Special Feature

Intermedial Aesthetics: Still Images, Moving Words, and Written Sounds in Early Twentieth-Century Korean Cinematic Novels (*Yeonghwa Soseol*)

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Introduction: Korean New Mediascape and *Yeonghwa soseol*

Contemporary Korean and Korean American mediascape explodes with intermedial arts where boundaries between platforms, mediums, genres and modes of representation are no longer fixed but quite porous, readily interacting to obscure established distinctions between different media. From easy crossovers between comic books into novels and then to films or digital images projected on the facades of skyscrapers to multi-media artists' installations, we constantly encounter intermedial objects in our everyday lives.[1] Furthermore, webtoons, video arts, digital books, computer-generated images in films and television, and smart phones reshape the ways in which text, image, sound, and technology are fused together to bring about new ways of seeing, reading, and hearing. New technology in the twenty-first century, especially the computer and digitization, has indeed radically altered our mediascape whereby our encounter with art, especially literature, photography, film, and the press, though now considered not so new media, has also undergone significant changes. Indeed the questions and debates around how technology will affect the way we read books, understand them, interact with them, communicate with each other, and understand our world are pervasive, especially in South Korea, a country that currently boasts itself as a leader in Internet speed and

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1. Paik Namjun was probably one of the most recognizable Korean American figures in new media art. There are too many examples to list here, but some contemporary examples are Heo Yeongman's graphic novels that have recently been adapted into television dramas or Kim Hosik's Internet "novel" that drew enough attention to become published as a book and then adapted into the now classic romantic comedy film *My Sassy Girl*. ARKO Art Center (Seoul) has been devoting itself to the exhibition and archiving of contemporary art which showcases the depth and breadth of the medium. Art Center Nabi, though currently less active, was also at the forefront of promoting new media art, especially the intersection between art and technology. Korean American artist Yong Soon Min has worked with various materials combining them in innovative ways. See for example her work *Movement* and her curatorial works, in particular *There,* which was shown at the Gwangju Biennale in 2002.

connectivity and mobile technology. These contemporary debates about culture, art, and technology, however, are not so new.

Colonial Korea in the 1920s-1930s also underwent unprecedented industrial developments whereby Gyeongseong mediascape was forever changed. Broadly speaking, photography, film, radio, and the press came to play an active part in redefining literary activities, especially reading and writing. To be sure, arts, technologies, and practices associated with photography, film, and the press were introduced to Korea slightly earlier in the nineteenth century, but it wasn't until the 1920s and the 1930s that they became a more prominent part of mass consumption and artistic practice. I would also suggest that it was in the 1920s and 1930s (during the period of Japanese colonial rule commonly referred to as the period of cultural rule, or *bunka seiji* 文化政治 in Japanese) that much experimentation with these new media technologies began appearing for mass consumption, in particular through fusion of new media technology and literature.[2]

In many ways, it is not possible to discuss one medium without the others in Korea, for much of the new communication technologies entered almost simultaneously as Korea itself was developing into a more industrialized country, hastened by its officially becoming "opened" to commercial and diplomatic relations with other nations.[3] In fact, as was the case elsewhere around the world,

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2. The period from 1919 to 1931 has commonly been referred to as the period of cultural rule during the Japanese colonial rule of Korea. In responding to the Korean people's mass protest for independence that began on March 1, 1919, the Japanese colonial government under Saitō Makoto shifted its strategies from military rule to cultural rule where some of the policies, especially regarding publication, were relaxed allowing for the founding of newspapers and journals, including the *Donga Ilbo* 東亞日報 founded by Kim Seongsu. For more on cultural rule, see Michael Robinson (1988 and 1998). Although there were new opportunities granted to Koreans for cultural activities, these were heavily monitored and policed. Mass media had to go through the Censorship Board. Yet submitting films to the Censorship Board was also part of a capitalist venture where processing fees were collected for all the films that were imported or domestically produced in Korea. The vast majority of films were American Hollywood films which passed through the Board rather smoothly thus helping not only to fatten the Board's purse but also enlivening the colonial Korean film culture through the introduction and screening of international films. See *Singminji geomyeol* (Geomyeol Yeonguhoe 2011) and Yecies, "Film Censorship as a Good Business in Colonial Korea" (2006).
3. The 1876 Treaty of Ganghwa signed between Joseon Korea and Meiji Japan and the 1882 Treaty of Amity and Commerce signed between Joseon Korea and the U.S. precipitated a number of missionaries, businessmen and government officials to visit and work in Joseon. Many of these early visitors, such as J. B. Bernadou, Harrie Webster, and Burton Holmes, photographed

photography, film, radio, mass press, and other general telecommunication technologies and apparatus were not only built on each other but also interacted vigorously with each other. This article sets out to explore a new, rather minor, genre called *yeonghwa soseol* 映畵小說 which came to be written and published during this era of at once relative cultural bloom and censorship under Japanese colonialism. I argue that *yeonghwa soseol*, which I translate as cinematic novel,[4] is an important new intermedial art that offered writers opportunities to experiment with new narrative, visual, and aural techniques often deriving from the tension and competition between new media technologies while for the readers the cinematic novel enabled new practices of reading, seeing, and hearing. The Korean cinematic novel enabled not merely the construction of a new, popular, minor genre but more significantly new experiences and meanings leading to a new intermedia aesthetics where the pages of a newspaper served as a screen upon which pictures, voices, and texts could be projected. In short, I argue that the Korean cinematic novel, especially Sim Hun's *Mask Dance*, is an example of new media art of the 1920s which was created to elicit a three-dimensional intermedial experience of cinema culture (seeing, listening, reading, and interacting) using the two-dimensional paper screen space.

What's in a Compound?: An Intermedial Genre Called *Yeonghwa soseol*

The compound term *yeonghwa soseol* points to its own complexity if not its paradox. While *yeonghwa* (film) and *soseol* (novel) might rightly gesture toward some hybrid or mixed qualities, the compound is neither as simple nor clear cut as it appears, for *yeonghwa soseol* could describe multiple kinds of phenomena both now in the twenty-first century as it was then in the early twentieth

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and filmed Korean people and scenes which ultimately exposed Koreans to the new media technology of that time. Holmes is said to be the first person to have screened a motion picture in Korea, which was a private screening for King Gojong. See Yecies and Shim, "Invasion from the West, 1893-1905" in their *Korea's Occupied Cinemas* (2011, 16-40).

4. Theodore Hughes translates *yeonghwa soseol* as "film novel" in his *Literature and Film in Cold War South Korea* (2012). While I believe the terms film and cinema could be used interchangeably here, I have decided to translate the term as cinematic novel in order to underscore the multi-level aspects of the film-watching experience in *yeonghwa soseol.*

century colonial Korea. If we are to examine the ways that a work could be labeled a *yeonghwa soseol*, there are plenty. First, the type that we are probably most familiar with is films adapted from novels or plays (an adaptation). For example, some of the most popular early Korean films were adapted from beloved classical novels such as *The Tale of Chunhyang* (1935, Korea's first talkie film)[5] and *The Tale of Simcheong* (1925). Even today, films adapted from novels or comic books are quite common. Reversely, a *yeonghwa soseol* can also refer to a novel based on a film. This type of *yeonghwa soseol* was especially popular during the early twentieth century when many foreign films, especially Hollywood films, were introduced and screened in Korea.[6] After being first screened in movie theaters such as the Danseongsa, many of them, subsequently or simultaneously, were published as serialized novels in newspapers or popular magazines, of course, undergoing a translation into the Korean language. Later, *pilleum iyagi* or film narrations were broadcasted on the radio, at times inviting famous *byeonsa* or actors and actresses to recite the story. Another type of *yeonghwa soseol* is novels which applied narrative techniques that simulated a camera eye view or the appropriation of the montage. The best-known early twentieth-century Korean literary works that would fit into this category would be Bak Taewon's *Cheonbyeon punggyeong* (Streamside sketches, 1936) or his *Soseolga Gubossi ui iril* (A day in the life of Gubo the novelist, 1934). Lastly, the *yeonghwa soseol*, which my study takes up, refers to texts that were explicitly labeled as *yeonghwa soseol* opposed to being classified as *jangpyeon soseol* (long novel) or *danpyeon soseol* (short story). Similar to the previously mentioned

