

# THE LIFE AND DEATH OF MUSIC AS EAST ASIAN INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

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L.P.Hartley begins the prologue to his 1953 novel *The Go-Between* with the memorable line, *PPT2*: ‘The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there.’ The author has found a diary, hidden within a cardboard collar-box full of relics from his early life, with which to remember his early years. David Lowenthal takes this quote as the title of his 1985 book, telling us that the past has an ever-changing role in shaping and making sense of the present; some of the past is celebrated while some is purged. Museums, likewise, present our shared history, but are increasingly contested sites, where the typical focus on the monumental, on the Great rather than the Little tradition, is challenged by a requirement to include the vernacular, and where the ownership of ‘looted’ artifacts is questioned.

*PPT3* My contention is that our contemporary zeitgeist is to accept a past that is, to paraphrase the South Asian theatre director and critic Rustom Bharucha, both alive and venerated (1993: 21). It is, rather than objects in museums, the intangible cultural heritage, performed and presented, that allows the past to live. By making the past live, we attempt to sustain our identity, or, as academics, we interpret difference, in an effort to challenge the hyper-real consumerism of our post-modern condition, the ‘cultural grey-out’ of the industrial commodification of synthetic, formulaic production that is designed to generate profits. The clumsy paraphrase *PPT4* I’ve just given is from Theodor Adorno’s critique of the popular music industry. I’m trying to capture how Western commodification *PPT5* ‘ventriloquizes the world’ (after Shohat and Stam 1994: 191), how Orientalism reinforces the dominant culture by matching the familiar to the exotic, *PPT6* how Hollywood films create flashy, shallow forms that disperse cultural divides, *PPT7* how world music is, to quote Spencer (1992), ‘easy to take but not at all bland, unfamiliar without being patronizing’, *PPT8* and

how we indulge in ‘lite difference’, sampling globalized menus in restaurants that constitute ‘eatertainments’ in our ‘shoppertainment’ malls.

What is wrong with resistance to this? *PPT9* A national culture, John Tomlinson (1999) tells us, can react to globalization by balancing and countering it, or as Bert Feintuch argues, *PPT10* it can spark people to remember local life, to ‘think about matters close at hand and close at heart’ (Feintuch 1988: 1). Beyond the national, the late Alan Lomax (1972) – to whom we owe much of our knowledge of Gaelic psalmody, the Blues, and Bluegrass – *PPT11* had it that the world is an agreeable and stimulating habitat precisely because of cultural diversity.

*PPT12* ‘Culture’, as a complex, comprises tangible and intangible elements. *PPT13* Today, tourists search out the 981 World Heritage Sites recognized (in August 2013) by UNESCO. These, to Myriam Jensen-Verbeke (2009: 58), are the tangible ‘places to visit before you die’. Unlike previous generations, tourists travel readily and cheaply around the globe, courtesy of Boeing 747s and Airbus 380s, and their gaze is captured by buildings, monuments, natural sites, and by artifacts displayed in museums. World Heritage Sites build on a global collective legacy that began with the international concern about Egypt’s 1954 proposal to flood the valley containing the Abu Simbel temples. Articulated in the 1972 UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and National Heritage, few would today question the basic tenet: conservation of the tangible heritage is a good thing.

Even so, the pernickety will have concerns: should a ruined castle be left as it is, should discrete repairs be made to keep walls standing, should the public be allowed to ramble amongst the rubble. In Japan and Korea, unlike Europe, the tradition has been to rebuild: wooden temples require it, and their external walls need regular painting. The stone foundations might today well be strengthened by reinforcing with concrete. *PPT14* This happened with the rebuilding of the Unified Shilla-era Pulguk Temple in Korea in the 1970s, but the nearby Sökkuram grotto, *PPT15* rediscovered in the 1920s by Japanese archaeologists, underwent several restorations that struggled to separate the precious stones from people. One restoration allowed rain to seep in, another failed to control humidity, *PPT16a* third rebuilt the entrance hall in front of the grotto and installed a glass screen to keep people out. The rebuilt old walls of East Asian palaces are, likewise, both new and old, incorporating modern mortars, stones

of the same size rather than smaller stones at the top, and less taper bottom to top than in ancient walls.

