

**FROM CENTER TO PERIPHERY: THE DEMOTION OF LITERARY SINITIC
AND THE BEGINNINGS OF *HANMUNKWA*—KOREA, 1876–1910**

by

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Abstract

From the 1876 Treaty of Kanghwa to Korea's annexation in 1910, the last thirty-five years of the Chosŏn dynasty (1392–1910) were witness to some of the most impactful events in Korea's modern history. Through encounters with Western powers and the influence, both direct and indirect, of a rapidly modernizing Japan, many Koreans began to reappraise their country's Sino-centric past and the once-shared knowledge, symbols, and practices of the traditional East Asian cosmopolitan order. A major consequence of this reappraisal was the demotion of Literary Sinitic (commonly known as Classical Chinese) from its long-held status as the *de facto* official written standard of state and its removal from the center of the curriculum of state-sponsored education to the periphery in the guise of a newly created classroom subject *hanmunkwa*.

This thesis details how shifts in the terminology for both Literary Sinitic and the vernacular script, the educational activities of Western missionaries, the abolition of Korea's traditional civil service examination system, the establishment of a Western-style educational system, the proliferation of new Literary Sinitic teaching materials and methodologies, and the influence of Japan combined at the end of the Chosŏn dynasty to demote the learning and use of Literary Sinitic. Furthermore, this thesis shows that Literary Sinitic's demise was not simply the collateral damage of a predestined and unavoidable rise of Korea's native script, but was, by the time of annexation, already a long though still unfinished process.

The reappraisal and demotion of Literary Sinitic in Korea is important for more than merely understanding the precolonial moment in Korea. It is vital to improving our understanding of Korea's part in the disintegration of a once vibrant East Asian cosmopolitanism, while further exploring the early development of *hanmunkwa* will also

help us apprehend the lingering effects and influences exercised by once transcultured practices, even after those practices are reimagined and reconfigured according to new, nationalized frameworks.

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1 Introduction

The final thirty-five years of the Chosŏn dynasty (1392–1910)—from the opening of relations with Japan following the 1876 Treaty of Kanghwa, to Japan’s ultimate annexation of the Korean peninsula in 1910—were marked by rapid, thoroughgoing and often difficult transformations in Korean society. As Koreans encountered Western powers and a rapidly modernizing Japan throughout this period, Korean society slowly began its own process of modernization-*cum*-Westernization, spurring reappraisals within Korean society of the country’s Sino-centric past and the once-shared knowledge, symbols, and practices of the traditional East Asian cosmopolitan order. A major consequence of this reappraisal was the demotion of Literary Sinitic¹ from its long-held status as the *de facto* official written standard

¹ Though commonly known in English as “Literary Chinese” or “Classical Chinese,” I follow Mair (1994) throughout in using “Literary Sinitic” as the term for the cosmopolitan written language of premodern East Asia known today in Korean as “*hanmun*” 漢文. Though “Literary Sinitic” may seem like no more than a dressed-up version of “Literary Chinese,” Mair (2004) explains that,

In linguistic classification, “Sinitic” is quite comparable to “Indic.” Both consist of a number of separate languages (Mandarin, Wu, Southern Min, Yue...; Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati...), each with its own historical development. And both Sinitic and Indic are part of a larger language family (Sino-Tibetan... and Indo-European). (11)

From a linguistic perspective, then, “Sinitic” denotes the Sinitic branch of the commonly accepted Sino-Tibetan language family of which Literary Sinitic can be considered a member; a denotation that, as Mair ably explains, the term “Chinese” fails to capture.

Given, however, that we are dealing here with a Korean context, the simplest solution might seem to be simply using “*hanmun*” throughout. Such a solution, though common and not wholly inappropriate in English-language research on the use of Literary Sinitic in Korea, would be particularly problematic here. A significant portion of this paper deals with the introduction of the term “*hanmun*” itself into Korea, examining the term’s role in the marginalization and otherizing of Literary Sinitic in Korea at the end of the Chosŏn dynasty. Furthermore, my choice of “Literary Sinitic” over “*hanmun*” or “Literary Chinese” or “Classical Chinese” should be understood as a deliberate attempt to approach this topic from a comparative perspective. “Literary Sinitic” wrests scholarly examination of the language from the sole possession of “Chinese” studies and gives it back in a measure to those who examine its use among the Sino-xenic traditions of the premodern East Asian world. It also provides one part of what could be a common unambiguous vocabulary useful for a more comparative approach to scholarship on the history and use of this language across East Asia. If merely coincidental, then a happy coincidence it is that Mair first uses the term “Literary Sinitic” in an article discussing the use of the language in areas outside of what is often considered China proper, including Tibet and of course Japan, Korea, and Vietnam.

of state and its removal from the center of the curriculum of state-sponsored education to the periphery in the guise of a newly created classroom subject *hanmunkwa* 漢文科.²

1.1 Korea and the Sinitic cosmopolis

This integrated medium of language and script, known in Chosŏn sources as “*chinsŏ*” 眞書 (“true/authentic writing”), was introduced into Korea due to its relationship with the fundamental cultural and linguistic symbols and practices that Korean elites accepted as a means for participation in the premodern East Asian cosmopolitan order, and was maintained by an educational system centered on mastering a body of textual knowledge conveyed solely through that medium. Not only were its physical manifestations in the form of a rich textual heritage and vibrant manuscript and book culture a defining symbol of premodern East Asia, but as the universal medium for the spread and maintenance of the shared knowledge which bound the region together, its very learning and use were themselves arguably the region’s *most* defining symbols.

This translocal cosmopolitanism founded on shared literacy and literary practice was not peculiar to premodern East Asia, but, as Pollock (2006) shows, was a common characteristic of other premodern cosmopolitanisms as well. Pollock has coined the phrase “Sanskrit cosmopolis” to describe the vast regions of premodern South Asia, where peoples

² In addition to Literary Sinitic’s demotion and removal to the periphery of the new educational system, a number of related linguistic shifts were spurred by the nationalist ideology and attendant government policies introduced during this period. These include the nascent beginnings of a vernacular press, as well as the creation, importation, and appropriation of thousands of loan words and neologisms, coined (often in Japan) and borrowed to cope with the waves of new ideas and concepts coming from the West and washing over the peninsula. This latter phenomenon occurred not only in Korea but throughout East Asia, including in China itself. Describing the Chinese situation, Liu (1995) writes that “the massive influx of neologisms in the late nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth century was unprecedented in terms of scale and influence. It fundamentally transformed the Chinese language at almost every level of linguistic experience, rendering classical Chinese nearly obsolete” (18). The same was true of Korea.

chose “to adopt language or life ways or modes of political belonging that affiliated them with the distant rather than the near, the unfamiliar rather than the customary” (Pollock 2006: 12). Following his justification for this coinage, namely, the supraregional dimension of “cosmo-,” the political dimension of “-polis,” and the qualification provided by “Sanskrit” (12), I argue that premodern East Asia can be said to have constituted a “*Sinitic* cosmopolis,” with Literary Sinitic “producing the forms of cultural and political expression that underwrote this cosmopolitan order” (12).³ And save for perhaps the introduction of writing itself on the Korean peninsula, the magnitude of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century shift in written language use and attitudes was unprecedented in Korean history.

1.2 Leaving the Sinitic cosmopolis

1.2.1 New relationships

Beginning roughly in the 1860’s under the regency of Prince Regent Hŭngsŏn, the father of the Chosŏn dynasty’s penultimate monarch, King Kojong, the Chosŏn government adhered to a governing doctrine known as Wijŏngch’ŏksa 衛正斥邪 (“Defense of Orthodoxy and Expunction of Heterodoxy”) as a response to Western Powers’ increasing penetration into East Asia. The peninsula’s inhabitants, aside from traditionally sanctioned interactions with China through tribute missions and the like, were to have no interaction with foreigners,

³ A variety of phrases have been used in English language research to describe East Asia’s premodern cosmopolitan order, what I refer to in this paper primarily as the “Sinitic cosmopolis.” Schmid (2002) calls it variously “the transnational Confucian realm,” or the “transnational culturism of East Asia.” Tokumori (2009) and Kōnoshi (2009) use simply “East Asian classical world” and Koyama (2003) calls it the “Sino-centric cosmic order.” Others, attempting to signal the significance of the region’s shared literary heritage and practice, have referred to it variously as the “Chinese character cultural sphere” Cho (2011), or the “Sinographic sphere” Saitō (2009). But in referring only to the region’s shared script, I would argue that these last two miss their mark. As used formerly throughout East Asia, Literary Sinitic comprised an integrated whole of both language *and* script, the former unimaginable without the latter. And it was the region’s shared literacy in Literary Sinitic, not merely its shared script (which in differing locales was employed in diverse and divergent ways), that most defined the cosmopolitan order. This understanding is reflected in Kin’s (2010) use of “*kanbun bunkaken*” 漢文文化圈 (“Literary Sinitic Cultural Sphere”).

with the express purpose of preventing the circulation of what the court deemed dangerous Western texts or the religious and political ideologies they contained. By the 1880s, following King Kojong's full assumption of power and after being forced open by Japan in 1876, the Korean court sought to strengthen ties with Qing China as a counterweight to Japanese designs on the peninsula. The court thus fell increasingly under the influence of a newly invigorated Chinese imperialism. The Qing government encouraged a new governing ideology known as Tongdosŏgi 東道西器 ("Eastern Morality and Western Skills") which embraced the idea that so long as traditional Confucian governing ideologies (Eastern Morality) were upheld and respected, there was little harm or even much to be gained in adopting Western science and technology (Western Skills). Qing officials also helped the Chosŏn court negotiate treaties with the U.S., Britain and other Western powers as a way checking Japanese influence.

Such interactions with both China and the West were extraordinary. If we accept that Literary Sinitic's use in Korea had been predicated on state and aristocratic acceptance and participation in cosmopolitan norms, then the increase of Qing influence on Chosŏn's internal governing affairs, the new treaty with Japan, and the subsequent treaties with Western powers can be seen, at the very least, as a first symbolic deviation from the norms of Korea's traditional participation within the Sinitic cosmopolis. The treaty relationships were based not on Chinese or even Korean or Japanese models, but on a Western legal model which presupposed the existence of a global community of nations made up of theoretically equal and individual nation states; surely a departure away from a regional cosmopolitan order centered culturally and politically on a superior Chinese patron. Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, these new relationships created a situation in which Korean

society came into greater contact with a rapidly changing Japan and eventually the West. Koreans first encountered, then accommodated, and eventually appropriated new national symbols and practices of Western origin which would supplant those shared symbols and practices that had for so many centuries oriented the peninsula's ruling elites toward participation in the Sinitic cosmopolis. Through this contact at home and abroad Koreans began to encounter new ideas about language, both written and spoken, that would eventually affect the way they viewed the relationship between the written word and their own spoken language.

1.2.2 Japan looms large

Japan's role in the reimagining and relocation of Literary Sinitic previous to annexation in 1910, was rarely acknowledged by Koreans. King (1998) concludes his description of Korea's pre-annexation debates over written language standards by pointing out that "...Japan's intense language debates during the Meiji era receive little notice in the Korean discussions... rather, Japan and Japanese writing are invoked in general terms only" (62). Schmid (2002), too, notes that Korean reformers, including especially Korea's first "language entrepreneur"⁴ Yu Kilchun, participated in "an overt downplaying of Japan and... emphasis on direct links with the West," and that this downplaying "concealed [what] was the important function of Japan as the primary mediator through which Korean[s]... learned about the West and its supposed universal civilization" (110). Nevertheless, Japan's own vernacularizing movement and the ideas formulated there about the place and purpose of language in a modern nation became major influences in Korea. This would include new ideas about language standards, the demotion of Sinological learning, and subsequently, a

⁴ See King 1998: 36.

newfound pride in vernacular writing. After formal annexation in 1910, colonial language policies would of course become a key factor in transforming Korea's language situation. However, this transformation, including especially the reappraisal of Literary Sinitic's place in society, was heavily influenced by the Japanese beginning not long after concluding the Treaty of Kanghwa and well before annexation.

Japan's example alone exerted a significant influence on attitudes and ideas about language in the nearly two decades following Korea's opening. With the outbreak of the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), this passive role would be much changed as Japan took its most direct action to date in the internal affairs of the peninsula. The nineteen-month period from late July 1894 to early February 1896 saw the Japanese defeat China in a war for control over Korea as well as the enactment of sweeping reforms in Korea under Japanese aegis. During what has since become known as the Kabo Reforms (Kabo kyōngjang 甲午更張), 660 reforms were promulgated transforming fundamental characteristics of the country's social fabric. The reforms began transformations of Korea's judiciary, government bureaucracy, military and police administration, and financial and educational systems, “constituting a milestone in Korea's modernization process” (Eckert 1990: 228).

1.2.3 *Kaehwagi* and the decentering of China

In his examination of the beginnings of Korean nationalism during the final years of the Chosŏn dynasty, Schmid (2002) discusses Korean society's reorientation away from the cosmopolitan order, calling it “the decentering of the Middle Kingdom.” He writes that, “[t]his reorientation called into question the full range of practices, texts, and customs that for centuries had been shared by Koreans as part of their participation in the transnational Confucian realm. Formerly accepted as universal, these were increasingly deemed Chinese

and thus alien to Korea” (11). The learning and use of Literary Sinitic is a prime example of the practices, texts, and customs Schmid mentions, and the shift in Koreans’ use of and esteem for Literary Sinitic can be seen as a fundamental feature of the decentering process. Once central to Korea’s participation in the Sinitic cosmopolis, Literary Sinitic came to be defined as peculiarly Chinese (*literally*) with “*hanmun*” 漢文 (*Chinese writing*) coming to replace “*chinsŏ*.”

Schmid (2002) explains that this decentering program began with the Kabo Reforms and continued through annexation in 1910—a period now frequently termed the Enlightenment Period (*Kaehwagi* 開化期).⁵ Grounds for decentering lay in what a “disparate group of intellectuals, reformers, and publicists” (3) viewed to be the Sinitic cosmopolis’ lost legitimacy. Promulgating their views through “the most powerful public medium of the time, newspapers and journals, as well as some textbooks and monographs” (3), this disparate group viewed Western powers’ humiliating advances into China, the very center of the old cosmopolitan order, and China’s defeat in the Sino-Japanese War as clear evidence that China was in decline, while Japan, traditionally viewed in Korea as being at the barbaric fringe of the Sinitic cosmopolis, was ascendant, due to its embrace of Western knowledge. In both cases, the West and the knowledge it exported through colonization and missionizing loomed large. According to this view, the West’s scientific and technological advances, its comparatively high standard of living and its military strength were all deemed evidences of a superior and “enlightened civilization” (*munmyŏng kaehwa* 文明開化). The Sinitic cosmopolis was a stagnant and backward order, and therefore the many centuries of knowledge originating from its attendant philosophies and ideologies were incorrect and

⁵ Also commonly known as the Patriotic Enlightenment Era (*Aeguk kyemonggi* 愛國啓蒙期)

outdated at best, though quite possibly very dangerous, even an existential threat, since maintaining such a worldview might make the maintenance of Korean sovereignty impossible in the face of Western advances. Championing reform through enlightenment policies, these Enlightenment-faction (*kaehwa-p'a* 開化派) Koreans undertook to redefine knowledge itself. Accordingly, the period's publications, though downplaying Western associations, began using the term "*sinhak*" 新學 ("new knowledge") to describe certain knowledge and ideas of ultimately Western provenance which were said to typify enlightenment, development, and progress. In contrast, the corollary term "*kuhak*" 舊學 ("old knowledge") was associated explicitly with the knowledge and learning of China and portrayed as backward, superstitious, corrupt, and stagnant (Schmid 2002: 57). This epistemological reorientation assured that decentering was more than merely a political reorientation away from a China-centered world; it was a philosophical, intellectual and cultural shift reflecting "Korea's growing participation in the modern ideologies of the capitalist world system" (55).

1.3 Demoting Literary Sinitic and the beginnings of *hanmunkwa*

During the Kabo Reforms, official government language policy demoted Literary Sinitic as merely "Chinese writing" (*hanmun* 漢文) and promoted Korea's vernacular script to the station of "National Writing" (*kungmun* 國文). The establishment of missionary schools in the mid-1880s and of public Western-style schools following the Kabo Reforms, along with the institution of further education regulations after Korea became a Japanese protectorate in 1905, were much more central, however, to the regularization of new nationalist language ideologies which demoted Literary Sinitic as un-Korean. Encounters with new ideas and contact with Japan and the West alone, though not insignificant, were not

of themselves sufficient means for upsetting the hold Korea's centuries-old Sinophilic language ideologies had on literate Koreans' consciousness. These ideologies, which had sustained Literary Sinitic for so long in Korean society, were not easily brushed aside.

The purpose of this thesis is to show that Korea's late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century shift in language use and attitudes was in fact a long process, and not an automatic, inevitable, or immediate rupture with the past. New nationalist language ideologies with their paradoxical emphasis on universal peculiarity placed a high premium on fostering a uniquely "Korean way" of writing. Well after 1876, however, Korea continued to be governed by men who valued deeply the prestigious and historically rich tradition associated with the learning and literacy they had acquired after many years of rigorous training and personal sacrifice. In the nearly two decades after the opening of relations with Japan most literate Koreans would have had little reason to believe that Literary Sinitic would not continue as the principal written language of state and the most esteemed form of writing for many years to come. And even well after institutional changes in language policy and practice were ushered in by the Kabo Reforms, Literary Sinitic continued to be highly valued by a great many Koreans.