5. An earlier 1923 silent film version of *The Tale of Chunhyang* was produced and directed by the Japanese former teacher turned film pioneer Hayakawa Koshū. He created the Hayakawa Entertainment Bureau in Korea in 1913 and imported films from Japan's Nikkatsu to establish a profitable film business in colonial Korea. He also founded the Donga Culture Association. See Yecies and Shim (2011, 51). Although this film has not survived, advertisements and newspaper reports of Hayakawa's *Chunhyang* dotted the news at that time. See *Maeil Sinbo* (22-23 August, 1923). See also Serk-bae Suh's "Treacherous Translations" (2010) for discussion of the 1938 Japanese theatrical production of *Chunhyang*.

6. Over-all, Korean film production and screenings paled in comparison to imported foreign films. For example, in 1925, imports totaled around 2,100 American films and 124 European films. Even as late as 1932, statistics show that 62.7% of the films screening in Korea were Western, 32.3% Japanese, and only 4.1% Korean (cited in Jeon 2006, 51). See also Yecies (2006, 6) for the relative ease of Hollywood films to pass through the Censorship Board without much rejection, restrictions, or cutting of content which led to the what Yecies calls "Hollywood's Golden Age" in Korea.

types, the *yeonghwa soseol* this study focuses on also attempts to simulate a cinematic experience for the readers through its narrative techniques, inclusion of photographs and illustrations, and other cinematic devices. What does set the last type of *yeonghwa soseol* apart from the former types is that the latter emphatically associates itself to film and labels itself as *yeonghwa soseol*. Many of the *yeonghwa soseol* included in this last type intentionally integrated aspects of film culture into the text perhaps by envisioning it as a film in the future, but were still written explicitly as a serialized novel and not purely as a screenplay or scenario, which at times was also serialized and published in newspapers. What is clear, despite their overlaps and differences, is that all types of *yeonghwa soseol* were born out of and closely linked to the emergence and popularity of new media called film, photography, and radio and new technology associated with these media.

Despite the preponderance of the links between film and novel, the reception of this particular new genre, cinematic novel, has been largely mixed. If, on the one hand, some writers and critics embraced cinematic novels as an original and legitimate form that could both entertain and educate the masses, then on the other hand, some were equally vehement about dismissing it as a popular form catering to the frivolous entertainment of the masses. Many early critics of cinematic novels questioned and repudiated their popular qualities. Im Hwa, for example, took issue with his fellow KAPF member, Kim Gijin's, support of cinematic novels although ironically later Im Hwa himself starred in a film version of *Yurang* (Wandering), the first KAPF cinematic novel written in 1928 by Yi Jongmyeong.[7] Contemporary literary and film critics have tended to be equally dismissive or considered it as a minor genre and commonly included the cinematic novel as a subset of drama/theater or treated it as a precursor to scenario writing, hardly considering it as an object of its own analysis. Jo Dong-il's *Hanguk munak tongsa* (*A History of Korean Literature*, 1997) and Yi Yeongjae's "Chochanggi Hanguk sinario munhak yeongu" (A study of early Korean scenario literature, 1989) are examples of this case. Kim Sunam, the editor of *Hanguk sinario seonjip* (Selected works of Korean scenarios, 2003) also sees the *yeonghwa soseol* as closely related to screenwriting and thus anthologizes

7. See Hughes, *Literature and Film in Cold War South Korea* (2012, 29-34) for more on KAPF and popular literature and film.

them under the category of scenarios. Choe Hyesil (1992) diverges slightly from the previously mentioned scholars in that she recognizes the *yeonghwa soseol* as a novel, but she focuses solely on the ways in which modernist writers, such as Yi Sang and Bak Taewon, adopted the cinematic language and form in their works and does not undertake analysis of actual works of *yeonghwa soseol*. More recently, however, Kim Gyeongsu has argued that there is a parallel development between film and the modern novel in which *yeonghwa soseol* is a part, whereas Gang Hyeon-gu has taken up the *yeonghwa soseol* to show the close relationship between it and popular, urban culture during the colonial period. Jeon Uhyeong's dissertation is probably the most comprehensive and recent study of *yeonghwa soseol* where he expands upon the ways in which this new genre attests to the formation of modern perceptions and visual media's foray into new narrative modes and aesthetics.

What these studies do not address but what they suggest to me is that there must have been an intense competition (in readership, financial profit, ideological prestige or status to name just a few) between film and the novel in early twentieth-century Korea which the cinematic novel then attempted to take advantage of or mediate. Thus, rather than dwelling on the predicament of which category and which form, I would suggest that a more productive way of approaching cinematic novels is to ask what work did this new genre do and what alternatives did this new genre provide? In this essay, thus, we will investigate what this new genre was and how we can understand it through a case study of a cinematic novel which was thought to be the very first *yeonghwa soseol* written and published in Korea—Sim Hun's *Talchum* (Mask dance).[8] To be sure, the Korean cinematic novel (the type that this study explores) was a minor genre that had an extremely short life span—only fifty-six were published between 1926 and 1939.[9] On the other hand, what this also suggests to me

8. Jeon Uhyeong's study has found that Sim Hun's *Mask Dance* is not really the first cinematic novel published as Sim Hun and the editors of *Donga Ilbo* proclaim it to be and others have long cited. In fact, Kim Ilyeong's *Samlim e seobeon* (Secret whispers in the forest) preceded *Mask Dance*. Kim's cinematic novel was serialized in the *Maeil Sinbo* from April 4 to May 16, 1926 whereas Sim's *Mask Dance* began serialization in November 1926 (Jeon 2006, 1).

9. This number is cited in Jeon Uhyeong's table (2006, 43-44). It might be more accurate to say that cinematic novels published between 1926 and 1939 constitute the first generation cinematic novels. There have been other *yeonghwa soseol* published in the recent century and contemporary examples abound as Internet novels, digital books, and films become more interactive. See also

is that cinematic novels might indeed have been a genre that was especially responsive and sensitive to the cultural trends of the era in which film (silent and talkie), radio (broadcasting sound), and modern novel (reading the vernacular) were all at work together and in competition with each other. Hence, rather than seeing it as a minor genre to be dismissed, I examine the Korean cinematic novel, nestled in the interstices of various media, for its transformative and interactive potentials.

