P’ANSORI AS SOCIAL CRITIQUE:
PERPETUATING A MUSICAL TRADITION IN TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY SOUTH KOREA

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAIʻI AT MĀNOA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

IN

MUSIC

APRIL 2017

By

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis is not merely a result of my own commitment. This project has been a collective work with a great deal of support from my family, mentors, interviewees, and friends. My research has been generously funded by The Graduate Fellowship in Ethnomusicology for Students from Asia & the Pacific, The Center for Korean Studies Core University Graduate Scholarship, and The Heide Student Assistance Fund in Music. I appreciate their support and encouragement.

My heartfelt thanks goes first to informants of this project, members of Badaksori. They have shown their full support during my fieldwork, providing a warm and welcoming atmosphere. In particular, Choi Yongsuk, a leader of the group as well as a key figure of this thesis, dedicated his time to giving frequent interviews and helped me to observe musical and political activities of the group in a close proximity. Without his support and help, this project would have not been possible.

I am truly indebted to my adviser, Dr. Byong Won Lee, for his guidance and encouragement in completing this thesis. He has been not only an academic mentor, but also is a parental figure to me while I was away from my family. I am also immensely grateful to Dr. Frederick Lau, who spent many hours helping me explore new ways of thinking and shaping academic framework. Dr. Young-a Park also deserves special tribute for carving time out of her hectic schedule to help me attain insightful perspectives and a scholarly mindset, especially regarding the study of Korean politics.

Over the course of my graduate study at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, I have been fortunate to encounter many mentors and collegues, who have allowed me to

grow not only as a student but also as an individual. I am grateful for the intellectual guidance, valuable advice, and great support of Emeritus Professors Barbara Smith, Ricardo Trimillos, and Hagen Koo. Many thanks also goes to my fellow classmates and friends for their constant support and encouragement: Chiao-Wen Chiang, Padraic Costello, Megan Dekievit, Ben Fairfield, Yanxiazi Gao, Yuan Hsin, Minhee Kim, Seola Kim, Yuan-Yu Kuan, Yi-Chieh Lai, Haein Lee, Christopher Molina, Christopher Serrano, Sean Shibata, Aaron Singer, Kirk Sullivan, Hyewon Um, and Xi Yang. Their help made it possible for me to finish this project.

My knowledge and experiences on *p'ansori*, a focus of this project, are all attributable to those teachers and mentors in South Korea. My first p'ansori teacher, Byonghye Kim, inducted me to a wider world outside Korea with countless possibilities, which changed my life entirely. Without her in my life, I might not have overcome as many challenges. Nancho Lee, a mastersinger, helped me build a strong foundation to become a musically-knowledgable p'ansori performer. Sunghwan Park, a mentor of my life, has been willing to spend time discussing intellectual, musical, or personal issues I have had and has been supporting every move I have made.

I owe my deepest dept of gratitute to the most important people in my life, my father, Chanwoo Lee, my mother, Jungsoon Kim, and my only sibling, Sangyoon Lee. Without their unconditional love and unlimited support, this project, as well as my graduate study as a whole, would have been impossible. My last tribute is for a person who has always been there for me and filled my heart with joy, laughter, and love.

Thank you.

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the new form of Korean story-singing tradition, *p'ansori*, in the twenty-first century through the works of a South Korean performing group called Badaksori (sound from the bottom). Based on the musical and political actions of Badaksori's members, this study details how this liberal group articulates nationalistic, antiforeign, egalitarian, and pacifist ideologies in its new p'ansori productions. Utilizing historical perspectives, ethnographic research, and textual and musical analyses of performances by Badaksori, this thesis illustrates how key elements of traditional p'ansori have been transformed, reinforced, or retained in the age of modernity.

This thesis begins by challenging the conventional conceptualization of traditional p'ansori as a device to promote Confucian morality in the nineteenth century by showing how its subtexts allusively confronted the Confucian ideology. During the Japanese colonial period in the early twentieth century, performers began to use p'ansori to project antifeudalist and anti-imperialist ideas in a more explicit way. In the late twentieth century, this function of p'ansori as social critique was accentuated by incorporating *minjung* ("masses" or "people") discourses that challenged the agenda of the authoritarian state. Drawing parallels between minjung discourses and Badaksori's pursuits, this study draws upon minjung ideology as a theoretical and empirical basis for its examination of the identity, ideology, and performance of Badaksori.