However, the tourist gaze falls not just on the tangible heritage, but on souvenir shops and on music and dance shows. *PPT17* Shops sell trinkets that tourists buy in the largely misguided hope that they have found something ‘authentic’ and ‘real’; *PPT18* music and dance shows, as with what has by many been called ‘airport art’,<sup>1</sup> claim connections to a tradition that may stretch a point. *PPT19* Local and international festivals have become sites of pilgrimage. Some local festivals in Japan, such as the Chichibu night festival, or in Korea the *Kangnŏng tanoje* spring festival or Chŏnju’s Sori Festival attract hundreds of thousands. *PPT20 (blank)* Europeans travel *en masse* to the Festival of the Desert in Essakane or the World Sacred Music Festival in Fes. And the contemporary ease of travel also means that distant musicians and dancers traverse the globe on festival tours.

However, conserving the intangible – local customs, costumes and cuisines, performance arts and crafts – is controversial. Criticism may reflect contemporary lifestyles, beliefs, morality, aesthetics, and so on. So it must be if history shapes the present. *PPT21* Good examples of this are Korea’s shaman rituals. Long considered backward, the government’s drive to modernize and the widespread embrace of Christianity – not least by the educated, by scholars and government officials – led to an antipathy to shamanism as superstition and animism. In the 1960s, two festivals with shaman rituals were made important intangible cultural properties, *PPT22 Ŭsan pyŏlshinje* (Property 9, appointed February 1966) and *PPT23 Kangnŏng tanoje* (Property 13, appointed January 1967), but the shaman aspect in each was downplayed. Only in the 1980s, after student protests had harnessed shamanism, after scholarly consensus shifted from the reality of the spirit world to an essentializing acceptance that shamanistic worldviews are part of a Korean’s inner being, and as experiments with staging virtual concert versions of rituals took place, were rituals and ritualists endorsed more openly. A flurry of intangible property appointments were made, *PPT24* that within a few years embraced representative rituals from each of Korea’s geographical areas. But, as history serves the present, then giving intangible heritage life today requires shifts in presentation style and symbolism.

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<sup>1</sup> Kaeppler 1977, 1978, De Kadt 1979; O’Grady 1981; Moeran 1984; Hitchcock, King and Parnwell 1993).

Watch a shaman ritual on stage and the spirits don't join the ritualists. The symbolism in props is partially discarded, the music made more interesting and less repetitive, and often, secular musicians and dancers will join. *PPT25* For example, southwestern ritualists have mixed ritual music with improvisation in a series of celebrated albums. *PPT26* Again, the professional quartet SamulNori encouraged southeastern ritualists under Kim Sökch'ul, to create stand-alone percussion pieces that *PPT27* have recently been analyzed to create a new Korean percussion language by the Australian jazz drummer, Simon Barker – documented in his film, *Intangible Asset Number 82*, and now taught in both Japan and Korea. **NB: there is a fusion here of shamanic & other things! [PLAY VIDEO]**

Contemporary tastes may also question the significance of specific intangible heritage. *PPT28* Korea's Property 81, *Tashiraegi*, for example, is a masque relating to a second burial custom, tracked back to a period when it was customary to bury the dead in a straw house for three years. No more, and when KBS made a documentary that featured this custom, the deceased was a Christian, so they judiciously cut much of the symbolism of the tradition to accommodate. *PPT29* *Tashiraegi*'s appointment has been heavily contested, to the extent that rival groups have gone to court to claim ownership, *PPT30* and it is clear that the authorized version ignores a multitude of alternatives and would have been labeled by Hobsbawm an 'invented tradition'. Again, consider puppetry. *PPT31* Korea's Property 3, containing a play known as *Kkoktu kakshi norŭm*, is, to say the least, ribald – one character (right) urinates over the audience. *PPT32* Property 79, *Palt'al* foot puppets, is, simply put, pretty bad: manipulating a puppet with one's feet has to be inferior to using hands...