Here I borrow and broadly extrapolate from Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of "minor" literature in their *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (1986). There are several levels to what I mean by "minor" which resonate with Deleuze and Guattari but which also I borrow very loosely. First, I use it to refer to Korea's real status as the colonized as well as the Korean film industry's minor presence represented by statistical figures during the colonial era compared to the domination of screening of imported Hollywood films and the significant presence and role of Japanese film companies operating in colonial Korea. Second, I have classified the Korean cinematic novel as minor since it is a genre that has been largely overlooked, excluded, or abjected from Korean literary studies and certainly the literary canon even though writers such as Sim Hun and Kim Gijin have penned their own cinematic novels. Third, "minor" refers to the small number of cinematic novels that were actually written and published during the early twentieth century. And lastly, I use "minor" in a more figurative sense to refer to perceptions about technology, art, and knowledge within the uneven power relations between East and West. That is, the mistaken perception that new media technology inherited by the East could not engage in creative production of new media aesthetics. Like Deleuze and Guattari, who characterize minor literature as political, subversive, and revolutionary, I also read Korean cinematic novels as possessing the potential to inform and to revolutionize major genres—literature, film, photography, and radio—as they constitute their own major genres. Yet as Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih (2005) have pointed out even Deleuze and Guattari's attempt at bringing about productive theoretical approaches to understanding major/minor relationships inadvertently proscribes the hierarchal vertical relationships

Gang (2006) who divides her study of *yeonghwa soseol* into three periods: 1920-30s Japanese colonial period, 1960s, and the 2000s.

with a center and margins rather than the more lateral inter-relations. Lionnet and Shih's discussion of transnationalism, therefore, attempts to put in the center the transversal relations amongst the minor or the margins. "Minor transnationalism" then is physical and intellectual spaces where minority cultures are no longer situated on the north/south or the West/non-West axis but connecting minority cultures at the local, national, and global to and with each other rather than being mediated by, for example, the center, the colonizer's metropolis, or language. They implore us to look sideways and in-between. What Lionnet and Shih share in common with Deleuze and Guattari, then, is the powerful notion that minor literature or minority culture can be read as, in a sense, major literature or majority culture. The concept of the minor as a major provides me ways to use intermediality as a method to integrate the popular new media film, photography, radio, and literature in my analysis of Korean cinematic novels while avoiding the unnecessary hierarchies that come with them as well as to avoid assigning values to the binaries old/new, traditional/modern, and West/non-West.

Intermediality is a broad concept as well as a methodological approach which has been broadly defined as "phenomena that … take place between media" or media that can be said to transgress "boundaries between conventionally distinct media," especially how non-literary forms can translate into textual systems or ways literature can relate to other media (Rajewsky 2005, 46).[10] Working from this broad definition, Irina Rajewsky goes on to attempt a narrower conceptualization of intermediality. She proposes three subcategories: medial transposition; media combination; and intermedial references (51-52). Medial transposition refers to, for example, "film adaptations, novelization, and so forth" where the "intermedial quality has to do with the way in which a media product comes into being" (51). Media combination, on the other hand, would refer to the "intermedial quality … determined by the medial constellation constituting a given media product, which is to say the result or the very process of combining at least two conventionally distinct media or medial forms of articulation" (52). Rajewsky defines the last subcategory, intermedial

10. Many intermedial studies have dealt with the relationship between literature and other media. See Werner Wolf and Walter Bernhart, eds., *Description in Literature and Other Media* (2007). Theater and performance studies which often work in tandem with image and sound have also developed approaches to their subject through intermedial studies.

reference as "rather than combining different medial forms of articulation, the given media-product thematizes, evokes, or imitates elements or structures of another, conventionally distinct mediums through the use of its own media-specific means" (53). For example, a literary text could reference film through evocation of film techniques such as montage, zoom shots, and so on.

In many ways, intermedial qualities outlined by Rajewsky attest to the succinct claims made by W.J.T. Mitchell that "all media are mixed media" (1994, 5) or Noël Carroll's argument that a medium is "generally composite in terms of its basic constituents" (1996, 28). This might suggest that intermediality and intermedial studies can serve as a catchall phrase referring to the hybridity of art itself. What I would like to emphasize in thinking about the colonial Korean cinematic novels as intermedial, however, is not so much the hybrid qualities of cinematic novels or to affirm their multimedia qualities, but intermediality as a methodological tool for probing the interactions between media arts so as to ask where interdisciplinary studies, comparative studies, or transdisciplinary studies through a minor, popular Korean literary genre takes us.

New Media and New Technology in Colonial Korea: Photography, Film, and Radio

Photography, film, and radio entered Joseon Korea almost simultaneously in the late nineteenth century. It is said that the history of photography in Korea begins in 1871 when Felice Beato photographed scenes from the U.S. military's second unsuccessful attempt at opening Korea to diplomatic and trade relations.[11] Japanese photographers and photo studios in Korea also played an influential role in early photography in Korea. Therefore, photographs of Korea by non-Koreans generally make up the early archive whereas the history of Korean photography can be dated to 1883 when Kim Yong-won set up a studio with the assistance of a Japanese photographer.[12] Ji Unyeong (1852-1935) also

11. It is believed that a few selected Koreans were introduced to photography and photo studios in China in 1863 during one of the tribute missions. During this mission, Korean envoys Yi Eusik and Oh Gyeongseok had their portraits taken. See Bennett (1997, 1).

12. Bennett surmises that Kim with the help of Honda Shunosuke was probably the first Korean

opened a studio and even photographed the then Korean King Gojong's royal portrait in 1884. He went so far as to Japan to study photography and imported photographic equipment. Ji, however, returned to his life as a brush painter rather than pursuing photography as a career. Similarly, Kim Gyujin (1868-1933), the founder of Cheonyeondang Photo Studio, became the first official photographer at the Korean court although he too returned to calligraphy and painting rather than pursuing photography as a profession. There would be many more pioneering Korean photographers to follow in the early twentieth century who would advance the medium and engage in multiple aspects of the photographic arts.[13] Although a history of Korean photography could be said to have begun with portraiture, it quickly expanded to commemorative and documentary photography as well as radically transforming the way portraits were taken. More significantly, the founding of vernacular Korean newspapers such as the *Dongnip Sinmun* (*The Independent*), *Maeil Sinbo*, *Chosun Ilbo* and *Donga Ilbo* contributed greatly to not only making photographs an everyday sighting for the readers but also introducing new genres such as photo journalism, pictorials, and new photography which created new professions and hobbies related to photography. The arrival of film (*hwaldong sajin*—or moving pictures) and the growing popularity of cinema culture generated and fashioned a fascinating relationship between moving image and still image.

As for film in Korea, the first public showings of moving images of French Pathé and Guamont and American *actualité* films in 1897 are said to mark the beginnings of cinema in Korea.[14] Writing in 1929, Sim Hun, the author of *Mask Dance*, also claimed that the first moving image to be imported to Korea was in 1897 (Kim and Jeong 2001, 26-27). While the year 1897 has not yet proven to be the beginning of cinema in Korea, that is less important than thinking about the various pre-cinematic technology that became available in

to operate a photo studio in Korea (1997, 16).

13. See Bak (2007) for other Korean photographers.

14. Kim Jong-won and Jeong Jungheon (2001) cite 1897 as the first public screening of moving images in Korea thus marking that year as the beginning of cinema in Korea. Yecies and Shim (2011), on the other hand, state that they were not able to confirm this date because they could not locate *The Times* of London article announcing moving images being shown in Korea in 1897. They do, however, give a broader range of dates for the beginning of *hwaldong sajin* from 1893 to 1905 when missionaries from the U.S. and Great Britain visiting and traveling in Korea projected magic lantern slide shows.

Korea which had exposed many Koreans to new ways of seeing. Earlier visual narrative devices such as the patheorama,[15] a small binocular-like device that one looked through to see still images from films or illustrated stories, as well as photographed stagings of tableaux vivants, stereographic photographs, and magic lantern slide shows all forecasted the arrival of moving pictures or films. Stereographic photography was a process where a camera with two lenses photographed a scene from slightly different angles. When the two photographs were placed next to each other and viewed through a stereoscopic viewer, a three-dimensional effect was produced. Likewise, with the magic lantern slide shows, the transition from one slide to the next produced an effect of movement whereby the photographs appeared not only to be moving but more real.