As Blommaert (1999) astutely observes, new language ideologies are not "simply picked up by popular opinion" (10). Writing about what he terms "language ideological debates," Blommaert writes that language ideologies "do not win the day just like that..." Rather they are "reproduced by means of a variety of institutional, semi-institutional and everyday practices: campaigns, regimentation in social reproduction systems such as schools, administration, army, advertisement, publications (the media, literature, art, music) and so on" (10). The demotion of Literary Sinitic and its removal to the periphery of the new educational system during the final years of the Chosŏn dynasty similarly required the

reproduction and regularization of new language ideologies through reforms in government language policies, through media campaigns against its public use, and through the abolition or reform of the institutions which had supported Literary Sinitic for centuries. The conceptual relocation or reimagining of Literary Sinitic following the 1876 Treaty of Kanhwa, as reflected in the shift of terminology used to describe Literary Sinitic and the vernacular script, was accompanied by a physical relocation or removal of Literary Sinitic from the center of Koreans' literate lives following the abolition of the traditional civil service examination system (*kwagŏ* 科擧) and the establishment of new Western-style educational institutions. The development of *hanmunkwa*, a new and distinct academic discipline for teaching Literary Sinitic as one subject in a multi-subject Western-style curriculum, became a central feature of this reimagination and relocation process.

The removal and reimagining of Literary Sinitic was by no means a finished project by the time of Korea's annexation in 1910. The use of Literary Sinitic, though increasingly marginalized, continued well into the colonial era and in some ways beyond. Korea has indeed experienced a very long "*hanmun* hangover." Nevertheless, the precolonial moment is vital for understanding the views held by Koreans today about Literary Sinitic's place in their society. Describing those whose ideas led to a reimagining of the Korean nation, Schmid (2002) writes that "[a]rmed with their presses and dominating the school movement, these nationalist writers produced many of the key texts and generated some of the most powerful social memories of the nation," and this knowledge about the Korean nation, produced at the end of the Chosŏn dynasty, now forms the "basis of modern Korea's nationalist discourse"(3-4). So it is with Literary Sinitic. The origins of many of the ideas Koreans hold today about Literary Sinitic's place in modern society, how it should be taught, and the

reasons for learning it are found not in the practices of those who continued teaching and learning it in much the same way as had always been done, but in the ideas and practices developed by the relatively few Koreans and Western missionaries who took to teaching Literary Sinitic as one subject among many within the period's newly developing school system.

2 Korea's premodern language situation⁶

At the signing of the Treaty of Kanghwa, Korea's spoken language differed radically from the official written language; a situation later termed *ŏnmun ich'i* 言文二致 (divergent speech and writing).⁷ The spoken language situation consisted of a series of diachronically related, though non-standardized varieties of Korean, with the Seoul dialect as the most prestigious (King 1998: 35). With writing, the situation was far more complex.

2.1 Literary Sinitic

Throughout the peninsula's history, literacy was by and large limited to aristocratic males, with Literary Sinitic serving as the *de facto* official written language of virtually all domains of writing. Though exact dates are unknown, Literary Sinitic made its way to the Korean peninsula early in the first few centuries of the Common Era (Eckert 1990: 12–23; Norman 1988: 78) as greater contact with China led the period's elites to begin adapting their society to fit within the Sinitic cosmopolis by adopting cosmopolitan knowledge, symbols, and practices. Literary Sinitic, therefore, became the vehicle for conveying and maintaining orthodox knowledge and governing practice within Korea, and without it the peninsula's participation in the cosmopolitan order would have been much constrained. As Korea's first, and for at least a thousand years *only* fully elaborated system of writing, Literary Sinitic brooked no real challenge to its prestige or dominance until the late-Chosŏn period; this despite the fact that the language was never connected to the native speech of any

⁶ See Appendix A for a discussion of the problems with common sociolinguistic categorizations of Korea's premodern language situation.

⁷ The work of Koyama (2003), Lee (2010), Twine (1991) and others on the Japanese *genbun itchi* movement, a close corollary to Korea's later *ŏnmun ilch'i* 言文一致 (unifying speech and writing) movement, would indicate that along with its companion "*ŏnmun ich'i*," the two terms entered Korean discourse via Japanese influence, though it is yet unclear exactly when.

permanent linguistic community within Korea, and by the time of its arrival on the peninsula, had already sustained a long history of significant dissimilarity with the various vernaculars of China as well (Norman 1988: 83).

Koreans were acutely aware of the vast differences between their spoken and written languages and the difficulties this caused in learning and using Literary Sinitic. Two indigenous orthographic systems, *idu* 吏讀 (“clerk readings”) and *kugyŏl* 口訣 (“oral embellishments”) were developed slowly over time to help alleviate these difficulties.⁸ Both systems employed Chinese characters (or their abbreviated forms) as phonograms and were supplemental to Literary Sinitic literacy, the former serving to partially render vernacular Korean and the later as an aid in the reading of pure Literary Sinitic texts.

As its name suggests, *idu* was used mainly by clerks or scribes in mundane record keeping or other clerical tasks and allowed for the crude transcription of bits of vernacular Korean. It was a hybrid system which mixed Literary Sinitic written in partial Korean word order with limited vernacular elements such as simple Korean nouns and Korean morphosyntactic elements like verb endings and noun particles using some Chinese characters solely for their phonetic value (i.e. as phonograms). *Kugyŏl* on the other hand was, as King (2007) succinctly describes, a “reading-aid-cum-translation device” (203). Either brushed in ink or reduced to a complex system of stylus dots and dashes (*kakp'il* 角筆), *kugyŏl* annotations in the margins of otherwise wholly Literary Sinitic texts allowed the

⁸ Though tradition has it that both were invented during the early Unified Silla period (668–935) by the revered Confucian scholar Sŏl Ch'ong (650–730), Yi and Ramsey (2011: 56) show that “that would have been impossible, for... there are textual examples of writing with *idu* that preceded him.”

reader trained in their decipherment to read alloglottographically,⁹ meaning that what was written in one language (Literary Sinitic) could, using this system, be extemporaneously read in another (Korean). Written using Chinese characters, *idu* and sometimes *kugyŏl* had the look of Literary Sinitic, were both learned as part of the same elite education, and therefore both occupied the same “literacy space” as Literary Sinitic, with an assumed literacy in Literary Sinitic entailing an additional competence on some level in both *idu* and *kugyŏl*. These two “supplemental literacies” therefore, shared in Literary Sinitic’s prestige.

Even though *idu* and *kugyŏl* were used to partially bridge the gap between Literary Sinitic and vernacular Korean, given the great structural dissimilarity of these two languages, these clumsy “borrowed character orthographies” (*ch’aja p’yogi* 借字表記) failed to efficiently and accurately record the vernacular language.

2.2 The vernacular script

During the reign of the Chosŏn dynasty’s fourth monarch, King Sejong, a native alphabetic script was invented and officially promulgated in 1446 with the title “*hunmin chŏngŭm*” 訓民正音 (commonly translated as “The Correct Sounds for the Instruction of the People”). This new script provided for the first time an efficient and accurate means for recording vernacular Korean, though its chief inventor and primary patron, King Sejong,

⁹ The term “alloglottography” was first used by Gershevitch (1979) to describe a phenomenon in the ancient Near East whereby utterances in Old Persian made by the Persian king were recorded by bilingual scribes in Elamite. When reread aloud the Elamite records were then rendered orally back into Old Persian. Citing Gershevitch’s work, Rubio (2006) describes alloglottography as the practice of “writing a text in a language different from the language in which it is intended to be read” (45). Coulmas (1999: 8–9) gives a similar definition and describes the Japanese practice of rendering Japanese readings for Literary Sinitic texts as an example. Korea’s *kugyŏl* system, too, should be considered an attoglottographic device, meant as it was to facilitate a nativized reading of Literary Sinitic texts.

undoubtedly saw for it a role supplemental to Literary Sinitic literacy.¹⁰ Nevertheless, even before the full nature of the native script was known, a small coterie of scholars voiced vociferous opposition to its creation. In an anti-alphabet memorial from early 1444, Ch'oe Malli, a high ranking scholar in the Hall of Worthies (Chiphyōnjōn 集賢殿), complained that the creation of a vernacular script was improper for a country such as theirs, dedicated as it was to imitating Chinese civilization “in matters of culture, literary and material, and in ritual and music.” Ch'oe described the creation of a vernacular script as a contemptible affair, stating that “[o]nly the likes of the Mongols, Tanguts, Jurchens, Japanese and Tibetans have their own graphs. But these are the matters of barbarians, and not worth talking about.”¹¹

Commenting on the “Sinophilism” and “aristocratic disdain” of Ch'oe's memorial, Ledyard (1998) writes that,

...these were the attitudes that told of the ruling class rejection of the Korean alphabet even before it was launched; they were certainly not peculiar to Ch'oe Malli, but common to the bureaucracy as a whole. Nor were they characteristic only of Sejong's day, but constant for the rest of the Chosŏn dynasty. (150)

¹⁰ Though the motives behind the script's creation cannot now be fully ascertained, there is little reason to believe that King Sejong, steeped as he was in the language and learning of Confucian textual knowledge, viewed the script as a means for the wholesale abandonment of Literary Sinitic in favor of mass vernacular literacy, despite latter-day lay and scholarly devotionals declaring such a motive. Rather, the great king likely intended that his script serve as a replacement for the cumbersome borrowed character orthographies *idu* and *kugyŏl*. Some evidence for such a motive can be seen in the fact that one of the primary concerns for Ch'oe Malli and his associates was the possible negative consequences of replacing *idu* with the new script, thus nullifying the need for scribes and other primary users of *idu* to learn even Chinese characters let alone Literary Sinitic, and therefore be ignorant of proper Confucian ways gleaned as the happy yet inevitable by-product of a Literary Sinitic education (see Ledyard 1998: 142). Furthermore, as its original name *hunmin chŏngŭm* suggests, though now somewhat cryptically (see Ledyard 1998: 177–183 on the fifteenth-century meaning of *chŏngŭm*), Sejong seems to have considered his script as a resource for *improving* Literary Sinitic literacy through correct pedagogy. The first project for which the new script was used, a Chinese character rime dictionary, and Sejong's strong defense of this project to the anti-alphabet memorialists is evidence of his pedagogical motivation.

¹¹ 唯蒙古, 西夏, 女真, 日本, 西蕃之類, 各有其字, 是皆夷狄事耳, 無足道者. Translation above from Ledyard 1998: 141.

Literary Sinitic was the universally accepted medium of Neo-Confucianism, by then Chosŏn's official ruling orthodoxy, and the ruling elites were willing to abandon neither orthodoxy nor Literary Sinitic. Even when faced, then, with the creation of a native script that possessed a ready ability to efficiently record the country's universally spoken idiom, Literary Sinitic retained its prestigious status and overwhelming use relative to the vernacular script.

Aside from the very vocal protestations of Ch'oe Malli and his few associates, the ruling elites of Sejong's day found that "[t]he much more practical and effective protest was to ignore the alphabet altogether, to put it beneath one's notice..." (Ledyard 1998: 151). Literary Sinitic therefore continued as the primary written language of the state bureaucracy and was maintained by a Chosŏn educational system centered on preparing students to sit for civil service examinations (*kwagŏ* 科擧) which granted passers access to positions in the state bureaucracy. Candidates were tested on their understanding of the Confucian canon (written in Literary Sinitic) as demonstrated in their ability to compose in Literary Sinitic responses to questions about the canon. So long as it was the language of government and these examinations, Literary Sinitic would remain essential to achieving and maintaining success in elite society (i.e. entering the state bureaucracy), and literary works composed therein would continue to be considered literary art *par excellence*.

The native script, however, did not simply go away or fall into obscurity. Immediately after its promulgation, it was used in several purely vernacular works¹² and eventually found its widest use as a pedagogical tool in so-called "*ŏnhae*" 諺解 ("vernacular

¹² E.g., *Yongbiŏch'ŏn-ka* 龍飛御天歌, *Sŏkpo sangjŏl* 釋譜詳節, etc. For a comprehensive examination of early works that employed the new script see An 1979.

explanation”) versions of Literary Sinitic texts, often used as primers for students learning Literary Sinitic. These hybrid texts were at first typically Buddhist sutras, though later included the Confucian classics as well. They consisted of the original Literary Sinitic text on the one hand and a vernacular translation or commentary on the text on the other (Kornicki 2009: 38–9). And it was through these *ŏnhae* texts that the native script “largely supplanted the functions of *kugyŏl* orthography” (King 2007: 204). The script was also used in language teaching manuals used at the Interpreter’s Bureau (Sayŏgwŏn 司譯院), in Buddhist writings for proselytizing, and in personal letters.¹³ It was employed for a number of other reasons as well by a diversity of individuals, from the royal family to Confucian scholar-officials to Buddhist monks to women and children.¹⁴ Its use, however, was considerably limited relative to that of Literary Sinitic.

2.3 Separate literacies

Both indicative of and perhaps in part responsible for perpetuating the native script’s limited use was the development of a deep and widely-recognized division delineating the perceived proper domains of use for Literary Sinitic and the vernacular script not long after its invention. This divide suggested that unlike with the privileged relationship between Literary Sinitic and the borrowed-character orthographies *idu* and *kugyŏl*, Chosŏn’s ruling elites viewed the Korean vernacular written in Sejong’s script as a subordinate and largely separate literacy. The discursive nature of this disparity in status can perhaps best be seen in the common terms used to refer to the two writing systems. Considered rustic and unrefined, the written vernacular was commonly referred to as “*ŏnmun*” 諺文 (“vulgar/vernacular

¹³ See especially Haboush 2009.

¹⁴ For greater detail on the variety of persons and purposes by whom and for which the native script was used prior to the late-Chosŏn period, see Ledyard 1998: 323–399.

writing”) or even at times as “*amk’ŭl*” (“women’s letters”). In contrast, the term “*chinsŏ*” 眞書 (“true/genuine writing”) was coined¹⁵ as a term of distinction to refer to Literary Sinitic, marking it as authentic and refined. These terms reflected and were themselves a central element of a discourse on the purpose and role of written language reified by the two script’s physical location in Chosŏn educational space—Literary Sinitic at the center of the formal curriculum and instruction in the use of the native script, if it occurred at all,¹⁶ at the margins of home learning.¹⁷ Such a discourse served to institutionalize a language ideology in which, as the one “true writing,” Literary Sinitic alone was appropriate for official public use by Confucian-minded men participating in a far-flung East Asian cosmopolitanism, while the vernacular script was decidedly better suited to the mundane private affairs of women and Buddhist monks toiling obscurely in their narrow, local spheres. And though Jahyun Kim Haboush rightly notes that “in everyday life, this division was often transgressed” (Haboush 2009: 2), in official state discourse there developed and remained this strictly held distinction in status between Literary Sinitic and the vernacular script that did not begin to change until the final years of the Chosŏn dynasty.

¹⁵Consulting both Morohashi’s *Dai Kan-Wa Jiten* 大漢和辭典 and the *Hanyu Da Cidian* 漢語大詞典 shows that unlike in Korea neither “*chinsŏ*” 眞書 nor its variant “*chinmun*” 眞文 were used historically to refer to Literary Sinitic in either Japan or China.

¹⁶ Excluding the Interpreter’s Bureau.

¹⁷ Kwak Chu’s letter to his mother-in-law, Madame Hapsan, asking that she teach his nephews the vernacular script while they are at her house is evidence of this home learning. He writes:

Would you please teach my two nephews “vulgar language” (*ŏnmun*) while they are staying there? It will be a burden to you, but do teach them vernacular script please. I ask you this favor after much reckoning. (“Kwak Chu’s Letter to His Mother-in-Law.” In Haboush 2009: 283–84)

3 New terminology

As acknowledged from the outset, old language ideologies are not simply swept aside by force of reason or overcome by the purported logic of a new competing ideology. And as will be seen, even the weight of law can be insufficient to unseat deeply-held views and attitudes on the proper use and function of language. However, the eventual regularization of new nationalist language ideologies which reversed Korea's written language hierarchy through increased vernacularization and the physical relocation of Literary Sinitic from the center to the periphery of the state educational system was made easier by a shift in terminology begun well before these new ideologies were introduced and regularized in the years following the Kabo Reforms.

In describing the vernacularization process initiated earlier in neighboring Japan, Wataru Koyama writes that the Japanese transformation would come to require “nothing less than a revolution in the ontic, epistemic and political-discursive universe of words and things” (Koyama 2003: 552–3).¹⁸ The same could and ought to be said of Korea. So long as Literary Sinitic was dressed in the robes of “true script” while the vernacular script wore “vulgar” rags, new language ideologies would have little chance of catching hold. Among a myriad other signs, symbols, and sacraments that required reimagining and reconfiguring in order to remove Korea from the Sinitic cosmopolis, the removal of Literary Sinitic to the periphery of literate life would entail a shift in the terms used for Literary Sinitic and the vernacular script. This shift would dramatically transform the way the two languages were represented allowing for a thorough reevaluation of Korea's Literary Sinitic tradition.

¹⁸ As Koyama's quote belies, Korea's vernacularization process was not unique. The late-19th and early-20th century breakup of the Sinitic cosmopolis was in large measure made possible by similar vernacular movements which occurred throughout East Asia, beginning first in Japan, then in Korea, and later within China itself.

The outcome of this shift was described by the well-known late-Chosŏn scholar and poet Hwang Hyŏn (1855–1910). As recorded in a November 1894 entry in his *Maech'ŏn yarok* (*Maech'ŏn's Unofficial Record*), Hwang states:

At this time, the Official Gazette and provincial records have all been a mixture of *chinsŏ* and *ŏnmun* coupled together into phrases in imitation of the Japanese writing style. In the language of our country we have long called Chinese writing “*chinsŏ*” and *hunmin chŏngŭm* we have called “*ŏnmun*,” with the two together commonly called “*chin-ŏn*.” Since this year, Kabo (Kojong 31 [1894]), those individuals who pursue current trends have greatly accepted *ŏnmun*, calling it “*kungmun*,” and, considering *chinsŏ* to be something foreign, call it “*hanmun*.” Accordingly, the 3-character term “*kukhanmun*” has been coined and the terms “*chinsŏ*” and “*ŏnmun*” have finally disappeared. These fools cry out with the argument that *hanmun* should be scrapped, but the current state of things has restrained them.¹⁹

Hwang observes, as has already been laid out, that the common traditional terms for Literary Sinitic and the vernacular script were “*chinsŏ*” and “*ŏnmun*” respectively. By 1894, however, the new terms “*hanmun*” 漢文 (“Chinese writing/Han writing” for Literary Sinitic) and “*kungmun*” 國文 (“National Writing” for the vernacular script) had been taken up by certain “trendy” types who then advocated getting rid of Literary Sinitic altogether as something foreign, specifically *Chinese*. This observation came near the end of 1894, at the height of the Kabo Reforms and a few short months after an official government pronouncement for the first time referred to the vernacular script as “*kungmun*.”²⁰ As it turns

¹⁹時京中官報及外道文移，皆眞諺相錯，以綴字句，蓋效日本文法也。我國方言，古稱華文曰眞書，稱訓民正音曰諺文，故統稱眞諺，及甲午（高宗三十一年）後趨時務者盛推諺文曰國文，別眞書以外之曰漢文，於是國漢文三字遂成方言，而眞諺之稱泯焉，其狂佻者倡漢文當廢之論，然勢格而止。— From Hwang 2005: 168.