*PPT33* Staging brings major issues. This is Korean *Namdo tŭllorae*, southern rice agriculture songs. Mechanization has destroyed any remaining reason to have these songs in the countryside, and these photographs are staged – for a photo-book. *PPT34* Taken one stage further, when performed outside of the locale, plastic rice shoots with lead bases and pantomime cows are required. *PPT35* Take these aspects away, though, and the songs have become iconic: they are recorded in a multitude of versions, they feature in films, in school music textbooks, and so on. **[PLAY AUDIO – 1 verse only; different words!!]**

The polemic against conserving the intangible comes in a number of Canutian holding-back-the-tide flavours. *PPT36* Anthropology's structural-functionalism has proved influential: intangible culture, we are told, is part of social production, and so as society changes, so must the intangible (Blacking 1978; 1987: 112; Nettl 1985: 124–7; Bohlman 2002: 63; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004). If it does not change, *PPT37* it will lose its meaning as it is 'frozen in time and space like a museum display' (Hesselink 2004: 407). Again, the undermining of 'folklore' by political and ideological agendas has found resonance when governments attempt to conserve, as they, *PPT38* to cite Henri J. M. Claessen (cited in Nas 2002: 144), 'pay people to sing incomprehensible songs that have long [since] lost their meaning'. *PPT39 (overview)* Outsiders are typically charged with the validation of 'folklore', introducing a top-down approach where scholars and bureaucrats police production (Seitel 2001; Nas 2002; De Jong 2007) or focus on archiving (Alivizatou 2009: 173), in so doing devaluing the ownership stakes of individuals and local communities (Skounti 2009; George 2009: 76).<sup>2</sup> In fact, conservation **does** shift ownership. It may give rights to governments – who control, for example, UNESCO's national committees –, or, rather more negatively, to companies, *PPT40* as with biomedicine and mining concessions in South America and Papua New Guinea (Ziff and Rao 1997; Gillespie 2010<sup>3</sup>). *PPT41 (blank)* Or ownership is claimed beyond the local community by economically savvy players working on national and international stages, including those contracted to provide shows for tourists (Ó'Briain 2012) or those with intimate knowledge of the cultural industries (Alaszewska 2012; Kraef 2012). ~~Again, elevating specific versions of intangible heritage may undermine other versions, thereby accelerating decline although the threat of loss remains a common theme in conservationist interventions (Cleere 2001; Meskell 2002; Holtorf 2006; Rowlands 2007).~~

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<sup>2</sup> Folklorists have long considered it essential that local ownership and control be maintained (see, e.g., Abrahams 1968; Baumann 1971; Ben-Amos 1971; Hymes 1975), an approach recently resurrected with more beneficial hindsight in *Who Needs Experts? Counter-mapping Cultural Heritage* (Schofield 2013), for which the blurb runs: 'the chapters collected here launch a convincing attack on the ways in which "expertise" has been used to build authority and hence to exclude laypersons from an involvement in heritage. They...show how counter-heritages can radically undermine older models to provide...more democratic ways of understanding heritage and its role in contemporary society'.

<sup>3</sup> Kirsty Gillespie, *Steep Slopes: Music and change in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2010).

