而安油者 古之人 中國之人 則曰 燈檠 我與子 則曰 光明.... 彼束毛而尖者 彼則曰 筆 我則曰賦詩.... 彼則曰紙 我則曰照意 彼以彼之所名者名之 我以我之所名者名之. Yi O., "Iŏn," in *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 281. Yi put these principles into practice elsewhere, penning numerous works employing Korean vernacular usage. See Youme Kim, "Life and Works of Yi Ok," 74–75, 90–101.

78. Kim R., *Selected Poems of Kim Sakkat*.

79. Yi O., *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 4:282.

80. Ibid., 283: 則剌剌鄉音 或有文字之所未名者 則如其可以名者 則吾何畏而不畏哉 此吾之所以以鄉名者也. Yi O., *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 4:283.

81. 以俚諺中所用服食器皿 凡干有名之物無名之物 多不用本來之名稱 以妄以己意傅合鄉名. Yi O., *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 4:280. 溪畔有鳥 碧羽甚鮮 其名曰 鐵雀 而乃曰 修竹村家翡翠啼 則越裳之貢 奚為於朝鮮村家也. Yi O., *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 4:282.

82. 故歷代而夏殷周也漢也晉也宋齊梁陳隋也唐也宋也 一代不如自有一代之詩焉 列國... 一國不如一國 另自有一國之詩焉 三十年而世變矣 百里而風不同矣. Yi O., *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 4:275. Similar sentiments were present in the writing of his contemporaries. See Chŏng M., *18-segi Chosŏn chisigin ŭi palgyŏn*, 117–33.

83. 作之者 天地萬物之一象胥也. Yi O., *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 4:275.

84. 不敢以其聲之不慣 而有所變改焉. Yi O., *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 4:275.

85. 此吾之亦不可以不有所作者也 亦吾之所以只作俚諺 謝乎天地萬物者也. Yi O., *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 4:273.

86. Yi Ok, for example, wrote a classic (*kyŏng* 經) biography (*chŏn* 傳) of tobacco and a memorial presented by a dog impeaching (*haek* 劾) a cat, and incorporated a woman's plaint in the style of *Book of Songs* into an *idu*-based court document. See Yi O., *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 4:408–30, 268–69, 218–19, 180–81.

87. 是豈我也 時則然矣 于時何哉; 283: 吾豈鄉闇也哉 吾豈詭也哉 吾豈僭也哉. Yi O., *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 4:275.

88. Yi San, *Hongjae chŏnsŏ* 50, in HMC, 263:282c–283b; *Chŏngjo sillok* 33:55a [1791/11/07#2]; An, *Chosŏn hugi sop'ummun ŭi silch'e,* 12; Yoo, "Networks of Disquiet."

89. For Yi Ok's reading of Gongan writers, see Kim Yŏngjin, "Yi Ok ŭi kagye wa Myŏng-Ch'ŏng sop'um toksŏ"; Youme Kim, "Life and Works of Yi Ok," 16, 67, 89–90. For the "times," see Li Zhi, *Book to Burn*, 132–34, 146–47.

90. 我不以古人之名名我 我不以古人之字字我 而我名名我 我字字我. Yi O., *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 4:280.

91. See *Analects,* Zi Lu no. 3.

92. *Chŏngjo sillok* 33:46b [1791/10/24#1]. For the circulation of banned books in Chosŏn, see Yoo, "Networks of Disquiet," 260–72.

93. Yi H., "Ch'ŏngjanggwan Yi Tŏngmu," 100n31, citing Yi Tŏngmu, *Ch'ŏngjanggwan chŏnsŏ*; Gao, "'Xixiangji' zai Hanguo de chuanbo wei jieshou," 58.

94. *Mao Preface*: 風之始也 所以風天下而正夫婦也. For Chŏngjo's discussion of "Fish Hawks," see Yi San, *Hongjae chŏnsŏ* 84 in HMC, 264:259a–261b; 86 in HMC, 264:297a–298c; 88 in HMC, 264:327c–327d. Rival traditions to *The Book of Songs*, which were gradually overtaken by the Mao tradition after the Han, still treated "Fish Hawks" as a poem about sexual desire ultimately being controlled and regulated through proper ritual. See also Kern, "Beyond the 'Mao Odes,'" esp. 135–36, 142. For earlier interpretations discovered in texts excavated in Mawangdui and Shanghai excavations, see Riegel, "Eros, Introversion," esp. 150–53, 157–59. I thank Fu Su for help with this note.

95. The message of *Tongsanggi* and its occlusive treatment of sexuality in the vein of *The Book of Songs* tradition are drastically different from Yi Ok's exploration of sexual desire in his other writings. For instance, in his "On the Colloquial and Vernacular," Yi defends the portrayal of sexual desire, licentious behavior, and female interiorities in literary works, a notable departure from *Tongsanggi*. See Yi Ok, *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 4:276–80, 284–90.