²⁰ Im Hyŏngt'aek (1999) indicates that a December 17, 1894 pronouncement known as the “Rescript on Public Writing” was the Chosŏn government’s earliest use of the term “*kungmun*” to refer to the written vernacular. However, the August 12, 1894 pronouncement abolishing the traditional civil service examination system lists the written vernacular, calling it “*kungmun*,” as one of the subjects to be tested by the newly instituted civil service exams.

out, unlike “*kungmun*,” “*hanmun*” was introduced into official discourse well in advance of Hwang’s observation.

3.1 From “*chinsŏ*” to “*hanmun*”

A survey of the *Chosŏn Wangjo Sillok* 朝鮮王朝實錄 (*Annals of the Chosŏn Dynasty*; hereafter *Sillok*), the dynasty’s most official record, shows that in official discourse the transition from “*chinsŏ*” to “*hanmun*” preceded the shift from “*ŏnmun*” to “*kungmun*” and seems to have been fully completed in little more than a decade following the Treaty of Kanghwa. In fact, the text of the treaty itself, which is included in the *Sillok*, contains one of the last instances of “*chinsŏ*.” Further evidence for this can be found in a call for universal education in a February 1886 editorial titled “Non hakchŏng” 論學政 (“On Education Policy”) in the (then) new weekly newspaper, *Hansŏng Chubo* 漢城週報. The anonymous author argues in favor of teaching the vernacular script rather than Literary Sinitic in schools on the grounds that it is quick and easy to learn, but does so using the terms “*hanmun*” and “*ŏnmun*.” Moreover, there is no accompanying call for an end to the teaching and use of Literary Sinitic, unlike in Hwang Hyŏn’s report eight years later. Rather, the author argues that those with time and financial means to study Literary Sinitic should be allowed to do so in addition to learning the vernacular script, so that “...education will be universal and moral edification will be fully realized”²¹ The relative ease of this shift from the aggrandizing term “*chinsŏ*” to what Hwang Hyŏn considers a foreignizing term “*hanmun*” is remarkable, especially when one considers that Literary Sinitic’s status in Korea was not diminished at all during the period of shift, particularly *vis-à-vis* the vernacular script.

²¹ Cited in Namgung 2006b: 351.

Again, a survey of the *Sillok* shows that “*chinsŏ*” entered the Chosŏn dynasty’s official discourse in the late 15th century, well after the introduction of “*ŏnmun*” fifty years previous. “*Ōnmun*” first appears in the last entry of the lunar year 1443 in an announcement of the invention of Sejong’s new script,²² and occurs 906 times thereafter throughout the *Sillok*.²³ “*Chinsŏ*,” on the other hand, occurs much less frequently than “*ŏnmun*,” and first appears in the *Sillok* in 1490 in the report of an investigation by the Correctional Tribunal of the Ministry of Punishment into the forgery of documents by one Chŏng Chin. The relevant passage reads:

Chŏng Ŭison’s testimony was as follows: “Su Ch’un’gun’s wife showed me the contents of a letter written in *ŏnmun*. I translated it into *chinsŏ* and presented it to the Correctional Tribunal, and the draft report which has been presented is a translation into *ŏnmun* of what was sketched out in *chinsŏ*.”²⁴

²²是月，上親制諺文二十八字，其字倣古篆，分爲初中終聲，合之然後乃成字，凡干文字及本國俚語，皆可得而書，字雖簡要，轉換無窮，是謂訓民正音。—*Sejong Sillok*, Vol. 102, 1443/12/30, Number 2.

This month, His Highness personally created the twenty-eight letters of the Vernacular Script (*Ōnmun*). Its letters imitate the Old Seal, and are divided into initial, medial and terminal sounds. Once one combines them, they form a syllable. All [sounds] in both Chinese characters and in the rustic language of this country may be written. Although they are simple and fine, they shift and change [in function] without end. These are called the “Correct Sounds for the Instruction of the People.”—Translation from Ledyard 1998.

Ledyard notes that the text of this entry may well have been added after Sejong’s death by the compilers of Sejong’s annal (1998: 134–6). This would push back “*ŏnmun*’s” first *Sillok* appearance a mere two months, however, to the February 1444 entry containing the text of Ch’oe Malli’s anti-alphabet memorial in which Ch’oe calls the native script “*ŏnmun*” a number of times. This shows that the term had gained a certain level of currency even before the alphabet project was complete.

²³ This includes the “*ŏnmun*”-variants “*ŏnsŏ*” 諺書 (*Sillok*: 386 times; *Sŭngjŏngwŏn Ilgi*: 526 times), “*ŏncha*” 諺字 (*Sillok*: 29 times; *Sŭngjŏngwŏn Ilgi*: 12 times), “*ŏnch'al*” 諺札 (*Sillok*: 69 times; *Sŭngjŏngwŏn Ilgi*: 101 times), “*ŏnhae*” 諺解 (*Sillok*: 70 times; *Sŭngjŏngwŏn Ilgi*: 347 times), “*ŏngan*” 諺簡 (*Sillok*: 50 times; *Sŭngjŏngwŏn Ilgi*: 15 times), “*ŏngyo*” 諺教 (*Sillok*: 119 times; *Sŭngjŏngwŏn Ilgi*: 269 times), “*ŏndan*” 諺單 (*Sillok*: 1 time; *Sŭngjŏngwŏn Ilgi*: 15 times) as well as the compound term “*chinŏn*” 眞諺 (*Sillok*: 31 times; *Sŭngjŏngwŏn Ilgi*: 358 times) used by Hwang. “*Ōnmun*” occurs 151 times in the *Sillok* and 164 times in the *Sŭngjŏngwŏn ilgi*.

²⁴義孫供招云：“壽春君妻，以諺文書狀，意以示我，我以眞書翻譯而書呈禁府，推納狀草，則乃眞書起草，而以諺文翻譯。”—*Sŏngjong Sillok*, Vol. 247, 1490/11/13, Number 1.

The full meaning of this passage may be difficult to grasp, removed as it is from the context of its entire *Sillok* entry. What is most important to note for the purposes of this inquiry, however, is that in this first instance of “*chinsŏ*” the term co-occurs with “*ŏnmun*.” This pattern is repeated throughout the remainder of the *Sillok*. Of the fifty-five instances in the *Sillok* of “*chinsŏ*” and its variants,²⁵ all but four co-occur with “*ŏnmun*.” The same pattern can be seen by expanding the inquiry to a survey of the *Sŭngjŏngwŏn Ilgi* 承政院日記 (*The Daily Records of the Royal Secretariat*) where of 406 instances of “*chinsŏ*” all but six co-occur with “*ŏnmun*,” and of these six, two contain references to written languages other than Literary Sinitic.²⁶ Also, the infrequency of “*chinsŏ*” relative to “*ŏnmun*” does not mean that references to Literary Sinitic within official Chosŏn records are necessarily fewer than references to the written vernacular. Rather, elsewhere in the *Sillok*, as in many Literary Sinitic works, references to what was the default language often occur simply as “*mun*” 文 (writing, literature) or “*cha*” 字 (characters) (King 2007: 204).

That the term “*chinsŏ*” first appears well after the first instance of “*ŏnmun*,” that it nearly always co-occurs with “*ŏnmun*,” that its use is quite limited relative to “*ŏnmun*,” and that it is neither the only nor even the primary manner of referring to Literary Sinitic indicates that it was coined in reaction to the creation of the native script as a term of distinction, and that as used in official records it was largely meant to delineate Literary Sinitic from the written vernacular in passages where both were referenced (e.g., when a *Sillok* entry may indicate that a particular proclamation or edict should be promulgated in

²⁵Variants counted here are “*chinmun*” 眞文 (*Sillok*: 3 times; *Sŭngjŏngwŏn Ilgi*: 0), and “*chin-ŏn*” 眞諺 (*Sillok*: 31; *Sŭngjŏngwŏn Ilgi*: 358). “*Chinsŏ*” occurs 21 times in the *Sillok* and 48 times in the *Sŭngjŏngwŏn Ilgi*.

²⁶ For example, one of these entries refers to Koreans’ observances of written language practices on the Japanese island of Tsushima.

both Literary Sinitic and the written vernacular, or when something written in one is to be translated into the other). Given, then, the very specific and limited way in which “*chinsō*” had been employed in official sources historically, and again noting that Literary Sinitic continued to enjoy its traditionally high status throughout the roughly decade-long period of shift from “*chinsō*” to “*hanmun*,” it seems reasonable to conclude that using “*hanmun*” was not initially considered a marginalizing threat to Literary Sinitic during the 1880s when the shift actually occurred, even though by the 1894 Kabo Reforms, Hwang Hyōn clearly sees the term as having a foreignizing quality. This conclusion is bolstered by considering how and by whom “*hanmun*” is used during the 1880s when the term first gains wide currency.²⁷

“*Hanmun*” first occurs in the *Sillok* to refer to Literary Sinitic in the text of the Treaty of Kanghwa and twice more in short order following the treaty, but its initial use is resisted by the Korean negotiators.²⁸ The *Sillok*’s first well-received use of “*hanmun*” to refer to

²⁷ See Appendix B for a discussion of how the term “*hanmun*” was used in the *Sillok* prior to the period in question.

²⁸ As in each of the treaties entered into by Korea from 1876 onward, the Treaty of Kanghwa includes a section establishing the language each country would use in future communications between the two parties. As recorded in the *Sillok*, Article 3 of the treaty reads:

Henceforth, in all official correspondence between our two countries Japan shall use their country’s writing (*ki-kungmun*), and for a period of ten years from the present date shall specially provide an accompanying *hanmun* translation. Chosōn shall use *chinmun*.

嗣後兩國往來公文，日本用其國文，自今十年間，別具譯漢文一本，朝鮮用眞文。From *Kojong Sillok*, Vol. 13, 1876/02/03, Number 1.

The treaty’s inclusion of both “*hanmun*” and “*chinsō*” (here “*chinmun*”) might at first appear to be a distinction without a difference, as from our current vantage point both terms here undoubtedly referred to Literary Sinitic. At the time, the two parties seem to have each understood the term “*hanmun*” somewhat differently, however, leading to this otherwise awkward co-occurrence with “*chinsō*.” Though it is possible that the Koreans understood the distinction between “*hanmun*” and “*chinsō*” to have reflected an altogether difference in *kind*, it seems more likely that they viewed Japanese use of Literary Sinitic to be rather of a different *quality* than theirs, given the separate tradition and linguistic apparatus (i.e., systems other than *idu*, *kugyōl*, or the Korean script) used in Japan for rendering Literary Sinitic intelligible to a Japanese reader. That the Koreans insisted that what was originally written as simply “*hanmun*” in an earlier draft submitted by the Japanese be changed to include “*chinmun*” in the treaty’s final version (see Hwang 2003: 136) reflects this view

Literary Sinitic occurs in the 1883 treaties with Great Britain and Germany. Like the Treaty of Kanghwa, these treaties contain an article naming the official languages of correspondence between the two countries wherein Literary Sinitic is still set forth as the Korean government's preferred language for written correspondence, but rather than calling it “*chinsǒ*,” the accepted term is “*hanmun*.” The relevant portion from the treaty with Great Britain, Article 12, Section 1, reads:

Our two nations, having negotiated and concluded this treaty in the writing of our two countries [*Hanmun* and English] have carefully inspected each version and have confirmed that their phrasing and meaning correspond one to another.²⁹

This passage is remarkable not only because it is the first instance in the *Sillok* of “*hanmun*” used unproblematically to refer to Literary Sinitic, but also because it is the first time Literary Sinitic, by any name, is explicitly declared Korea's official written language despite many centuries of official use. Larson (2008: 72–80) has shown, however, that the text of these treaties was drafted not by Koreans, but by two Chinese officials, Ma Jianzhong (1845–1900) and Ding Ruchang (?–?), and that the former was also responsible for drafting the text of the 1882 treaty between the U.S. and Korea.³⁰ Nevertheless, in later treaties negotiated directly by Korean officials, such as those with Italy, France, and Russia, the

and may also reflect the fact that, having already long used “*chinsǒ*,” the Koreans were not yet willing to give the term up, at least not based on a Japanese precedent. Such an understanding of this one and only co-occurrence in the *Sillok* of “*hanmun*” and “*chinsǒ*” would make it more appropriate then to render 漢文 in the Treaty of Kanghwa and the two entries following shortly thereafter as “*kanbun*” rather than “*hanmun*” to reflect the assumption inherent in Article 3 that the Korean negotiators at the time viewed 漢文 as peculiar to their Japanese counterparts.

²⁹ 兩國議立此約，原係【漢，英】兩國文字，均經詳細校對，詞意相同。 – From *Kojong Sillok*, Vol. 20, 1883/10/27, Number 7.

³⁰ In the 1882 treaty with the U.S., Literary Sinitic, as the language of the Korean state, is referred to as “*hwamun*” 華文 (Chinese writing), the same generic term used in Hwang Hyōn's 1894 account.

wording follows almost exactly that of the earlier treaties written by the Chinese, and in each case the Koreans unapologetically declare that the official written language of the Korean government is Literary Sinitic, now dressed as “*hanmun*.”

The use of “*hanmun*” to mean Literary Sinitic, then, has two separate introductions in official discourse. The first, by the Japanese in 1876, is tolerated in reference to Japanese use of Literary Sinitic, but resisted when referring to Korean use, and is therefore ineffectual, while the latter introduction in treaties negotiated and written by the Chinese in 1883, is accepted and modeled by the Koreans themselves in later treaties. This double introduction—the first one a failure and the second a success—can be read as an indication of the Korean court’s willingness to identify with the Chinese and its discomfort at doing so with Japan. It also reflects the peninsula’s differing geopolitical circumstances at the time of the two introductions. Staring down a cannon barrel, the Korean government was forcibly made to negotiate a treaty with Japan in 1876, while the 1883 treaties were negotiated by the Chinese on Korea’s behalf at the request of Korea’s King Kojong in order to block Japanese influence on the peninsula (Larsen 2008). It is little wonder then that the first instance met resistance, while the second was accepted and later modeled. And so long as Literary Sinitic was being officially recognized as the written language of the Korean state each time “*hanmun*” was used to refer to it, and provided that the status of the vernacular script had as yet not significantly changed, there was little to get in the way of the term gaining currency.

3.2 From “*ŏnmun*” to “*kungmun*”

Though the two-character term “*kungmun*” 國文 has a long history in Korean documents, its use in the *Sillok* prior to the 1894 beginnings of the Kabo Reforms shows that in its earlier sense, the term meant simply “the writing or language of some particular place

or country” and was therefore usually combined with a preceding place-specifying qualifier (e.g. *a-kungmun* 我國文 “our country’s writing,” *ki-kungmun* 其國文 “that/their country’s writing,” etc.). In late 19th-century Japan, nationalist intellectuals and linguists who had studied in Europe, especially in Germany, there internalized newly developing ideas which touted a deep almost mystical connection between a people’s language and their nation’s spirit or essence and later returned to Japan where they began evangelizing their new beliefs among their students (Koreans included) and publishing them in the Japanese press. Ueda Kazutoshi (1867–1937), one of Japan’s most influential nationalist language scholars, wrote in his collection of essays on language titled *Kokugo no Tame* (For the Sake of the National Language):

Just as blood shows a common birth in the realm of the flesh, language, for the people who speak it, shows a common birth in the realm of the spirit. If we take the Japanese national language as an example of this, we should speak of Japanese as the spiritual blood of the Japanese people. (Ramsey 1991: 41)

Ueda and other like-minded linguists and intellectuals, for whom the development of a national standard language was as much focused on standardizing the spoken language as it was on vernacularizing the written, eventually appropriated the term “*kokugo*” 國語 (“National Language”; Korean: *kugŏ*), to stand in for their newly adopted notion of a national standard language and as a counterpart to the European standards.

Ramsey (1991) has shown that this two-character term in its neologized form eventually made its way into China, as “what Victor Mair calls a “round-trip” word,” or “a word the Japanese first borrowed from classical Chinese sources; subsequently altered the meaning, tailoring it to fit some new (usually Western) concept; then finally sent in its new meaning back to its country of origin, China” (38). What Ramsey’s description fails to

mention, however, is that a decade before returning to and gaining currency in China in its new guise,³¹ “*kungmun*,” the Korean pronunciation for *kokugo*’s written correlate, “*kokubun*,” was introduced and embraced by Korea’s rising cadre of nationalist scholars and officials as part of the growing vocabulary of nationalism. The first use of “*kungmun*” in official Korean documents occurs at the beginning of the Kabo Reforms in an August 12, 1894 royal edict first published in the Official Gazette (*Kwanbo* 官報) announcing the institution of a new civil service examination system. Referring to the written vernacular as “*kungmun*” and Literary Sinitic as “*hanmun*,” the edict lists the two languages in that order along with several other subjects that examinees would be tested on. Then, on November 21, 1894 another royal edict first published in the official gazette reversed the 1880s treaties and many centuries of precedent by announcing that the vernacular would be the primary language of all government laws and edicts with attached Literary Sinitic versions being optional—an unprecedented reversal of the hierarchy of the two written languages.