Although the first showing of moving images in Korea cannot be precisely dated, what can be confirmed is that after the June 1903 public film screenings organized by Henry Collbran and Harry Rice Bostwick in the warehouse of the Seoul Electric Company, a culture of film viewing can be said to have soared. One of the first theaters devoted to screening *hwaldong sajin* was the Wongaksa (1908), which according to Sim Hun, served as one of the very few and the most important place for Koreans to watch moving pictures (Yi 2011, 38).[16] It was also around the same time or a little earlier that Wongaksa opened, that *byeonsa*/*benshi* (movie storyteller) also debuted, lending sounds and vocalized effects to the moving images on the screen.

Between 1927 and 1935, the film industry in Korea and elsewhere underwent a major transformation moving from silent films to talking pictures or "talkies." In Japan, the first "talkie" film was made in 1926 while in Korea the first "talkie" film, an adaptation of the beloved *pansori* the *Tale of Chunhyang* was made in 1935. Despite these milestones, the majority of films made during the 1920s and 1930s remained silent in both Japan and Korea. If the majority of films screened in Korea were still silent films during the 1920s, radio broadcasting, which formally began in Korea on 16 February 1927, provided the novelty of sound technology.[17] Print media such as newspapers and magazines actively participated in introducing the radio as a

15. Images could also be projected by inserting the patheorama into a lantern projector.
16. See also note 43 and 44 in Yi Sunjin (2011).
17. Although the first formal broadcast was aired in 1926, the Government-General of Korea (GGK) began testing radio as early as 1924.

new form of civilization to the general population. A number of newspaper and magazine reports noted people being utterly perplexed by the seemingly "magical" wireless box that would transmit sound wondering how people were placed in the small magical boxes. One of the headlines in *Chosun Ilbo* read, "One of the most important intrigues of modern science."[18] This article highlighted the importance of understanding modern science and technology and urged the readers to actively go seek knowledge and information from the radio demonstration to be held the next day. Two days later, the same reporter described the scene in which an enormously successful public demonstration took place where an unexpectedly large crowd had gathered:

> The crowd started to congregate since 6 o'clock. There were suited gentlemen and housewives as well as laborers. The elderly were also present. I felt as though Seoul citizens from all sectors of society were gathered there. The crowd that had assembled could not possibly be all accommodated, so the doors had to be closed shut in order to command some order. The meeting hall was so full of people that it was about to burst. [19]

These demonstrations substantially raised the public's interest and curiosity toward the marvels of sound technology and radio entertainment.

The introduction of photography, film, and radio, hence, presented novel seeing and hearing experiences that were mediated by new technology in Korea. Yet undoubtedly all of these new media rigorously interacted with various other preexisting, and what many would label as "traditional," forms of visual, performative, and literary practices, such as brush paintings, traditional dramas (*pansori*, *talchum*, etc.), and oral and written literatures. What additionally surfaces in this genre is modern Korean fiction's tenuous relationship to "older" but still vibrant storytelling prose such as *yadam* (historical romances) or *seolhwa* (tales) from the Joseon dynasty which after all also depended on sound production, image circulation, and written text just as the writers of the "newer" cinematic novels experimented with various old and new formats, genres, styles, and technologies in working out a literary medium. It is under these historical

18. Choe Eunhui, "Geunse gwahak ui ildae uiui," *Chosun Ilbo*, 17 December 1924.
19. Choe Eunhui, "Jul eomneun jeonhwa e neogs-eul ireun gunjung," *Chosun Ilbo*, 19 December 1924.

contexts, the Korean cinematic novel emerged—around the same time as the professionalization of photography, popularization of film, introduction of radio broadcasting, and maturation of modern literature, especially the novel, in Korea. The coming together of text, sound and (moving) image was placed in motion via cinematic novels setting the stage for the sound films and modernist novels to come. More importantly, however, this partnership signaled the ways in which literature's cinematic turn forged new relationships between literature and new technologies and new media and how this affected the practices of creating literature itself. I contend that the coming together of these new media did not necessarily create discrete media arts, but they were entwined in a symbiotic relationship with each other through which they generated new intermedial reading, viewing, and hearing experiences.

Sim Hun and *Mask Dance*

I will take up Sim Hun 沈熏 (1901-1936), a major early film theorist, critic, novelist, and a cinematic novel writer, and his work *Mask Dance* (*Talchum*) as my object of analysis. Sim Hun was born Sim Taeseop on October 23, 1901, in Seoul to a *yangban* (scholar/aristocrat) family. He participated in the March 1, 1919, Independence Movement for liberation from Japanese colonialism and was briefly imprisoned as a result. Shortly after, Sim left to study abroad in China at Zhejiang University (1920-1923) and during his studies he traveled widely through Beijing and Shanghai. Returning to Korea after his studies, Sim along with An Seokgyeong and Kim Yeongpal (Kim Gijin) formed the New Drama Research Group. And while active in promoting drama and film, an opportunity even arose for Sim to act in the well-received film *Janghanmong* (dir. Yi Gyeongson, 1925) which was based on the 1920 kino-drama (*yeonswaegeuk*) directed by Yi Gise. The film was originally based on Jo Junghwan's *sinsoseol* (new fiction) which was serialized in the *Maeil Sinbo* in 1913.[20] In addition to writing *Mask Dance*, Sim contributed frequently to newspapers and magazines

20. Jo's *sinsoseol*, in turn, was an adaptation of Ozaki Kōyō's novel *Golden Demon*, serialized in the *Yomiuri Sinbun* between January, 1897 and May, 1902. I would like to thank one of the reviewers for pointing out that *Janghanmong* was once randomly called *sinsoseol* but now scholars tend to separate *sinsoseol* from translation or adaptation of Japanese domestic fiction.

as essayist and critic, writing on film and literature. Sim is, however, best known for his novel *Sangnoksu* (Evergreen, 1936), which has been canonized as one of the most important *nongchon gyemong soseol* (rural enlightenment novels). He received a substantial monetary prize for this novel from the *Donga Ilbo*, and he immediately began making plans to turn the novel into a film. Unfortunately Sim died in 1936 from typhoid fever. Although his career was cut short, Sim stands as an important figure in modern Korean literary history as writer and critic and for his successful efforts to engage with both film and writing.

Talchum *(Mask Dance)*

Although Sim's *Mask Dance* was found not to be the first cinematic novel published in Korea,[21] this work still stands as an important one for demarcating the beginnings and popularization of a new genre. Despite the conventional plot and common characterizations of good guy versus bad guy, which might not stray too far from *sinsoseol* or *sinpageuk*, the publication of *Mask Dance* coincided with major milestones in Korean film and literary history. For one, Sim Hun's publication of *Mask Dance* in 1926 signifies an important period in the history of cinema in Korea as well as Korean cinema. For example, it coincided with the November 1926 bidding war among Danseongsa, Umigwan, and Joseon Theater for the showing of *The Black Pirate* starring the sensational movie star Douglas Fairbanks, which demonstrated that the Korean film culture was undergoing significant growth. *Mask Dance*'s publication also coincided with the premiering of what is considered to be the most important and spectacular Korean nationalist film of the twentieth century—Na Un-gyu's *Arirang* on 1 October, 1926.[22] Secondly, the latter half of the 1920s was a

21. In its initial serialization and publication in *Donga Ilbo* on 9 November, 1926, *Mask Dance* announces itself to be the "first *yeonghwa soseol*." See note 7. It appears that Jeon Uhyeong is the first to have located an earlier cinematic novel by Kim Ilyeong. Previous scholarly works on Korean cinematic novels appear to have accepted that Sim's was the first.