96. TSG, 303.

97. Kim I., "*Tongsanggi* wa *Sŏsanggi* ŭi pigyo yŏn'gu," 29–32.

98. Huang, "Sentiments of Desire." Although *Western Chamber* was by no means a late Ming or early Qing work, its transmission to Chosŏn Korea and its later circulation coincided with late Ming and early Qing literature's trajectory of reception.

99. See Yi Sŏnghye, "Sop'ummun ŭi munch'ejŏk t'ŭkching," esp. 98–104.

100. I.e., the shift from uxorilocal society with strong matrilineal elements to a virilocal and patrilineal pattern modeled after Confucian proscriptions. See Deuchler, *Confucian Transformation of Korea*, 243–58.

101. 國家盛德事不知其數. TSG, 299.

102. 上德也則上德. TSG, 301.

103. 字恤典則新倉賑恤; 朝家極力賑恤北道百姓活出也無路. TSG, 299–300.

104. 若非這朝家處分渠們直到了彭祖同甲唐白絲樣白了實難見了丈家的味. TSG, 300–301.

105. *Mencius*, "King Hui of Liang," 13.

106. For the agronomic state as an expression of benevolent monarchy, see Wong, *China Transformed*, 135–39.

107. For these ideas in Korean political philosophy of the eighteenth century, see Yi T., *Dynamics of Confucianism and Modernization in Korean History*, ch. 9.

108. Yi San, "Manch'ŏn myŏngwŏl chuinong chasŏ" 萬川明月主人翁自序 from *Hongjae chŏnsŏ* 10 in HMC, 262:158a–159d; Lovins, "Making Sense of the Imperial Pivot."

109. Chŏng O., *Chosŏn hugi munhak sasangsa*, 108–13; 文體隨士氣 士氣卽國之元氣, *Chŏngjo sillok* 33:9a [1791/8/4#1].

110. Evon, "Conservation of Knowledge," 3–4.

111. 所謂明末清初文集及稗官雜說 尤有害於世道 觀於近來文體 浮輕噍殺 無館閣大手筆者 皆由於雜冊之多出來. *Chŏngjo sillok* 24:33b [1787/10/10#1]. Wang, "Co-constructing Empire in Early Chosŏn Korea," 305–06; Kōjirō, *Five Hundred Years of Chinese Poetry, 1150–1650*, 121–24.

112. Chŏng O., *Chosŏn hugi munhak sasangsa,* 85–100; books imported from China were selected on these merits. Chŏngjo also supported the publication of model essays by students of the royal academy. An, "Chŏngjo ŭi munye chŏngch'aek," 103–4.

113. An Taehoe, "Chŏngjo ŭi munye chŏngch'aek," 88–89, 90–94, 98; for a comprehensive list, see 96.

114. Youme Kim, "Life and Works of Yi Ok," 150; An, "Chŏngjo ŭi munye chŏngch'aek," 100–101; and An, "Chosŏn hugi sop'ummun," 34.

115. 學無益於正道 不如無學 文無當於實用不如無文. Yi San, *Hongjae chŏnsŏ* 163 in HMC, 267:195c–195d.

116. Evon, "Tobacco, God, and Books," 651; Youme Kim, "Life and Works of Yi Ok," 99, 188–89.

117. Youme Kim, "Life and Works of Yi Ok," 150–64.

118. See Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 36–39.

119. 奈之何生於大清乾隆之年 居於朝鮮漢陽之城 而乃敢伸長頭頸 瞋大細目 妄欲談國風 樂府 詞曲之作者乎. Yi O., *Wanyŏk Yi Ok chŏnjip*, 4:275. He insinuates this elsewhere (279–80).

120. Youme Kim, "Life and Works of Yi Ok," 96–101.

121. Haboush, *Confucian Kingship in Korea*, 17, 26–27, 29–33.

122. Notably, Yi Ok's embrace of the local was in step with larger trends during Chŏngjo's reign. See Chŏng Min's synopses of these trends in *18-segi Chosŏn chisigin ŭi palgyŏn*, 111–12.

123. Sim, "'Tongsanggi' ŭi hyŏngsŏng kwajŏng," 288–95.

124. This explains in part Chŏngjo's distaste for the philological practices of the *kaozheng* 考證 movement in the Qing, linking their work to the deviant literary styles he deplored. Yi San, *Hongjae chŏnsŏ* 50 in HMC, 263:282b–d; 164 in HMC, 267:216c.

125. 西廂記似毛詩 此甚可笑 如取其似而愛之 何不直讀史記毛詩. Yi San, *Hongjae chŏnsŏ* 163 in HMC, 267:191d.

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