

The Evolution of Korean Studies in the Philippines

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Abstract

This paper examines the evolution of Korean Studies in the Republic of the Philippines. Despite a security relationship with the United Nations Command that dates to the earliest days of the Korean War, neither the government nor academic institutions considered establishing Korean Studies programs for nearly half a century. South Korean companies invested heavily in the Philippines and other Southeast Asian nations in the 1990s, leading to the arrival of entrepreneurs, tourists, and retirees. This created a demand for Korean language education to support the increased business activities and employment opportunities that accompanied Korean investment. Although the pattern of South Korean trade and investment activity in the Philippines was similar to its Southeast Asian neighbors, the establishment of Korean Studies in the Philippines occurred later than similar programs in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. Nonetheless, the Korean Studies programs in the Philippines paralleled the development of programs in other Southeast Asian nations with language training classes leading to broader studies of Korean history, economy, politics and culture.

Keywords: Philippines, South Korea, North Korea, Korean Studies, Philippines-Korea relations, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, marriage migration, Korean Wave

Introduction

This paper examines the evolution and current status of Korean Studies in the Republic of the Philippines. Despite a significant military commitment to the Republic of Korea (ROK) since the earliest days of the Korean War—and sustained support to preserving the Armistice—the Philippines didn't begin formal studies of the two Koreas until the 1980s. Given its relatively late start, it isn't surprising that Korean Studies in the Philippines is less developed than programs in the global and regional powers whose interests in the peninsula led to the establishment of formal

studies in Japan, Russia, and the United States (U.S.) in the mid-19th Century.

Accordingly, it may be more appropriate to compare Korean Studies in the Philippines with programs in other Southeast Asian nations. South Korean companies have invested heavily in Southeast Asian nations beginning in the 1990s. In response, Korean Studies programs emerged in these countries to support the increased business activities and employment opportunities that accompanied Korean investment. Although the pattern of South Korean trade and investment activity in the Philippines was similar to its Southeast Asian neighbors, the establishment of Korean Studies in the Philippines occurred later than similar programs in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. Nonetheless, the Korean Studies programs in the Philippines paralleled the development of programs in other Southeast Asian nations with language training classes leading to broader studies of Korean history, economy, politics and culture.

This paper examines the evolution of Korean Studies programs in the Philippines within the framework of programs in global and regional powers. First, it defines Korean Studies and traces the development of programs in the major powers and their allies. In these nations, security interests in the Korean Peninsula led to the establishment of formal Korean Studies Programs that reflected the differing ideologies of the major powers. Second, it examines the growth of Korean Studies programs within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), outlining the economic, political, and social relations with Korea and Koreans that led to the establishment of formal Korean Studies programs in universities across the region. South Korean trade and investment in the 1990s created a demand for Korean language instruction that evolved to a broader study of Korea. Third, the paper analyzes the development and evolution of Korean Studies in the Philippines. Although Philippine universities developed Korean Studies programs later than their peer institutions across the region, the programs in the Philippines largely paralleled the development of those in other ASEAN countries. This section includes an overview of the University of the Philippines Diliman's Asian Center, examining its teaching, research, and extension activities.

The Development and Evolution of Korean Studies

To analyze the status of Korean Studies in the Philippines, it is helpful to understand how programs evolved in other countries. This section

briefly examines the evolution of Korean Studies in Korea and the great powers with interests in the Korea Peninsula. This section begins with an overview of the evolving concept of Korean Studies, along with the author's definition of the term. The objective of this section is to provide a framework for further analysis of the evolution of Korean Studies within Southeast Asian nations with a focus on the Philippines.

Korean Studies

Scholars have proffered several definitions of the term Korean Studies over the past quarter century. Seoul National University Professor Emeritus Yi Tae-jin calls it “an area studies concept.”¹ Writing in *The Journal of Korean Association of the Middle East Studies*, Woo Jung-sun defined Korean Studies as, “the whole study and research of Korea.”² Daniel Bouchez, past president of the Association for Korean Studies in Europe, referred to it as the “scholarship on Korea, an attempt at understanding a country called Korea from a Western position through studying what Korea is, what the characteristics of Korean culture are and so on.”³ Sociologist Kim Keong-il described Korean Studies as “dichotomous tensions between humanities (that is, Korean history, Korean literature, and Korean philosophy) versus the social sciences, the universal versus the particular, and the idiographic versus the nomothetic.”⁴ Encompassing these views, Charles K. Armstrong refers to it as “the academic study of Korea across humanistic and social science disciplines.”⁵

Based on the above definitions, in the Philippine context, the author defines Korean Studies as “belonging to an area studies field that focuses on the study of both North and South Korea, and which is approached in a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary way from the Philippine vantage point.” At the University of the Philippines Diliman's Asian Center, the teaching of Korean Studies comprises the study of both Koreas. It includes several academic disciplines—economics, history, political science, and others—and examines Korea against the Philippine socio-cultural, political and historical backdrop.

Korean Studies in Korea

It is interesting to note that the term Korean Studies did not originate from Korea itself. Rather, it was “conceived and defined by non-Koreans.”⁶ However, the origins of Korean Studies can be traced to the term “Homeland Studies” in Korea in the 1850s.⁷ As the term implies,

Homeland Studies was the study of *Chosun* Korea at a time when Koreans, particularly the court and intellectuals, reflected upon the precarious condition of the dynasty amidst the hungry empires surrounding it.⁸ They began to earnestly question the relevance of their Neo-Confucian traditions and tributary relationship with China. Progressives advocated “enlightenment thought,” and sought to modernize the country like Japan and Western nations, believing this would prevent other powers from encroaching on their territory.