22. Both of these films were shown at Danseongsa. The bidding war for *The Black Pirate* also involved the Japanese theater Ogonkan. At the end both Danseongsa and Ogonkan each paid 1,200 won, a figure considered astronomical by standards of that time, for the distribution and exhibition rights. This is just one of many examples which demonstrate how popular watching movies and the culture of cinema had become. See Dong Hoon Kim's "Segregated Cinemas, Intertwined Histories: The Ethnically Segregated Film Cultures in 1920s Korea under Japanese Colonial Rule" (2009).

period in which film all over the world was experiencing a renaissance. Some of the most radical innovations were being introduced. For instance, the montage, introduced and theorized by Sergei Eisenstein, fundamentally changed the ways scenes can be connected (edited) to one another.

As Jeon Heungnam well points out, *Mask Dance* is a rather conventional, melodramatic love story with a typical cast of characters that well falls into the category of popular (*tongsok*) literature (2004, 3). Oh Ilyeong 吳逸泳 is a poor student who has left his *guyeoseong* (traditional woman) wife back home in the countryside. He meets Yi Haegyeong 李惠卿, a daughter of a tenant farmer, who has come to Seoul to study and has become a *sinyeoseong* (new woman). They fall in love, but Im Junsang 林俊相, a rich classmate of Ilyeong's, obstructs their love. Gang Heung-yeol 姜興烈, Ilyeong's rabble-rouser friend from his hometown, miraculously appears and assists in fulfilling Ilyeong and Haegyeong's love and saves Haegyeong from various moments of distress and danger, especially from Junsang, only to have Haegyeong meet an unexpected death from tuberculosis.

Mask Dance was serialized into thirty-four episodes between 9 November and 16 December 1926 in *Donga Ilbo*.[23] The day before its scheduled serialization, a notice was published in the newspaper announcing it as "the first *yeonghwa soseol* in Joseon." It further went on to state that rather than providing illustrations to accompany the novel, this *yeonghwa soseol* will be using photographs and not just any photographs but "*siryeon* 實演 *sajin*"—photographs from actual demonstrations/performances. Not only does this advertisement announce Sim's *Mask Dance* as the first cinematic novel, but it also emphasizes the differences between it and other kinds of serialized novels published in the newspapers of the times by emphatically underscoring the photographs which will be accompanying the cinematic novel.[24]

Indeed, a photograph (sometimes two) accompanies every episode except Episodes 33 and 34. As indicated in the pre-publication announcement, the photographs are of actors and actresses who are acting out and creating scenes from the novel—not unlike the tableaux vivants, known also as "living

23. *Mask Dance* appeared every day of the week except on Mondays.
24. Kim Ilyeong's *Secret Whispers* did not use photographs but illustrations which might have been one of the reasons why it was overlooked.

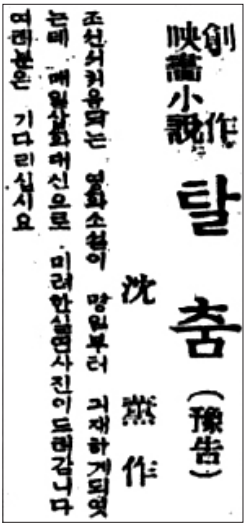

Figure 1.
Advertisement announcing *Mask Dance*

"The first cinematic novel in Joseon will begin its publication tomorrow. Rather than illustrations, beautiful photographs will accompany it every day. Readers, please stay tuned."

pictures," which were very popular during the early and mid-nineteenth century in Europe and the United States as a form of entertainment and play where "well-known works of art or dramatic scenes from history or literature" were imitated in silent, immobile poses (Chapman 1996, 22). Tableaux vivants were, in general, not photographed or captured but rather each scene was held for a brief moment of time after which the poses were dissolved and the figures readied for another scene.[25] In many ways, as Mary Chapman points out, tableaux vivants anticipated cinema (26). Thus, like the tableaux, the photographic practices and photographs in cinematic novels, in particular Sim Hun's *Mask Dance*, anticipate its cinematic future. On the other hand, the use of photographs in *Mask Dance*, which will not be realized as a film in the future although there were some rumors surrounding it, simulate and stand in as "real" images from a moving picture which never existed in the first place. These "still images" suggest that while *Mask Dance* was not a film, in order to become as close to being film-like, it needed to engage in acts of filming, or at least as far as to act out particular scenes however short they might have been. It is still unclear, however, what the sources of the photographs in *Mask Dance* really

25. There are photographic documentations of tableaux vivants especially from the early twentieth-century U.S. Many of these tableaux vivants were part of festivals in which acting out scenes from poetry or drama were often included.

are. It is indeed possible that these are original photographs taken specifically for the new cinematic novel. On the other hand, it is also possible that these photographs are actual still images from various Korean films that were screened earlier or were in production at the time when Sim and his editors at *Donga Ilbo* purchased them. Or another possibility is that they were a combination: some were originally staged and photographed while some were purchased from film companies.

Figure 2. *Mask Dance*, Episode 1 (*Donga Ilbo*, 9 November, 1926)

The efforts to create cinematic qualities through photographing and publishing still images required the careful staging of the mise-en-scene. Here I am referring to the mise-en-scene of *Mask Dance*'s entire layout itself in the newspaper as well as the individual photographs that served as filmic representation. The twenty-plus photographs in *Mask Dance* all vary in their framing and composition. Most likely using the best equipment that was available at that time, these photos show a level of sophistication in camera techniques especially in editing. While it appears that most of the photographs were taken with a prime lens used in taking portraits, the working distance between the talent and the camera is varied in order to create the effects of close-up shots. Lighting was also adjusted to actualize the mood of the scene and to enhance the emotions of the actors. For instance, in Episode 1, a strange, monstrous man sweeps into the chapel where a wedding ceremony is taking place and essentially kidnaps the bride in one swift movement.

Figure 3.
"The monstrous man swept away the bride in his arms and fled." (*Mask Dance*, Episode 1)

The photo shows a man holding a woman in his arms like he is cradling a baby. It appears that this photo used only one light stand coming from the actors' left side while the camera is positioned in the front of the actors. There is a dim glow in the background hovering over the man's head creating a halo effect. Otherwise, the shot is dark except for the bride's white dress in the foreground, the actors' faces which reveal determination on the man and relative calm on the woman, and the white side strip on which the subtitles are displayed. Cut out in the shape of a chapel window, it likely represents the window through which the monstrous man might have jumped in.[26]

Photographs in Sim's *Mask Dance*, thus, function as an index for simulating a film-watching experience. As a matter of fact, progress in the late nineteenth century in photographic technology and printing techniques such as the half-tone engraving process and flashlight powder enabled photography to create a greater sense of authority in lending accuracy. The development of the half-tone reproduction process, for example, permitted the reproduction of images along with texts which enabled a greater number of photographs to be printed in newspapers and the popular press (Harris 1979, 305). Neil Harris

26. Many of the photographs in *Mask Dance* resonate with films that were being screened in Korea, in particular Hollywood action films as well as German Expressionist films. The photograph in Episode 1 is especially interesting because it resembles Robert Weine's 1920 *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. I would like to thank Anne Keijser for this important and interesting reference to Weine.

writes in his influential study of "the half-tone effect," the development of this technology and technique did not just increase the number of photographs appearing in the press but to the readers of the time, the photographs appeared clearer and more real. He writes, the reproduction process "code[d] the original picture in a way… the illusion of seeing an actual scene… was immeasurably enhanced" (307). Harris goes on to say that such images produced a "deeper psychological satisfaction" in readers (307).

