



The origin of the Korean language is 9000 years ago, from farmers in Liaohe, northeast China.

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[Science Cafe] Transeurasian origins announced in Nature including Turkic, Mongolian and Japanese



A map showing the formation of the Transeurasian language. Transeurasian language languages such as Korean (pink), Japanese (dark yellow), Turkic (yellow), Mongolian (light gray), and Tungusic (dark gray) have been introduced to various places by farmers who spoke their ancestral language in Yoha (red), China 9000 years ago. It is claimed that it was created while migrating. / Nature

It has been found that Korean, along with Turkic, Mongolian, and Japanese, originated 9000 years ago in the Neolithic period from farmers living in present-day northeastern China. Until now, it is known that languages with similar systems spread as nomads from Central Asia migrated around the world much later than that.

Dr. Martin Loitz, a researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Human History in Germany, said, "As a result of a comprehensive analysis of the results of linguistics, archaeology, and genetics research, the Transeurasian language family from Europe to East Asia was found in the Liao River region of China during the Neolithic Age. We confirmed that it was the result of the migration of farmers who were farming millet," he said in the international academic journal 'Nature' on the 11th.

◇Transeurasian language with similar vowel harmony and sentence structure

41 linguists, archaeologists, and genetic biologists from 10 countries including Germany, Korea, the United States, China, Japan, and Russia participated in this study. Korean researchers were also listed as co-authors on the paper.

The Transeurasian language family is also called the Altaic language family. It consists of the Turkic language of the west, the Mongolian language of Central Asia, the Tungus language of Siberia, and the Korean and Japanese languages of East Asia. A vowel harmony appears where the vowel of the preceding syllable and the vowel of the last syllable meet each other as in 'Boegeulboegeul, Boegeolboegeol', and the subject, object, and predicate are spoken in order like 'I eat rice'. It is characteristic that a modifier comes before it, like 'pretty flower'.

Although the Transeurasian language family is a vast linguistic group that crosses the Eurasian continent, the origin and diffusion process are unclear and have been the subject of controversy in academia. While analyzing ancient agricultural and livestock-related vocabulary, Professor Lovitz's research team compared the results of archaeological studies of 255 Neolithic and Bronze Age sites in the region with the results of genetic analysis of early farmers living in Korea and Japan.

As a result of comprehensive analysis of all information, the research team said that they confirmed that the Transeurasian ancestral language speakers who were growing millet in the Liaohé region of China about 9,000 years ago moved across Northeast Asia from the early Neolithic period.



Millet is an annual plant in the genus of the rice family. As millet farmers spread around 9000 years ago in the Liaohé region of China, a study found that their language developed into a transeurasian language family such as Korean, Japanese, Turkic, Tungusian, and Mongolian. / Wikimedia

◇ Genetic match between Koreans and Japanese in the Neolithic Age

According to this 'agriculturalist hypothesis', transeurasian ancestral languages spread to Siberia and Central Asian steppes in the north and west, and reached Korea and Japan in the east. This is the result of overturning the 'nomadic hypothesis' that the Trans-Eurasia language was spread through the migration of nomads that originated in the eastern steppe 3,000 to 4,000 years ago.

"Today, accepting the origins of languages and cultures that cross national borders can redefine our identity," said Professor Lovitz.

Professor Lee Seong-ha of Hankuk University of Foreign Studies said, "It is a remarkable achievement in that it proved that the Trans-Eurasia language was the result of the spread of agriculture, not cattle, by analyzing the results of research in each field in three dimensions. We also confirmed for the first time that the genes of Korean ancestors in the Neolithic Age were 95% identical to those of the Jomon people, the indigenous people of Japan."