During the Japanese colonial period from 1910 to 1945, the term “*Chosun* Studies” replaced “Homeland Studies.” The term reflected a desire for a distinct identity and a longing for independence. After liberation, the term “National Studies” emerged. Used in the ROK from 1945 to 1960, the term celebrated the return of independence and an aversion to communism.⁹ As a result of the division of peninsula and Cold War competition between communism and capitalism, intellectuals across the globe began to seriously study the two Koreas. In the process, modern Korean Studies emerged. In the ROK, “National Studies” became “Korean Studies.”¹⁰

Korean Studies in the Great Powers

Before the term Korean Studies gained wide usage in the 1960s, the colonial powers with interests in Korea had begun to study the peninsula and its people. Qing China, which had a tributary relationship with Korea since its invasion in 1636, witnessed the arrival of the Americans, Russians, and Japanese in the 1800s. American missionaries studied the country beginning in the late 1800s to support efforts to convert Koreans to Christianity. These missionaries are considered the pioneers of Korean Studies in the U.S.

Russia acquired the Maritime Region from Qing China in 1860. In the process, it acquired a border with Korea. Following the Tumen River, the 17-kilometer border is Russia’s shortest international border. Nonetheless, Russians began publishing accounts of their visits to Korea and interactions with Koreans in newspapers and journals.¹¹ The University of Saint Petersburg became the “cradle of Korean studies,” as diplomats, missionaries, linguists and geographers began publishing their research on Korea.¹²

In Meiji Japan, as historian Hilary Conroy noted, the “*Chosen Mondai*” [The Korea Problem] exercised Japanese minds and emotions through the whole of modern Japan’s formative period, from 1868 to

1910.”¹³ This led to the publication of thousands of newspaper articles and hundreds of books, as reporters and researchers sought to determine Japan’s role on the Korean Peninsula.¹⁴ The study of Korea moved from the academic and journalistic disciplines to administrative and bureaucratic realms during Japan’s colonization of Korea.

The Japanese left the Korean Peninsula at the end of the Second World War, overseen by the XXIV Corps (U.S.) in the southern half of the peninsula and the Soviet 25th Army in the north. The Soviets provided planning and material support to the Korean People’s Army in its invasion of the south. In response, 16 United Nations (UN) member states, including the Philippines, fought under the American-led United Nations Command (UNC), while another five provided humanitarian assistance to the ROK. Despite its historic ties to Korea, Chinese leaders knew very little about North Korea; the People’s Republic of China didn’t have an embassy in Pyongyang at the start of the war. Nonetheless, Premier Zhou En-lai warned, “The Chinese people . . . will not supinely tolerate seeing their neighbours being savagely invaded by the imperialists” before the Chinese People’s Volunteers intervened.¹⁵

Korean Studies During the Cold War

The Korean War and Cold War led both superpowers to examine Korea. In the U.S., Americans with first-hand experiences in South Korea—either as war veterans or members of the Peace Corps—began to research and write about the history, society, culture, politics, and relations between the two Koreas. These individuals led the study of Korea, primarily focusing on the South, in the U.S. from the 1960s until the 1980s.¹⁶

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and its socialist allies in Central and Eastern Europe focused on studying North Korea. The emphasis on North Korea was a result of “political considerations rather than purely academic criteria”¹⁷ in the USSR and its allies. In Poland, for example, “Korean language and literature was taught in the North Korean version by North Korean lecturers.”¹⁸ To these countries, South Korea was viewed as “a puppet state of the United States under an oppressive military/dictatorial regime . . . or a pawn of the Washington-Tokyo-Seoul triangle in defense of capitalism.”¹⁹ As a result, with the exception of Yugoslavia, Korean Studies in Russia and its Communist allies meant North Korean Studies.²⁰ These countries didn’t begin to study South Korea until the end of the Cold War in 1990.

In contrast to their Communist neighbors, the Korean Studies programs in Western European countries focused largely on South Korea. The United Kingdom, France, Greece, Belgium, Luxemburg and the Netherlands committed forces to the UNC during the Korean War; Denmark, Italy, Norway and Sweden contributed humanitarian aid. Other European countries established diplomatic relations with South Korea in the 1950s and 1960s and shared a common alliance with other capitalist countries led by the U.S. Also, South Korean foundations provided financial support to Korean Studies programs and courses in Western Europe.²¹

Countries in West Asia, including Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Iran, also began to take interest in the study of Korea.²² Although Ankara dispatched the Turkish Brigade in the earliest days of the Korean War, Turkey didn't take an interest in South Korea until the 1988 Seoul Olympics that showcased the nation's economic development. The following year, the Turkish government established its Korean Studies at Erciyes University in Kaiper.²³ At the same time, Saudi Arabia recognized South Korea's investment potential.²⁴

Korean Studies in the Post-Cold War Era

South Korea's rapid economic development in the 1980s surprised the world. Seoul successfully hosted the 1988 Summer Olympics. In 1996, South Korea became a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the so-called "Rich Men's Club." These events highlighted the progress the ROK had made since the Korean War. Other countries took notice and sought to understand the "Miracle on the Han." At the same time, the ROK government began funding Korean Studies in programs to support its global economic interests. In South America, "most courses and/or Korean Studies related activities are launched with financial support from the Korean government."²⁵