Another development in photographic technology that enabled and emphasized photography's potential to simulate reality was the flashlight powder. Although flash powder in its initial years of usage was considered to be dangerous, it soon gave way to possibilities of capturing indoor images in dim light but more importantly as technology that enabled the capturing of subjects/objects as they are. Peter Hales writing about the cultural history of American cities and their photographic representations discusses the American journalist Jacob Riis's works that used the flashlight technology to "illuminate the truth" of impoverished, urban slums of New York City life (Hales 2006, 5). Here, it is less about the ability to faithfully replicate the images and more about the essence of the images as they are in their authentic conditions so the images themselves could "speak the truth." As Hales rightly points out, photography for Riis is not about the authority of the photographer but really transferring the authority to the medium—photography—to serve as proof for reality.[27]

While Harris's and Hales's works address the late nineteenth and early twentieth century American context, both the half-tone engraving and flash light were used in Korean photographic practices in the early twentieth century and certainly evident in the publication of *Mask Dance*.[28] While Sim Hun does

27. To be sure, indexicality of photography does not necessarily refer to the faithful reproduction of the real world as a number of critiques of photography has already amply explained. See for example, John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories* ([1988] 1993) and the collection of essays in Leo Charney and Vanessa R. Schwartz, eds., *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life* (1995), in particular Tom Gunning, "Tracing the Individual Body: Photography, Detectives, Early Cinema and the Body of Modernity," (15-45).

28. See Sin Nakkyun's (1899-1955) multi-volume works on theory, practice and history of photography, which can be considered the beginning of Korean photographic theory, history, and writings on photography education. These include *Lectures on Photography*, *Studies on Photography Materials*, *The Effects of Light*, and *Index of Photography Terms and Materials* published in 1928. Sin and other early Korean photographers and theorists were also discussing photography at multiple levels and not simply as reproduction of life (Bak 2007, 34-36).

not explicitly discuss these developments as contributing to the reasons for his insistence upon using photographs in his cinematic novel, it could strongly be inferred that he was fully aware of their effects.

Figure 4.
"Heung-yeol's furious fist"
(*Mask Dance*, Episode 9)

At the same time, Korean intellectuals as well as the Korean public were also coming to an understanding that photographic and filmic images were not necessarily a true reproduction of reality. Instead, by the early 1930s, film watching had become one of the most popular past times or hobbies (*chwimi*) for Koreans who would go to the cinema to escape reality and for entertainment and enjoyment.[29] Thus, rather than relying on only the mimetic faculties of *siryeon sajin*, what Sim Hun attempts to do is to recreate the screening

29. Going to see a film was becoming a regular activity through which movie viewers could fulfill their desires and fantasies. By the early 1930s there were ten movie theaters in Seoul and a majority of these theaters screened films practically 365 days a year. Based on total ticket sale figures of all the theaters in Seoul during a year, it can be calculated that given the 700,000 Koreans living in Seoul at the time, an adult would see on the average three movies a year. By the second half of the 1930s, writers such as Kim Girim and Yi Sang were readily writing about film-watching experiences in their own literary works as well as stating that one of their hobbies was film watching (Jo 2003, 208).

experience for the readers of the cinematic novel. For this reason, other paratextual and intertextual elements of film populate his cinematic novel.

In *Mask Dance*, the names of the actors in the photograph/film are listed at the end of each episode, validating that they are real actors with roles and not mere nameless passersby on a postcard. In fact, I would guess that Sim Hun intentionally casted real actors and actresses like Na Un-gyu, Nam gung-Un, Ju In-gyu, and Kim Jeongsuk, whose faces the readers were already very familiar with either through watching films or seeing them in other mass publications. In fact, Na Un-gyu had become a national hero and film star just a month earlier, before the serialization of *Mask Dance* had begun, through his film *Arirang*, thus making him an instantly recognizable figure. Similarly, Kim Jeongsuk was the female star of the 1926 film *Janghanmong,* in which she played opposite Sim Hun. These actors' names were prominently listed at the end of each episode indicating their roles as in the "real" film credits at the beginning or end of a film showing.

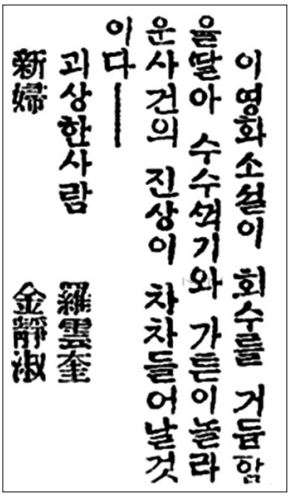

Figure 5.
Strange Man: Na Un-gyu; Bride: Kim Jeongsuk

These activities of using real recognizable actors, staging scenes for the cinematic novel, and providing end credits to reiterate the symbiotic relationship between the cinematic novel and film ultimately aimed to simulate the experience of going to the cinema. Taking into account the paratextual and intertextual details in analyzing the visual layout of *Mask Dance*'s first episode (see Figure 2), we can see the ways in which Sim worked assiduously to bring

together multiple media onto one screen.

Even in the era of silent films, films were hardly silent. A wide range of sounds attempting to intensify the films' realism often accompanied films. For example, orchestras, live sound effects, phonographs, movie tellers, etc., were often employed to lend realism to the projected images. Tom Gunning makes an important claim that many early film innovators had always had "an image of sound" as part of the film technology in which they envisioned "to recreate and recapture the sensual world in several dimensions" (Gunning 2001, 28). Scholars of early film history have also demonstrated that spectators were not only delighted by the combination of sound and image, but also recounted the ways in which spectators believed that sound brought out the reality of the images (Altman 2004, 42). James Lastra (2000) and Miriam Hansen (1991), for example, have persuasively argued in their respective studies of early American cinematic sound that sound artists with their numerous sound effects opened ways for the spectators to imagine and participate more actively in making the connection between image and text. Hansen goes on to further argue that spectators were able to integrate the experiences of film with actual lived experiences. The contributions sound made to film "allowed for locally and culturally specific acts of reception, opening up a margin of participation and unpredictability" (1991, 43). Hansen also states that cinema provided an "alternative public sphere for particular social groups, like immigrants and women, by providing an intersubjective horizon through and against which they could negotiate the specific displacements and discrepancies of their experience" (43-44). What Hansen is describing is an intricate relationship between the sound producers and the spectators in which the sound producers could and would readily adjust sound to meet the desires and expectations of the local audiences. This also suggests that spectators possessed and practiced ample agency through their own participation in the cinematic experience which included seeing, hearing, and imagining.

