



THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE KOREAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN THE CONTEXT OF UNIVERSAL HUMAN VALUES

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Abstract

This article analyzes, from a philosophical perspective, the role and significance of the Korean language and literature within the system of universal human values. The study presents an analysis of the works of poets who contributed to traditional Korean literature, such as Kim Si-sup (김시습) and Yun Seon-do (윤선도), as well as modern writers and poets, including Yi Chong-jun (이청준) and Kim Sowol (김소월). Particular attention is given to themes such as human destiny, the relationship between the individual and society, spirituality, and freedom. These themes are explored through the prism of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, based on the analysis of literary works.

Keywords: Korean language, Korean literature, universal human values, philosophy, Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, spirituality, individual and society, human destiny, classical literature, sijo poetry, harmony between human and nature.

Introduction

Universal human values, in their essence, are broader and deeper in content than national and regional values and possess a universal significance. They correspond to the goals and aspirations of all nations, peoples, and ethnic groups in the world.

It should be noted that no people or nation in the world possesses a completely isolated culture independent of other peoples and global civilization. No nation can develop in accordance with global standards without utilizing the most advanced cultural and educational achievements of other peoples. Therefore, the socio-economic and cultural-educational development of all nations has historically been closely interconnected.



Central Asia has long been one of the centers of science, culture, literature, and art. Thinkers who originated from this region enriched world science and culture with their discoveries and immortal works, significantly influencing their further development. The rich and multifaceted culture of our people is an integral part of world culture.

The spirituality that has been formed over centuries, embodying the traditions, customs, and values of the people, is at the same time a component of universal human values and, thus, represents the spiritual heritage of all humanity.

In this context, the study and promotion of the Korean language, literature, and culture among young people acquire special importance within the framework of the socio-political and economic reforms being carried out in Uzbekistan under the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. This, in turn, contributes to strengthening socio-economic cooperation between the two nations.

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev emphasizes that the time has come to create a new system of foreign language education that will serve as a solid foundation for the future. Uzbekistan's policy of openness, its active integration into the global market, and the expansion of international cooperation in all spheres increase the demand for foreign language proficiency, including the Korean language.

“As we set the goal of building a competitive state, graduates of schools, lyceums, colleges, and higher educational institutions must be proficient in at least two foreign languages. This requirement should become a key criterion for the performance of every head of an educational institution,” noted Shavkat Mirziyoyev [1].

Literature Review:

Indeed, in this context, it is essential to enhance the scientific and pedagogical potential of teaching foreign languages, including the Korean language. Korean culture and literature have been shaped over millennia under the influence of Eastern philosophy. The ideas of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism have played a significant role in shaping the worldview of Korean writers and poets. Through literature, they revealed the inner world of a person, their place in society, moral responsibility, and spiritual development from a philosophical perspective. Therefore, Korean literature possesses not only artistic value but also profound philosophical significance.



Kim Si-sup (김시습, 1435–1493) is one of the prominent representatives of classical Korean literature, a writer, philosopher, and Buddhist thinker of the Joseon dynasty. In his works, the ideas of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism are harmoniously combined.

One of Kim Si-sup's major works is the collection *Geumo Sinhwa* (금오신화, 金鰲新話) — *New Tales of the Golden Turtle*. It is one of the most famous and significant works of the author, consisting of five novellas and considered one of the earliest collections of fantasy novellas in Korean literature. The work explores philosophical issues such as the relationship between life and death, the world of spirits and the human world, the eternity of love, and the transience of earthly existence. Influenced by the Chinese *chuanqi* tradition, the work represents a synthesis of the real and the mystical worlds. Through this work, Kim Si-sup laid the foundation for Korean fantasy prose.

In the novella *Manboksa Jeopogi* (만복사저포기, 萬福寺樗蒲記) — *A Tale of a Man Who Played Jeopo at Manboksa Temple*, the love between a living man and the spirit of a deceased woman is depicted. The work emphasizes that human emotions transcend even physical death.

In the story *Choe Yun Jeon* (최윤전, 崔雲傳), the author, analyzing human destiny from a philosophical perspective, raises issues of spiritual perfection. The work clearly reflects a Buddhist worldview. In addition, his poetic and philosophical writings express ideas of harmony between nature and humanity, rejection of worldly vanity, spiritual purification, and the pursuit of enlightenment. His poetry is characterized by lyricism, philosophical depth, and symbolism, reflecting the author's inner spiritual quest.

The works of Kim Si-sup possess not only literary but also spiritual and philosophical value, as he demonstrates that true human happiness lies not in the material world but in the richness of inner spiritual life.

Yun Seon-do (윤선도, 1587–1671) was an outstanding Korean poet and thinker of the Joseon period, one of the greatest representatives of classical Korean poetry. Among his well-known works are *Eobusasisa* (어부사시사) — *The Fisherman's Four Seasons*, *Sansu Sok* (산수속) — *Songs of Mountains and Waters*, *Cheongsong*



Byeolgok (청성별곡) — *Songs of Cheongsong*, *Ouga* (오우가) — *Song of Five Friends*, *Manheung* (만흥) — *Songs of Seclusion*, *Geumsedongi* (금쇄동기) — *Diary of Geumsedong*, and others.

Research Methodology:

Yun Seon-do's (윤선도) work *Eobusasisa* (어부사시사) — *The Fisherman's Four Seasons* is written in the *sijo* genre (traditional Korean poetry). This work is one of the most renowned in Yun Seon-do's творчество. Through the image of a fisherman's life, it reveals the idea of a harmonious, simple, and peaceful human existence in unity with nature. The author creates the image of a person who, having abandoned government service, chooses philosophical seclusion and inner tranquility.