Regardless of these arguments, the intangible heritage is now widely subject to efforts to conserve, preserve and sustain it. There are at least three reasons for this. First is a realization that the tangible and intangible belong together. When the concentration camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1979, and following it the atomic bomb site at Hiroshima and the bridge at Mostar, in 1996 and 2005 respectively, the necessity of making understandable the values, attitudes and activities of the people involved with them was accepted. *PPT42* Cultural heritage, then, is performed, so an understanding of the intangible – the production and use of the tangible – is a necessity (Vergo 1989; Woodhead and Stansfield 1994; Dean 1996; Goulding 1999; Dicks 2000; Jewell and Crofts 2001; Breathnach 2003; Hall 2009). *PPT43* As Peter Aronsson (2013) at Linköping University puts it in relation to the supranational Norden identity, performed heritage, repeated to shape society and identity and to frame history, takes place in prestigious institutions such as museums and archives, in officially sanctioned spaces such as at jubilees and public monuments, but is also found in more mundane, ephemeral and banal cultural practices.<sup>4</sup> To complete the circle, then, heritage balances what in East Asia we would consider the Great and Little traditions, the aristocratic, literati, ‘classical’ with the ‘folk’. **Note: most of the arguments against conserving the intangible heritage focus on the Little, the ‘folk’...**

*PPT44 (blank)* The second reason for conserving the intangible is that academics have a penchant for nostalgia. In middle age, I recall with fondness the Korean cultural production I encountered during fieldwork 30 years ago – including the song I’ve just played, which keen listeners would have noticed had different words! –, but also reflect on a shift in cultural consumption: where I experienced music made by the people as participants, I now see music produced for the people as consumers.

Third, our support for conserving the intangible has been bought. *PPT45* The most striking example of this in recent times has been the UNESCO programme to appoint Masterpieces in the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. In each of the three rounds of Masterpiece appointments, member states nominated genres, places or aspects of their intangible cultural heritage. They commissioned documentation and

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<sup>4</sup> Aronsson sees in the latter ‘the naming of phenomenon, viewing exhibitions or walking in the countryside.’ Here, I would mark the distinction as being between what in East Asia is often called the ‘Great culture’ (of the court and aristocracy) and the ‘Little tradition’ of the masses (often synonymous with folk culture).

reports, often from academics. Then, once the nomination was received by UNESCO, it was sent out for ‘expert’ review. Music and dance nominations were passed to the International Council for Traditional Music, who invited its members to act as ‘experts’. A quick calculation would indicate that a large number of academics were involved.

### [PAUSE...]

Why is this important to Japanese and Korean Studies specialists? Well, we have an advantage when discussing conservation, in that we can speak with authority about what has actually happened to the intangible heritage in Japan and Korea. These two countries have longer histories of attempting to preserve, promote and sustain – the three elements that my use of the term ‘conservation’ bring together – the intangible than anywhere else.

*PPT46* Long before UNESCO took an interest in the intangible heritage, in 1950, Japan did. It promulgated its Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties (*Bunkazai hogohō*). *PPT47* Korea followed suit in 1962, with its Cultural Properties Preservation Law (*Munhwajae pohobōp*). *PPT48* Taiwan joined in, in 1982, with its Cultural Heritage Preservation Act (*Wenhua zichan baocun fa*), and *PPT49 [NB: 2003 on!]* China has caught up in the last decade, with 2011 seeing the enactment of its Law Concerning the Intangible Cultural Heritage of the PRC (*Zhonghua renmin gongheguo fei wuzhi wenhua yichan fa*). Laws to protect the tangible heritage date back earlier, in Japan to the early Meiji years and in Korea to the Japanese colonial period (Negi 2001: 10; Howard 2006; Alaszewska 2012: 198), but, post-Pacific War, a shift brought consideration of the intangible. Admittedly, the immediate context of the 1950 Japanese legislation was a fire the previous year in the main hall of the Hōryūji temple and the loss of wall paintings (Negi 2001: 13), but the law addressed the tangible (*yūkei*), intangible (*mukei*), and monuments and sites (historic, scenic, natural – *shiseki, meishō, tennen kinenbutsu*). An amendment in 1951 differentiated performing arts from craft techniques, while a new category for folk performing arts and crafts was introduced in 1954 (Tsunaeki Kawamura *et al* 2002: 68–9; Alaszewska 2012).