Sim's cinematic novel *Mask Dance* is undoubtedly a written text but both the text and photographs work to create sounds within while at the same time offering readers the occasion to participate in the sound making. The "dialogue balloons" which appear in many of the photographs serve this function. These resemble dialog bubbles in comics or silent film inter-titles, but they are also wholly different. The text, photographs, and the text engraved within photographs come together to form an intermedia art surface as well as forcing

an intermedial reading practice where reading involves more than just reading the text to oneself in silence but the actual vocalization of the utterances as presented in the balloon. In other words, Sim Hun also imagines his cinematic novel with sound technology embedded. At the center of this sound technology in *Mask Dance* is the presence of the *byeonsa* who squarely stands next to the image-driven text as well as playing the role of a narrator. Inducing oral and aural elements of the cinematic experience, *Mask Dance* essentially commands the readers to imagine themselves as the *byeonsa* rather than a silent reader.[30]

Like the Japanese *benshi*, the *byeonsa* were movie narrators who enlivened the filmic experience with their narrative voice during the silent film era.[31] Without a doubt, the *byeonsa* played an important intermedial role between the audience and the projected film by offering the sound of his voice and story-telling skills especially given that the majority of films shown in Korea were either foreign or/and silent in the 1920s. While for some, the *byeonsa*'s work ended with introducing and summarizing the film's plot, feature films often required the *byeonsa* to act the role of the characters in the film. Increasingly, the *byeonsa*'s role took center stage. It entailed varying his voice to fit the character, demonstrating appropriate affect, and more often than not, it also involved interpreting and explaining the psychological state of the characters.[32] A popular *byeonsa*, therefore, possessed the skills to "eloquently and vividly articulate what was taking place in the film so that the audience could imagine these events were actually taking place."[33]

Sim Hun structures and organizes his *Mask Dance* in a way that he

30. While the *byeonsa* became an important cultural icon in the early twentieth century especially in relation to the growing film culture, he was not unlike the *pansori* singer of tales who was primarily responsible for narrating a story through his storytelling and singing skills.
31. Even after the first Korean sound film ("talkie") became available in 1935, some famous *byeonsa* retained their fame and role for some years where they often transitioned into radio broadcasting, especially radio dramas. Movie tellers were also active part of the cinema culture in Taiwan as well as in the U.S. and Germany in the early years of cinema.
32. See Im Gwontaek's *Janggun ui adeul* (The general's son, 1990) for a scene that recreates early Korean cinema in which a *byeonsa* is narrating/acting out a film.
33. Jo (1997, 194) explains that moviegoers would even choose which movie to see based on who the *byeonsa* would be. The popularity of a film and the profitability of the theater were in large part directly dependent on how popular the *byeonsa* was. The popularity of the *byeonsa* was related to how effective he was in enlivening the film with realism and pleasure. See Jo for more on the influential role *byeonsa* played in early Korean cinematic experience.

tenaciously encourages the readers to become the *byeonsa*. Just as the sound producers in American silent films invited participation on the part of the spectators, Sim summons the readers to a high level of participation. As mentioned above, with the insertion of dialog bubbles, the reader/audience is encouraged to utter the actors' thoughts and to act out the scenes. Moreover, the entire narrative is written in a highly descriptive manner. The narrative pays close attention to details of places and people's actions rather than being abstract, further enabling the reader/audience to the role of the movie teller who functions as the omniscient observer relaying the scenes. Along these lines, I would even venture to say that Sim imagined his cinematic novel to be read out loud in a group setting just as film watching was very much a community experience. Given that literacy in the 1920s was still relatively low, reading still required being read to.[34] Hence, "reading" *Mask Dance* was much more complicated than it appears. By inciting multiple bodily sensory experiences by bringing together multiple interpretive communities generated by new technology, Sim creates a new intermedial art where reading experience contributed toward the oral and aural dimensions.

In envisioning writing a text that involved negotiating in between media, especially between film, photography, and radio, Sim appears to duly recognize that there was a need to transform the way he wrote. In other words, he seems to consider the contested aesthetics of each medium but aspires to resolve it by bringing them into one text, which has ostensibly led to a genre called *yeonghwa soseol*. Many critics have praised the novelty aspect of Sim's cinematic novel while still dismissing it as a lowbrow or popular novel for its action filled, illogical melodrama. In this last section, I would like to closely analyze some of the texts of *Mask Dance* to explore how sound and image surfaced onto the virtual screen (newspaper) through written words—that is the text's visuality and aurality. What I am attempting to do in this section is to show how the narrative and language in Sim's cinematic novel also worked toward the construction of intermedial aesthetics.

Mask Dance reads like a scenario in part because the narrative includes a

34. Cheon Jung-hwan in his *Geundae ui chaek ikgi* (2003) argues that a modern reading public began developing in the 1920s. He claims that in modern Korea reading developed along with other popular culture and new media such as film, radio, and theater.

number of spectacular scenes that teem with unabashed sounds and moving images. One such example can be located in the four scenes that take place in Junsang's villa (Episodes 21-24). Junsang coerces Haegyeong to come to his villa (*byeoljang*) where she essentially becomes his captive. The heartbroken Ilyeong is unable to do anything except share his woes with his friend Heung-yeol, who then decides that it is his duty to rescue Haegyeong. The spectacular cops and robber chase scene and gun shootings happen in this context. Naturally, Heung-yeol comes to Haegyeong's rescue just as Junsang is about to physically assault her. The paranoid and startled Junsang takes a gun and shoots at the large shadowy figure outside the window. Heung-yeol is shot and slumps down (Figures 6 and 7).

Figure 6.
"I got him on the chest in one shot!"
(*Mask Dance*, Episode 21)

Figure 7.
"Bastard, you think I'm dead?"
(*Mask Dance*, Episode 22)

Cops having heard the gunshots rush to Junsang's home looking for Heung-yeol, who had barely escaped through the window. The sounds of whistle blowing and footsteps of ten or more cops rushing to and fro create a climactic scene filled with quick movements and loud sounds generating suspense and tension in the text.

> —*Whistle blowing*—
> The cops on the chase who had heard two shots being fired felt as though their livers had shrunken. They phoned for backup and so now there were about ten or so other cops running toward Junsang's house. A few of them had scaled the wall and were now hovering over Junsang's slumped body. Junsang points to the gun he himself had tossed and moans,
> "Thief! Thief!"
> as if he was talking in his sleep.
> (Sim Hun, *Mask Dance*, Episode 22)

Probably the most spectacular scenes in *Mask Dance* are the two wedding scenes which open Sim's cinematic novel (Episode 1) and again near the end (Episodes 26-29). In the opening wedding scene, the characters are simply designated as "groom," "bride," and "monstrous person," thus further adding to the mysteriousness of these characters and the curiosity that drives the reader to find out who they are and what had led them to this apparently unhappy state. The groom, having blackmailed the bride's parents into marrying her off, is at the chapel feeling somewhat anxious. During the wedding ceremony, a monstrous shadowy figure jumps through the window and hands over a baby to the groom. This monstrous figure then whisks the bride off her feet and literally jumps out of the scene. A great chaos ensues and the first episode ends with the narrator/*byeonsa* asking, "The wedding chapel is filled with pandemonium. What has caused such a storm and who is the strange man who disappeared with the bride?"

> A bell rings from the chapel and the courtyard is packed with cars and rickshaws. We don't know whose wedding it is, but it was being held magnificently. Finally, as the front door gradually opens, the organ plays the wedding march making the guests inside the chapel a bit anxious. The pastor holding his Bible stands solemnly in front of the pulpit decorated with flower vases and wreaths….

> "Is there anyone who opposes this marriage? If so, speak now or forever hold your peace."
>
> The guests were quiet as mice. No one opposed. The pastor felt relieved and was about to conclude the ceremony with a prayer. Many bowed their heads.
>
> It was at this moment! All of a sudden the windows to the right fly open and a strange, large, black shadow appears carrying a child. The chapel is flooded with screams and screeches. A man with hair that is sticking straight up toward heaven and eyes that appear to be burning with flames shoots a vengeful glance at the groom.
>
> Many people are scared out of their wits and some look as though they have lost their mind by the way their eyes rolled about. The monstrous man took large steps toward the groom and tries to hand over the baby he had been carrying.
>
> "Ah—!"
>
> (Sim Hun, *Mask Dance*, Episode 1)

Similar to the villa scene, the sentences are relatively short and much of the text is made up of descriptions and actions. One could imagine the camera panning from the outside to the inside of the chapel where a wedding ceremony is about to take place. The camera moves from the outside and cuts to the inside of the chapel where it moves toward the window resting on the ominous black shadow. Then the camera pans to Heung-yeol's face showing the reader the details of his vengeance. The invited guests are obviously terrified and their diegetic screams and fearful looks fill the mise-en-scene. And while the zoom camera for close-up shots had yet to be developed at that time, the text already foresees it when Sim describes the "man with hair that is sticking straight up toward heaven and eyes that appear to be burning with flames shoots a vengeful glance at the groom."

