

## In Search of an Ideal *Sijo* (時調) Format in English: An Investigation of Kevin O’Rourke’s English Translations

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This study undertakes a thorough examination of Kevin O’Rourke’s (1939–2020) translations of *sijo* (時調), with a particular emphasis on the form of the traditional Korean poetry. The study has a four-fold purpose. First, it explores O’Rourke’s five-line format for rendering the traditional *sijo* into English. To illustrate distinctive features of this format, I compare his rendition of Hwang Chini’s *sijo* “Tongjit tal kinagin pam ūl” (동짓달 기나긴 밤을) with a number of English versions by other translators. Second, I compare three *sijo* formats (including the five-line format) that O’Rourke utilized at different stages of his career as a translator. This diachronic analysis reveals significant shifts in how O’Rourke felt the traditional *sijo* should be structured in English. Third, the study deals with three potential problems with the five-line format, namely a visual mismatch between the original and its translation, a susceptibility to editing errors, and variability in e-book viewers. To explore these issues, I provide a detailed examination of O’Rourke’s translations of a number of *sijo* poems written by Kim Sujang, Chŏng Ch’ŏl, and Hwang Chini. Finally, I analyze O’Rourke’s rendering of the fourth line of translated *sijo*, which corresponds to the first three syllables of the final *chang* of the original *sijo*. This micro-level analysis demonstrates how and to what extent he adjusted the syllable counts of the fourth lines. I conclude with a brief discussion of the wider implications and limitations of O’Rourke’s translation approach.

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## Introduction

*To read shijo [sijo] is to live and breathe the history and culture of Korea [...] Making the translations has been a labor of love.*<sup>1</sup>

Kevin L. O'Rourke (1939–2020) was an Irish Catholic priest and professor of English literature at Kyung Hee University. He first came to South Korea in 1964 as a newly ordained priest of the Missionary Society of St. Columban. He soon began studying Korean through a non-degree program at Yonsei University and furthered this learning in a degree program at the same institution. He received his master's degree in 1970, and in 1982, he became the first foreign national to earn a PhD in Korean literature from a Korean university.<sup>2</sup> From the late 1980s, he gained a reputation as a translator of Korean literature, receiving a variety of honors and awards such as honorary citizenship of Seoul in 2006 and a presidential citation in 2009. During his life, he frequently expressed his love for Korea in his writings. He called Korea his home<sup>3</sup> and used the pen name "K. O'R." reminiscent of the three-letter abbreviation for Korea.<sup>4</sup>

O'Rourke was one of the world's foremost translators of Korean poetry.<sup>5</sup> He translated over 2,000 poems, which encompassed a variety of *siga* (詩歌, poetry and song) genres including *hyangga* (鄉歌), *hansi* (漢詩), and *sijo* (時調). Of these genres, he was most interested in the *sijo*, a three-line poem that originated in the late 14th or early 15th century.<sup>6</sup> He produced multiple compilations of his *sijo* translations, such as *The Cutting Edge: A Selection of Korean Poetry*, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, and *The Book of Korean Poetry: Chosŏn Dynasty*.

O'Rourke was among the few translators who made a sustained effort to find a format to effectively translate the formal conventions of *sijo*. Comparing his collections of *sijo*, it is clear that he altered the format of his English translations at least two times. For instance, the two collections that earned him translation awards, namely *Tilting the Jar, Spilling the Moon* (1988) and *The Book of Korean Poetry: Chosŏn Dynasty* (2014), demonstrate markedly different formats. He was recognized as a prominent *sijo* translator not only because of the sheer number of

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<sup>1</sup> Kevin O'Rourke, trans., ed., *The Book of Korean Shijo* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002), 21.

<sup>2</sup> Bruce Fulton, review of *My Korea: 40 Years Without a Horsehair Hat* by Kevin O'Rourke, *Acta Koreana* 20, no. 2 (2017): 625–27.

<sup>3</sup> Kevin O'Rourke, *My Korea: Forty Years Without a Horsehair Hat* (Folkestone: Renaissance Books, 2013), xxi.

<sup>4</sup> O'Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, vii.

<sup>5</sup> Bruce Fulton, "In Memoriam: Professor Kevin O'Rourke (1939–2020)," *Acta Koreana* 23, no. 2 (2020): 171–72; Bruce Fulton, "Kevin O'Rourke: A Remembrance," *Azalea: Journal of Korean Literature & Culture* 14 (2021): 359–62.

<sup>6</sup> The *sijo* as a song falls outside the scope of this study.

*sijo* poems he translated, but also because he was committed to devising a better format for *sijo* translation.

Regrettably, O'Rourke and his translations have not received appropriate recognition in academic circles. Most research on his translations touches only briefly on the three-*chang* (三章) structure, even though a variety of structural elements characterize his translations.<sup>7</sup> In the realm of poetry, it is widely acknowledged that form embodies meaning and thus makes the poem more memorable.<sup>8</sup> In *sijo* translation, poetic form is all the more significant in that the *sijo* has distinctive structural aesthetics that are uncommon in Western poetry.<sup>9</sup> Although *sijo* poetry is being studied in American schools and universities, there is no general consensus about the structure of the traditional *sijo* in English.<sup>10</sup>

Against this backdrop, the present study examines the structural features of O'Rourke's *sijo* translations and explores the implications and constraints of his approach to translating the traditional *sijo*. Specifically, I illustrate the structural features that set O'Rourke apart from other translators and compare his translations to identify changes in his view of how the traditional *sijo* should be structured in English. The central focus of my analysis is O'Rourke's five-line format—the one he believed would “bring the uniqueness of the *sijo* home to the reader”<sup>11</sup>—and the fourth lines (the first *ku* of the final *chang*) of his translations in the five-line format.

## O'Rourke's Collections of *Sijo* Poems

O'Rourke's first compilation of *sijo* poems was *The Cutting Edge: A Selection of Korean Poetry* (1982). This volume contains 53 *sijo* poems (alongside 49 modern poems), representing his early attempts at translating *sijo* literature. His second compilation was *The Sijo Tradition* (1987), one of the Korean-English translations listed in the UNESCO Collection of Representative Works.<sup>12</sup> This volume is, in a strict sense, his inaugural collection of *sijo*, comprising 378 poems in the conventional three-line format. However, the most extensive and valuable

<sup>7</sup> Kang Hyejŏng, “Segye ūi si *World Poetry*’ (Norton, 1997) sojae Han’guk kojŏn si ūi chonjae yangsang koch’al,” *Ōmun nonjip* 78 (2016): 65–97; Pak Chinim, “Ko sijo yŏngyŏk yangsang koch’al: Kang Yonghŭl, K’ebin Oruk, Teibidŭ Maekk’en pŏnyŏk bon ūl chungsim ūro,” *Pigyo Han’gukhak* 28, no. 3 (2020): 279–302.