The Japanese legislation strongly influenced those drafting Korea’s law. Many of the incoming government under Park Chung Hee had trained in Japan, as had senior



academics who were tasked with preparing research reports to justify which intangible heritage should be appointed. *PPT50* The same terms appear: ‘Intangible cultural properties’ (J: *Mukei bunkazai*; K: *Muhyŏng munhwajae*; sometimes rendered as ‘treasures’ or ‘assets’), and the prefix ‘important’ (J: *jūyō*; K: *chungyo*) to designate an appointment of national significance; ‘Living human treasures’ or ‘living human properties’ – more formally designated as ‘guardians’ or ‘holders’ (J: *hogosha* (more normally, though, *hojisha*); K: *poyuja*), and so on. Article 1 is virtually identical, *PPT51* the Japanese translating as: ‘to preserve and utilize cultural properties, so that the culture of the Japanese people may be furthered and a contribution made to the evolution of world culture’. **Note the last bit: evolution, not just preservation.**

The Japanese law and the system it introduced proved influential elsewhere, particularly because of the activities of the Tokyo-based Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO. The Korean system was explored by Taiwan as it drafted its own legislation, but Korea became much more influential in the 1990s. It usurped the role of Japan, for example, when it sponsored a set of policy meetings and regional workshops between 1996 and 2002, the culmination of which was a redrafting in Seoul of the ~~France-centric~~ guidelines on supporting ‘living human treasures’ that remains largely in force.

*PPT52 (blank)* From the outset, there was a distinct difference between the Japanese and Korean legislation. Essentially, Japan focused primarily on classical or ‘high’ arts, and for these supported senior practitioners who have supposedly dedicated their life to a genre; practitioners of folk arts are only acknowledged as part of a group. Korea, in contrast, gave equal status to the Great and Little traditions, and was primarily concerned with the art or craft, rather than with the practitioners. The reason was that the government, craving legitimacy, saw in conservation a way to strengthen identity by evoking nationalism (*minjok chuŭi*), thereby balancing modernization with a pride in nationhood that had been dented by centuries of subservience to China, Japanese colonialism, and the destructive Korean War.

Evoking nationalism through court, aristocratic and literati cultural forms, most of which had been inherited from China, was simply not an option. But giving folk arts and crafts equal prominence was. The pillar of legitimacy this involved, namely,



assigning Korean roots to folklore, would be problematic, but work had already been done by cultural nationalists and folklorists such as Yi Nūnghwa, Ch'oe Namsōn and Song Sōkha: during the first half of the century they had claimed shamanism and mask dance plays as totally Korean, downplaying Siberian and Chinese connections.

*PPT53* So, among the first eight intangible cultural properties appointed in Korea, *Chongmyo cheryeak* (Music at the Royal Ancestral Shrine) and *kat il* (bamboo and horsehair hat making) were joined by six folk genres that included *PPT54 p'ansori* epic storytelling through song and *PPT55* the women's-song-and-dance genre, *Kanggangsullae*.

In Japan, folk genres gained greater access to support in a 1975 revision to the law, *PPT56* but a distinction was maintained between intangible cultural properties (*mukei bunkazai*) and folk intangible culture properties (*mukei minzoku bunkazai*). *PPT57* Consider classical *Kabuki* theatre and folk *Kagura*. The first is an intangible cultural property, the second an intangible folk cultural property. An interview (by Shino Arisawa) with Hirotsugu Saito in 2010, then Chief Specialist for Cultural Properties at the Agency for Cultural Affairs elicited the difference: *PPT58 Kabuki* actors specialize in a specific role, spend most of their time training and performing it, and earn money from doing so; *Kagura* performers have other jobs, and only come together to perform for calendric Shintō festivals. *PPT59* The *Bunraku* puppet theatre offers another example. It is an intangible cultural property, but 16 other genres of puppetry, as *Ningyō jōjuri*, are intangible folk cultural properties, with 6 sharing the same *Bunraku* performance style – three puppeteers to a puppet, plus *shamisen* plucked-lute accompaniment and chanting. *Bunraku* as a property delineates a single professional troupe founded in the nineteenth century by Bunraku-ken Uemura, who moved from Awaji Island to Osaka, but Awaji puppetry remains only a folk property, conserved largely by farmers.