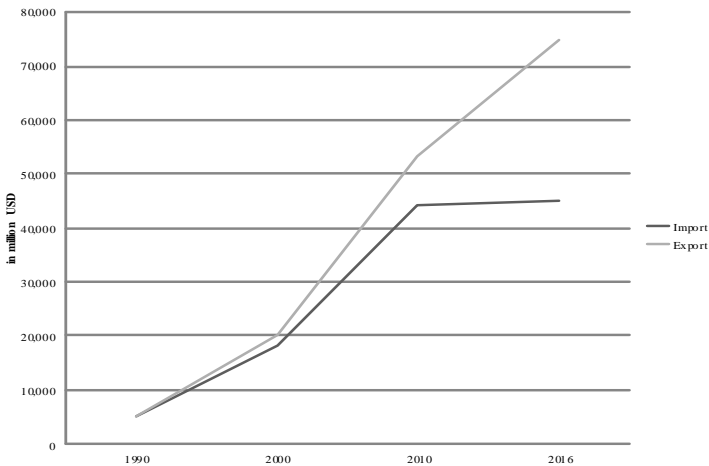
Free from the ideological constraints of the Cold War, Russia and its former socialist allies pursued their economic motives and quickly established diplomatic relations with South Korea. Korean Studies programs in these countries followed suit.²⁶ Professor Kim Sang-hun, a professor in the Department of South Slavic Studies at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, noted, "North Korean Studies, which was established in Eastern Europe through close academic exchanges with North Korea about forty years previous, transformed naturally into South Korean Studies after the 1990s and beyond."²⁷ These socio-cultural and economic

exchanges between the former Soviet Union and its satellites and South Korea have continuously been growing to this day.

Korea and Korean Studies in Southeast Asia

Southeast Asian nations developed a serious interest in South Korea in the first half of the 1980s due to the country's aggressive economic expansion in the region. For resource-poor Korean companies and entrepreneurs, Southeast Asia offered raw materials, natural gas, and oil. Its 700 million people not only represented a large, untapped market, but a source of cheap labor to offset increasing wages at home that occurred as a result of South Korea's democratization during this period. Trade between South Korea and ASEAN nations grew exponentially as shown in Chart 1.

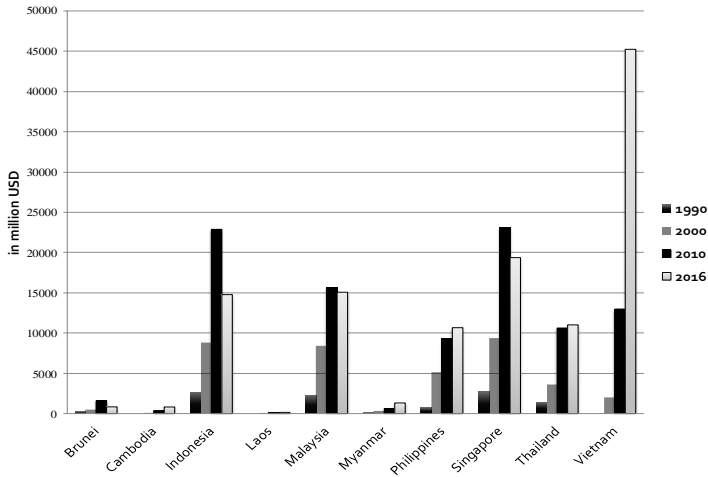
Chart 1: Korea's Trade with ASEAN (1990 to 2016)



Source: 2017 ASEAN-Korea Relations in Figures; data extracted and arranged by the author²⁸

Next to China, ASEAN was South Korea's biggest trading partner in 2017. Chart 2 depicts trade with individual ASEAN countries.

Chart 2: Korea’s Trade with ASEAN by Country (1990 to 2016)



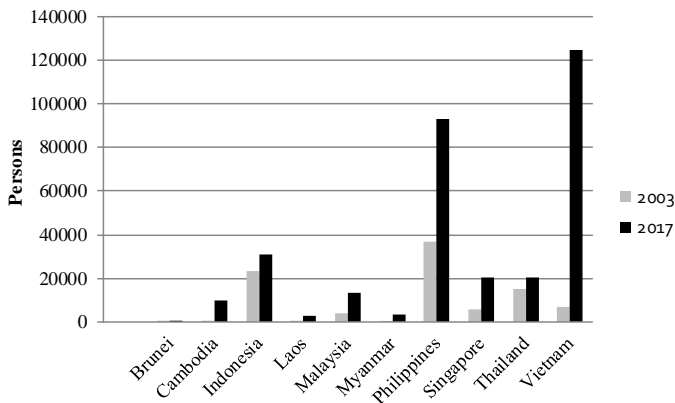
Source: 2017 ASEAN-Korea Relations in Figures; data extracted and arranged by the author.²⁹

Among ASEAN countries, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam had the greatest trade volumes with Korea.

In terms of people-to-people exchanges, the number of Koreans visiting Southeast Asia has increased since the 1980s. Koreans represent the largest group of visitors to Southeast Asia; more than 7.6 million Koreans visited ASEAN countries, accounting for 29 percent of foreign visitors. The 2.3 million citizens of Southeast Asian nations who visited South Korea in 2017 accounted for 18 percent of foreign visitors to the ROK.³⁰

A growing number of South Koreans have chosen to reside in ASEAN nations. The preferred countries include Vietnam, the Philippines and Indonesia. Chart 3 depicts overseas Koreans by country, as well as the change between 2003 and 2017.