The notion expressed previously in Japan that a nation’s language was intimately connected with the national spirit or essence, would eventually become common fare in Korea as well, and was repeated by Korean nationalists when eulogizing the vernacular script. By 1907, Kang Mae writes that “Korea’s spirit of independence was born with this, [Sejong’s invention of] our *kungmun*” (King 1998: 56). A year later, Yi Pogyŏng calls the vernacular

³¹ Mair (1994) details the earliest use of this term in China, writing that:

The first person known to have used the term *kuo-yü* in reference to a Sinitic language was the scholar and educator Wu Ju-lun. In 1902, Wu went to Japan to observe the educational system there. He was deeply impressed by the success with which the Japanese government had spread the use of the Tokyo dialect as their *kokugo* (i.e., *kuo-yü*) (Ramsey 1991). Upon his return to China, Wu began advocating to the Ch’ing government the adoption of Mandarin as a national language. By 1909, various tentative steps had been taken in this direction, but the dynasty collapsed before they became a reality. (730)

script the “spiritual essence” (*chǒngsu*) of the Korean people (King 1998: 60). And in 1910, Chu Sigyǒng, Korea’s most influential early language reformer, writes that,

“...language is the essence of independence... [T]he prosperity and decline of a nation lies in the prosperity and decline of its language, and the very question of the existence of a nation lies in the existence of a language.”³²

As with *kokugo* in Japan, *kungmun* (and then after 1906, *kugō*) in Korea would, until annexation, no longer refer to the language and writing of any other place or any other country, and it would certainly not refer to Literary Sinitic. “*Kungmun*” would also no longer require any qualification to convey that it was now exclusively the language of the Korean nation. For these and like-minded persons, Literary Sinitic, whether as *chinsō* or *hanmun*, could not properly represent the Korean nation.

3.3 The impact of terminological shift

The eventual effect of this shift in terminology on Literary Sinitic’s status can be seen in several of the few public defenses of Literary Sinitic published over a decade after the Kabo Reforms. In a February 1908 essay by Yō Kyuhyōng (1848–1921) in the *Taedong Hakhoe Wōlbo* (*Monthly of the Great Eastern Educational Association*) titled “Non Hanmun Kungmun” 論漢文國文 (On *hanmun* and *kungmun*) Yō defends the continued use of Literary Sinitic on the basis of its historic ties to the Korean nation. He writes:

Since being established by Tan'gun and Kija, our nation has gone on to use *hanmun* for four thousand years. *Hanmun* existed at the origin of our nation and is not something imposed upon us from abroad. Now the world says, “Only after abolishing *hanmun* and writing in pure *kungmun* can our nation begin to be established.” Though reasoning of this nature is absurd and delusional on its face, requiring that nothing further be said, it must be called out. For if it is not, the foolish will in the end be unable to realize it.

³² Cited in King 1998: 48.

Sejong first made *kungmun*'s 36 letters modeled after the characters of China's molar innunciants (見溪群疑) and called it "*ŏnmun panjŏl*" in order to assist with *hanmun*; simply to teach the unlearned masses who did not understand *hanmun*. It was not intended to abolish the one (*hanmun*) and replace it with the other (*kungmun*).³³

Putting aside the historicity of his claims to Literary Sinitic's existence in Korea for four thousand years, Yŏ's argument that Literary Sinitic was integral to the primordial identity of the Korean nation can be read, as noted by Schmid (2002: 69–70), as an appropriation of the nationalizing logic of the *kungmun*-only faction. And although Yŏ ridicules those who would assert that the use of Literary Sinitic had been imposed from without, he nonetheless concedes rhetorical ground, wittingly or unwittingly, by adopting the otherizing term "*hanmun*" while arguing for Literary Sinitic's "Koreaness." With "*chinsŏ*" shorn of legitimacy and thus its currency, he is quite literally forced to argue on his opponents' terms.

In another essay in the April 1909 *Taedong Hakhoe Wŏlbo*, a pseudonymous author, Usan kŏsa 藕山居士, again defending the continued teaching and use of Literary Sinitic, confronts the difficulties "*hanmun*" and "*kungmun*" present for his position by asserting that Literary Sinitic had already long been used as the country's national writing (*kungmun*) and therefore ought still to be considered as such.

...It has been said that scrapping *kungmun* and turning attention instead to *hanmun* would be doing so on behalf of others and self-deprecating; that it would be showing contempt for the spirit of one's own nation. This too is completely wrong. For in using *hanmun*, if we look at its beginnings [in Korea], it cannot be said that it must have been done for others or that it was

³³我韓自 檀箕開國, 并用漢文, 行之四千年, 漢文即我韓本有之文, 非自外襲而取之也. 今世俗之言曰, 廢漢文, 純用國文, 然後始可以立國也. 愚迷如此, 不容多辨, 而又不能不辨, 不辨則蚩蚩者, 終不能覺悟也. 我英陵朝, 始製國文三十六字母, 所以模倣支那見溪群疑字母, 而名曰諺文反折, 所以羽翼漢文, 專以訓夫愚夫婦之不解漢文, 非廢彼而立此也. – Cited in Namgung 2007a: 479–80.

self-deprecating. Our country's use of *hanmun* now spans already over three thousand years, and it is found in the terms and idioms [of the Korean language] whose meanings could not be understood were it not for *hanmun*. The nation's people have already long used *hanmun* as the National Writing (*kungmun*).³⁴

Finally, in yet another *Taedong Hakhoe Wölbo* essay by the same pseudonymous author, Usan kösa, we see most clearly the difficulty “*hanmun*” creates for those who wish to represent Literary Sinitic as more than merely the “the national script of just another foreign country” (Schmid 2002: 68–9) and who would argue for Literary Sinitic's continued status as Korea's primary written medium. Addressing directly the obviously otherizing effect of “*hanmun*,” the author proposes the term be jettisoned altogether in favor of another term that “none ought to ridicule...” He writes:

What is *mun* 文?... It is the writing passed down and used in common in our three nations of East Asia for several thousand years. By convention it is called “*hanmun*,” and we too call it that. We do so following common convention that others may easily understand, not to say that Han 漢 is good. Han 漢 is a name for China. Han 漢 is not our nation... The two-character word “*hanmun*” has wide currency now, but we did not at first call it that. Furthermore, the word does not make sense. Writing was created anciently, not during the Han dynasty. It might properly be called “*komun*” 古文 (old writing) or the “old writing of antiquity” 古文之古, but this too is nonsensical, since among the many forms of writing between heaven and earth there are none that are not ancient. It should therefore be called “*amun*” 亞文 (Asian Writing). None ought to ridicule calling it “*amun*.” We are Asians, and Asians using Asian writing is what makes us all a common Asian people. Of those

³⁴ 又其言에 曰捨國文面尙漢文은 所以爲人而卑已 *ho* 야 銷自國之精神이라 *ho* 니 此又萬萬不然이라. 漢文이 若係創行이면 固不必爲人而卑已로 *toy* 乃我國之用漢文이 今已爲數三千 載 *ho* 야 物名及熟語에 其意義를 若非漢文이면 至有不能形解者 *ho* 니 國人之用漢文을 若固有之國文이 已久矣오. – *Taedong hakhoe wölbo*, vol. 15, pp. 1–2, April 1909. Cited in Pak 2006: 174.

who do not wish to cast aside their race and become a different race, who would dare reject Asian writing? Hereafter, we must call it “*amun*.”³⁵

³⁵文者何也?... 乃吾東亞三國所同用 幾千年傳來之文字也. 俗謂之漢文而吾仍之 蓋隨洛稱. 令人易知而已 非以漢而好之也. 然而漢 支那國名也; 漢非我國也... 漢文 二字 大抵隨俗之稱 非吾先稱也. 且其說不通也. 文生於古 非生於漢也. 當曰 古文 而古文之古 亦是說不通也. 天下萬文 無非古者 當可曰亞文也. 曰亞文 則當無敢非之者也. 吾亞人也. 亞人而用亞文 則凡為同亞之人者 如不欲棄種而為別種 則誰敢非亞文乎? 從今後吾當曰亞文也. –*Taedong hakhoe wŏlbo*, vol. 5, p. 1, June 1908. Cited in Pak 2006: 175.

4 The development of *hanmunkwa*

As discussed briefly above in Section 2.2, despite the fifteenth-century creation of the vernacular script, Literary Sinitic maintained its prestigious status and overwhelming use due to its role as the sole medium for the Chosŏn dynasty's governing orthodoxy (Neo-Confucianism) and its location at the center of an educational system which had as its primary *raison d'être* training the sons of the ruling class to become future government officials thoroughly indoctrinated in said orthodoxy. The redefinition of knowledge propounded by Enlightenment-faction reformers following the Sino-Japanese War, whereby Sinological learning was demoted as backward and stagnant “old knowledge,” and Western ideas and attendant technology were promoted as enlightened and progressive “new knowledge,” was regularized and reified by the establishment of a Western-style educational system. The requirements of this new educational system—which for the first time attempted universal education through mass literacy and instruction in various areas of knowledge comprising concepts and ideas other than the words of Confucian sages, the details of Chinese histories, and the forms of Chinese poetry all composed in Literary Sinitic—undermined Neo-Confucian orthodoxy and was incompatible with traditional Literary Sinitic mastery, which typically required a decade or more of intensive study and not insignificant financial means.

Literary Sinitic would continue to be taught in this new educational system, but it would no longer occupy the center of the curriculum. Instead it was taught as one subject in a multi-subject curriculum which included math, science, geography, history, and so on. Major changes to Literary Sinitic education, then, mirrored developments in education reform generally, and from opening in 1876 to annexation in 1910, developments in Literary Sinitic education, eventually termed *hanmunkwa*, may be divided into three periods of unequal

length. The first period lasted from opening in 1876 until the commencement of the Kabo Reforms in August 1894. The second period lasted from the beginning of the Kabo Reform Movement until shortly after the 1905 Ŭlsa Treaty when Korea was made a Japanese protectorate. The third period began with the September 1906 promulgation of the First Rescript on Education and lasted until eventual annexation in August 1910.

4.1 1876–1894

During the longest and earliest of these periods, from opening in 1876 up until the beginning of the Kabo Reforms in August 1894, educational changes were modest and Literary Sinitic continued its central role in most Chosŏn educational institutions. Nevertheless, official observation missions to Japan, the early developments of a hybrid writing style eventually known as *kukhanmun* 國漢文, and the founding of several Western-style schools, including particularly Protestant missionary schools, were important developments in Korean education, presaging changes in language and educational policy that would be institutionalized during the Kabo Reforms.

4.1.1 Observation missions to Japan

Korean officials began traveling to Japan almost immediately following the Treaty of Kanghwa; first for brief observation missions and later for longer periods of formal study. In the same year the treaty was concluded, Kim Kisu (1832–?) was dispatched to Japan as a special envoy by the Chosŏn court for the first of these observation missions. There he was to examine and report on the Meiji government's program of reforms. Kim's eventual report contains evidence of Koreans' early introduction to new ideas about language education via encounters with Japanese models. Called the *Susinsa kirok* 修信使記錄 (*Record of the*

Special Envoy), the report includes a description of Japan's modernizing educational system and touches briefly on language issues and language pedagogy. Kim writes:

At this place called “*hakkyo*” 學校, the method of instruction is to teach writing and reading to the children of the gentry as well as to talented commoners from the age of seven or eight. First Japanese characters are taught followed by Chinese characters, and, on reaching the age of sixteen, pupils are no longer made to read the Confucian classics. Primary focus is placed on studying astronomy, geography, and arithmetic, and to a lesser degree there are lessons in agricultural machinery, military machinery, and drafting. All this is done without ceasing even for a moment using books as well as hands-on learning. They have *hakkyo* even for girls, as well, with the major fields of astronomy, geography, soldiering and agriculture, and the minor subjects of poetry, literature, writing, and painting. All [the girls] are made to concentrate on a handicraft.³⁶

Kim's report shows Japanese school children of both high and common birth studying a multi-subject curriculum in which they are taught to read and write first Japanese kana, then Chinese characters, and are not made to study the Confucian canon after age sixteen. Though Korea did not immediately model what Kim witnessed in Japan, that a high-ranking official observed a modern(izing) educational system and that the results were reported to the King Kojong, is undoubtedly a meaningful event. Ten years later, in the anonymous *Hansŏng Chubo* editorial mentioned in the section 3.1, the author proposes several educational reforms which resemble the educational methods Kim Kisu had observed in Japanese schools. After briefly outlining the advantages of a phonetic script and vernacular writing, the author ends by advocating that Korean schools first teach students to read and write using Korea's

³⁶“其所謂學校教人之法，士大夫子弟以及民之俊秀，自七八歲，教之學書習字。初教日本文字，次教漢字。至十六歲，不復使之讀經傳，大而天文地理句股之學，小而農器，軍器，圖形之說，眼閱手調，未之暫掇。以至女子，亦有學校，大之天地兵農，小之詩文書畫，皆專一藝” – From Kim 1971: 108.

vernacular script and then allow for instruction in Literary Sinitic for those with the wherewithal to learn it:

Therefore, in our country as well, we should establish schools and instruct students in vernacular writing. From the works of Confucius and Mencius to European writings on building capital, all should be translated into *ǒnmun* and taught. Then after ten years of studying, those with no privation at home may study *hanmun* complementarily and become outstanding Confucian scholars. In doing this, education will be universal and moral edification will be fully realized.³⁷

This line of reasoning shows the impact of the early observation missions on Korean attitudes about Literary Sinitic and the institutions (in this case education) which both supported and were supported by it. The article advocates that Korean students, in addition to Western works on math and science, ought to study even the Classics, using not Literary Sinitic, but the written vernacular in much the same way Kim Kisu had described Japanese students doing ten years previous. Similar arguments would only grow in number throughout the pre-colonial period's public media, again often by those with Japanese connections.

In 1880, four years after Kim Kisu's mission, a second special envoy, Kim Hongjip (1842–1896), was sent to Japan. He too observed Japan's reforms and after returning home became an advocate of similar reforms in Korea. Kim would later become Korea's first modern prime minister during the Kabo Reforms, and as such would oversee the implementation of a number of education and language reforms which demoted Literary Sinitic by upending many of the institutions and everyday practices which supported it.

³⁷“然則我國設立學校，亦當以諺文教習學生。自孔孟聖賢之書，以至歐人殖貨之術，皆用諺文繙誦之。數十年就學，無累於家計者，則傍令學習漢文，可做鴻儒。如是則，學校普遍教化周洽矣。” “On Education Policy” 論學政, *Hansǒng Chubo* 漢城週報, February 2, 1886. – Cited in Namgung 2006b: 351.

In 1881 following Kim Hongjip's mission, King Kojong sent the so-called Courtiers' Observation Mission (*Chosa sich'al tan* 朝士視察團),³⁸ a much larger delegation of twelve government officials and their twenty-seven attendants, to Japan to observe and report on Meiji reforms in industry, politics, economy, culture, and education. According to Huh (2006), the "Reports" and "Observations" resulting from this four-month mission to Japan numbered more than eighty volumes³⁹ and became the "primary materials used by Korean authorities in their quest for 'self-strengthening' and 'opening'" (30–1). One of the reports by Ŏ Yunjung (1848–1896) included what would have been for its time a radical call for abolishing the traditional civil service examination, which, as discussed in section 2.2, was one of the primary institutions supporting Literary Sinitic's teaching and use. Ŏ writes:

If the Confucian examinations for the state posts are abolished, the crowds of public-spirited, enterprising people will find their way abroad, to learn skills and technologies, and come back. But, if the traditional Confucian examinations are not abolished, no talents will appear; the people will satisfy themselves with old learning and will not strive for progress in knowledge.⁴⁰

The mission's membership included many others like Ŏ who would later become core members of Korea's Enlightenment faction, some of whom, again like Ŏ (as Finance Minister) would also occupy prominent cabinet positions in the Korean government during the Kabo Reform Movement. These included Ŏm Seyōng (1831–1899), Minister of Agriculture; Yun Ch'ihō (1865–1945), Education Minister in Kim Hongjip's first cabinet; Pak Chōngyang (1841–1904), Education Minister in Kim Hongjip's second cabinet and then

³⁸ Also known as the *Sinsa yuram dan* 紳士遊覽團.

³⁹ Huh (2006) notes that "[m]ost of the Mission's reports were kept in Kojong's person (sic) collection, *Chibokje*. Later they were transferred to Seoul National University's Kyujanggak Library, which owns them currently" (54).

⁴⁰ Cited in Huh 2006: 52.

Prime Minister following Kim's resignation; Yi Hōnyōng (1837–1907), Minister of Internal Affairs; and Yu Kilchun (1856–1914), Vice-Minister of Internal Affairs. Yun Ch'ihō and Yu Kilchun were also among the first Koreans to study in Japan. Yu studied at Keiō Gijuku, the forerunner to Keiō University, under the school's founder Fukuzawa Yukichi (1834–1901), one of the leading Meiji reformers and an active participant in Japanese language reforms. Yu and Yun were both outspoken supporters of language reform in Korea, eventually pressing their views in favor of greater vernacularization in newspaper editorials.⁴¹

The fourth and last observation mission was led by Pak Yōnghyo (1861–1939), who was sent to Japan to repair relations following an 1882 soldiers' riot in which the Japanese legation was overrun and a number of Japanese were killed, forcing the Japanese minister to Korea and his aides to flee. Pak was also tasked with further observing Japanese government reforms while in Japan. Among his observations, Pak was impressed by Japan's growing newspaper culture, and in 1883 after returning to Korea he helped establish a government printing office, the Office of Culture and Information (Pangmun'guk 博文局), and obtained King Kojong's permission to publish a thrice-monthly newspaper, the *Hansōng Sunbo* 漢城旬報, the first organ of what would become a thriving public press; a central space for the country's language debates more than a decade later. Pak, along with several of those who accompanied him, including Kim Okkyun and Sō Kwangbōm, returned from their travels in Japan firm supporters of a Japanese-style reform agenda, and all three would eventually take part in an abortive 1884 *coup d'état* by which they and their cohorts aimed to forcibly institute reforms in Korea along the lines of what they had witnessed while in Japan. Following this failure, Pak and Sō fled into exile in Japan, though both were eventually

⁴¹ See King 1998.

brought back to Korea by the Japanese in 1894 and installed in the Kabo Reform cabinet; Pak serving as coalition partner in Kim Hongjik's second cabinet, and Sō as an official in the Justice Ministry and later in the Education Ministry.