*PPT60 (blank)* Inequity? Choices have been made, that are articulated, for better or worse, in sets of operational principles and procedures, and in administrative and budgetary practices (after Baumann 1991: 22). Control for much of the legislation's history has been vested in the Japanese Ministry of Education (Monbushou) and Korean Cultural Properties Administration (Munhwajae ch'ong). The public face of conservation, though, seeks to hide the power games – the political dimensions and the jockeying for benefit by individuals or groups and their supporters.

Politics, though, are at play. In each of the three UNESCO Masterpiece rounds, China, Japan and Korea were the only countries to get nominations accepted. In 2003 and 2005, the Japanese Masterpieces were *Bunraku* and *Kabuki*. Korea's 2005 Masterpiece was *Kangnŏng tanoje* – appointed without a shaman an intangible cultural property back in 1966. *Kangnŏng tanoje* is a spring festival with Confucian and shaman rites, music, games and a market. But, the festival originated in China, and China's reaction to the Masterpiece appointment was to vastly multiply its own efforts to identify and protect intangible heritage. **PPT61** They did so in a way that sent shock waves reverberating around Korea, when they proposed the Korean percussion band genre, *nongak*, and the Korean folksong 'Arirang' as Chinese items on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.<sup>5</sup> In 2009, on the basis that *nongak* is part of the cultural landscape of the northeastern Jilin Province, where Koreans have settled since the nineteenth century, China succeeded with the first. **PPT62** But Korea stamped its ownership on 'Arirang', a song that back in the 1930s and 1940s was well-known and loved in Japan, which was inscribed on the list as Korean in 2012.<sup>6</sup> [play video: to 1'10"]

**PPT63** Arguments and debates about the intangible heritage often concern the preservation of 'authentic' archetypes, but once we escape the grasp of archivists, conservation has a second side: promotion. The operational principles of systems increasingly allow – if not expect – intangible properties to develop aspects of their presentation that will accommodate, say, the media, tourism, or commercial marketing. Different systems around the world thus place different emphases on preservation and/or creativity.

In Korea and Japan, we can see preservation and creativity co-existing. Let's consider Korea's local percussion bands, **PPT64** *nongak* or *p'ungmul*. **Not Chinese, of course!** Such bands, playing drums and gongs and occasionally a shawm or two, were for many centuries ubiquitous to the Korean countryside. They were appropriate to pre-modern life, serving local rituals **PPT65** (*maegut*, after the Sino-Korean *maegwi ant'aek*, and related terms), fund-raising events (*köllip*, *kölgung*, [*madang* or *chishin*] *palpki*; note that the scope and meaning of terms varied from place to place), and

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<sup>5</sup> China achieved much the same with the Kyrgyz *Manas* epic, and with Mongolian harmonic singing, *khomei*.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/RL/00445> ; <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011&RL=00213>.

communal activities related to farming and fishing (*ture, p'ungjang, [kim] maegi*, and additional terms) (Howard 1990: 31–3; see also Hesselink 2006: 15–17). (*Add music – talk over*) The twentieth century saw decline: metal gongs were melted down as Korea's colonizer, Japan, moved to a war footing; post-liberation land reform reduced communal farming teams as many a villager became a smallholder; village guardian spirits succumbed under the spread of Christianity, and the need to hold local rituals that would chase goblins away from wells, kitchens and storehouses reduced as sanitation and refrigeration improved.