<sup>8</sup> Clare Sullivan, “Poetry,” in *The Routledge Handbook of Literary Translation*, ed. Kelly Washbourne and Ben Van Wyke (London: Routledge, 2019), 269; James Underhill, *Voice and Versification in Translating Poems* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2016), 41.

<sup>9</sup> David McCann, “The Structure of the Korean *Sijo*,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 36 (1976): 114–34.

<sup>10</sup> Kim Namkyu, “Hyŏndae sijo, K-munhak ūrosŏ ūi kanŭngsŏng,” *Han’guk kŏndae munbak yŏn’gu* 22, no. 1 (2021): 45–76; Pak Miyŏng, “Miju palgan ch’angjak yŏngŏ sijo jip e nat’anan sijo ūi hyŏngsik kwa kŭ ūimi—*Around the Tree of Light, Modern Sijo, Urban Temple* ūl chungsim ūro,” *Sijobak nonch’ong* 34 (2011): 71–110; Yŏm Ŭnyŏl, “Segyehwa sidae, sijo ūi koyusŏng kwa pop’yŏnsŏng t’amsaek: Hyŏngsik nonŭi ro pon sijo ūi maeryŏk,” *Uri mal kŭl* 87 (2020): 357–89.

<sup>11</sup> O'Rourke, *The Book of Korean Sijo*, 10.

<sup>12</sup> There are 22 entries for Korean-English translations in the UNESCO Collection of Representative Works (<http://www.unesco.org/culture/lit/rep/>).

of O'Rourke's *sijo* collections is *The Book of Korean Shijo* (2002). Published by the Harvard University Asia Center, this volume contains 611 poems translated in his signature five-line format—the first two lines for the opening *chang* (初章), the third line for the middle *chang* (中章), and the last two lines for the final *chang* (終章). In addition to these three volumes, there are smaller, pocket-sized collections such as *Mirrored Minds: A Thousand Years of Korean Verse* (2001), *Shijo Rhythms* (2001), and *A Shijo Poet at the Court of King Sonjo: The Pine River Songs* (2004).

O'Rourke's translations appear in various formats across different collections. In *The Shijo Tradition*, for example, Hwang Chini's *sijo* "I'll cut a piece from the waist of this interminable eleventh moon night ..." (동짓달 지나긴 밤을 한 허리를 베풀네어 ...) is presented in a three-line format, while in *The Book of Korean Shijo*, the same poem is exhibited in a five-line format. As I will discuss later in this article, O'Rourke concluded from his studies that the provenance and structure of the *sijo* was most effectively represented in the five-line format.

O'Rourke's five-line format has received mixed reviews. In a polemical review of *The Book of Korean Shijo*, Peter H. Lee sharply criticizes it and concludes that "the five-line versus three-line debate is presently moot until more materials have been adduced and more studies carried out in traditional music."<sup>13</sup> Likewise, in an article on methods for translating the traditional *sijo*, Pak Chinim questions the validity of the five-line format.<sup>14</sup> She claims that O'Rourke's reduction of the middle *chang* to a single line testifies that he (mis)interpreted the middle *chang* as a repetition of the opening *chang*. However, in a subsequent article published 13 years later, Pak reverses her previous stance,<sup>15</sup> claiming that the five-line format effectively captures the musical qualities of the *sijo* and visually emphasizes the relative importance of the final *chang*. Kang Hyejŏng and Yi Sangbin examine changes in O'Rourke's view of how the traditional *sijo* should be structured in English.<sup>16</sup> However, Kang does not provide a detailed explanation of *sijo* structure, only briefly mentioning that O'Rourke deleted titles and inserted indents. In contrast, Yi closely examines issues concerning *sijo* structure by comparing O'Rourke's rendition of "Ŏbu sasi sa" (漁父四時詞, The fisherman's calendar), a 40-verse *sijo* cycle by Yun Sŏndo, with the English translations of the same original by several translators including Peter Hyun, Peter H. Lee, and David McCann. Yi expounds on the division of the three *chang*, focusing on the onomatopoeic expression "*Chiguk ch'ong chiguk ch'ong ōsawa*" in the middle *chang*.

Studies on O'Rourke's translations of *sijo* have a number of limitations. In the first place,

<sup>13</sup> Peter H. Lee, review of *The Book of Korean Shijo* by Kevin O'Rourke, *The Journal of Asian Studies* 62, no. 1 (2003): 303. O'Rourke responded to this review with some quite clever and sharp retorts. See Kevin O'Rourke, "Kevin O'Rourke Responds to Peter H. Lee's Review of *The Book of Korean Shijo*," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 62, no. 4 (2003): 1196–98.

<sup>14</sup> Pak Chinim, "Han'guk munhak ūi segyehwa wa pŏnyŏk ūi munje: Sijo ūi yŏngŏ pŏnyŏk ūl chungsim ūro," *Pŏnyŏkbak yŏn'gu* 8, no. 1 (2007): 163–64.

<sup>15</sup> Pak Chinim, "Ko sijo yŏngyŏk yangsang koch'al," 279–302.

<sup>16</sup> Kang, "Segye ūi si *World Poetry*' (Norton, 1997) sojae Han'guk kojŏn si ūi chonjae yangsang koch'al," 86; Yi Sangbin, "K'ebin Orok ūi sijo pŏnyŏk ūi kujo chŏk t'ŭkching—Yun Sŏndo ūi 'Ŏbu sasi sa' rŭl kiban ūro," *T'ongbŏnyŏkbak yŏn'gu* 26, no. 2 (2022): 109–32.

they only examine excerpts from a select few of his translations, neglecting to adequately consider the substantial modifications he made to his format. Another issue is the scant discussion of why he invented the five-line format and what revisions he made at a certain point in time. These gaps in the previous research are perplexing, given his long-term commitment to making traditional Korean poetry more accessible to overseas readers. In this regard, I aim to reveal O'Rourke's perspective on *sijo* translation, especially with regard to his five-line format, and to initiate a conversation about one of the most creative ways in which the traditional *sijo* has been translated.

### ***Sijo* Texts Analyzed in This Study**

This study examines a number of translations from O'Rourke's collections, especially *The Cutting Edge*, *The Sijo Tradition*, and *The Book of Korean Shijo*. In the following sections, each discussion commences with a *sijo* poem from *The Book of Korean Shijo* (2002), one of the most extensive collections of *sijo* poems translated in the five-line format. To provide a better understanding of the five-line format, I also briefly examine English translations by other prominent *sijo* translators such as Richard Rutt.