4.1.2 *Kukhanmun*⁴²

After Pak Yōnghyo obtained King Kojong's permission to publish the *Hansǒng Sunbo* he asked Yu Kilchun, who had recently returned to Korea from his studies in Japan, to manage the paper with the help of Inoue Kakugorō (1860–1938), an associate of Fukuzawa Yukichi (Duus 1995: 78), and to write the inaugural editorial for the paper's first edition. Yu composed his editorial in a vernacularized mixed-script style. Although his essay was never actually published and the newspaper failed to survive more than a year, most future newspapers and other popular print media in the pre-colonial period, including the *Hansǒng Sunbo*'s successor, the *Hansǒng Chubo*, took up Yu Kilchun's vernacularized mixed-script style, thus undermining the use of pure Literary Sinitic. “*Kungmun* and *hanmun* used together” 國漢文混用, as a late-1894 royal edict would later term it, the *kukhanmun*-style would eventually emerge as a compromise style used by both pro-Literary Sinitic and pro-vernacular script advocates alike. King (1998) describes the style as at first Literary Sinitic “with a few Korean-script particles and endings sprinkled here and there, almost more as punctuation or a reading aid than an attempt to write Korean” (50).

⁴² Though an examination of the mixed-script style eventually known as *kukhanmun* could rightly be included in either of the subsequent periods of education reform outlined above, its beginnings during the early 1880s merit its being placed here in this discussion of pre-Kabo developments.

The term “*kukhanmun*” does not appear in official government sources until 1894, and not unlike the terms “*kungmun*” and “*hanmun*” from which “*kukhanmun*” is derived, the term itself reflects a reversal in the status of Literary Sinitic vis-à-vis the vernacular script. While “*chin-ōn*,” the previous hybrid term used for referring to Literary Sinitic and the vernacular script together, positioned Literary Sinitic ahead of the vernacular script, “*kukhanmun*” reverses this order.

Though Yu Kilchun linked the *kukhanmun* style ostensibly to Korea's *ŏnhae* tradition,⁴³ King (1998: 50) suspects that Yu's experience in Japan, where he gained extensive familiarity with Japan's developing mixed-script vernacular style while working closely with his Japanese mentor Fukuzawa Yukichi, was a more likely influence on Yu's choice to write vernacular Korean in a similar hybrid style. Further evidence of this link between *kukhanmun* and the Japanese mixed-script can be found when we remember Hwang Hyŏn's 1894 statement in his *Maech'ŏn yarok*. Mentioning Korea's new hybrid style, he writes that, "At this time, the Official Gazette and provincial records have all been a mixture of *chinsŏ* and *ŏnmun* coupled together into phrases *in imitation of the Japanese writing style*"⁴⁴ (emphasis added). As the top passer of the 1885 literary licentiate examination and one well versed in the late-Chosŏn Literary Sinitic tradition, Hwang would have undoubtedly been aware of the nature of Korea's *ŏnhae*-style. It is telling that rather than link *kukhanmun* to *ŏnhae*, Hwang calls it an imitation of what the Japanese were doing. The Kabo Reforms would eventually propel the rise of *kukhanmun* as the most agreed upon public written standard during the post-Kabo period, and Koyama (2003) notes that the style's thoroughgoing imitation of written Japanese would eventually become so complete that,

"Japanese texts and [the] Japanese empire's nationalist ideologies, inscribed in Sino-Japanese varieties, were almost verbatim translated into Sino-Korean varieties, most importantly by the Japanese Protectorate government from 1905, and by the Japanese Government-general of Korea from 1910 onward." (721)

Kukhanmun's use at first required what fervent pro-vernacular script reformers despised most—the continued need for extensive knowledge of both Literary Sinitic and of

⁴³ As does Yi 1970.

⁴⁴ 時京中官報及外道文移, 皆眞諺相錯, 以綴字句, 盖效日本文法也。— From Hwang 2005: 168.

obscure references to Confucian texts in order to read and write (King 1998: 61). Some defenders of Literary Sinitic were displeased by *kukhanmun*'s rise as well, seeing it as a betrayal of Confucianism. Sin Kisŏn (1851-1909), a conservative Confucian scholar-official appointed as Education Minister at the end of the Kabo Reforms movement, lamented that *kukhanmun*'s emergence as a semi-official style after Kabo was "an attempt to ruin letters and abolish the study of the Confucian canon."⁴⁵ Despite such discontent from those on both sides of the issue, however, both King (1998) and Namgung (2006d) show that a majority of those who published their feelings on the matter sided, though sometimes reluctantly, with *kukhanmun*.

4.1.3 Western-style schools

4.1.3.1 Foreign language schools

After concluding the Korea-U.S. treaty in 1882 and at Chinese insistence, the Korean court began recruiting foreign advisers and experts in various fields, including military, education, and customs and trade. As the roles and responsibilities of these foreign advisers within the Korean government grew, so did the need for Korean interpreters who could help them carry out their work.⁴⁶ In August 1883, under the direction of King Kojong's new German advisor, Paul Georg von Möllendorff (1847–1901), Korea's Foreign Office established the Interpreter's School (T'ongbyŏn hakkyo 通辯學校), also known as the Tongmunhak 同文學, for training interpreters in English.⁴⁷ Kim Mansik (1866–1933), who

⁴⁵ 國漢文之并同 將以壞文字 而廢經傳也。From *Sin Kisŏn chŏnjip-sang*, p. 242; cited in Namgung 2006a: 48.

⁴⁶ A December 1883 report in the *Hansŏng Sunbo* lists over 25 Western advisers working in Seoul, Pusan and Wŏnsan in addition to the eight Western officials stationed at the American, British and German legations. See Pak 2003: 361–362.

⁴⁷ Some instruction in Japanese also took place early on.

had recently returned from Japan after traveling with Pak Yŏnghyo as a deputy envoy, was tapped as the school's principal, and instruction was conducted by two Chinese acquaintances of Möllendorff, Wu Zhongxian (?–?) and Tang Shaowei (?–?), who had both studied English in the United States, as well as a British sailor, T. E. Halifax (?–?), who had accompanied Möllendorff on his trip from Beijing to Seoul and who had previously taught English part-time for four years while in Japan. Throughout the Chosŏn dynasty, interpreting had been limited to the *chungin* 中人 (“middle people”) class; however, a mandate required that the Interpreter's School “shall admit even the sons of farmers, industrialists, businessmen, and merchants, and, considerations shall be given to (the applicants’) academic aptitude irrespective of class background” (Kim 2008). Such a stipulation was a precursor for a more universal education system.

Initially, forty students enrolled in the school's inaugural class, and the top graduate of the school's first graduating class in 1884 was Namgung Ŏk (1863–1938), who had long studied to sit for the civil service exam when at the age of twenty he decided instead to enroll at the Interpreter's School to study English. Namgung was appointed as a clerk at the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1886 and later as secretary to Minister Plenipotentiary Cho Minhŭi (1859–1931) on a diplomatic mission to England, Germany, and Russia in 1887. Namgung's appointments became an early precedent for advancing one's career in government through learning a Western language.⁴⁸ Writing in 1896, Daniel Gifford would

⁴⁸ Namgung would go on to even further career heights as a journalist, an educator, and an independentista. Following the murder of Korea's Queen Min and the removal of King Kojong to the Russian legation in 1896, Namgung became a founding member of the Independence Association along with Sŏ Chaep'il and Yi Sangjae. In 1898 he helped found then served as president of the influential daily the *Hwangsŏng sinmun* 皇城新聞 (*Imperial Capital Gazette*). In 1905 he was appointed as county magistrate in Yangyang, founded Hyŏnsan School there a year later, and in 1908 founded the vernacular-only education magazine *Kyoyuk wŏlbo* 教育月報 (*Education Monthly*).

note that fifteen of the school's former students held positions in the country's various ports. After three years the Tongmunhak was closed and its interpreter training functions were incorporated into the Royal English School (Yugyöng kongwön 育英公院) opened in 1886.

From 1886 to 1894 the Royal English School's primary focus was English language instruction and classes were taught entirely by three Americans: Homer Hulbert (1863–1949), Delzell Bunker (1853–1932), and George Gilmore (1841–1912). Unlike at the Interpreter's School, which had taught English solely to train Foreign Ministry officials for the advancement of the country's diplomatic and trade relations, the curriculum at the Royal English School comprised a wide number of subjects all taught in English—including history, geography, natural science, and arithmetic—making it Korea's first Western-style school with a multi-subject curriculum. Also unlike the Interpreter's School, the Royal English School's students were all from prominent *yangban* families, some of whom had already passed the civil service exam but sought further advancement through English training and Western schooling. Consistent with the “Eastern Morality and Western Skills” doctrine, however, students came to the Royal English School with prior Confucian training and were thus literate in Literary Sinitic.⁴⁹ The knowledge and skills offered at this new Western-style school, then, were not a replacement for a traditional education centered on mastering the Literary Sinitic-based Confucian canon, but rather a supplement to it. Nevertheless, like the Interpreter's School before it, the Royal English School set a precedent for providing students with a path to career and social advancement through education in non-traditional knowledge and skills formally taught in a language other than Literary Sinitic. And for those

⁴⁹ Gilmore would remark that the students learned very quickly, and attributed their acute ability to memorize to their previous schooling in Literary Sinitic. See Namgung 2006a: 17–18.

who came without having already passed the civil service exams, a different path into the bureaucracy.

4.1.3.2 Missionary schools

The 1882 Korea-U.S. treaty as well as the treaties with Great Britain and Germany in 1883 each expressly forbade Christian missionaries from proselytizing in Korea. However, in 1885, King Kojong lifted the prohibition on missionary activities, and shortly thereafter recently-arrived Protestant missionaries began establishing private schools as a part of their missionary efforts. In August 1885, a Methodist missionary, Henry Appenzeller (1858–1902), began teaching two students in his home and soon more students joined them, making it the country's first private Western-style school. In June 1886, King Kojong, showing great interest in the school's growth, personally gave it the name Paejae Haktang 培材學堂 (“Academy for the Rearing of Useful Men”). Like all other Protestant mission schools established thereafter, Paejae accepted students from all backgrounds; rich or poor, ruling class or commoner.

In his first yearly report, Appenzeller wrote that the purpose of the school was to train Korean students in Western science and culture and that in order to achieve this goal most classes would be conducted in English. He further explained that the “Chinese classics,” too, occupied a prominent position at the school and thus all students would be required to study them. Consequently, Literary Sinitic (which the missionaries simply termed “Chinese”) was taught at every level of the school's three-year curriculum (Namgung 2006b: 20). Enrollments boomed and by the mid-1890s, the curriculum grew to three departments: a theological department; an English department, with studies in reading, grammar, composition, spelling, history, arithmetic, chemistry, and philosophy; and a “Chinese”

department, where students “are taught the Chinese classics ad infinitum, Sheffield’s Universal History, also in the Unmun (vernacular script) certain religious works” (Gifford 1896: 311).

When Presbyterian missionary Horace Underwood established what later became the Christian Academy (Yesugyo haktang) in April 1886, he too included Literary Sinitic in his curriculum, along with instruction in English and the vernacular script. In 1890 under a new headmaster, Samuel Moffett (1864–1939), the school dropped English from the curriculum altogether in order to focus solely on teaching Literary Sinitic, with Daniel Gifford teaching the Bible (translated into Literary Sinitic) and a Korean instructor teaching from the *Thousand Character Classic* (*Qianziwen* 千字文), Pak Semu’s *Children’s First Learning* (*Tongmun sŏnsŭp* 童蒙先習), and Zhu Xi’s reworking of *Reflections on Government* (*Tongjian* 通鑑) vols. 1–8 (Namgung 2006e: 23). The inclusion of Literary Sinitic and the “Chinese classics” in the curricula at missionary boy’s schools became the norm during this period.

In what is likely the earliest published defense of the continued teaching of Literary Sinitic in a Western-style classroom, Gifford (1896) writes:

The study of the Chinese classics has much the same educational value for the Korean that a classical course in Latin and Greek has for the student in the Occident. The effort to master the difficult language is in itself a mental discipline. The writings of Confucius and Mencius, as a system of mere ethics, together with much that is defective and a disproportioned stress laid upon the virtue of filial piety, contain also much that is undoubtedly beautiful and true. Then again, to such an extent have the Chinese words and phrases embedded themselves in the native speech, that no Korean can obtain mastery of his own language without a preliminary study of Chinese. (282)

The reasoning in Gifford's statement, particularly the emphasis on a Literary Sinitic education's disciplining and acculturating effects and the overwhelming presence of loans from Literary Sinitic in the Korean lexicon, is remarkably similar to arguments made a decade or more later by those Koreans who would defend the continued use of Literary Sinitic in Korean society and its inclusion in schools' curricula. Though unstated, however, another likely reason for Literary Sinitic's inclusion would have been the desire to proselytize to Korea's ruling class by attracting students, particularly from elite families, who would have been wholly immersed in the view that a proper education could not be had without Confucian training and Literary Sinitic mastery. Protestant missionaries' activities in Korea had first been allowed through official channels and their early conversion successes were among Korean elites. Literary Sinitic's inclusion in their schools' curricula can be seen as part of the missionaries' efforts at gaining legitimacy for their schools and giving their teachings social cachet.

Departing slightly from this norm, the Christian Academy's Samuel Moffett halted lectures from Confucian texts beginning in 1893. Literary Sinitic was instead taught using only the Bible and other existing Literary Sinitic translations of Christian texts. Subjects like math, topography, and biology were taught in the vernacular only. In 1893, the thrust of the Presbyterian mission's proselytizing efforts shifted from what was till then a focus primarily on converting upper class males to focusing on the laboring class and the education of women and children. Thus their publishing efforts changed from creating Literary Sinitic publications to creating tracts and other materials in the vernacular script and the Christian Academy's curriculum reflected this change. Despite discontinuing English instruction in

1890 and changing Literary Sinitic instruction three years later, there was no significant change in the school's enrollments (Namgung 2006e: 24).

Such curriculum changes show the distinction the missionaries made between Literary Sinitic (the *language* and *script*), and the *content* of Literary Sinitic texts. Traditionally there was no distinction made between an education in Confucian textual knowledge and an education in Literary Sinitic; the two went hand in glove. As Evon (2009) shows, the Enlightenment faction's redefinition of knowledge, which took hold in the wider Korean society slowly following the Kabo Reforms, was accompanied by a redefinition of the role and function of written language. Both entailed "the eventual disestablishment of... Literary Sinitic... as the written language of the intellect [and the disestablishment of] the body of (Neo-) Confucian textual knowledge that supported—and was supported by—that language through civil service examinations" (3). This same decoupling of Literary Sinitic from the content of traditional texts was a prominent feature of some of the *hanmunkwa* textbooks published after 1906, whose authors argued that for Literary Sinitic to stay relevant and useful to Korean society new knowledge would have to be both translated and produced in Literary Sinitic.

4.2 1894–1906

Lasting from 1894 until 1906, the second period of major education reform was bookended by the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905). Japan's gaining the upper hand and final victory in the first conflict led to the installation of a Japanese-backed reform government in Korea known as the *Kun'guk kimuch'ō* 軍國機務處 (Military Deliberative Council), headed by Kim Hongjip as Prime Minister, and comprised of a sizable number of Enlightenment-faction officials selected by

the Japanese legation in Seoul (Duus 1995: 77). The Kabo Reforms began with the installation of this reform government.

As described above, several reform-minded individuals had, prior to Kabo, already made calls for greater vernacularization. Though language reform was largely ancillary to the main thrust of the reform agenda, reforms took square aim at education. And as the previous section's discussion has shown, changes in education could not help but greatly affect language practice and policy. So, with the approval of the Japanese to pursue a thoroughgoing reform agenda, the new Japanese-backed Korean government effectively inserted itself into the vernacularization movement.

4.2.1 Language policy

The new government's only explicit language policy reform came in the form of a royal edict promulgated in the latter half of 1894, which read simply, "All laws and edicts shall be based in *kungmun*; one may attach a translation in *hanmun* or mix *kungmun* and *hanmun* together."⁵⁰ As a reaffirmation of this policy, on January 7, 1895, King Kojong's *Chongmyo Sŏgomun*⁵¹ was composed in the vernacular with Literary Sinitic and *kukhanmun* versions following. Then on May 31, 1895, a second government proclamation was promulgated reiterating the earlier edict (Namgung 2006c: 6; Ch'oe 2003: 229). These proclamations are noteworthy as they officially establish vernacular Korean written in the vernacular script as the written language of government, thereby replacing Literary Sinitic in

⁵⁰ 法律勅令總以國文爲本 漢文附譯或混用國漢文.

Ch'oe (2003: 228–9) dates the language of this edict to August 4, 1894 while King (1998: 37) gives November 21, 1894 and Namgung (2006c: 6) has it originating in the December 17, 1894 issue of *Kwanbo*. The edict is included in the *Sillok* appearing under the same date given by King. The name of the edict as given by King ("Edict on Public Writing" 公文式) is attributed by Ch'oe to a different regulation promulgated on May 8, 1895. The English translation above is from King (1998: 37).

⁵¹ A record of pronouncements made by the king at the Royal Ancestral Shrine (*chongmyo*).

that capacity for the first time; however, no real measures were put in place to enforce these new policies. Instead, the immediate effect was the rapid mainstreaming of *kukhanmun*, which quickly became the government's default written style as can be seen in the composition of the *Sillok* from this period. Though compiled later under Japanese direction, the records comprising the text of the *Sillok* during the Kabo Reforms were all written in *kukhanmun*.

