



Special Review I

Korean Studies in Mongolia

Volume 28 Number 1

June 2025

The Review of Korean Studies

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For the past few years, the *Review of Korean Studies* (hereafter, *RKS*) has been publishing Special Reviews on the status of Korean studies and education in different parts of the world, as we did for Korean studies in Japan (December 2019 issue, “Recent Korean Studies in Japan”), in China (June 2021 issue, “Current Status of Korean Studies in China”), and in Southeast Asia (December 2022 issue, “Korean Studies Research and Pedagogy in Southeast Asia: Trends, Challenges, and Prospects in Southeast Asia”). We have been trying to expand our search and review radius, and at this juncture we are more than gratified to inform the readers that acclaimed Mongolian scholar in Korean studies, Dr. Tsegmid Tserendorj of the Institute of History and Ethnology at the Mongolian Academy of Sciences (for which he is also serving as Vice President) and his colleague, Batmunkh Sarnai, offered us a comprehensive analysis of Korean studies in Mongolia, under the title of “Research and Educational Trends of Korean Studies in Mongolia,” a definitive review that would provide us with details regarding the current state of Korean education and research in Mongolia.

The authors first acknowledge the active exchanges that have been underway between South Korea and Mongolia for the past three decades and present two areas of Korean studies in Mongolia as the focus of this review: (1) Korean studies research and (2) Korean language education, of which the latter reportedly achieved greater development than the former. According to the authors, as of 2024, about 10 universities are operating regular Korean language courses, with many more running elective courses. The review also says that research outcomes in Korean studies so far show outstanding results in the area of linguistics.

The authors also provide us with a brief historical view on Korean studies in Mongolia and introduce us to scholars and professors who have been instrumental in Mongolian Korean studies’ advances and promotion.

According to the authors, Korean studies in Mongolia are in progress of qualitative and quantitative development, with its own challenges of course. In terms of specific areas, history (history of Korea-Mongolia relations to be specific) and pedagogy seem to be thriving. The number of Korean studies researchers are also increasing significantly, mostly being professors and instructors who majored in Korean studies.

The authors then suggest that other than comparative studies and research on the history of Korea-Mongolia relations, pure Korean language studies and Korean history studies would also be worthy of a more aggressive pursuit in the future, also arguing the necessity and imperativeness of producing translations of major Korean historical sources in Mongolian and publication of them as academic materials, sooner than later. They also propose the development of various educational text materials regarding a variety of areas such as Korean literature, folklore, religion, culture, and geography.

We at *RKS* convey our deepest gratitude to the authors who kindly agreed to share their wonderful insight on the current situation of Korean language education in Mongolia as well as past efforts and achievements of general Korean studies in the region. As a Ph.D. who obtained his doctoral status here at the Academy of Korean Studies, Prof. Tserendorj is not only a Korean expert but also a dear friend to all Koreans. We hope this review will let the readers know that Korean studies and education in Mongolia are in good shape, advancing on all fronts, and endeavoring to grow even further by setting loftier goals. Thanks again to the Professor for this Special Review.