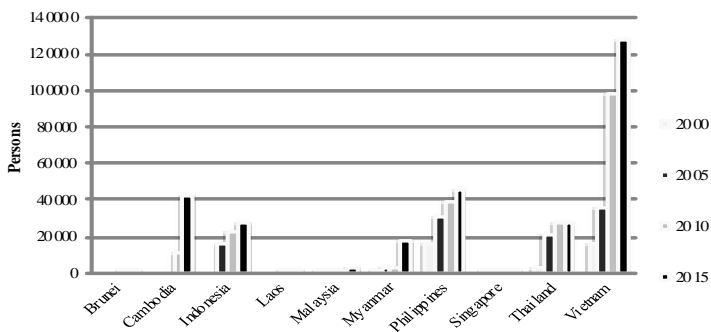
Chart 3: Overseas Koreans living in ASEAN (2003 and 2017)



Source: 2017 ASEAN-Korea Relations in Figures; data extracted and arranged by the author.³¹

The number of ASEAN nationals living in South Korea has increased similarly during a comparable period. Chart 4 depicts ASEAN residents of Korea, as well as the growth in the number of residents since 2000.

Chart 4: ASEAN Nationals Living in Korea (2000 to 2015)



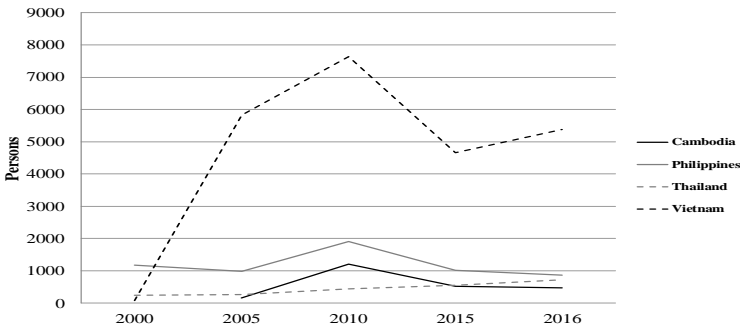
Source: 2017 ASEAN-Korea Relations in Figures; data extracted and arranged by the author.³²

Vietnamese, Filipinos, Cambodians, Thais and Indonesians live in South Korea either as workers or spouses married to ROK nationals. Nearly 200,000 workers from ASEAN countries account for 58 percent of the

foreign labor population; i.e., those holding an E-Visa (non-professional labor).³³

The number of citizens of ASEAN countries married to Koreans and residing in South Korea paralleled the increases in ASEAN nationals living in Korea. Marriage Migration, as measured by the number of F-Visas issued, is shown in Chart 5:

Chart 5: Marriage Migrants to Korea (2000 to 2016)



Source: 2017 ASEAN-Korea Relations in Figures; data extracted and arranged by the author³⁴

Among ASEAN countries, the majority of spouses come from Vietnam, Cambodia, the Philippines, and Thailand.

Korean Studies in Southeast Asia

In response to the growing economic and socio-cultural exchanges between Korea and ASEAN, leading universities in the region developed Korean language education programs. Universities in Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia began offering Korean language courses in the mid-1980s.³⁵ Following the establishment of diplomatic relations with the ROK in 1992, universities in Vietnam began to teach Korean language classes and other courses related to Korea.³⁶ In Myanmar, academic institutions first offered a Diploma course in the Korean language in 1993.³⁷ The Royal University of Phnom Penh began teaching Korean in 2002.³⁸ The National University of Laos did so the following year.³⁹

The ROK government, the Korea Foundation, and the Academy of Korean Studies provided funds to many universities to support the development of broader Korean Studies programs. The *Hallyu* [Korean

Wave], K-Pop, and growing presence of Koreans in the region as a result of tourism, investment, and migration sparked an interest in the language, history, and culture of Korea. The leading universities that introduced Korean language instruction in the 1980s and 1990s now lead the development of more comprehensive Korean Studies programs.

The University of Malaya was the first university to offer Korean Studies within the ASEAN region, creating an interdisciplinary bachelor's degree in the field in the latter half of the 1990s.⁴⁰ The University of Indonesia offered a four-year course in Korean Studies in 2006. Gadjah Madfda University, also in Indonesia, established its four-year degree in Korean Language Studies.⁴¹ Thailand experienced similar growth in Korean Studies programs in its top universities. Prince of Songkla University (Phuket Campus) and Chulalongkorn University developed bachelor's and master's degree programs in Korean Studies.⁴² Additionally, in Thailand there are "twenty-six universities that proposed research on Korean Studies."⁴³ Both Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City and Vietnam National University Hanoi have established Korean Studies and Korean Language Centers.⁴⁴

The evolution of Korean Studies programs within ASEAN parallels the development of programs in Eastern Europe, Southwest Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. Unlike the great powers whose interest in Korea was based on security concerns, economic ties and cultural influences drove the growth of Korean Studies in middle powers. ASEAN's geographic proximity—relative to Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America—enabled greater economic, cultural, and personal exchanges to Korea, fueling an interest in the country. After developing successful Korean language programs, leading universities in Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam established more comprehensive Korean Studies Program. It is within this framework that this paper examines Korean Studies in the Philippines.