Aside from the symbolism of Literary Sinitic's official demotion by these edicts promoting the vernacular script, their long-term impact is questionable. Just a few short years after the end of the Kabo Reforms, with a decrease in Japanese influence and the court seeking to reassert royal prerogatives, government support for the *kungmun*-first policy wavered, and, as can be seen in the *Sillok*, official government records reverted to being composed in full Literary Sinitic. In an anonymous editorial in the *Tongnip Sinmun* (*The Independent*) from May 20, 1899 titled "T'aguk kŭl anira" ("It Isn't Any Other Nation's Script") a perturbed anonymous author writes:

We have heard that the Korean government is revising the farmstead legislation, and that it has ordered the statutes, rules, and regulations to be written completely in *hanmun*. Now is the time when the notables in power in the Korean government should be doing their utmost to make progress toward enlightenment; why do they refuse to discard old ways and continue to take actions that move us backward?⁵²

Writing in the fully vernacular *Tongnip Sinmun*, it is little wonder the author views the reintroduction of Literary Sinitic in government documents as a backward move. Clearly, promulgating official edicts demoting Literary Sinitic had not discontinued its use nor ended debate on its role in government specifically and literate society in general.

⁵² Cited in King 1998: 53.

4.2.2 Abolishing the *kwagŏ*

Arguably, the reform which had the greatest impact on Literary Sinitic does not in fact deal explicitly with language policy. What was to be the final administration of the traditional civil service examination occurred with fifty-nine passers on June 18, 1894. Less than two months later, on August 3, the Military Deliberative Council received King Kojong's approval to reform the method for selecting government officials.⁵³ The *kwagŏ*, which focused solely on an examinee's knowledge of the Confucian canon and his ability to compose in Literary Sinitic, was abolished and a new examination system was instituted, allowing individuals to sit for state exams irrespective of social class and testing examinees on a variety of subjects including mathematics, politics, domestic and foreign affairs, and composition in both the vernacular (*kungmun*) and Literary Sinitic (*hanmun*) (Namgung 2006c: 5).

Those who were in the process of preparing to sit for the old exams were in many cases left with a decade or more of wasted efforts (Namgung 2006c: 6). The central (really the only) component in the curriculum of the country's many public and private educational institutions was left bereft of its previous legitimacy as the new examination system undermined what had to that point been the primary rationale for the study and instruction of Literary Sinitic—the chance to obtain public office through demonstrating command of a knowledge system to which Literary Sinitic mastery alone controlled access. Though the old examination system's abolition did not immediately eradicate traditional education, it did severely demote the value of such an education for many Koreans.

⁵³ 一, 科文取士, 係是朝家定制, 而難以虛文收用實才. 科舉之法, 奏蒙上裁變通後, 另定選舉條例事.” 竝允之.

Deprived of its historic link to state-sponsored systems of knowledge by the demise of the old examinations, Literary Sinitic nevertheless continued to be highly valued by some. Rutt (1960) describes how the local private Confucian academies continued well into the colonial period to instruct their students in Literary Sinitic in the traditional mode of rote memorization of the Confucian canon. For these conservative Confucian acolytes the continued practice of writing in only Literary Sinitic and teaching only the Confucian canon was simply a continuation of the “Defense of Orthodoxy and Expunction of Heterodoxy.” Despite what became a tumult of *kungmun*-only supporters’ railings against Literary Sinitic in newspapers and other print media following the Kabo Reforms,⁵⁴ few defenses were proffered by Literary Sinitic partisans in prominent public media, especially during this period prior to 1906. For these diehards it would seem the merits of Literary Sinitic, its appropriate place in society, or whether to call it “*hanmun*” or “*chinsō*” were simply not worthy of debate. Not unlike their counterparts in Sejong’s day, it seems these Literary Sinitic-partisans “showed their support by not bothering with the debate at all” (King 1998: 62). Quite unlike the outcome in the fifteenth century, however, by choosing not to take part in the debate (if in no other way than by not participating in the new education project or other modernization reforms for that matter), the old guard barred themselves from the opportunity to be among those who would come to define the way future generations of Koreans would encounter Literary Sinitic—as *hanmun* taught in a *hanmunkwa* classroom.

4.2.3 Literary Sinitic in new public schools

The institution of a new public educational system began in earnest in 1895, the year following the abolition of the *kwagō*. Plans were made for the establishment of a system of

⁵⁴ See King 1998 and Namgung 2006a.

Western-style public elementary schools throughout the country, but before schools could be staffed, teachers would need to be trained. An April 16, 1895 royal edict published in the *Official Gazette* announced regulations for the establishment of the Seoul Teacher's College (Hansŏng sabŏm hakkyo 漢城師範學校). Instruction at the school would be divided into thirteen subjects in total, including ethics, teaching methodology, history, geography, math, chemistry, physics, and *hanmunkwa*, marking the first time that Literary Sinitic would be taught as part of a multi-subject curriculum in a state-sponsored educational institution. (Ch'oe 2003: 230; Namgung 2006b: 26). The official institution of the public elementary school system came later in the year, and by 1886, five schools (four with about 100 students each and the fifth with about 150) had been established and an arrangement was made between the government and Paejae Haktang to send up to 200 students to the school at government expense (Gifford 1896: 284, 310). Literary Sinitic instruction in these state schools, however, would not occur as a separate class subject, but was combined with instruction in the vernacular script into a single class on reading and writing.

Though Literary Sinitic was no longer the sole mode of instruction at these public schools, the instructional methods and materials used early on continued to include instruction on Confucianism and even continued to require rote memorization of selected parts of the Confucian canon. In 1895, the Education Ministry published a textbook for use in elementary school reading and writing classes, *Yumong hwip'yŏn* 牖蒙彙編, composed in *kukhanmun* (mixed script) and containing primarily excerpts and summaries from traditional histories and short compositions expounding Confucian ethics. Later, a December 1898 article in the *Hwangsŏng Sinmun* explains that the Literary Sinitic component of new middle

and high school reading and writing classes too would focus solely on traditional content.⁵⁵ Starting from the first year of middle school, students were to be taught passages from *Illustrated Exemplars of the Five Relationships* (*Oryun haengsilto* 五倫行實圖), then *The Lesser Learning* (*Xiaoxue* 小學) in year two, *Mencius* (*Mengzi* 孟子) in year three, *The Analects* (*Lunyu* 論語) in the first year of high school, *The Great Learning* (*Daxue* 大學) in the second, and finally, in the last year of high school, *The Doctrine of the Mean* (*Zhongyong* 中庸) (Namgung 2006d: 367). It was not until after an August 1906 Ministry of Education regulation mandating that all government schools' curricula include *hanmunkwa* as a separate class that the subject truly began to develop the characteristics of other modern public school subjects. Though unquestionably a major historical event, the Kabo Reforms' effect on Literary Sinitic instruction in public schools did not take the form of an immediate rupture or absolute break with the past. Rather, the result was a mixture of continuity and change.

4.2.4 Literary Sinitic in missionary schools

Separate from the developments in Literary Sinitic education in Korea's new public school system, were developments in missionary schools' Literary Sinitic instruction. During this decade-long inter-war period, most missionary schools continued to teach Literary Sinitic alongside the other subjects in their curricula, with some schools that had not previously included Literary Sinitic instruction adding it, as was the case with Ewha Girls Academy, founded by the Presbyterian mission in 1886, which added Literary Sinitic instruction to its curriculum for the first time in 1896 at the request of the school's students. Instruction using the Bible continued to be a common practice, but several Literary Sinitic

⁵⁵ A system of public middle and high schools were first established in early 1899.

readers published by Christian missionaries in China were imported by missionaries in Korea and gained widespread use as *hanmunkwa* textbooks in missionary schools. These included Charles Hartwell's primer *Chuxie jieti* 初學階梯, first published in 1884 by The American Presbyterian Mission Press in Shanghai; Ernst Faber's *Zixi cudong* 自西徂東, published in 1899 by the Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge among the Chinese and titled in English, *Civilization: Christian and Chinese*; and Griffith John's *Dehui ruwen* 德惠入文, first published in 1879 but not introduced into Korea until after an early 1905 printing.

Perhaps the inter-war period's most significant new *hanmunkwa* textbooks, however, were a four-volume series by James Scarth Gale (1863–1937), *Yumong ch'önja* 牖蒙千字, with the English title *The Thousand Character-Series*. Gale had arrived in Korea in 1888 after graduating from the University of Toronto with a degree in Modern Languages and quickly distinguished himself in his Korean language studies. He published his first Korean language study aid, *Korean Grammatical Forms* in 1894 and later in 1897 published *A Korean-English Dictionary*. In 1903, the first volume of his *Yumong ch'önja* series was published, with volumes 2 and 4 following in 1904 and volume 3 in 1905. The first three volumes are composed in *kukhanmun* and are a translation and adaptation of a series of English language elementary school textbooks from Ontario, Canada. The first two volumes consisted of progressively more advanced short writings on topics as varied as astronomy, personal hygiene, Western history, and contemporary British and American scholarship. Each lesson includes a short list of new words encountered in the lesson in both the vernacular script and Chinese characters, and also lists the lesson's newly-encountered characters one at a time along with their Korean gloss and pronunciation written in the

vernacular script. The third volume is comprised mainly of selected translations from Western short stories, novels and biographies of famous Westerners. Like the first two volumes, each lesson includes new word and character lists, and all three volumes include a character glossary in the back (Namgung 2006b, 126–133). The final volume is a Literary Sinitic reader Gale and his coeditor, Yi Ch'angjik, titled *Yumong sokp'yŏn* 牖蒙續編. It contains works by past Korean writers including King Sejong, Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn, Chŏng Mongju, Yi Kyubo, Kim Ch'ongjik, Yi I, Hong Yangho and Song Siyŏl. A short English preface by Gale reads simply:

This volume completes the set and contains specimens of the Best Korean writing, though not all of the best writers are represented. Of some, it was impossible to obtain any selections; of others, no suitable ones were found for insertion in the book. Many of the very best writers however are represented, and all the selections, if we except that of Ki-ja, are of an interesting character as well as a high literary type.

Gale's series is significant for a number of reasons. First, his were the first *hanmunkwa*-specific textbooks ever published in Korea. Second, whether or not his textbooks served as a model, Gale's series employs a number of approaches to teaching Literary Sinitic that though novel for the time, were similarly used by later *hanmunkwa* textbook writers and editors, including his character-by-character approach in the early volumes and his choice of works by Korean writers only for his final volume.

Oddly, Namgung (2007b) construes Gale's interest in Literary Sinitic as an almost sinister, conspiratorial attempt to undermine Confucianism, writing:

Serving the ultimate goal of spreading Christianity required the weakening, even eradication of Confucianism. Unable to be rid of both at once, in the end, the separation of Literary Sinitic from Confucianism was devised. It is from such a background that the *hanmunkwa* textbook *Yumong ch'ŏnja* sprung. (77)

Gale's own published and unpublished writings show, however, that quite to the contrary, he was enamored not only of Literary Sinitic, but also of the Confucian "thought-worlds" it contained. In a retrospective June 1918 piece titled simply "Korean Literature"⁵⁶

Gale writes:

With the promulgation of the new laws in January 1895 the Examination ceased to be and with it has gone the universal study of the Classics. Confucianism died in a night and so the ship of state slipped its old anchor chains and was adrift... In the many transitions the literary one is perhaps the most momentous... One transition more is [Koreans'] change from the Confucian style of writing to the unadorned modern colloquial.

In another retrospective essay also titled "Korean Literature," though this one unpublished and undated, Gale continues this theme of disapproval of the shift to the vernacular, writing that "poems in the vernacular would make the ancient gods turn pale," and he laments the divide created between scholars of the "old school" and new by the "tragic death of native literature," by which he means the end of Korean literary production in Literary Sinitic. He writes:

This tragic death of native literature that followed the fateful edict is seen in the fact that a famous father of the old school may have a famous son, yes a graduate of Tokyo University, who still cannot any more read what his father has written than the ordinary graduate at home can read Herodotus or Livy at sight; and the father, learned though he be, can no more understand what his son reads or studies than a hermit from the hills of India can read a modern newspaper. So they sit this father and this son separated by a gulf of a thousand years pitiful to see.

Nevertheless the poems, the literary notes, the graceful letter, the inscriptions, the biographies, the memorials, the sacrificial prayers, the stories, the fairy tales of old Korea will remain, a proof of the graceful and interesting civilization of this ancient people.

⁵⁶ This and the following quotes from Gale come from Ross King's talk notes titled "Canadian Missionary to Korea, James Scarth Gale, and his [hitherto unknown] Contributions to the Study of Korean Literature."

It would seem from his own writings that Gale saw his work as an attempt at preserving in some measure a very suddenly though only recently lost literary past. In the same unpublished undated essay he writes further:

It is not as though Korea had put her book aside to pick it up later and read. The book is sealed and locked behind the bars of the Chinese character as effectually as though it had been reduced to the Egyptian hieroglyph... The literary past of Korea, a great and wonderful past is swallowed up as by a cataclysm, not a vestige being alive to the present generation. Of course the present generation is blissfully ignorant of this and quite happy in its loss. It has its magazines and writes with all confidence learned articles on philosophy, on Kant and Schopenhauer. It sits at the feet of Bertrand Russell and speaks the praises of Nietzsche. It would be a Western poet with long hair and lank wavy collar. It would write blank verse in English itself, pitiful to see.

Gale's many literary works, his translation and book collecting activities, as well as his teaching Literary Sinitic through his textbooks, were clearly not some scheme to damage Confucianism in order to propagate Christianity, but a genuine effort to extend access to what he considered Korea's rapidly disappearing literary past.

4.3 1906–1910

Following Russia's defeat in the Russo-Japanese War in September 1905, Japan reasserted control over the Korean peninsula, and in November 1905, concluded the Ŭlsa Treaty whereby Japan took control of Korea's foreign diplomacy and the peninsula effectively became a protectorate of the Japanese Empire. Though the treaty made no provision for Japanese control over Korea's internal affairs, the following year on September 1, 1906, the Education Ministry promulgated four royal edicts now collectively called the First Rescript on Education (Che 1 ch'a hakkyo-ryōng 第1次學校令) under the direction of the newly established Japanese Residency-General in Korea (T'onggambu 統監府). The rescript marked the beginning of the final period in the pre-colonial development of

hanmunkwa lasting until annexation in August 1910. Though the shortest of the three periods here discussed, it is in many ways the most significant, since the unfettering of Literary Sinitic from the strictures of a primarily *kwagŏ*-focused curriculum, combined with the addition of *hanmunkwa* as a separate subject in all public elementary, middle, and high schools, and the rapid proliferation of private schools seeking to avoid the strictures of the new public school mandates, led to a boom in the publication of *hanmunkwa* textbooks with a variety of new pedagogical approaches.

4.3.1 Literary Sinitic in state and private schools and the boom in *hanmunkwa* textbooks

The 1906 Rescript on Education mandated that the *hanmun* and *kungmun* portions of previous reading and writing courses be split into *hanmunkwa* and *kugŏkwa* 國語科⁵⁷ with four total hours of instruction per week in both subjects in public elementary schools and slightly fewer hours in middle and high schools. A second series of edicts comprising the Second Rescript on Education (Che 2 ch'a hakkyo-ryŏng 第2次學校令) was promulgated three years later on September 1, 1909, recombining *hanmunkwa* and *kugŏkwa* into the single subject *kugŏ kŭp hanmunkwa* 國語及漢文科 and mandating six hours of instruction per week.

Instruction at public elementary schools was conducted using a four-volume textbook series, *Hanmun tokpon* 漢文讀本, prepared and published in 1907 by the Education Ministry, though after a year's use, this series was deemed too difficult for early beginners and a more basic introductory textbook, *Hanmun immun* 漢文入門, was prepared and published in 1908.

⁵⁷ From this time on, what focus had been given to *kungmun* (National Writing) in Korea was shifted to *kugŏ* 國語 (National Language), very much in line with the developments in Japan's continued language debates with their *kokugo*-centric rhetoric.

Many private schools established by Koreans also included *hanmunkwa* in their curricula and published their own *hanmunkwa* textbooks from which to teach. In all, thirty-four new *hanmunkwa* textbooks were published in Korea, and a number of others published in China and Japan were imported to fill the gap in response to the new public and private school demand created by the 1906 rescript (Kim 1999, 180–81; Namgung 2006b: 141, 177). Twenty-six of these textbooks are structured or adopt pedagogical approaches that were non-traditional and novel in Korea for their time. These are listed in the table below.

Table 4.1 Non-traditional *hanmunkwa* textbooks used in Korea from 1906–1910

SOURCE	TITLE	YEAR	WRITER/EDITOR
government	<i>Hanmun tokpon, vols. 1–4</i> 漢文讀本	1907	Education Ministry
	<i>Hanmun immun</i> 漢文入門	1908	Education Ministry
	<i>Pot'ong hakkyo hakto-yong hanmun tokpon, vols. 1–4</i> 普通學校學徒用 漢文讀本	1909	Education Ministry
private authors	<i>Taedong munsu</i> 大東文粹	6/5/1907	Chang Chiyŏn (1864–1921)
	<i>Hanmunhak kyokwasŏ, vols. 1–2</i> 漢文學教科書	7/30/1907	Yŏ Kyuhyŏng (1849–1922)
	<i>Monghak hanmun ch'ogyŏ</i> 蒙學漢文初階	10/1907	Wŏn Yŏngŭi (1852–?)
	<i>Sohak hanmun tokpon, vols. 1–2</i> 小學漢文讀本	2/1908	Wŏn Yŏngŭi (1852–?)
	<i>Ch'odŭng changmunpŏp</i> 初等作文法	2/1908	Wŏn Yŏngŭi (1852–?)
	<i>Puyu toksŭp</i> 婦幼獨習	7/1908	Kang Hwasŏk (1845–1926)
	<i>Sinjŏng ch'ŏnjamun</i> 新訂千字文	7/1/1908	Yi Sŭnggyo (1851–1928)
	<i>Kukhanmun sin-okp'yŏn</i> 國漢文新玉篇	11/6/1908	Chŏng Ingno (?–?)
	<i>Munjang jinam</i> 文章指南	12/3/1908	Ch'oe Chaehak (?–?)
	<i>Ahakup'yŏn</i> 兒學編	1908	Chŏng Yagyong (1762–1836); Chi Sŏgyŏng (1855–1935)
	<i>Ch'odŭng yŏhak tokpon</i> 初等女學讀本	1908	Yi Wŏn'gŭng (1849–?)
	<i>Pot'ong kyokwa hanmun tokpon</i> 普通教科漢文讀本	1908	Hwimun ũisuk 徽文義塾
<i>Hancha ch'osŭp</i> 漢字初習	1908	??	