The goal of this thesis is to foreground the traditional role of p'ansori as a means of voicing social critiques of dominant ideologies, from Confucian ideology to state-implemented discourses. I show that p'ansori emerged and has continued as a subversive

vehicle to speak for socially and economically marginalized people in Korea. This study also shows that Badaksori has strategically and creatively made use of this traditional function of p'ansori in modern South Korea for its ideological work by altering the textual and musical presentation. I argue that even though musical, stylistic, and thematic appearances of p'ansori performance has continuously changed, its function as social critique has remained unchanged and central throughout its history in Korea.

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This thesis follows the McCune-Reischauer system. In some cases, however, I will follow the official Romanization of certain words or names that do not conform to this system, as in the case of Badaksori (*Padaksori* in the McCune-Reischauer Romanization system). All translations are mine, unless otherwise indicated.

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

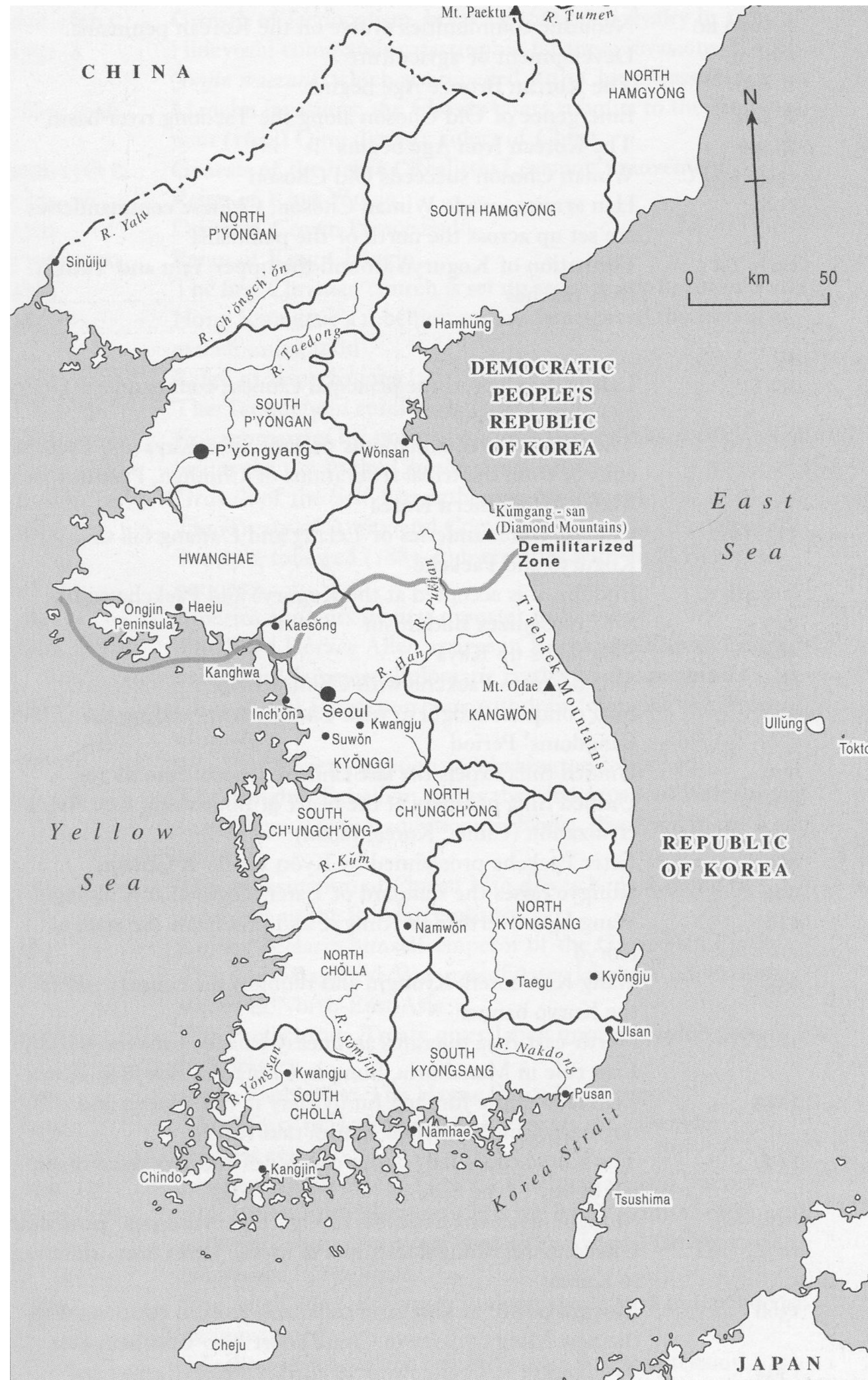
Lighting a torch aloft at a pavilion
A *sorikkun* (*p'ansori* singer) stands to the east of a *kosu* (a drummer)
By all means, below the stage is better than up
And then only enjoying together with *minjung* (people)
("Kwanuhŭi" by Song Manchae, 1843; cited by M. Kim (1988: 309))