The Philippines and Korea

The first encounter between Filipinos and Koreans occurred during the 8th Century, when Chang Bogo arrived in the country to trade with Filipinos. After cultivating then dominating maritime trade between, Silla, Heian Japan, and Tang China, the Sillan admiral's fleet of ships traveled to the Philippines and other Southeast Asian countries.⁴⁵ A millennium would pass before the next contact. In 1837, Father Andrew Kim Dae Gun came to the Philippines to escape the persecution against the kingdom's

small Catholic community. The Filipino faithful named a parish in Lolomboy in honor of Korea's patron saint. In 1935, a few Koreans from Wiju in northern Korea settled in the Philippines.⁴⁶ In short, the early encounters between Filipinos and Koreans were few and far between.

As noted in the introduction, the Philippines sent forces to assist the ROK at the outset of the Korean War. Despite being a fledgling democracy itself, the Philippines formed and dispatched the Philippine Expeditionary Forces to Korea. The "Philippine Military Aid to the United Nations Act, provided the legal basis to dispatch the PEFTOK to fight under the United Nations Command (UNC).⁴⁷ Over 7000 Filipino military and support personnel served in Korea during the three-year conflict. Following the signing of the Armistice Agreement, the Philippines supported the maintenance of the agreement as a member of the UNC Liaison Group. The Philippine government also signed the "Agreement regarding the Status of United Nations Forces in Japan."⁴⁸ Although the Philippines withdrew combat forces from the Korean Peninsula, it maintained accredited liaison groups to the UNC in Korea and UNC-Rear in Japan.⁴⁹

The Korean War also produced the first known Korean marriage migrants to the Philippines. Approximately 30 Filipinos married Korean women during and after the war. They returned to the Philippines with their brides, primarily settling in the metropolitan Manila area.⁵⁰ In the 1970s, the first Korean Presbyterian missionaries arrived; they were soon followed by other Christian denominations.

Korean Business Activities in the Philippines

In the wake of South Korea's economic development, economic exchanges between the two countries increased. During the 1980s, a growing number of Koreans established small-and medium-sized companies in the country. According to data from the Securities and Exchange Commission, there were 12,633 Korean-owned businesses in the Philippines as of 2017. Table 1 depicts the industries in which Korean companies are active:

Table 1: South Korean Business Activities in the Philippines

Industry	Percentage
Wholesale and Retail	20%
Real Estate	8%
Manufacturing	6%
Construction	5%
Business and Management Consultancy	3%
Tour and Travel	3%
Hotels and Restaurants	2%
Private Education	2%

Source: Securities and Exchange Commission; data extracted and computed by the author.⁵¹

The principal wholesale and retail businesses include companies involved in the sale of electronic components, household products, household goods, scrap metals, motor vehicles and construction materials. Real estate refers to selling, buying or renting of properties. Manufacturing activities include making ready-to-wear garments, wood products, plastics, food stuffs and beverages. South Korean manufacturing companies are located primarily in Cavite, a province of Luzon. Construction includes general engineering activities and is focused on residential building. Tour and travel agencies, hotels, and restaurants support the growing number of Korean tourists. Many English language institutes in the metropolitan Manila area cater to Koreans seeking to learn or improve their conversation skills. The remaining companies (51%) includes businesses involved in a wide range of activities such as advertisements, agriculture, amusement and recreation, beauty parlors, dental practices, coal mining, maintenance and repairs.⁵²

Although Korean entrepreneurs operate a wide variety of businesses, they are mostly located on Luzon. These businesses are further concentrated within Metropolitan Manila. Table 2 lists the location of Korean businesses on the main three island groups.

Table 2: Location of Major Korean Industries in the Philippines

Industry	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao
Wholesale and retail	83%	10%	7%
Real estate	54%	9%	37%
Manufacturing	93%	4%	3%
Construction	89%	8%	3%
Business & Management Consultancy	56%	6%	36%
Tour & Travel Agency	78%	20%	2%
Hotels & Restaurants	72%	24%	4%
Private Education	77%	21%	2%
Others	79%	11%	10%

**Source: Securities and Exchange Commission;
data extracted and computed by the author.⁵³**

South Korean business leaders formed business associations to exchange information and advocate for their industries. They established the Overseas Korean Traders Association in 1991 and the Korean Chamber of Commerce in 1995. Separately, members of the Korean community in the Philippines began publishing Korean language newspapers. The *Weekly Korea Post* was first published in 1993, followed by the *Manila Seoul Weekly* a year later. *News Gate* and *Weekly Manila* appeared in 1995 and 2000, respectively.

Socio-Cultural Exchanges with South and North Korea

Economic and socio-cultural exchanges between the Philippines and the ROK have continued to grow. There were 93,093 Koreans living in the Philippines in 2017, nearly three times the number of Koreans who resided in the archipelago in 2003.⁵⁴ Cebu is home to the largest Korean population, with many Koreans retiring there; most Koreans working in the Philippines live in Metropolitan Manila.⁵⁵ In 2017, the ROK Government reported that 56,323 Filipino residents were living in South Korea. Nearly 20 percent (10,875) were spouses of Korean nationals (F-6 visa).⁵⁶ Additionally, 548 Filipinos and Filipinas studied at South Korean colleges and universities in 2016.⁵⁷