SOURCE	TITLE	YEAR	WRITER/EDITOR
private authors	<i>Yuhak chach'wi</i> 幼學字聚	1/20/1909	Yun Ch'ihō (1865–1945)
	<i>Soksǒng hancha kwabon</i> 速成漢字課本	3/20/1909	Hwimun ũisuk 徽文義塾
	<i>Chajǒn sǒgyo</i> 字典釋要	7/30/1909	Chi Sǒgyǒng (1855–1935)
	<i>Hanmun ch'ohak, vols. 1–4</i> 漢文初學	1910	Hwang Handong (?–?)
	<i>Hanmun sin-tokpon, vols. 1–4</i> 漢文新讀本	1910	Yi Chongha (?–?)
	<i>Komun nyaksǒn</i> 古文略選	1910?	Yǒ Kyuhyǒng (1849–1922)
	<i>Kodǔng hanmun tokpon</i> 高等漢文讀本	1910	Pak Ŭnsik (1859–1925) ed. Yǒ Kyuhyǒng
imported	<i>Fenzi luejie</i> 分字略解	1900, 1906	Calvin Mateer (1836–1908)
	<i>Huitu mengxūe jiejing</i> 繪圖蒙學捷徑	1908	Wang Hengtong (?–?)
	<i>Huitu mengxūe guoben</i> 繪圖蒙學果本	1908	Wang Hengtong (?–?)

Six of the above (*Sinjǒng Ch'ǒnjamun*, *Ahakp'yǒn*, *Hancha Ch'osŭp*, *Yuhak Chach'wi*, *Chajǒn sǒgyo*, and *Soksǒng hancha tokpon*) are Chinese character textbooks focused on helping students learn characters' Korean readings and glosses one at a time. Traditionally, students learned to read and write Chinese characters combined together in the context of a larger passage from primers like the traditional Literary Sinitic primer *Qianziwen* 千字文 (*The Thousand Character Classic*) or other canonical texts. The characters' meanings and appropriate use were eventually grasped through their relationship to other characters within such passages or their repeated occurrences in other sources (Kōnoshi 2009: 7). The shortest such phrases would be idiomatic expressions like the idiomatic four-character phrases of the *Qianziwen*. Such a method was both time- and memory-intensive.

The well-known late-Chosŏn scholar, Chǒng Yagyong (1762–1836), had advocated teaching characters in small semantic groups, writing a character textbook of his own, *Ahakp'yǒn*, which grouped characters together generally in either synonym or antonym pairs

(Namgung 2006c: 20), but his character-centric approach to instructing Literary Sinitic novices did not become a widespread practice until the development of *hanmunkwa* in the early twentieth century. Evidence for his influence on these early twentieth century publications can be seen in Chi Sögyöng's⁵⁸ (1855–1935) reprinting of Chöng's text in 1908.

Yi Sünggyo's (1851–1928) *Sinjöng Ch'öñjamun* was composed for elementary students and contains 1,000 characters Yi deemed simple and practical for everyday use. An advertisement for the book in the November 8, 1908 edition of the *Hwangsöng Sinmun* stated that in addition to being an elementary school text it could also be used by women, the working class, woodcutters and shepherders to learn *kukhanmun* (Kim 1999: 181). Yun Ch'ihö's *Yuhak Chach'wi* consists of 1,264 important and practical characters chosen from a variety of other *hanmunkwa* textbooks, as well as 306 idiomatic four-character phrases. The main text was printed in large font with characters' meanings and pronunciations printed beneath in the vernacular script.

Another novel approach can be seen in the format and structure of many of the chrestomathies that were published as Literary Sinitic readers or composition textbooks. Yö Kyuhyöng's⁵⁹ *Hanmunhak kyokwasö* is divided into two volumes; the first comprised of

⁵⁸ In 1880, Chi accompanied Kim Hongjip on his tour of Japan, and after returning, passed the civil service examination in 1883. He was active in Enlightenment-faction activities until being exiled in 1887 to Sinji Island in Chölla Provice for his connections to certain members of the Enlightenment faction who had participated in the failed 1884 coup. In 1892, after six years in exile, Chi returned to the capital, and in 1896, was made a Royal Secretary. In 1899, he was appointed dean of the Kyöngsöng Medical School. In 1905, Chi submitted his *Sinjöng kungmun* 新訂國文 to King Kojong containing his suggestions for reforming the vernacular script, and in 1908, he became a member of the National Script Research Institute (Kungmun yön'gu-so 國文研究所).

⁵⁹ In 1882 at the age of thirty-four, Yö passed the *kwagö* and received a clerical post in the Foreign Office. In 1883, he was made a clerk in the Office of Culture and Information (*Pangmun'guk* 博文局), where he worked as an editor on the inaugural edition of the *Hansöng Sunbo*, Korea's first modern newspaper. Later in September 1906, Yö received a position as a *hanmunkwa* instructor at a private middle school and was made an instructor at the public Seoul High School the following June. His two-volume Literary Sinitic reader, *Hanmunhak kyokwasö*, was published a month later.

essays by Korean authors, and the second comprised of Chinese authors' works. Essays in the Korean volume are presented in a reverse chronological order and are by a total of thirty-seven writers; thirty-four Chosŏn-dynasty writers plus the Koryŏ dynasty's Yi Kok, Yi Kyubo, and Kim Pusik. Chang Chiyŏn's (1864–1921) *Taedong munsu* goes even further, by excluding Chinese authors altogether. In his introduction he writes that his motivation for selecting works by Korean authors only was that “only the writings of the Chinese are known, while the writings of the people of our country are unknown.”⁶⁰ Even though these readers were solely focused on past writers, such an arrangement of authors based on nativity was not at all common traditionally, but was indicative of the period's rise in nationalism, coming, as these textbooks did, following the widely detested Ŭlsa Treaty.

The general rise in nationalistic and patriotic sentiments was reflected in the content of other *hanmunkwa* textbooks, as well, though unlike Yŏ Kyuhyŏng's and Chang Chiyŏn's textbooks, not in the selection of writings by past Korean authors, but in the inclusion of new compositions which focused in part on patriotic topics. Representative of this style of textbook are Wŏn Yŏngŭi's⁶¹ (1852–?) *Monghak hanmun ch'ogyŏ* and his two-volume *Sohak hanmun tokpon*. The first volume is a basic primer with 213 topical lessons covering a variety of subjects including the natural world, body parts, moral instruction, human races,

⁶⁰ 只知有支那之人之文, 而不知有吾邦之人之文. – Cited in Namgung 2006b: 162.

⁶¹ After failing the *kwagŏ*, Wŏn began studying Neo-Confucianism under well-known late-Chosŏn scholar Yu Chunggyo (1832–1893). Though Yu was adamantly opposed to Western learning, Wŏn later embraced it, enrolled in Seoul Teachers College's intensive program in 1895 and was a member of the first graduating class that same year. As such he was among the first Koreans with modern teaching credentials. He began teaching at a government elementary school after his graduation and in 1898 became an instructor at the Seoul Teachers College where he remained until 1905 when he resigned in protest over the conclusion of the Ŭlsa Treaty. Later he helped found the Kyesan School along with Chang Chiyŏn (1864–1921), Yu Kŭn (1861–1921), An Chonghwa (1860–1924), Hyŏn Ch'ae (1886–1925), Wŏn Taegyŏ (1857–?), Min Hyŏngsik (1875–1947), and Yu Sŏngjun (1860–1935), and his textbooks were used at this and other private schools.

Korean and world geography, the Korean nation, contemporary and ancient Korean history, and descriptions of various Eastern and Western customs. None of the lessons' contents were taken from historical texts—rather, all were written by Wŏn. Like *Monghak hanmun ch'ogyŏ*, the two-volume *Sohak hanmun tokpon* is also arranged in topical lessons on a variety of subjects, though the lessons become progressively longer and more difficult.

Wŏn's other textbook from this period, *Ch'odŭng changmunpŏp*, is also significant as the first grammar of Literary Sinitic published by a Korean. Books on grammar or language structure, particularly as one encounters them today in foreign language classes, were an unknown quantity in Korea at the time. A common Korean saying goes, “don a horse-hair woven head band for ten years, and grammar will dawn on you,” meaning literally that if a student (one who wears a horse-hair woven band or *manggŏn*) studies Confucian texts by the traditional method of rote memorization for ten years, Literary Sinitic structure will become apparent, as if by osmosis. Taking this into account, Wŏn's *Ch'odŭng changmunpŏp* was a breakthrough. It was modeled on Literary Sinitic grammar books published in China and Japan, specifically Ma Jianzhong's *Mashi Wentong* 馬氏文通 (1898), Kenkichirō Kojima's *Kanbunten* 漢文典 (1902) and Lai Yuxun's *Hanwendian* 漢文典 (1906), which were themselves outgrowths of Western concepts of language and grammar (Namgung 2006d: 330).

4.3.2 Defending and defining *hanmunkwa*

Calls made in newspapers and other prominent media arguing for the full abolition of Literary Sinitic from public life were most prolonged during this final half decade before annexation (King 1998: 51). It was only then that Literary Sinitic's supporters made any

attempt to defend its continued use. In the preface to his *Monghak hanmun ch'ogyŏ*, Wŏn Yŏngŭi writes:

Just think of *hanmun*; it has been used in the nations of East Asia for several thousand years. And though the speech sounds of our languages are different they are made distinguishable by brush. Though the meanings of our books are varied we are able to arrive at their meaning through a common translation. Truly it is a ferry able to widely ply a ten thousand-forked river.⁶²

In the preface to *Sohak hanmun tokpon* he argues even stronger:

If one should say, “We write well enough with *kungmun*, what need is there for this [*hanmun*]?” I would answer that *hanmun* is the common script of East Asia, and therefore the two character word “*kungmun* 國文” might also refer to Chinese characters. At any rate, if Chinese characters are removed from writing, even if one attempts to grasp the meaning, if it is written only in the vernacular then the full meaning can hardly be known; then what?... *Hanmun* is the key to all scholarship. It is the tool for unlocking the repository of ancient knowledge and contemporary scholarship in all fields, and if you try without it to open a locked door with your bare hands, you will in the end be no more than a layman.⁶³

Chang Chiyŏn makes similar arguments in the introduction to his *Taedong munsu*:

...Our country’s learned men have for thousands of years been accustomed to using *hanmun*, and a sudden shift away from it would be difficult. Were public and private writing not in *hanmun*, we could not have functioned, and were this the case, the courtly and unofficial records and histories could not have been circulated. For this reason *hanmun* cannot be dropped from all the many textbooks made for various subjects; that is, *hanmun* cannot be abolished or we will not have any textbooks.⁶⁴

⁶²惟漢文，乃屢千年東洋諸國之同文也。言語之異音，筆以辨焉，書籍之異義，譯以達焉，洵萬逕普通之津梁也。 – Cited in Namgung 2006a: 365.

⁶³若謂，有國文足用，何必乃爾耶，則漢文亞東之同文，而國文二字，亦漢字也。雖欲沒漢字，而釋其義其於東文之裨替何哉... 噫，漢文科學之管鑰也。古之曹倉杜庫，今之各學巖門，苟無管鑰之具，而徒欲手開，則終於門外漢矣。 – Cited in Namgung 2006a: 365.

⁶⁴然而吾邦之士，屢千年習慣於漢文，有難卒變，公私文牘，非此莫行，朝野紀乘，非此莫通。諸凡學科教育之書，亦捨此無由施焉。此漢文之不可偏廢，而教科之不得不有者也。 – Cited in Namgung 2006a: 365

Unlike the arguments made against Literary Sinitic in the *Hwangsŏng sinmun* and other prominent print media during this period, most defenses of Literary Sinitic appeared only in the prefaces and introductions to *hanmunkwa* textbooks like those above. The three very impassioned arguments in favor of Literary Sinitic excerpted above in section 3.3, one by Yŏ Kyuhyŏng and the other two by a pseudonymous author, appear to have been anomalous, and even *they* appeared only in an academic association journal of rather limited circulation, the *Taedong hakhoe wŏlbo*, where their authors' arguments would be read mostly by like-minded individuals.

Nevertheless, Literary Sinitic instruction had won a place in the curricula of state and private schools under the banner of *hanmunkwa*, and this would continue into the colonial period and beyond. The shape and texture of the subject was defined primarily in the materials (*hanmunkwa* textbooks) used to teach it, and that shape and texture would shift and change following textbook censorship laws passed less than a year before annexation barring textbooks with contents emphasizing Korea's independence or containing other patriotic material. Thus, most textbooks published after September 1909 were reprints or variorum editions of traditional texts.

Table 4.2 Traditional *hanmunkwa* textbooks published after the Second Rescript on Education

SOURCE	TITLE	YEAR	WRITER/EDITOR
private authors	<i>Sohak</i> 小學	1909	Chŏng T'aeha
	<i>Hyŏnt'o kuhae kambon Maengja</i> 懸吐具解監本 孟子	1909	Ŏ Yunjŏk
	<i>Maengja chipchu</i> 孟子集註	1909	Min Chunho
	<i>Maengja chipchu</i> 孟子集註	1909	Chŏng Unbok
	<i>Nonŏ chipchu</i> 論語集註	1909	Min Chunho
	<i>Nonŏ chipchu</i> 論語集註	1909	Chŏng Unbok
	<i>Chuhae kambon Nonŏ</i> 註解監本 論語	1910	Yi Chongjŏng
	<i>Chungyong chipchu</i> 中庸集註	1910	Chŏng Unbok

SOURCE	TITLE	YEAR	WRITER/EDITOR
private authors	<i>Daehak chipchu</i> 大學集註	1910	Chǒng Unbok
	<i>Hyǒnt'o kuhae chipchu Chungyong</i> 懸吐具解集註 中庸	1910	O Sǒnggŭn
	孝經大義(全)	1910	Cho Umok

Defined by these textbooks, *hanmunkwa* was a decidedly backward-looking discipline. Furthermore, as seen even in the 1906 guidelines for elementary *hanmunkwa* instruction,⁶⁵ for the Education Ministry the focus of the subject was from the beginning almost solely on reading comprehension, with little or no effort to teach composition. Literary Sinitic as taught in colonial period *hanmunkwa* classrooms would progressively become a truly dead language.

⁶⁵ “Focus on teaching students common Chinese characters and *hanmun* in addition to building their character. Teach works that illustrate the beautiful words and kind deeds of the virtuous and wise, as well as those common turns of phrase that are worth students knowing and understanding. Make efforts to connect your teaching to the vernacular and at times have students translate these using the vernacular script.” – Cited in Namgung 2006b: 67.

5 Conclusions

Until the late-nineteenth century, Literary Sinitic functioned as Korea's official medium of writing despite the mid-fifteenth century creation of a native alphabetic script, and served to bind Korea's premodern ruling class to peoples, practices and places far removed from the peninsula. Its learning and use granted users access to texts and the ability to participate in the thought worlds contained within them, thus allowing for the establishment and maintenance of a transcultural sphere of shared knowledge and practice occupied by Sinologically literate elites throughout East Asia. This situation fostered a Sinophilic language ideology in which Literary Sinitic and the vernacular script occupied separate and unequal literacy space, both conceptually and physically. As "true writing" (*chinsŏ*), Literary Sinitic conceptually sat atop Korea's inscriptional-*cum*-literacy hierarchy, while the vernacular script was relegated to a lower, merely "vulgar" (*ŏnmun*) status. Physically, Literary Sinitic occupied the very center of formal education and state and stately literacy, while the vernacular script inhabited the extreme margins of home learning and private use. This Sinophilic language ideology and its attendant conceptual and physical manifestations carried the day for well over 400 years after the invention of the vernacular script, undergoing challenges only after the introduction of Western- and Japanese-inspired nationalist language ideologies in the late nineteenth century.

The transition in official government records from "*chinsŏ*" to "*hanmun*" and from "*ŏnmun*" to "*kungmun*," which began with the 1876 Treaty of Kanghwa in the first case and with the 1894 Kabo Reforms in the second, was a reorientation of Korea's conceptual hierarchy of inscription and literacy. Though "*hanmun*" had largely replaced "*chinsŏ*" by the mid-1880s, it is only after all things Chinese suffered a severe delegitimization in Korea due

to China's defeat in the Sino-Japanese War, and only after the vernacular script was promoted from "vulgar writing" to *the* National Script during the subsequent Kabo Reforms, that "*hanmun*" becomes an otherizing, foreignizing term. It was only *then* that the term caused grief for those who would defend the continued teaching and use of Literary Sinitic. This shift in terms, then, allowed for the regularization of new language ideologies which valorized the vernacular script as a symbol of the Korean nation while rejecting Literary Sinitic as something foreign and undesirable. And while not sufficient in itself, it was nevertheless an important step toward making Literary Sinitic's removal to the periphery of Koreans' literate and educational lives seem all the more logical in the face of burgeoning nationalism and China's recent delegitimization.

The beginnings of Literary Sinitic instruction in a multi-subject curriculum can be found in the missionary schools of the 1880s. With the loss of its connection to state-sponsored knowledge systems through the abolition of the *kwagŏ* in 1894, Literary Sinitic then entered the new public school system as well—as *hanmun* taught in *hanmunkwa* classes. The new public school system was not simply a reformed version of the traditional system, but rather a wholesale replacement of the latter by the former, requiring both new teachers and new textbooks. During the brief three-year period between the first Rescript on Education in September 1906 and the second in September 1909, *hanmunkwa* textbook authors employed a surprising number of new approaches to teaching Literary Sinitic—some teaching characters one at a time and building up to fully elaborated Literary Sinitic, some focusing on Literary Sinitic grammar, others separating Literary Sinitic from Confucian textual knowledge, and still others focusing in whole or in part on compositions by Korean authors, all in a way that had never been seen previously.