On one Wednesday of August in 2013, four p'ansori performers appeared on a small booth on an open truck instead of the typical stage with flashy lighting. Hundreds of students and citizens were watching them, while waving pickets with phrases such as "Japanese must apologize to our flowers" and "I am the very evidence alive, why does Japan say they have no evidence?" Performers introduced themselves as Badaksori, a group that began their career by performing p'ansori for "grandmothers," a euphemism for victims of enforced sex slavery. They sang at the weekly 1087th rally that has demanded earnest apology from the Japanese government and the truth that comfort women were drafted into the Japanese forces during the Pacific War. One of the male performers states, "We came to know a true history of ours through our grandmothers' words. We have put these stories into p'ansori, in hopes that equality, justice, and peace flow on this land. Perhaps, those grandmothers are the biggest teacher of p'ansori for us."

This thesis is a study of a new twenty-first-century form of Korean singing tradition, p'ansori. The focus of the research is a performance group based in Seoul, South Korea, which is called "The P'ansori Factory, Badaksori (hereafter referred to as Badaksori)". Through the works of Badaksori, I will examine change or the absence of

change in several key aspects of traditional p'ansori to understand how new p'ansori reflects the experiences of Korea's strive for modernity.

Figure 1 Map of Korea (Pratt 2006: 9)



The impetus for this study comes from my own engagements in performing new p'ansori repertories as a member of Badaksori in 2013 in Seoul. I had the opportunity to observe and participate in Badaksori members' p'ansori-making processes and performances at the spot of demonstrations. My examination of their performances reveals their political motivation and sensibility, which can be roughly defined as liberal democratic agendas with a strong nationalistic consciousness and pacifist ideals.

Badaksori's approach to their musical tradition is reminiscent of the typical use of a folk cultural practice during nationalist movements, postcolonial reconstructions in the Third World, and political transitions (Buchanan 2006; Castro 2001; McDonald 2013; Noll 1991; Turino 2000). The political negotiations that p'ansori performers practice in and outside of their performances first became clearly visible in the performance practices that coincided with the advent of minjung (literally, "masses" or "people") ideology in late twentieth century South Korea. This thesis also addresses the influence of this ideology on the contemporary performances of Badaksori.

The modern practice of modifying one's traditions according to contemporary political and cultural states has been documented in many other ethnomusicological studies (Bohlman 1989; Turino 2000; Waterman 1990; Yano 2002). In my research, multidirectional changes have also occurred in new p'ansori practices since the turn of the twentieth century. These changes provide the fundamental question of this study: If some of the characteristics that constitute the p'ansori tradition are changed, how and why can it continue to be called p'ansori?