The original *sijo* texts used in this study come from Chŏng Pyŏnguk's (1966) *Sijo munhak sajŏn* (時調文學事典, Dictionary of *sijo* literature). This anthology comprises 2,376 *sijo* poems and includes numerous annotations regarding difficult *hancha* (漢字) characters and classical allusions. In his preface to *The Book of Korean Shijo*, O'Rourke cites *Sijo munhak sajŏn* as the primary source of his translations and one of the most valuable resources for those studying the *sijo*.<sup>17</sup>

In this article, I present *sijo* poems in the same format as in the source material. I have taken great care to preserve not only the macro-structures (especially layouts) of the poems but also the micro-structural properties such as the size of indents and line breaks (enjambments). Representing these structural features as they appear in the source material is crucial since they can affect how the translated *sijo* are perceived.

### **A Comparison of *Sijo* Translations by O'Rourke and Other Translators**

The traditional *sijo*, especially *pyŏng sijo* (ordinary *sijo*), has quite a fixed structure. It is written in three *chang* (章), each of which consists of four rhythmic segments called *ŭmbo* (音步). The *ŭmbo* largely corresponds to *ku* (句)—the grammatical divisions of the *chang*. The *ku* is normally three or four syllables in length; in the final *chang*, however, the first *ku* is fixed at three syllables and the second *ku* at five or more. The final *chang* has a different relationship

<sup>17</sup> O'Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, 23.



to the rest of the *sijo*. It is usually a twist in thematic development, introducing “a different emotional atmosphere or a slight turning of the attention.”<sup>18</sup>

The structure of *sijo* translated into English, however, varies from one translator to another. O’Rourke’s translations are distinctive in that they comprise five lines as opposed to the conventional three or six lines.<sup>19</sup> The subsequent analysis compares O’Rourke’s translation of a well-known *sijo* composed by Hwang Chini, a sixteenth-century *kisaeng* poet, with four alternative translations of the same original.

### An untitled *sijo* by Hwang Chini<sup>20</sup>

冬至 ㅅ달 기나긴 밤을 한 허리를 버혀내여  
春風 니불아래 서리서리 너헛다가  
어론님 오신날 밤이여든 구뵈구뵈 꺾리라

### In-Söb Zöng’s translation<sup>21</sup>

THE LONG, LONG NIGHT  
OF THE ELEVENTH MONTH

The long, long night of the Eleventh Month!

I will cut its waist in two.

Putting the half confusedly

Under the quilt of the spring wind,

So that, the night he comes back,

I will unfold it for him.

### Richard Rutt’s translation<sup>22</sup>

I will break in two the long strong back  
of this long midwinter night,

Roll it up and put it away  
under the springtime coverlet.

And the night that my loved one comes back again  
I will unroll it to lengthen the time.

<sup>18</sup> Richard Rutt, “*Sijo* Verse in Korea,” *Korea Journal* 10, no. 6 (1970): 5.

<sup>19</sup> Kevin O’Rourke, trans., *Mirrored Minds: A Thousand Years of Korean Verse* (Söul: Eastward Publication, 2001); O’Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*; Kevin O’Rourke, trans., *The Book of Korean Poetry: Chosön Dynasty* (Singapore: Stallion Press, 2014).

<sup>20</sup> Chöng Pyönguk, *Sijo munbak sajön* (Söul: Sin’gu Munhwasa, 1966), 165.

<sup>21</sup> In-Söb Zöng, trans., *A Pageant of Korean Poetry* (Söul: Eomun-Gag, 1963), 22.

<sup>22</sup> Richard Rutt, ed., trans., *The Bamboo Grove: An Introduction to Sijo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), no. 77. There are no page numbers in Rutt’s collection. Instead, each poem has an identification number.

**Goeng Pil Kim's translation**<sup>23</sup>

Winter moon, your longest night, I shall snip out your long cold waist.  
 Spring breeze flee beneath my quilt, put round and round, I keep your warmth!  
 So the day my old love comes chilled, I spread warm folds though the night.

**James Hoyt's translation**<sup>24</sup>

I would cut in twain the long November night,  
 Wind it up and tuck it under my genial spring coverlet.  
 Then the day my dear lover comes to me, that night,  
 I'd unwind it back again.

**Kevin O'Rourke's translation**<sup>25</sup>

I'll cut a piece from the waist  
 of this interminable eleventh moon night,  
 and wind it in coils beneath these bed covers, warm and fragrant as the spring breeze,  
 coil by coil  
 to unwind it the night my lover returns.

Zōng's translation, as presented above, occupies a middle ground between the *sijo* and conventional English poetry. On one hand, it resembles British/American poetry, in the sense that there is a title (in this case, the same as the first line)<sup>26</sup> and each line begins with a capital letter. On the other hand, it retains two distinctive features of the *sijo*. First, in lines 2, 4, and 6, there are indents that indicate the division of the three *chang*. Second, there is a clear separation (a blank line) between the last two lines and the remainder of the poem. The second "stanza" here corresponds to the final *chang*, usually interpreted as an "emphatic syntactic division" of the *sijo*.<sup>27</sup>

In contrast, Rutt's translation is in a balanced three-part format. Unlike in Zōng's translation, the line that corresponds to the final *chang* is not given extra visual emphasis. Instead, the three *chang* are equally highlighted by the run-on lines that feature noticeable indentation and de-capitalization. Other *sijo* translators such as Peter H. Lee and David McCann also use this format.

Kim's translation adheres even more strictly to the division of the three *chang*. He presents the poem in a three-line format with no enjambments, presumably aiming for a higher level

<sup>23</sup> Goeng Pil Kim, *A Lone Flute Resounds: Korean Classical Sijo Poetry Translated into English* (USA: Guhbooksun Publishing, 2015), 3. The author's name in this collection is "Kim Goeng Pil." There are no details about the translator.

<sup>24</sup> James Hoyt, *Soaring Phoenixes and Prancing Dragons: A Historical Survey of Korean Classical Literature* (Seoul: Jimoondang International, 2000), 251.

<sup>25</sup> O'Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, 55.

<sup>26</sup> Because there is no title in the original *sijo*, translators such as Rutt, *The Bamboo Grove* and O'Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo* use the first lines of the poems to index the *sijo* in their anthologies.