As this cinematic novel progresses, the truth becomes told, and we discover along the way that Haegyeong and Ilyeong are star-crossed lovers. Junsang has always been in competition with Ilyeong in school and even in love. Junsang, a son of a rich landowner, wields his power to coerce Haegyeong's parents into marrying their daughter. *Mask Dance* returns to the exact same scene in Episode 26-29, even using the same still images. Sim employs a jump-cut technique where the narrative begins at nearly the end and then proceeds forward through what is supposed to be a flashback. Rather than entirely repeating the previous wedding scene episode, however, it is rewritten in the form of a film script

albeit rather simply. But as the author's prologue to the second wedding scene indicates, "There were many things to say before we reached the wedding scene but due to the shortage in still photographs, I could only skip about. In the wedding scene, I will not use technical terminology but will experiment by rewriting the scene in the form of a screenplay" (*Mask Dance*, Episode 26, 6 December, 1926). Sim goes on to explain that he will use black triangles to indicate a shot and white circles to mark a scene or change in a scene (see Figure 7).

Although somewhat choppier than the first wedding scene, the second wedding scene is written as a scenario demarcating shots and clearly directing the movement of the camera, as if they were tracking shots. In the following scene, Junsang's estranged wife appears at the chapel and thrusts their illegitimate son in front of him. Trapped, Junsang desperately attempts to escape.

Figure 8. Episode 28 written as a screenplay with triangle and circle notation (*Donga Ilbo*, 8 December, 1926)

▲Brother-in-law!" shouts a man from that side.
▲Groom: he can't escape through that direction.
▲In front of him stands Heung-yeol.
▲On the left stands his brother-in-law.
▲On the right stands Nansim.
▲Heung-yeol, Nansim, Brother-in-law. They surround the groom, glaring at him as they all slowly close in on him.
▲Groom looks like a mouse that has just eaten some poison and is desperately looking for a way out.
▲Heung-yeol sees this ridiculous sight. He looks up at the sky and lets out a thunderous laugh. Haaaahaaa!

It is apparent that writing has been transformed by popular Hollywood films and, in particular, the action genre of cops and robbers or classic westerns which included non-stop motion, physical stunts, and varying rhythms and pacings. The most impressive transformation is the ways in which prose narrative could be restructured and reformulated into a filmic narrative and vice versa.

Mask Dance is ultimately a tragic melodrama where Haegyeong dies from tuberculosis and Ilyeong mourns her death. If read only at the level of theme and plot, then *Mask Dance* is not much different from the majority of early twentieth-century melodramatic theater or new fiction. However, Sim Hun intentionally experimented with screenwriting, film narrative techniques, and various visual and aural apparatus to create a new genre that resulted in creating a new intermedia art. Unlike mere adaptations, Sim Hun explored the potential of media crossovers, media fusion, and cinematic references where he enabled readers to experience a three-dimensional media art from the texts, sound, and images printed on a two-dimensional surface.

To be sure, the Korean cinematic novel was a minor genre that had an extremely short life span between 1926 and 1939.[35] On the other hand, cinematic novels are a genre that was especially responsive and sensitive to the cultural trends of the era in which film, photography, radio, as well as both the vernacular traditional novel and the modern novel (reading and listening to the vernacular) were all at work together and in competition with each other. Although *Mask Dance* and the Korean *yeonghwa soseol* could be considered as a "minor" and "popular" genre, it serves as an important window for situating the Korean media culture as part of the globally intertwined media culture of the early twentieth century.

The Afterlife of *Mask Dance*

Since its first publication in 1926 and until its slow fading in 1939, fifty-six "*yeonghwa soseol*" have been identified, of which only about half are still extant

35. It might be more accurate to say that cinematic novels published between 1926 and 1939 constitute the first generation cinematic novels. There have been other *yeonghwa soseol* published in the recent century and contemporary examples abound as Internet novels, books, and films become more interactive and engage in transmedia storytelling.

while the other half only their bibliographical information remains.[36] Of these, only three were actually ever produced as films: *Yurang* 流浪 (1928), *Seungbang bigok* 僧房悲曲 (1927), and *Aeryeonsong* 愛戀頌 (1937).[37] Hence, the majority of the cinematic novels lived their life as texts and remain as such rather than becoming projected onto the large screen. As for Sim Hun, after the publication of *Mask Dance*, he left for Japan to study filmmaking for six months. He intended to make a film version of *Mask Dance* and thus even wrote the script for it. However, it is said that due to the high cost of production, he was unable to finish the project. Yet, even before Sim had fully expressed his wishes to adapt his cinematic novel into an actual film, the media carried articles announcing the forthcoming film version of *Mask Dance*. For example, the day after the last episode was published, the 17 December, 1926, issue of *Donga Ilbo* included an article announcing that "Joseon Kinema Production" will begin filming *Mask Dance* right away." It went further stating that Sim Hun will be the screenwriter, Na Un-gyu the director, and Namgung Un the lead male character. A year later, another article announced that the script was now ready and filming would begin soon. In this article, it named Sim Hun as the director. Of course, the project was never completed. But it is apparent that keenness in wanting to see *Mask Dance* as film suggests that the cinematic novel version was quite successful amongst the readers, publishers, and writers.

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36. Jeon Uhyeong has compiled the most recent and comprehensive list of works that has been labeled as "*yeonghwa soseol*" during the colonial period.

37. *Seungbang bigok* (An elegy from the nunnery) by Choe Dokgyeon was serialized in the *Chosun Ilbo* from 10 May to 11 September, 1927 and then was made into a film in 1930. *Aeryeonsong* by Choe Geumdong was serialized between 5 October and 14 December, 1937 in the *Donga Ilbo* and in September, 1939, opened in theaters under the title *Hwanmugok* 幻舞曲.

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Abstract

In recent years, there has been, what some, including W.J.T. Mitchell, have termed, a "visual turn" where our encounters and experiences of the world have become increasingly more visual, even in the literary realm. The recognition that writers and literary works have long been engaged with the visual technologies of language has opened up a field of inquiry that has allowed scholars to further probe the relationship between literary works and the other arts, especially the visual, beyond standard literary criticism to cultural studies. This study is particularly interested in the relationship between literature and photography, film, and radio in early twentieth-century Korea. More specifically, it investigates the genre of *yeonghwa soseol* (cinematic novels) to consider the questions of not only literature's cinematic turn but also the ways in which the newly forged relationship between literature and new technologies and new media affected the practices of creating literature itself. In looking at the emergence of this genre as well as through the analysis of a specific work by Sim Hun, this study hopes to show how the emergence of new print media, film, photography, and radio did not necessarily create discrete media arts but was entwined in a symbiotic relationship with each other and with traditional literary forms through which they generated new reading, viewing, and hearing experiences.

Keywords: intermediality, cinematic novel (*yeonghwa soseol*), Sim Hun, early cinema and photography, new media and technology in early twentieth century

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