The robust relations between the Philippines and the ROK starkly contrast the Philippines' ties with Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Philippines and North Korea established diplomatic relations in 2000 and began trade the following year. Exports to North Korea initially

centered on electronic components. By 2015, the Department of Trade and Industry reported that exports to North Korea had shifted to bananas and women's undergarments. Very few Filipinos have lived and worked in North Korea. In 2005, four Filipinos were reported to have worked for the British Tobacco Company in Pyongyang.⁵⁸ There were seven Filipinos believed to be living and working in North Korea in 2012.⁵⁹ According to the most recent estimates, six Filipinos worked in North Korea in 2017, including staff at the UN World Food Program, an international NGO, and a Singaporean company.⁶⁰

In short, the Philippines relationship with South Korea is similar to that of its ASEAN neighbors. Like Thailand, the Philippines supported the defense of the ROK under the UNC; both nations have served as members of the UNC Liaison Group and UNC Rear since their establishment. Similar to other Southeast Asian countries, the Philippines was the target of investment from South Korea beginning in the 1980s and accelerating in the 2000s. Trade and investment led to increased interactions between Filipinos and Koreans, as the two peoples worked together, settled in one another's country or married. The Korea Wave exposed the next generation of Filipinos to Korea. It is within this framework that this paper examines Korean Studies in the Philippines.

Korean Studies in the Philippines

Professor Lily Ann G. Polo developed the first Korean Studies Program at the Asian Center, University of the Philippines Diliman in the 1980s. After studying at Seoul National University and Ehwa Women's University, she returned to the Asian Center and developed and taught the first courses on Korea.

Universities in the Philippines began offering Korean language courses in the 1990s in the wake of trade and investment that began a decade earlier.⁶¹ At this time, there were no Korean Studies programs in the Philippines. Like other countries, interest in Korea was overshadowed by the popularity of China and Japan studies.⁶² Despite the yeoman's work done by Professor Polo, the former Dean of the University of the Philippines Diliman, Professor Josefa Sanieel noted, "we took Korea for nothing."⁶³

Colleges and universities in the Philippines broadened their course offerings related to Korea in the early 2000s. The Korea Foundation provided some financial support during this period, part of a broader \$1.4 million initiative to advance Korean Studies in Southeast Asia from 1995

to 2007.⁶⁴ Additionally, the foundation provided annual book donations, language training materials, and Korean language education in South Korea. Table 3 summarizes the Korean language and Korean Studies programs in the Philippines:

Table 3: Korean Language and Korean Studies Programs in the Philippines

Academic Institution	Degree/Course	Established
Ateneo de Manila University	Korean language courses and Korea-related courses	2012
Bicol University	Korean language courses	-
Cavite State University	B.S. in International Relations Major in Korean Studies	2006
Far Eastern University	Korean language courses	-
Philippine International College	B.A. in Asian Studies Major in Korean Studies	2008
Philippine Normal University	Korean language courses	2013
University of Asia and the Pacific	Korean language courses	2014
University of the Philippines Diliman	M.A. or Master’s Degree in Asian Studies Major in Korean Studies (Asian Center)	1980s
	Korean language courses (Department of Linguistics)	1990
	Korea-related courses (Center for International Studies)	2010
West Visayas State University	Korean language courses	-

Source: Gilbert Que, “Korean Studies in Philippine Academia;” modified and updated by the author.⁶⁵

Eight of the nine institutions offering Korean Language or Korean Studies programs are in Luzon, with five universities located within the Metropolitan Manila area. Bicol University, Cavite State University, the Philippine International College, and West Visayas State University, are located in Albay, Antipolo, Cavite and Iloilo City, respectively.

The majority of the nine colleges and universities focus on Korean language education. The language programs at the Far Eastern University and Philippine Normal University primarily support students majoring in

tourism. In this respect, the academic institutions in the Philippines are similar to those across Southeast Asia. These universities established Korean language education programs in response to increased business and social contacts with Koreans.

Filipinos' interest in Korean socio-cultural issues has driven the growth in Korean Studies programs in the last decade. The Korea Foundation had provided over \$115,000 to the University of the Philippines Diliman to expand the Korean Studies program as part of the broader program to advance Korean Studies in ASEAN.⁶⁶ However, financial support ended in 2007, and in-country language training opportunities, scholarships for cultural exchanges, and research grants have declined as well.⁶⁷ Thus, the efforts to expand Korean Studies in the Philippines should be viewed as a "home-grown" initiative.

Two universities have offered undergraduate programs in Korean Studies. In 2008, the Philippine International College became the first academic institution in the Philippines to offer a bachelor's degree in Korean Studies. Cavite State University offered a B.A. in Korean Studies beginning in 2006. However, the university discontinued the program in 2011. The University of the Philippines Diliman is the only university to award graduate degrees in Korean Studies.

The Asian Center, University of the Philippines Diliman

Established in 1949, the University of the Philippines Diliman is a public research university located in Quezon City. The university is the flagship campus and administrative seat of the University of the Philippines System. The Korean Studies program operates under the Northeast Asia Department, one of four regional departments within the Asian Center.

As noted, Professor Polo developed the Korean Studies program with limited support from the ROK Government. It is a home-grown initiative to facilitate engagement with Asian counterparts and to correct the Philippine disproportionately Western-oriented education, of which, the University of the Philippines is no exception.⁶⁸ Although Professor Polo established the curricula for the undergraduate and graduate programs, few students pursued Korea-related studies. In the 1990s, only five students majored in Korean Studies.⁶⁹ Despite the limited interest, Professor Polo introduced graduate-level Korean Studies courses. The Asian Center offers a Master of Arts and a Master's Degree, with the former requiring completion of a thesis. From 2000 to 2012, eight students completed

graduate-level Korean Studies; seven wrote theses on Korea-related matters including anthropology, history, politics, and religion.