<sup>27</sup> Peter H. Lee, ed., *An Anthology of Traditional Korean Literature* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2017), 51.

of formal equivalence.<sup>28</sup> However, this equivalence appears to be easily achievable, given that all the poems in Kim's collection are displayed in landscape orientation.<sup>29</sup> He seems particularly attentive to maintaining the syntactic architecture of the original *sijo*. In the above excerpt, he even maintains the order of phrases in each line.<sup>30</sup>

In stark contrast, Hoyt's translation is a loosely structured poem. It appears as a four-line format where only the final *chang* is rendered in two lines. This four-line format seems to be arbitrary, given the inconsistent line counts of *pyŏng sijo* in Hoyt's collection.<sup>31</sup>

O'Rourke's translation also demonstrates structural incongruity. It is an unusual cinquain and, on the face of it, does not conform to the three-*chang* principle. The five lines of the poem vary in length and seem out of balance. The third line is abnormally long, and the fourth line is excessively short. The syllable count of each line is 7-12-19-3-11, an unusual combination of lines for an English-language poem. What makes this translation even more distinct is that, unlike in Rutt's translation, there are no stylistic or grammatical devices to visually depict the division of the three *chang*.

O'Rourke's five-line format reveals implicit aspects of the *sijo* structure. It reflects the origin of the *sijo* in the sense that it derives from the five-part structure of *kagok ch'ang* (歌曲唱) to which *sijo* were originally sung.<sup>32</sup> In his five-line translations, the first and second lines represent the opening *chang*, the third line the middle *chang*, and the last two lines the final *chang*. Given this *chang* division, O'Rourke's translation above is quite stable in terms of syllable count (19-19-14). He maintains that his five-line format gives the *sijo* an exotic feel—"something uniquely Korean" that is lacking in other *sijo* translations, especially those with "a pretty six-line [three-line] lyric."<sup>33</sup>

Another feature of O'Rourke's translations is the relative stability of syllabic length in the fourth line. In his five-line translations, the fourth line corresponds to the first three-syllable *ku* of the final *chang*, although it does not always reflect the meaning of the first *ku*. In the above example, the fourth line "coil by coil" is an ideal fit because it consists of three single-syllable words (three words *and* three syllables). As illustrated later, O'Rourke took great care to preserve in his translations the truncated feel of the first *ku* of the final *chang*. He rightly stated that the first *ku* of the final *chang* is so embedded in the mind of Korean

<sup>28</sup> Formal equivalence is another expression for literal translation in which the translator reproduces the form of the original as closely as possible. Eugene Nida and Charles Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

<sup>29</sup> Translators such as Chong-wha Chung retain the three-line structure of the original *sijo* in their translations. Their translations contain run-on lines in portrait orientation. See Chong-wha Chung, ed., *Korean Classical Literature: An Anthology* (New York: Kegan Paul International, 1989), 64–94.

<sup>30</sup> "[T]he poetic imagery and meanings of words [in my translations] were sequenced as closely as possible in English to keep the dramatic progression and pacing as the respective poet originally intended to inspire." Geong Pil Kim, *A Lone Flute Resounds*, back cover.

<sup>31</sup> In Hoyt's collection, *pyŏng sijo* are presented in four, five, or seven lines.

<sup>32</sup> O'Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, 1–24. See also Jaemin Park and Jinhee Kim, "The Origin of the *Sijo* Poetic Form in Relation to Old Korean Music Scores," *Acta Koreana* 20, no. 1 (2017): 221–47.

<sup>33</sup> O'Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, 9–10; Kevin O'Rourke, "Reflections on Translating Classical Korean Poetry," *Acta Koreana* 11, no. 1 (2008): 76.



people that it is “virtually unassailable.”<sup>34</sup>

To sum up, different translators have adopted different formats to translate the traditional *sijo* into English. O’Rourke devised a five-line format as he believed it best reflected the origin of the *sijo*’s macro-structure. Although this format remains under debate and requires further elaboration, it is undoubtedly one of the few formats that accentuates otherness (in O’Rourke’s view, “Koreanness”) in *sijo* translation. One of the most distinctive features of the format is the truncated fourth line that corresponds to the first *ku* of the final *chang*.

### Major Changes in O’Rourke’s *Sijo* Format

Early in his career, O’Rourke did not use the five-line format. In the 1970s and 1980s, he had different views of what the traditional *sijo* should look like in English. Below is an example of how his *sijo* format changed over time.

#### An untitled *sasöl sijo* by Kim Sujang<sup>35</sup>

갓나희들이 여러 層이오래  
 松骨[鶻]매도 갖고 줄에 안즌 저비도 갖고 百花  
 園裡에 두루미도 갖고 綠水波瀾에 비오  
 리도 갖고 땅에 찍 안즌 쇼로개도 갖고  
 석은 등걸에 부형이도 갖데  
 그러도 다 各各 님의 사랑인이 皆一色인가  
 하노라

#### O’Rourke’s translation (A)<sup>36</sup>

*The Beauty of Being Loved*

Ah, the variety of the female species!  
 Falcons,  
 Swallows perched on a line,  
 Herons on a hundred flowers,  
 Ducks on blue waters, great and small,  
 Hawks sitting quietly on the ground,  
 Owls in rotten trees.

But all have this in common: they are beauties,  
 For all are loved by men.

<sup>34</sup> O’Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, 10; O’Rourke, “Reflections on Translating Classical Korean Poetry,” 75.

<sup>35</sup> Chŏng Pyŏnguk, *Sijo munbak sajŏn*, 21.

<sup>36</sup> Kevin O’Rourke, trans., *The Cutting Edge: A Selection of Korean Poetry* (Sŏul: Yonsei University Press, 1982), 30.

**O'Rourke's translation (B)**<sup>37</sup>

Ah, the variety  
of the female species!  
Falcons,  
swallows perched on a line,  
herons on a hundred flowers,  
ducks on blue waters, great and small,  
hawks sitting quietly on the ground,  
owls in rotten trees.  
But all have this in common; they are beauties,  
for all are loved by men.

**O'Rourke's translation (C)**<sup>38</sup>

Ah, the variety  
of the female species!  
Falcons; swallows perched on a line; herons on a hundred flowers;  
ducks on blue waters, great and small; hawks sitting quietly  
on the ground; owls in rotten trees.  
But all are beauties,  
for all are loved by men.

The three translations above demonstrate how O'Rourke revised his own translation of a *sasöl sijo* (an expanded *sijo*) written by Kim Sujang (1690–?), one of the most renowned *sijo* poets of the 18th century. Translation A represents O'Rourke's initial translation; translations B and C are his revised versions of translations A and B, respectively. While these translations are much the same in lexicogrammar, they differ immensely in their internal structure.