In this thesis I have detailed how shifts in the terminology for both Literary Sinitic and the vernacular script, the educational activities of Western missionaries, the abolition of Korea's traditional civil service examination system, the establishment of a Western-style educational system, the proliferation of new teaching materials and methodologies, and both the indirect and direct influence of Japan, combined at the end of the Chosŏn dynasty to demote Literary Sinitic from its status as the *de facto* written language of state by removing it to the periphery of Koreans' literate and educational lives. In doing so, I have attempted to show that Literary Sinitic's demise was not simply the collateral damage of the sudden yet preordained rise of Korea's native script, but was, by the time of annexation, already a long though still unfinished process.

This thesis has hinted at the possibility of a link between the instructional methods and materials for teaching Literary Sinitic developed at Protestant missionary schools previous to 1906 and the similar developments in public and private Korean-run schools after that date. It is still uncertain, however, the degree to which missionary schools or their teaching methods and materials, particularly James Scarth Gale's textbooks, were used as a model by the Korean public and private school educators who followed them.⁶⁶ Answering this question will require further research into the lives of the authors, editors and compilers of this period's *hanmunkwa* textbooks as well as a more thorough analysis than has been offered here of the content and pedagogy of Gale's textbooks and any later textbooks that might be compared to them. Also, though this thesis stops at the point of Korea's annexation, *hanmunkwa* continued to develop throughout the colonial period and further research that

⁶⁶ Yi Kŭngwŏn, who authored *Ch'odŭng yŏhak tokpon*, a *hanmunkwa* textbook for girls, is known to have attended Gale's Yŏndong Church, while Chŏng Ingno, who authored *Kukhanmun sin-okp'yŏn* was a Christian preacher in Pyongyang, and both may have been aware of Gale's work.

explore these developments and their effect on Koreans' use of and attitudes toward Literary Sinitic today is merited.

Research on the reappraisal and demotion of Literary Sinitic in Korea is important for more than merely understanding the precolonial moment in Korea. It is vital to improving our understanding of Korea's part in the disintegration of a once vibrant East Asian cosmopolitanism. And moreover, further exploring the early development of *hanmunkwa* will also help us apprehend the lingering effects and influences exercised by once transcultured practices, even after those practices are reimagined and reconfigured according to new, nationalized frameworks.

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Appendices

Appendix A Problems with diglossia and digraphia

Attempts by linguists and other scholars to define Korea's premodern language situation using conventional sociolinguistic terminology are problematic, as the terms and descriptions most often applied to the situation "diglossia" and "digraphia" apply only tenuously at best.

The concept of diglossia was first formulated by Charles Ferguson in a 1959 article by the same name, and it is by far the most commonly deployed sociolinguistic concept for describing the late-Chosŏn situation. In his article, Ferguson describes what have become the four paradigmatic cases of diglossia—Swiss German, Arabic, Greek and Haitian Creole—and explains that individuals within each of these language communities are known to alternate their language use between a high-prestige code (H) in formal domains and a low-prestige code (L) in informal domains.

It would seem that the primary motivation for calling the Korean situation diglossic is an effort to highlight differences in the prestige afforded Literary Sinitic and Korean vernacular writing and the resulting divergence in their use. Diglossia as applied to Korea, however, is problematic for several reasons. In fact, a major failing of the concept, not just as applied to Korea, is the inability of various scholars to agree on what properly constitutes the phenomenon in the first place. Hudson (2002), attempts to outline a standard definition, though he admits that in the intervening 40-plus years since Ferguson first coined the term, "a coherent and generally accepted theory of diglossia remains to be formulated" (1), and Coulmas (2002) agrees that "after more than forty years and thousands of scholarly publications dealing with it, the term shows signs of wearing thin" (59). According to

Hudson, one major disagreement is whether to restrict diglossia to the occurrence of code switching between varieties of the same language so as not to step on the toes of related linguistic phenomena such as societal bilingualism, or whether to include code switching between unrelated languages.

Setting aside these academic disputes, diglossia does not properly describe the relationship existing between Literary Sinitic and the written vernacular for more substantial reasons. First, according to Ferguson (1959: 328), central to any true diglossic situation is a complementary distribution, or compartmentalization of each code into mutually exclusive domains. Supporting Ferguson's contention, Hudson (2002: 2–3) states that this important characteristic of diglossia is one of the traits which most distinguishes it from mere societal bilingualism. In Korea, the relationship between Literary Sinitic and the vernacular script, however, was never one of mutually exclusive domains of use. Though the written vernacular was indeed effectively barred from certain domains occupied exclusively by Literary Sinitic, such as official government documents and any number of other formal workly genres, Literary Sinitic was bound by no such constraints. There were, in other words, virtually no domains of literate life it did not penetrate—from official court documents and stately correspondences to the utterly mundane and unworkly texts of everyday life. And despite the discursive distinctions made between the two languages, Literary Sinitic was used at times by nearly all groups of literate society—men and women, Confucians and Buddhists.⁶⁷ While it would be fair to argue that Literary Sinitic did not penetrate the domain of the Sinologically illiterate—some of whom, such as women and children, were nevertheless able to employ the vernacular script—the vernacular script *was*

⁶⁷ See Haboush (2009) for a number of such examples.

used by the Sinologically learned and unlearned alike, creating a situation well removed from the strict complementary distribution and exclusive domains found in diglossia as elaborated by Ferguson (1959) and those following him.

The most significant problem with describing the Korean situation as diglossic, however, is that, according to Ferguson (1959), diglossia describes situations in which individuals within a given language community alternate their *spoken* language, yet the two alternating linguistic codes in question in Korea, Literary Sinitic and the vernacular script, are quite obviously *written* codes. Spoken Korean in any of its varieties was unchallenged in all domains of speech, formal and informal. While Hudson (2002) and Coulmas (2002) both acknowledge the vital role the literature of an H may play in maintaining its privileged status vis-à-vis the oft-times nonliterary L, the diglossic alternation between H and L as described by Ferguson (1959), Hudson (2002), Schiffman (1997), Coulmas (2002; 1987) and many others is fundamentally an alternation in *speech* choices. Leaving aside debates as to whether or not Literary Sinitic was ever more than a written code in China, it certainly never functioned as a spoken language in Korea.⁶⁸ In other words, spoken Korean and Literary Sinitic (or even written Korean for that matter) occupied linguistic space that could not be inhabited by the other, and therefore not only was there no alternation between the two, alternation was never a possibility. Therefore, though words were indeed borrowed from Literary Sinitic into the spoken and later written vernacular, a term such as diglossia, which is meant to describe a division in the speech workload of a given language community, misses the mark of what was actually happening in pre- and early-modern Korea. Authors who describe the Korean situation as diglossic, like Cho (2002), Silva (2003), Lee (2008),

⁶⁸ This despite Silva's (2003) puzzling and inaccurate claim that educated Korean elites at the end of the Chosŏn dynasty spoke a variety of what he calls "nativized Chinese."

Snow (2010) and others, are either unaware of or overlook this fact in order to focus on the one semi-compatible aspect of diglossia to the late-Chosŏn situation: the existence of two differently-used and unequally-esteemed languages within one linguistic community.

Haarmann (1993), Haboush (2009), and King (1998; 2007), aware of the incongruence of mere diglossia, are nonetheless unwilling to give up on the term completely. Instead they call the situation “literary diglossia.” Though this choice indicates a recognition that diglossia alone is an inadequate descriptor, unfortunately, qualifying a diglossic situation as “literary” does not change the incompatibility of the concept with the Korean situation. Such an approach acknowledges that Literary Sinitic and the vernacular script are written rather than spoken linguistic systems, but the same problems persist, including particularly the issue of complementary distribution. If diglossia is fundamentally a sociolinguistic phenomenon constituting specific patterns in a language community’s *speech* choices, as I have argued based on the literature on the subject, then by characterizing the premodern Korean language situation as a literary (i.e. written) diglossia we may as well be saying it was a “written speech phenomenon.”

It is into these murky waters that digraphia wades and fares little if any better. Kornicki (2009) uses the term when writing about late Chosŏn, saying that “I am referring here to the coexistence within a given society of two written languages enjoying different levels of prestige” (4). Kornicki’s definition actually fits the Korean situation quite well, but his use of the term is at odds with the definition of digraphia commonly accepted by linguists. Though Grivelet (2001: 1), in the introduction to a volume dedicated to articles dealing with the phenomenon of digraphia, *does* acknowledge that “the notion of digraphia... does not have a unique definition yet,” the various trends in definitions he describes all characterize

the phenomenon as comprising an alternation between two scripts for *one* language (e.g. Roman and Cyrillic alphabets for Serbo-Croatian, Devanagari and Arabic for Hindi-Urdu, or even Chinese Characters and Hanyu pinyin for Modern Standard Chinese). Also, Kornicki's "different levels of prestige" is no doubt intended as a parallel of the notion of high- and low-prestige codes as found in diglossia. Grivelet argues however, that such distinctions between high and low do not really apply to most cases of digraphia. Again, this is clearly adrift from the premodern Korean situation.

Despite the inapplicability of diglossia and digraphia to the relationship between Literary Sinitic and the vernacular script in premodern Korea, a sociolinguistic phenomenon pertaining to the dynamic between cosmopolitan and vernacular languages defined and elaborated by Robert (2006a; 2006b), shows promise when applied to the Korean situation. Termed "hieroglossia," Robert's (2006a) description of the phenomenon may be readily applied to what was occurring within the premodern Korean situation.⁶⁹ He writes:

By this I mean the sum of relations that develop between a language perceived as a central or founding element in a given culture area (this language being the *hierogloss*) and a language or languages that are perceived as being dependent, not historically or linguistically, but ontologically or theologically, on that hierogloss. Within a hieroglossic relationship, the language perceived as dependent, often called the "vulgar tongue" or "vernacular" (or, as I will call it, "laogloss"), is clearly considered not to be self-sufficient. The "vulgar tongue" will either supply its vocabulary, be it abstract, religious, or philosophic, by borrowing massively from the hierogloss, content with simply adapting the foreign terms to its own phonetic system; or it will undertake, through the work of the clergy and literati, the much more subtle and deep task of reconstructing its own vocabulary, reorientating its conceptual links on the basis of the hierogloss and attempting to reestablish within its own frame the mental association of the model tongue. (26)

⁶⁹ Bolstering the applicability of Robert's hieroglossia to the Korean situation is his description of the readily comparable premodern Japanese situation as a paradigmatic example of the phenomenon.

Appendix B Instances of “*hanmun*” in the *Sillok* before 1876 and their meaning

Before 1876, the term “*hanmun*” occurs only six times in the *Sillok* to refer to language,⁷⁰ all within the Chosŏn dynasty’s first ninety years. Its use in several of these six passages is somewhat ambiguous as can be seen by the varying ways the term is translated in the Korean version—sometimes as “*hanŏ*” 漢語 (historically a term for “Chinese language,” meaning earlier stages of the language spoken at the Chinese court) and sometimes left simply as “*hanmun*,” denoting the modern Korean term for Literary Sinitic. A careful reading of the six passages reveals that this last option is clearly a misnomer and that before 1876, the term “*hanmun*” was not used in the *Sillok* to denote Literary Sinitic. Below are the six passages in chronological order and in all but the first case, what I have translated as “Chinese language” or “written Chinese”⁷¹ the Korean translation leaves as “*hanmun*.”

The prescribed number of instructors [at the Office of Interpreters] is to be three, with two faculty members teaching Chinese language (*hanmun*), one teaching Mongolian and they all being rewarded handsomely.⁷²

Cho Pan of the *puhŭnggun* (restoration forces) died. He was a P'unghaedo Paekchu-ite and the son of posthumously-titled sixth state councilor Cho Segyŏng. At the age of 12 he followed his father Segyŏng to Yŏndo (Beijing), and while staying at the home of his father’s cousin’s husband, Tan

⁷⁰ The search term “漢文” returns thousands of hits in the online *Sillok* database <http://sillok.history.go.kr>, as “漢文” turns out to be an abbreviation for 漢朝文皇帝 (or Han Wendi), the fifth emperor of the Han dynasty, whom the *Sillok* references numerously. Though I believe my search to have been careful and complete, I admit the possibility that I may have missed some instance of “漢文” in the *Sillok* used to refer to language in some way other than those instances discussed hereafter.

⁷¹ My choice of “Chinese” here may seem ironic, given my rant in the introduction about the inadequacy of the term in discussions of language. However, the use of “Chinese” in these translations is deliberate and intended to reflect the understanding of the fourteenth and fifteenth century Koreans who wrote the passages.

⁷² 額設教授三員內, 漢文二員, 蒙古一員, 優給祿俸. – From *T'aejo Sillok*, Vol. 6, 1394/11/11, Number 3. The Korean translation give “*hanŏ*” here for what is “漢文” in the original.

P'yŏngjang, he eventually learned the Chinese language (*hanmun*) along with communicating in written and spoken Mongolian.⁷³

In a petition to the court the Bureau of Rites said, “Ŭiju is a location court envoys frequent. As there is no curriculum there for instruction in interpretation the number of persons who can interpret is severely limited. It is requested that, following the example of the P'yŏngyang office, instruction in interpretation be established and volunteer students from Ponju and the surrounding area be assembled and taught written and spoken Chinese (*hanmun-hanŏ*). Then, selecting from those who complete the program, assign them as *t'okwan* in P'yŏngyang.” And so it was done.⁷⁴

In a petition to the court the Bureau of Rites said, “Choose 20 students for matriculation and assemble them at the Office of Interpreters to train them in written and spoken Chinese (*hanmun-hanŏ*). Every time an envoy is dispatched to Beijing appoint them as *chongsagwan* “to be sent along.” And so it was done.⁷⁵

In a petition to the court the Bureaus of Personnel and Rites and the Office of Diplomatic Correspondence said, “Choose young, intelligent scholar officials and have them specialize in *imun* (吏文). Select passages from within the *Chijŏng Chogyŏk* (至正條格) with unclear meanings, record them and on every visit to Beijing have the *sŭptok-kwan* follow along to inquire as to the correct meaning, translate it into Chinese (*hanmun*) and bring it back.”⁷⁶

On every mission to Beijing, have those personnel who are now selected read widely to familiarize themselves closely with writings from among the Chinese court's memorials, proclamations and other government documents that could help in reading the unclear passages within *imun*. Inquire as to the correct meaning of each passage in those portions that are difficult to

⁷³ 復興君趙胖卒。胖，豐海道白州人，贈參贊世卿之子。年十二，從世卿赴燕都，主從姊夫段平章家，遂學漢文，兼通蒙古書語。— From *T'aejong Sillok*, Vol. 6, 1401/10/27, Number 2.

⁷⁴ 禮曹啓：“義州，朝廷使臣往來之所，而無訓導譯語之法，通譯語者甚少，請依平壤府例，置譯學訓導，聚本州及隣近各官自願生徒，教以漢文漢語，擇其成材者，量授平壤土官。”從之。— From *Sejong Sillok*, Vol. 42, 1428/12/09, Number 5.

⁷⁵ 禮曹啓：“以入學選揀子弟二十人，竝令仍會司譯院，講習漢文漢語，每於使臣赴京，以從事官差送。”從之。— From *Sejong Sillok*, Vol. 62, 1433/12/13, Number 2.

⁷⁶ 傳于吏曹，禮曹，承文院曰：“揀擇年少聰敏文臣，使之專業吏文。如《至正條格》內文義未曉處抄錄，每赴京之行，令習讀官從行質正，譯以漢文而來。”— From *Sŏngjong Sillok*, Vol. 97, 1478/10/03, Number 3.

understand and seek to grasp them fully. Have these passages translated into Chinese (漢文), writing them one by one. Thereafter, when teaching *imun*, lecture on the *imun* in the above items by copying and specializing in them.⁷⁷

Of these six passages, three speak of “*hanmun*” as a language taught specifically to selected government officials at the *Sayŏgwŏn* (Office of Interpreters), with two of these three using the word pair “*hanmun-hanŏ*” which I take to denote instruction in the written and spoken forms of a single language. These passages, which speak of special training in at a government institution established for the training of interpreters in foreign languages primarily for diplomatic purposes, would make little sense were “*hanmun*” taken to mean Literary Sinitic. As the language of the curriculum in every village school throughout Korea there is no reason to think individuals may have been specially selected to learn this *same* language at the *Sayŏgwŏn*. It stands to reason that the *hanmun* or *hanmun-hanŏ* referenced in these passages is a language other than that already being taught to every student of any village school from their first day onward. The last two of the six passages describe members of Chosŏn embassies to China translating into “*hanmun*” difficult-to-understand passages within *imun*⁷⁸ documents. Were these passages examined alone without knowledge of the preceding four, one might reasonably conclude that “*hanmun*” in *these* passages may have referred to Literary Sinitic. Viewed within the context of the earlier passages however, the most appropriate interpretation is to understand “*hanmun*” in all these passages as

⁷⁷今揀擇人員，每赴京時，所讀吏文內文義未曉處，朝奏啓本・榜文・官府相通文字體格，一應可倣文書廣行聞見，隨得隨習，其難解處，逐節質正，期於通慣，翻以漢文，一一開寫以啓，後次吏文考講時並講論，上項吏文，須卽謄寫，亦令習讀。— From *Sŏngjong Sillok*, Vol. 98, 1478/11/13, Number 3.

⁷⁸ *Imun* (吏文), must not be confused with *idu*. *Imun* was a particular form of officialese used in communications between the Korean and Chinese courts. For more on *imun*, its development in China, and its learning and use in Korea see (Chŏng 2006).

referring not to Literary Sinitic but to a vernacularized variety of Chinese useful in diplomatic business with China and therefore given special attention at the *Sayǒgwǒn*.