Despite limited enrollment and external support, the Asian Center didn't waiver in its commitment to Korean Studies. The Asian Center hired the author to continue Professor Polo's work following her retirement, as well as providing money to fund a research associate. In 2016, the University of the Philippines Korea Research Center was established.

The popularity of the Korea Wave encouraged students to specialize in Korea. As Table 4 highlights, the number of graduate students choosing to specialize in Korea has increased significantly in the last seven years:

Table 4: Graduate Enrolment in Northeast Asia Majors

Year	Semester	China	Japan	Korea
2011-2012	First	17	31	8
	Second	17	31	9
2012-2013	First	27	12	8
	Second	25	12	8
2013-2014	First	33	12	11
	Second	35	12	10
2014-2015	First	28	15	11
	Second	28	12	14
2015-2016	First	32	15	14
	Second	37	16	12
2016-2017	First	28	14	13
	Second	32	16	12
2017-2018	First	37	20	15
	Second	38	20	22

**Source: Office of the College Secretary
Asian Center, University of the Philippines Diliman⁷⁰**

Of the 22 currently enrolled students, 16 have expressed interest to write a thesis. Reflecting a broader interest in Korea, students outside of the Asian Center routinely take Korea-related courses. Popular courses that are offered regularly include Socio-Economic Development in Korea, Politics and Governance in Korea, and Society and Culture in Korea.

Research and Extension Services

In addition to teaching, Asian Center faculty are active in research. The author has published articles and presented papers on Filipino migrants in South Korea and the ROK government's official development assistance projects in climate protection in select ASEAN countries. Professor Rolando Talampas presented a paper, "Ninoy Aquino: Romancing the (Korean) War, De-Romancing the Real," which examines Philippines-Korea relations from the perspective of war correspondent Benigno Aquino Jr. in a lecture in March 2017. To encourage students to share their research, the Asian Center has organized conferences, including the 1st Korea Studies Graduate Students' Conference and the Asian Center Graduate Students' Conference in 2017 and 2018, respectively. The Asian Center organized a special talk, "Inside North Korea," which featured three North Korean defectors as discussants. The October 2017 event was the most attended lecture in the history of the center.

The Asian Center forged partnerships with government organizations to include the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Foreign Service Institute, and the Philippine Tourism Promotions Board. In order to promote Korean Studies, the center also works with local universities and international institutions, including the ASEAN-Korea Centre and the Seoul National University Asia Center. The July 2018 ASEAN-Korea Youth Network Workshop, "ASEAN and Korean Youth as Drivers of Global Digitalization," is an example of the center's international outreach. Held in Manila and Seoul, the workshop aimed to deepen the understanding of information and communication technology and innovation, as well as provide network-building opportunities among the participants in Korea and across ASEAN.

Conclusion

Korean Studies in the Philippines has paralleled the growth of similar programs in Southeast Asian countries. Unlike the nations whose security interests—the U.S., Russia, and Japan—led to broad-based government

and private study of Korea in the late 19th Century—the Southeast Asian countries' interest in Korea developed through trade and investment ties a century later. Following a wave of South Korean investment, leading universities in Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia introduced Korean language instruction in the mid-1980s, as did former adversary Vietnam after the establishment of diplomatic relations with the ROK in 1992. Korean Studies programs evolved from language education in each of these countries a decade later, as well as in Cambodia and Laos.

The Philippines contributed forces to defend the ROK during the Korean War and supported the Armistice Agreement as members of the UNC Liaison Group and UNC Rear. Despite a near seven-decade security relationship, neither the government nor academia invested in programs supporting the rigorous study of Korea. In the 1980s, Professor Lily Ann Polo began teaching courses on Korea at the University of the Philippines Diliman. Although these courses became the basis for the first Korean Studies program in the Philippines, few students pursued the study of Korea.

Like its ASEAN neighbors, the Philippines experienced significant investment from South Korea in the 1990s, accompanied by an influx of Korean entrepreneurs, tourists, and retirees. Several colleges and universities responded by establishing Korean language programs. The Korea Wave generated broader interest in Korea among Filipinos, leading to the creation of Korean Studies programs at other universities and increased enrollment within the Asian Center at the University of the Philippines Diliman. It is now one of the center's most popular programs.

Notes:

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² Woo Jung-sun. "What is Korean Studies?" *The Journal of Korean Association of the Middle East Studies (KAMES)*, Volume 21, Number 2 (2000), pp. 1-3.

³ Bouchez (1996: 6)

⁴ Keong-il Kim, *Pioneers of Korean Studies*, (Seoul: Orom Systems, 2004), pp. 13-14.

⁵ Charles K. Armstrong, "Development and Directions of Korean Studies in the United States." *Journal of Contemporary Korean Studies*, 1 (2014), p. 36.

⁶ Un Leang, "Education and Research into Korean Language and Korean Studies: The Case of Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP)," In *8th KoSASA Biennial International Conference, Korean Studies for Southeast Asia, ASEAN FOR KOREA Vol.1*, (Canberra, Australia: Korean Studies Association of Southeast Asia, 2018), p.

⁷ Homeland Studies

⁸ Keong-il Kim, p. X.

⁹ Keong-il Kim, p. 14.