Translation A, one of the eight *sasöl sijo* in *The Cutting Edge*, differs from other contemporary translations of *sijo* in three significant ways. First, it includes a title, something that is not present in the original poem. However, unlike the title of Zǒng's translation discussed earlier, this title is not the first line of the translated *sijo*; rather, O'Rourke created the title based on the semantic content of the entire poem. Second, the lines corresponding to the final *chang* are detached from the rest of the poem, as in Zǒng's translation, yet there is no clear boundary between the opening and middle *chang*. This suggests that O'Rourke placed more emphasis on the dominant position of the final *chang* than on an equal division of the three *chang*. However, the two separated lines appear to be more of a Western-style stanza rather than a *chang*. Third, as a general rule, each line begins with a capital letter without an indent. As a result, one reads the translation on a line-by-line basis, even though end-stopping occurs in line 1 (the opening *chang*), line 7 (the last line of the middle *chang*), and line 9 (the latter part

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<sup>37</sup> Kevin O'Rourke, trans., ed., *The Sijo Tradition* (Söul: Jung Eum Sa, 1987), 126.

<sup>38</sup> O'Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, 130.

of the final *chang*).

There are, however, some inconsistencies in the division of *chang* in *The Cutting Edge*. For instance, another *sasŏl sijo* by Kim Sujang<sup>39</sup> is a twelve-line poem with no blank line before the final *chang*. Additionally, two *pyŏng sijo*<sup>40</sup> have a four-line format, as seen in Hoyt's translation, although most of the *pyŏng sijo* in the collection have a six-line structure with no indent.

Translation B, an excerpt from *The Sijo Tradition*, more closely follows the traditional structure of the *sijo*. It has a balanced three-*chang* structure in which there is no blank line between the final *chang* and the rest of the poem. This poem is characterized by substantial indents, which make it easy to recognize each *chang*. Notably, the indents are so large that in the middle *chang*, the run-on lines do not overlap with the opening line "Falcons." In terms of appearance, translation B is much the same as Rutt's translation. However, O'Rourke does not use capitalization to mark the beginning of each *chang* in this poem or in any of the others in *The Sijo Tradition*. The following example illustrates this:

I'll cut a piece out of this  
                   interminable winter night  
 and wind it in coils beneath these bedcovers,  
                   warm and fragrant as the spring breeze,  
 coil by coil to unwind it  
                   the night my love returns.<sup>41</sup>

Here, O'Rourke de-capitalizes the first letters of the middle and final *chang*, giving the poem a more prose-like feel. This micro-level strategy is unusual in that many *sijo* translators, especially those using a three-line format, capitalize the first letter of each *chang*.<sup>42</sup>

Translation C differs greatly from B in three areas. First, O'Rourke divides the opening *chang* into two lines. He then merges the middle *chang* into a single line that comprises several noun phrases linked by semicolons. Finally, he reduces the first half of the final *chang* from eleven to five syllables in an attempt to follow the three-syllable principle.

In summary, O'Rourke changed his translation approach in a way that preserved the original structure of the *sijo* and reinforced a sense of foreignness in the translated poem. Initially, he utilized a domesticating method<sup>43</sup> which highlighted structural features of British/

<sup>39</sup> O'Rourke, *The Cutting Edge*, 20.

<sup>40</sup> O'Rourke, *The Cutting Edge*, 25; 34.

<sup>41</sup> O'Rourke, *The Sijo Tradition*, 59.

<sup>42</sup> See, for example, the following anthologies. Jaihiun Joyce Kim, trans., *Master Sijo Poems from Korea: Classical and Modern* (Sŏul: The Si-sa-yong-o-sa Publishers, 1982); Lee, *An Anthology of Traditional Korean Literature*, 54–70; Inez Kong Pai, trans., ed., *The Ever White Mountain: Korean Lyrics in the Classical Sijo Form* (Tōkyō: John Weatherhill, 1965). Compare with David McCann, *Early Korean Literature: Selections and Introductions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

<sup>43</sup> Venuti juxtaposes the notions of domestication and foreignization in the following sentence: "A fluent translation is immediately recognizable and intelligible, 'familiarized,' domesticated, not 'disconcerting[ly]' foreign, capable of giving the reader unobstructed 'access to great thoughts,' to what is 'present in the original.'" For details, see Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (London: Routledge, 1995), 5.

American poems, such as enjambment and capitalization. In the case of *sasöl sijo*, he translated only the final *chang* into a separate stanza to emphasize its dominant position. In the late 1980s, he used a three-line format that was almost the same as that used by other translators. His three-line format was distinct in that there were much larger indents in the run-on lines and no capital letters used for the division of the three *chang*. Starting in the early 2000s,<sup>44</sup> however, O'Rourke made use of a five-line format, which would later distinguish him from other translators. This format unequally divided the three *chang* and emphasized different levels of abstraction, such as the visual potential and independence of the fourth line.

### Potential Problems with O'Rourke's Five-Line Format

Despite its creative nature, O'Rourke's five-line format is open to criticism for at least three reasons. First, a translation presented in the five-line format is not formally equivalent to the three-line original. Consider the following example:

#### An untitled *sasöl sijo* by Kim Sujang<sup>45</sup>

池塘에 月白 하고 荷香이 襲衣 할제  
 金樽에 술 잇고 絶代佳人 弄琴커늘 逸興을  
       못익의여 界面調를 읊퍼내이 松竹은  
       휘들오며 庭鶴은 춤을 춘다 閒中이 興味에  
       늑을늑을 모를노라  
 이 中에 悅親戚 樂朋友로 以終天年 하리라

#### O'Rourke's translation<sup>46</sup>

Moonlight shines on the lotus pond;  
 lotus fragrance pervades my clothes.  
 There's wine in the golden jug and a beauty playing  
       the *komun'go*. Captivated by the mood I sing a  
       sad refrain. Pine and bamboo sway to my song;  
       the cranes in the garden dance.

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In Palumbo's words, domestication is "a global strategy of translation aimed at producing a transparent, fluent style in the TL [target language]" (38), while foreignization is "a translation strategy aimed at rendering the ST [source text] conspicuous in the target text or, in other words, at avoiding the fluency that would mask its being a translation" (48). For details, see Giuseppe Palumbo, *Key Terms in Translation Studies* (London: Continuum, 2009).

<sup>44</sup> O'Rourke also used the five-line format in his 1995 translation of "Chöng Mongju sönsaeng ũ chukül ttae moyang," a poem by Sö Chöngju which features the interpolation of the *sijo* pair "Hayöga" and "Tansimga." It is thus reasonable to assume that O'Rourke adopted the five-line format in the early 1990s. See Midang So Chong-Ju, *Poems of a Wanderer*, trans. Kevin O'Rourke (Dublin: Dedalus, 1995): 117–18.