In this work, the ideas of Confucianism and Taoism are clearly reflected. A special place is given to the notion that nature spiritually purifies the human being.

The work *Sansu Sok* (산수속) — *Songs of Mountains and Waters* is also written in the *sijo* form. These poems depict mountains, rivers, and natural landscapes. Yun Seon-do views nature not only as an aesthetic value but also as a reflection of the human inner world. His works are dominated by motifs of peace, silence, and philosophical contemplation of life.

In the work *Cheongsong Byeolgok* (청성별곡) — *Songs of Cheongsong*, the author expresses his detachment from political life, loneliness, and inner experiences. The content reflects an internal protest against injustice; however, this protest is expressed not through open rebellion, but through philosophical reflection.

In Yun Seon-do's publicistic writings, philosophical views on Confucian ethics, governance, and human spiritual development are presented. In these works, he promotes the image of an ideal official, emphasizing honesty and moral purity. His worldview is dominated by ideas of rejecting personal gain, justice, and responsibility toward society.

The main themes of Yun Seon-do's (윤선도) творчество include harmony between nature and human existence, spiritual purity, political justice and inner freedom, moral tranquility, and a philosophical way of life. The poet is an outstanding representative



of classical Korean poetry, who perfected the *sijo* genre and made a significant contribution to the development of national Korean literature.

While poets such as Kim Si-sup (김시습) and Yun Seon-do (윤선도) contributed to the development of traditional Korean literature, writers and poets such as Yi Chong-jun (이청준) and Kim Sowol (김소월) played a significant role in the formation of modern Korean literature.

Yi Chong-jun (이청준, 1939–2008) is one of the major representatives of Korean literature of the second half of the 20th century. In his works, he deeply explores the inner world of the individual, the contradictions between the individual and society, and the conflict between tradition and modernity.

Most of his works are devoted to complex and contradictory relationships between society and the individual. His characters are often individuals unable to adapt to social norms and living in a state of internal psychological tension. Through their experiences, the author reveals the problem of societal pressure on personal freedom. In depicting the spiritual quest and inner drama of his characters, he skillfully employs internal monologue and psychological analysis. The characters in Yi Chong-jun's works strive to understand their "self" and find the meaning of life.

Particularly in the work *Seopyeonje* (서편제), a sharp conflict between national art, traditional values, and modern life is depicted. Through the national musical art of *pansori*, the author reveals human destiny and the idea of devotion to art. The characters are forced to sacrifice personal happiness for the sake of art, highlighting its sacrificial nature.

In the novel *Your Paradise* (당신들의 천국), the very concept of "paradise" is critically examined. The author demonstrates that a "happy society" created through administrative means can restrict human rights.

In conclusion, it should be noted that Yi Chong-jun's works elevate the historical and spiritual problems of Korean society to the level of universal human values. He occupies an important place in Korean literature as a writer who deeply and artistically reflects the inner world of a person, their striving for freedom, and their spiritual experiences.



Analysis and Results:

According to the writer, truth is not always expressed through words; sometimes it is conveyed through silence. This idea is close to existential philosophy and reveals the inner essence of the human being.

Kim Sowol (김소월, 1902–1934) is one of the most famous Korean lyric poets of the early 20th century. From a young age, he showed an interest in literature, drawing inspiration from Korean folk songs and traditional poetry. Kim Sowol is considered the poet who elevated Korean lyrical poetry to a new level.

The poet's short and tragic life left a deep imprint on his творчество. Among his major works are *Azalea Flower* (진달래꽃), *Mother, I Want to Go Home* (어머니, 어머니), *Mountain Flowers* (산유화), *Birds Have Flown Away* (초혼 — *Summoning the Soul*), *The Crow and the Nightingale*, and others.

His most famous work is the poem *Azalea Flower* (진달래꽃), which is regarded as one of the masterpieces of Korean literature. In Korean culture, the azalea symbolizes spring, tenderness, and devotion.

The main feature of Kim Sowol's poetic style is its simplicity, musicality of language, and closeness to the folk song tradition. His works deeply express feelings such as love, separation, longing, and sorrow, as well as subtle and complex experiences of the human soul, possessing a special philosophical depth.

Although his poems outwardly convey calmness, their inner dramatic intensity is extremely strong. The lyrical hero tries to restrain tears, yet this restraint itself conveys the depth of inner pain. This is characteristic of traditional Korean emotionality—patience and inner resilience.

Moreover, in his works, Kim Sowol expresses the pain of the human soul not through loud words, but quietly, yet deeply and profoundly. In this way, he conveys the national spirit of Korea, the people's sorrow and suffering in a simple but highly expressive form. This is close to the Buddhist idea of achieving spiritual perfection through the comprehension of suffering.

In this sense, his poetry occupies a special place not only in Korean literature but also in world lyric poetry.

In Korea, his works are still studied in schools and universities and are also performed in the form of songs.



Conclusion and Recommendations:

The works of Korean writers and poets in the field of literature constitute a philosophical foundation of universal human culture. In their works, such issues as human destiny, the relationship between society and the individual, spirituality, and freedom are analyzed in a deep and comprehensive manner.

Korean literature, having absorbed the ideas of Eastern philosophy—humanism, morality, and the inner self-perfection of the individual—has made a significant contribution to the development of world culture. In this regard, it occupies a special place within the system of global cultural values.

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