*PPT66* National contests kept entertainment performances (*p'an'gut*) of local bands going, but as they did so, they encouraged bands to adopt new styles of typically virtuosic performance from each other, and also set regional styles in stone that could be judged. The result was a differentiation between southeastern (*yŏngnam*), southwestern 'left style' and 'right style' (*chwado* and *udo*, respectively, but applied as if looking south from Seoul, so that right is to the west), central (*kyŏnggi*), and eastern (*kangwŏn*). Decline was further countered in 1966, when *nongak* was appointed Korea's Intangible Cultural Property 11. Initially, and possibly for reasons of political expediency (given that the president and his National Assembly were largely from the region), the southeastern style, based on a band hailing from the port of Samch'ŏnp'o but stretching inland to Chinju city, was appointed. Equally significant bands had not died, but still existed elsewhere, and as the Samch'ŏnp'o band declined, so more and more representations were made. Two new research reports were commissioned, and in December 1985, Intangible Property 11 was expanded, first to include three southwestern, central and eastern bands (Iri, P'yŏngt'aek, Kangnŭng), second to reappoint Samch'ŏnp'o (in 1986), and third to add two additional southwestern bands (Imshil and Kurye, in 1988 and 2010).

*Nongak* today survives, but as a living form it is contained strictly within the frame of set and prescribed regional styles. Performances last between 30 minutes and an hour, where the last village ritual I attended, in 1984, went on for four days.

*PPT67* I guess the parallel in Japan would be *matsuri-bayashi*, a genre of festival music typically featuring a *shinobue*-type flute and a percussion group comprising one or more gongs and two types of drums – small and high-pitched *kodaiko* and larger and more deeply resonant *ōdaiko* [*PLAY VIDEO*]. *PPT68* For this, the

ensembles are crammed inside six floats, each in recent years having a flute, a gong, four small drums (each played in alternation by two players) and a large drum *PPT69 (layout)*. As part of Saitama Prefecture, *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi* was appointed a prefectural intangible cultural property in 1956, with Takano Harumichi (1902–1983) appointed as guardian (*hojisha*). But, as disagreement over his leadership and teaching roles mounted, the genre was reappointed as a prefectural intangible folk cultural property in 1977, shifting to a group identity without a single holder. Takano, and his son, Takano Ukichi II, nonetheless remained central. Local accounts have it they devised a semi-professional ensemble, *PPT70 Chichibu Shachu*, which moved outside the festival floats to perform on stages. Suddenly unrestricted by space, *Chichibu Shachu* multiplied the large drums, increased the tempo and rhythmic elaboration, and moved to a style of performance framed by visual spectacle. Just as in Korea, the staged version became the form promoted outside the immediate locale, favoured by the media and by paying audiences.

At this point: enter the real professionals. In 1972, Ondekoza arrived in Chichibu, wanting to learn festival drumming, and to do so from Takano. Ondekoza had emerged a year before on Sado island, off the coast of Niigata Prefecture, aiming to elevate *taiko* drumming from festivals to an artistically inspired stage performance. With them, and with a second group, Kodo, the large *ōdaiko* drum became the symbol of Japanese drums globally. Contrasting the local account, Ondekoza – or rather, Hayashi Eitetsu – writes how they struggled to learn *Yatai-bayashi* in Chichibu, recording, notating, and analyzing the piece, then changing the instrumentation by increasing the number of large drums, and fusing sequences of rhythms to create their piece (Bender 2012: 74–7). Hayashi claims the group took ownership, structuring the flexibility of local folkloric transmission:

*PPT71* At the time, we had no idea that we were intentionally arranging the piece... For better or worse, the *Yatai-bayashi* that resulted was our own creation. Its high tension owes more to our communal lifestyle and training regimen than to the carefree, festival spirit of the original (1992: 63, cited in Bender 2012: 77).

There is something of the *furusato*, ‘old village’ idea here, from which ownership has essentially been wrested by a professional group. Back in Korea, local percussion

bands, with local rituals rather than the regional styles, equally evoke images of the *kohyang* ‘hometown’.