<sup>45</sup> Chöng Pyönguk, *Sijo munhak sajön*, 449.

<sup>46</sup> Kevin O'Rourke, trans., ed., *Shijo Rhythms* (Söul: Eastward Publication, 2001), 87.

Thus,  
happy with relatives, glad with friends, I'll live the  
span allotted me by heaven.

The original and translated texts bear little resemblance to each other. As a result, readers without any background knowledge of O'Rourke's method of *sijo* translation might struggle to comprehend the structural relationship between the two texts. Specifically, they might find it challenging to grasp the macro-level transformation of the three-line original into a five-line translation, as well as micro-level aspects of lineation, such as the legitimacy of the line break "Thus / happy with relatives ... by heaven."

This disparity between the original and the translation was also a matter of concern for O'Rourke himself. Right after introducing the five-line format, he tried to tackle the visual mismatch between the original and its translation. For example, in *Sbijo Rhythms*, the first bilingual collection of five-line *sijo* poems, he intentionally manipulates the layout of the source text, as exemplified below.

**Kim Sujang's *sasöl sijo* (edited by O'Rourke)<sup>47</sup>**

池塘(지당)에 月白(월백) 하고

荷香(하향)이 襲衣(습의) 할제

金樽(금준)에 술 잇고 絶代佳人(절대가인) 弄琴(농금)

커늘 逸興(일흥)을 못익의여 界面調(계면조)를

윽피내이 松竹(송죽)은 휘들오며 庭鶴(정학)은

춤 춘다 閒中(한중)이 興味(흥미)에 늙을늑을

모를노라

이 中(중)에

悅親戚(열친척) 樂朋友(락붕우)로 以終天年(이종천년) 하리라 [spacing: condensed]

In *Sbijo Rhythms*, the layout of the original and its translation are almost identical. The opening *chang* is evenly divided into two lines, the middle *chang* is one long line, and the final *chang* is broken into the first *ku* and the remainder. In this example, the fifth line is presented with condensed letter-spacing in order to make the final *chang* two lines without any break.

Another drawback of O'Rourke's five-line format is that it is susceptible to errors in editing and formatting.

Moonlight shines on the lotus pond;  
lotus fragrance pervades my clothes.  
There's wine in the golden jug and a beauty playing the black  
zither.  
Captivated by the mood I sing a sad refrain. Pine and

<sup>47</sup> O'Rourke, *Sbijo Rhythms*, 86.



bamboo sway to my song; the cranes in the garden  
dance.

Thus,  
happy with relatives, glad with friends, I'll live the span allotted  
me  
by heaven. [spacing error]<sup>48</sup>

This is an excerpt from Peter H. Lee's *The Columbia Anthology of Traditional Korean Poetry*, one of the most significant anthologies of traditional Korean literature. Lexically, it is identical to the translation shown earlier, except that the cultural reference "black zither" (in line 3) is used instead of *kōmun'go* for terminological consistency in the anthology. However, there are two glaring errors in this translation: line breaks at rhythmically awkward moments ("... zither / Captivated ..." in the middle *chang* and "... me / by heaven" in the final *chang*) and an additional space before "by heaven" in the last line. These editing errors are also present in several other translations by O'Rourke within the same anthology. Consequently, for readers, his translations appear to be convoluted and elusive.

These errors are also present in one of O'Rourke's collections. In *A Shijo Poet at the Court of King Sonjo*, there are multiple formatting errors, as exemplified below.

#### **O'Rourke's translation of Chǒng Ch'öl's *sijo***<sup>49</sup>

Yesterday I heard that Master Song  
from over the hill has new wine.  
I kicked the ox to its feet, threw on a saddlecloth  
and rode up here.  
Boy,  
is your master home? Tell him Chǒng Ch'öl  
has come.

This translation is slightly different from the standard five-line poems. It is clear that the third and fifth lines ("I kicked the ox ... rode up here" and "is your master home? ... has come") are outdented or else the remaining lines are indented. This confusing lineation can also be seen in four other poems on the same page of the collection. For example, in the poem "I'm fifty now, no longer young ...," only the third line is outdented.

The third potential problem with O'Rourke's five-line format is the variability of line breaks on e-book platforms.

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<sup>48</sup> Kevin O'Rourke, trans., "Kim Sujang (B. 1690)," in *The Columbia Anthology of Traditional Korean Poetry*, ed. Peter H. Lee (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 149.

<sup>49</sup> Chǒng Ch'öl, *A Shijo Poet at the Court of King Sonjo: The Pine River Songs*, trans. Kevin O'Rourke (London: Kegan Paul, 2005), 18–19.

**O'Rourke's translation (the default page view in an e-book version)<sup>50</sup>**

I'll cut a piece from the side  
of this interminable winter night  
and wind it in coils beneath these bedcovers, warm and fragrant as the spring breeze, coil by coil  
to unwind it the night my lover returns.

This is an excerpt from the e-book version of *Mirrored Minds: A Thousand Years of Korean Verse*. When viewed on a computer screen, this translation appears as a four-line poem, as demonstrated above. The four-line format remains unchanged until the text size is at 130%, when the poem transforms into a five-line structure with a peculiar line break and an outdent (“and wind it in coils ... coil / [outdented:] by coil”). Similar issues arise in the e-book version of *Shijo Rhythms*. In this e-book, the original *sijo* are displayed as digital images from the collection,<sup>51</sup> while the English translations on the subsequent pages are adjustable in font size.

In summary, O'Rourke's five-line format has practical drawbacks. It is complex and does not ensure the visual equivalence between the original and its translation. In addition, it is susceptible to editing oversights and e-book formatting errors. Inconsistencies in the format on the page could hinder readers' comprehension of the *sijo* structure and undermine their trust in the translation.

### The Fourth Line in O'Rourke's Translations

O'Rourke rendered the first *ku* of the final *chang* as a separate line, with the aim of creating an English version that followed the three-syllable rhythm of the Korean original.<sup>52</sup> However, he did not explain how he revised the fourth line. He simply acknowledged that it was very difficult to formulate a consistent English practice that mirrored the rigid three-syllable count, and that there were some inconsistencies in syllable count throughout his translations.<sup>53</sup>

In practice, O'Rourke was very attentive to the syllabic length of the fourth line. In *The Book of Korean Shijo*, for example, the fourth line typically consists of three syllables and/or three words. In this study, I take the word count to be a second measure of line length, given its significant role in shaping readers' perceptions of the fourth line.

<sup>50</sup> Kevin O'Rourke, *Mirrored Minds: A Thousand Years of Korean Verse* (Seoul: Literature Translation Institute of Korea, 2016), 53, <https://buk.io/@ka1977/53>.