¹⁰ The Korean terms 본국학, 조선학, 국학 and 한국학 are translated as Homeland Studies, Chosun Studies, National Studies, and Korean Studies, respectively.

¹¹ Sung-moo Kho, "Korea Studies in Russia: (1677 – 1930)," *Studia Orientalia*, (Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 1980), pp. 3-4.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

¹³ Hillary Conroy, "Chosen Mondai: The Korea Problem in Meiji Japan," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Volume 100, Number 5 (October 1956), p. 443.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Yu-fan Hao and Zhi-hai Zhai, "China's Decision to Enter the Korean War: History Revisited," *The China Quarterly*, Number 121 (March 1990), pp. 99-102.

¹⁶ Armstrong, 2014.

¹⁷ Youn-cha Shin Chey, "Korean Studies in the Soviet Union: A Historical Perspective," *Korea Journal* 4-14 (1989), p. 4.

¹⁸ Sung-eun Choi, "Korean Studies in Poland," *Journal of Contemporary Korean Studies*, Volume 4, Number 1 (2017), pp. 209-224.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

²⁰ Sang-hun Kim, "Korean Studies in Slovenia: Focusing on the University of Ljubljana," *Journal of Contemporary Korean Studies* 3 (1-2) (2016), pp. 223-241.

²¹ Alexandre Guillemoz, "Korean Studies in Western Europe and the Institutions Involved, 1976-1988," *Korea Journal*, Volume 29, Number 2 (1989), pp. 15-36.

²² Ock Byung, "Korean Studies in Iran." *The Journal of Korean Association of the Middle East Studies (KAMES)* Volume 21, Number 2 (2000), pp.105-118.

²³ Dae-sung Kim, "Korean Studies in Turkey," *The Journal of Korean Association of the Middle East Studies (KAMES)*, Volume 21, Number 2 (2000), pp. 1-13.

²⁴ Kum-sang Moon. 2000. "The Study on the Saudi Arabia's perception of Korea." *The Journal of Korean Association of the Middle East Studies (KAMES)*, Volume 21, Number 2 (2000), pp. 49-56.

²⁵ Won-jung Min, "A Short History of the Ups and Downs of Korean Studies in Latin America: Newcomers Meeting the Challenges," *National Museum of Korean Contemporary Korean Studies*, Volume 2, Number 1 (2015), pp. 181-197.

²⁶ Vladimir Li, 1990. "Korean Studies in the Soviet Union: A Turning Point," *Korea Journal*, (1990), pp. 38-41.

²⁷ Sang-hun Kim, p. 225.

²⁸ ASEAN-Korea Centre, "2017 ASEAN-Korea Relations in Key Figures," Available online at www.asean.korea.org, (Accessed June 3, 2018).

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

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- ³⁵ Hanafi Hussin, Md. Nasrudin Md., Akhir, Asmadi Hassan, Tan Soo Kee, and Geetha Govindasamy, "Korean Studies in Malaysia: Development, Challenges and Future University of Malaya," *International Review of Korean Studies* 13:1 (2016), pp. 131-154, Areeyathanawal, Chutima 2014. "The Present Condition of Korean Studies in Thailand." *Korea Cultural Research* 26:0 (2014), pp. 215-235, (in Korean), and Jang-gyem Kim, "Retrospect and Prospect of Korean Studies in Indonesia: Focusing on the University of Indonesia and the University of Gadjah Mada Cases," *Southeast Asia Research* 25:3 (2016), pp. 109-138. (in Korean).
- ³⁶ Thi Phuong Mai Nguyen, "The Current Status & Strategies for the Future of Korean Studies in Vietnam: The Case of the Faculty of Korean Studies, University of Social Sciences & Humanities, Ho Chi Minh National University, Vietnam," *8th KoSASA Biennial International Conference, Korean Studies for Southeast Asia, ASEAN FOR KOREA Vol.1*, (Canberra, Australia: Korean Studies Association of Southeast Asia, 2018).
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- ⁴¹ Jang-gyem Kim, p. 113.
- ⁴² Chutima.
- ⁴³ Sureerat Bumrungsuk, "Academic Works of Korean Studies in Thailand," *Southeast Asia Research*, Volume 24, Number 3 (2015), pp. 201-224.
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- ⁴⁷ Cesar P. Pobre, *Filipinos in the Korean War*, (Quezon City: Department of National Defense, Philippine Veterans Affairs Office, 2012), p. 114-5.
- ⁴⁸ Agreement regarding the Status of the United Nations Forces in Japan (together with related Protocol and Agreed Official Minutes), February 19, 1954, Treaty Series No. 10

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⁴⁹ GEN Richard G. Stilwell, *Headquarters United Nations Command / United States Forces Korea / Eighth United States Army Annual Historical Report, 1975*, (Yongsan Garrison, ROK: Command Historian Office), p. 18.

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⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ ASEAN-Korea Centre.

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⁶³ Personal interview with Josefa Saniel on January 5, 2018.

⁶⁴ David I. Steinberg, ed. *Korea's Changing Roles in Southeast Asia*. (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2010), p. 11.

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⁶⁷ Lily Ann G Polo, "Korea Studies Curriculum in the UP Asian Center: Development, Challenges and Prospects," *Philippine Korean Studies Symposium Proceedings*, (Quezon City: University of the Philippines. 2012), p. 112.

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⁷⁰ For data from 2000-2011, see Polo, pp. 106-107.