**PPT72** The Korean equivalent to Ondekoza is SamulNori, a quartet of percussionists who first took to the stage in Seoul in February 1978. Within a four-year period SamulNori established a **PPT73** canon of pieces that neatly fixed and captured the central, southeastern and southwestern *nongak* repertoires. (*play audio; in at around 4.30*) **PPT74** Where *nongak* is danced, SamulNori musicians, in all but one of their pieces, sit on stage. And, just as *taiko* groups have spread across the globe, notably since the group Kodo gave their American debut shortly after they crossed the finish line at the 1975 Boston Marathon, so has SamulNori. Both are criticized at home. *Taiko* groups don’t fit either the high art criteria of Japanese intangible properties or the *furusato* locality of intangible folk properties. SamulNori lack a sufficient history, and are an urban take on something inherently ‘hometown’ oriented. Both are groups of professionals who claim ownership of their repertoires, **PPT75** run study camps and festivals, **PPT76** sell copyrighted notations, workbooks and recordings. In so doing, they replace local percussion bands and ritual ensembles in the global imagination; **PPT77** in fact, SamulNori has recently replaced *nongak* in Korean school textbooks as well as on school playgrounds.<sup>7</sup>

**PPT78 [blank]** To summarize, much of the the music appointed as intangible cultural heritage – particularly folk genres – underwent transformation within the conservation process to create staged, visual performances that community owners maintained. The transformations lost connection to much of the former functions and uses, but were designed to better present performance. Second, and beyond the conservation systems, a further transformation took place as both *nongak* and *matsuri-bayashi* became the basis for new creativity that today, and particularly to less local audiences, substitutes for anything local. (*DVD clip; 1’08’06”*) To demonstrate, here’s Mugenkyo, a Scottish *taiko* group, filmed in Glasgow in 2012 performing *Yatai-bayashi* – but with all connections to Chichibu, to its festival and to its floats, lost.

**PPT78 again (blank)** There are two processes at work here. Although to prove my case would need many more examples than time permits, both have significance. The

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<sup>7</sup> SamulNori even replaced *nongak* in the video initially uploaded to the UNESCO site to illustrate the inclusion of *nongak* as Chinese – which is no longer available, but was once at <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011&RL=00213>.

first captures the reality of conservation. With social change, modernization and development, and with the influx of Western forms of cultural production, so the functions and uses of much of the intangible cultural heritage have been reduced to practices that interpret the tangible remains of our past – ruined buildings, museum objects and folkloric practices. In a sense, this intangible heritage is ‘dead’ rather than ‘alive’. However, as performance, the intangible heritage is presented on stage. Presentation demands links be retained to the past to comply with the received definition of culture, which, *PPT79* as Clifford Geertz has it (1973: 7), is as ‘an historically transmitted pattern of meaning embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic form by means of which men communicate’. Critics of conservation systems for the intangible heritage miss the last part of this: communication requires that accommodations be made for contemporary audiences.

*PPT80* The second process returns us to Article 1 of the legislation: **evolution, not just preservation, is involved**; New artistic practice must fit the requirements of the contemporary world, with its concert halls and festivals. Here, our received definition of culture becomes too narrow, as the symbols and systems that mark the links with the past lose relevance as artists find new ways to inject ‘life’. John Tomlinson would call this reterritorialization, after the global flows of Appadurai-esque deterritorialization; really, though, it is a matter of commerce, as musicians and artists secure their audience. *PPT81* But, in this new performance, the spirits of shamanism, like Elvis, will leave the building; and Chichibu, or Korean village rituals, end up lost somewhere in the mists of time. This worries many of us, though whether we should be concerned depends on whether we are prepared to supplement the ‘dead’ intangible heritage with something more in tune with contemporary society.

To me, both processes are desirable. The first, to take the words of the Czech novelist Milan Kundera, serves ‘the struggle of memory over forgetting’, and provides a foundation, a reassurance, for identity. The second – providing it avoids ‘cultural grey-out’, ‘lite difference’, and shallow forms that are bland and patronizing, synthetic and formulaic – breathes life into that identity; it provides excitement, a way for us to enthuse about Japanese and Korean creativity, and it allows musicians and other artists their place on the global stage. *PPT82* To close, here’s Kim Duk Soo, the

drummer most associated with SamulNori since its beginning, at a UNESCO-sponsored conference performance, demonstrating how SamulNori is evolving.