<sup>51</sup> Kevin O'Rourke, *Shijo Rhythms* (Seoul: Literature Translation Institute of Korea, 2016), 37-2/3, <https://buk.io/@ka1993/37/0.3333334>.

<sup>52</sup> O'Rourke acknowledged that making a direct comparison between Korean and English syllables in translated *sijo* was often challenging and impractical. In this context, Kim Jinhee's study provides valuable insights for readers. See Jinhee Kim, “The Prosody of Korean *Sijo* and Its Redevelopment in English,” *Korea Journal* 56, no. 3 (2016): 113–35.

<sup>53</sup> O'Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, 10.

Table 1. Number of poems by syllable/word count in fourth line (*The Book of Korean Shijo*)

Syllables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Frequency	29	110	249	151	51	12	6	2	0	1	611
%	4.7	18.0	40.8	24.7	8.3	2.0	1.0	0.3	0.0	0.2	100
Words	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Frequency	80	191	233	91	13	1	0	1	1	0	611
%	13.1	31.3	38.1	14.9	2.1	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.0	100

Note: The fourth line in 334 poems (54.7%) contains three words or three syllables. The fourth line in 147 poems (24.1%) consists of three single-syllable words.

As illustrated in Table 1, approximately 84 percent of the poems in *The Book of Korean Shijo* comprise two to four syllables or words in the fourth line. Over 40 percent consist of three syllables, while almost 25 percent include three single-syllable words. This suggests that despite the stringent linguistic constraints inherent in translating *sijo*,<sup>54</sup> O'Rourke quite successfully adhered to the three-syllable principle. His focus on the length of the first *ku* is evident in the six divisions highlighted in Table 1.

It must be noted that some of O'Rourke's translations have unusually lengthy fourth lines. For example, the fourth line "To friends from whom I have parted, I say" (in a poem by Tanjong, the sixth king of the Chosŏn dynasty) consists of ten syllables.<sup>55</sup> However, this translation does not pose a problem since the original line "奇語人間別離客하나니" (ten syllables) deviates greatly from conventional *sijo* form. O'Rourke rightly points out that "the [original] poem, written mostly in Chinese, scarcely has the *sijo* form at all."<sup>56</sup>

Another lesser-known aspect of O'Rourke's translations is the various techniques he employed to revise the final *chang* of his three-line translations. Several excerpts below illustrate how he re-broke the final *chang* without making any alterations to the lexical content of the text.

두어라 四時佳興에 남은 해를 보내자<sup>57</sup>

So be it. I'll pass my remaining years

in the spirit of the four seasons.<sup>58</sup>

So be it:

<sup>54</sup> Pak Chinim, "Ko sijo yŏngyŏk yangsang koch'al," 284–90; Eun-kyung Shin, "A Reception Aesthetic Study on *Sijo* in English Translation: The Case of James S. Gale." *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 26, no. 1 (2013): 175–213.

<sup>55</sup> O'Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, 45.

<sup>56</sup> O'Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, 44. See also Rutt, *The Bamboo Grove*, 27.

<sup>57</sup> Chŏng Pyŏnguk, *Sijo munhak sajŏn*, 61.

<sup>58</sup> O'Rourke, *The Sijo Tradition*, 122.

I'll pass my remaining years in the spirit of the four seasons.<sup>59</sup>

In the revised version above, the fourth line “So be it” is nearly perfect in some respects. First, it is a fixed expression consisting of three single-syllable words, just as *tuõra* (두어라) is a three-syllable expression that frequently appears in the first *ku* of the final *chang*.<sup>60</sup> Second, as with *tuõra*, “So be it” is syntactically independent. In addition, it is semantically equivalent to the first *ku* of the final *chang*. Third, the revised version contains a cataphoric colon that strengthens cohesive ties. This punctuation mark draws readers’ attention to the shift in meaning in the remaining part of the final *chang*.

In general, O’Rourke emphasized the rhetorical effects of the fourth line. In particular, he created English equivalents of stock expressions found in *sijo*. For example, in *The Book of Korean Shijo*, he uses “Boy” (어랑야, 아희야, 아헤야) in twenty-one poems, “So be it” [+ colon] (두어야, 두어라, 두워라) in fifteen poems, and “Need I add” [+ colon] (그밖기, 하물며) in four poems. In addition, he employs short imperative clauses such as “Listen,” “Tell him,” “Believe me,” and “Remember” in order to make the fourth line both concise and rhetorically impactful.<sup>61</sup>

As mentioned earlier, O’Rourke usually broke the final *chang* around the first three syllables when recreating the fourth line in his revised versions. In these cases, he considered the syntactic integrity of each of the newly broken lines. However, he sometimes broke the final *chang* at a syntactically awkward moment, as demonstrated in the following example:

Thus a matron’s hopes raised  
     were shattered in a trice.<sup>62</sup> [third line]  
 Thus the matron’s [fourth line]  
 hopes were raised and shattered in a trice.<sup>63</sup> [fifth line]

In the revised version, O’Rourke breaks the final *chang* in the middle of the noun phrase “the matron’s hopes.” As a result, the incomplete phrase “the matron’s” delays the transfer of meaning, creating a poetic tension typical of the first *ku* of the final *chang*. Although the fourth line may appear strange, the fifth line is natural compared to other options that O’Rourke could have chosen, such as “[Thus the matron’s hopes /] were raised and shattered in a trice.”

If times are good, boy,

<sup>59</sup> O’Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, 127.

<sup>60</sup> Sin Ŭnkyõng, “Sijo chongjang ch’õt ku ‘tuõra’ ũi yõnwõn e taehan sogo,” *Sijohak nonch’ong* 27 (2007): 193–218.

<sup>61</sup> Song Chiõn briefly mentions how these stock expressions can be translated. Song Chiõn, “Sijo hyõngsik kwa yõbaek ũi mihak e taehan t’amgu – Sijo ũi it’allia õ põnyõk ũl wihan siron,” *Han’guk siga yõn’gu* 58 (2023): 442.

<sup>62</sup> O’Rourke, *The Sijo Tradition*, 187.

<sup>63</sup> O’Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, 185.

what matter if our clothes get wet?<sup>64</sup>

Boy,

if times are good, what matter if our clothes get wet?<sup>65</sup>

In this example, O'Rourke reverses the order of the two chunks "if times are good" and "boy" and places only the interjection "boy" in the fourth line. In doing so, he emphasizes "아희야," a vocative that is commonly found in the first *ku* of the final *chang*.<sup>66</sup>

However important love may be,

must one follow a host of lovers around?<sup>67</sup>

Important

though love may be, must one follow a host of lovers around?<sup>68</sup>

In this example, O'Rourke breaks and transforms the line "However important love may be" into "Important / though love may be." As a result, in the revised version, the fourth line is simply "important," a three-syllable word. The last line now begins with the conjunction "though," which better represents the thematic twist in the latter part of the final *chang*.

Forget I never shall,

this side of the grave.<sup>69</sup>

Forget I shan't,

this side of the grave.<sup>70</sup>

In the above example, O'Rourke does not re-break the final *chang*. However, he manages to reduce the syllable count to four by using the contracted form "shan't."

In summary, O'Rourke utilized various techniques to reduce the length of the fourth line in his translations to three syllables. In general, he simply changed line breaks, but in more complex cases, he used techniques such as foregrounding, reversing, and contracting. In instances of formulaic *ku* present in the final *chang*, he used fixed expressions with rhetorical emphasis.

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<sup>64</sup> O'Rourke, *The Sijo Tradition*, 137.

<sup>65</sup> O'Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, 137.

<sup>66</sup> Song Chiŏn, "Tonho pŏp ūl chungsim ūro pon sijo chaksi pŏp," *Changmun yŏn'gu* 12 (2011): 173.

<sup>67</sup> O'Rourke, *The Sijo Tradition*, 39.

<sup>68</sup> O'Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, 42.

<sup>69</sup> O'Rourke, *The Sijo Tradition*, 133.

<sup>70</sup> O'Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, 134.



## Conclusion

O'Rourke spent decades searching for an ideal format through which to represent *sijo* in English translation. In the early 1980s, he translated *sijo* as ordinary British/American poems, occasionally with a visual emphasis on the final *chang*. In the late 1980s, he joined other translators in utilizing a balanced three-line format, while at the same time adding distinct touches such as extensive indentation and de-capitalization. However, from the early 1990s, he abandoned the mainstream format and formulated a five-line structure that visually represented covert dimensions of the *sijo*. This structure later became a cornerstone of his translation style and solidified his reputation as a translator of traditional Korean poetry.

As discussed in the previous sections, O'Rourke's five-line format has various characteristics. It is an unbalanced format in which the first two lines, the third line, and the last two lines represent the opening, middle, and final *chang*, respectively. The fourth line usually comprises two to four syllables, indicating a rough manifestation of the first *ku* of the final *chang*. This line is where the translator's refinement and the structural anomaly of the translated *sijo* are most noticeable. O'Rourke's five-line *sijo* also contains peculiarities in capitalization, indentation, and enjambment.

The five-line format was initially met with skepticism and viewed by some scholars as complex and experimental.<sup>71</sup> In the English-speaking world, it has not been embraced by other *sijo* poets or translators. This is directly related to the lack of theoretical discussion on the practice of *sijo* translation and to the fact that O'Rourke's translations have not received the scholarly attention they deserve, even in the *sijo hak* (時調學, *sijo* studies) community. In this sense, this paper represents a modest stride toward deepening our understanding of O'Rourke's creative application of interpretive factors in *sijo* translation. Moreover, it may provide the impetus for further comparative analyses of his translations across a broad spectrum of *siga* genres.<sup>72</sup>

It is also important to realize that O'Rourke's five-line format may have practical applications for the field of *sijo* translation. It allows for an enhanced understanding of the mechanics of *sijo* translation and for composing *sijo* poetry with different flavors and textures. However, in order to make practical use of the format, it is necessary to examine not only the rationale and strengths of the format but also the textual and social factors that influence the application of the format. In this sense, the field of *sijo* translation needs to consider a number of issues. The first of these is whether a standard form of *sijo* translation is necessary. If not, then principled decisions need to be made about which formats are effective in evoking a sense of foreignness for the reader. The mismatch between the three-

<sup>71</sup> See, for example, Pak Chinim, "Han'guk munhak ūi segyehwa wa pŏnyŏk ūi munje," 163; Pak Chinim, "Ko sijo yŏngyŏk yangsang koch'al," 298; Yim Chut'ak, "Han'guk kojŏn siga ūi yŏngŏ pŏnyŏk ūi yangsang kwa munjejŏm – Hwang Chini sijo chakp'um ūl chungsim ūro," *Ōmunbak* 114 (2011): 280.

<sup>72</sup> For example, Yi Sangbin compares O'Rourke's translations of *hyangga* and *sijo* poems. See Yi Sangbin, "Silla hyangga pŏnyŏk ūi hyŏngsik e kwanhayŏ: K'ebin Orok ūi yŏngŏ pŏnyŏk ūl kiban ūro," *Yŏngŏ kwŏn munhwa yŏn'gu* 16, no. 1 (2023): 85–111.

line original and O'Rourke's five-line format also needs to be the subject of considerably more discussion, as does the special use of, for example, capitalization and indentation. Just as important is the question of the validity of translating the middle *chang* as a single line and how to align the fourth line more effectively with the original *sijo*. Finally, we need to discuss the broader implications of the five-line format for the future of *sijo* translation.

From O'Rourke's viewpoint, many translators simplified the macro- and micro-structures of the traditional *sijo*, thereby failing to "open up huge possibilities in English."<sup>73</sup> He posited that the defining characteristics of the *sijo* are the five-line structure of *kagok ch'ang* and the first *ku* of the final *chang*.<sup>74</sup> To his mind, the three-line format may be visually appealing, but it is, in fact, a Western adaptation characterized by high levels of naturalization and simplification. O'Rourke adopted an innovative approach to translating *sijo*, viewing the five-line format as a medium through which the reader can engage with the historical context of the *sijo*. He believed that the essence of the traditional *sijo* was fundamentally anchored in its structure.<sup>75</sup>

O'Rourke's five-line format reflects the deep structure of the traditional *sijo*, standing in contrast to the three-line format which emphasizes the *sijo*'s surface structure. His approach to translation, which underscores the inner rather than the outer structure of the *sijo*, may indeed be seen as a risk, potentially overstepping the bounds of interpretive liberty. Nevertheless, his approach has merit. Given that it may be necessary to translate literary works differently to cater to different readerships, the five-line format will undoubtedly be applicable to a variety of such audiences. The specific applicability of the format remains the subject of further evaluation and discussion.

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<sup>73</sup> O'Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, 9.

<sup>74</sup> O'Rourke, "Reflections on 'Translating Classical Korean Poetry,'" 74–75; Pak Chinim, "Ko sijo yŏngyŏk yangsang koch'al," 298–99.

<sup>75</sup> O'Rourke, *The Book of Korean Shijo*, 9.

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