Overview of P'ansori

P'ansori is a Korean vocal music tradition of storytelling requiring two performers: one singer and one drummer. The term p'ansori is a mélange of spatial and sonic connotations. *P'an* refers to mental and physical space; it includes a sense of a place for an event that is open to the public and encourages participation. Meanwhile, *sori* refers to all sounds, and thus evokes a "musical metalanguage" that goes beyond singing (C. Park 2003: 1). The p'ansori singer conveys a narrative, which can last as long as seven hours, by alternating "between sung [sori] and spoken [*aniri*] presentation (Pihl 1994: 3–4)" with appropriate gestures. The drummer not only accompanies the singer by providing a variety of rhythms (*changdan*), but also serves as a co-actor, who builds an interdependent partnership with the singer, thus fulfilling "participatory ethos (Turino 2008)" of p'ansori performance.

The performance traditionally takes place in an opened space (p'an), which can range from a boisterous marketplace to the courtyard of a host's house. The singer stands facing the audience, and the drummer sits facing the singer, both on a straw mat. The singer can move around freely or sit down in order to express the dramatic situations of the narrative and convey the thoughts and feelings of the characters. In p'ansori's traditional aesthetics, the singer is expected to have several characteristics: *nŏrŭmsae* (skill with accompanying gestures, or a stage manner), *inmul* (appearance), *sasŏl* (knowledge of narratives), and *tŭkŭm* (vocal attainment).[1] During the performance, the singer, drummer, and audience actively interact with each other. They may engage in conversations about their feeling toward the performance or any other irrelevant topics.

Along with verbal exchanges, the drummer and audience may interject timely calls of encouragement (*ch'uimsae*), completing the participatory principle of p'ansori.

The aesthetic of p'ansori entails two indispensable concepts, *pijang* (tragic sorrow or solemnness) and *kolgye* (humor), each of which is tied to emotional states substantial in Korea, respectively *han* and *hŭng*. Han, among discursive definitions, is widely conceptualized as "bottled-up resentment and sorrow (C. Choi 1995: 117)" that "build[s] over time and under the weight of hardship (Abelmann 1996: 36–7)". While some regard this sentiment as a primordial inheritance of Korean minds, others perceive it as a modern idea "retroactively imposed on the people" through a national process of locating Koreanness based on the Korea's history of suffering (Willoughby 2000: 18). By evoking this han sentiment, p'ansori elicits "sympathy though suffering" and offers a means to withstand sorrow through catharsis (Pihl 1994: 5–6). In this sense, p'ansori connects narratives of suffering between present experiences and summoned memories of the past. Hŭng refers to a bursting joy that pertains to Korean experiences of communal life in the pre-industrial era, which are still "deeply imbedded in the social behavior" of Koreans today (Mills 2010: 1). The sociability of hŭng aligns with the performative nature of p'ansori that promotes communal experiences. Manipulating between pijang and kolgye, p'ansori performers can control the dramatic tension and release of the performance. Pijang, mostly paired with han sentiment, is followed by kolgye that eases the tension by evoking hŭng or laughter. The beauty of p'ansori lies in these contrasting emotions that are woven together over the course of a performance. In this respect, p'ansori is a musical narrative of experiences that are reenacted through a grid of several sentiments.

The musical analysis of new p'ansori pieces needs to begin with understanding

the requisite elements of traditional p'ansori music, which comprises *cho* (*jo* when used as a suffix) and changdan (rhythmic passages). Loosely referred to as "mode," cho is a collective term that embraces all of the concepts involved in p'ansori singing, such as ornamentation (*sigimsae* or *t'aru*), melodic type, singing style, mood, and corresponding theme (Um 2013: 78). Among approximately fourteen types of cho, the most central and common ones are *kyemyŏnjo*, *ujo*, and *p'yŏngjo*. These are frequently characterized by the mood: Kyemyŏnjo exudes mournful and soft feelings, often associated with "femininity"; ujo expresses grandeur and solemnness, and is usually found in "masculine scenes" and in the actions of aristocratic figures; and p'yŏngjo is mostly used in peaceful, merry, and delightful moments (D. Choi 1994: 86; C. Park 1995: 200; Um 2013: 81–86; P. Yi 1991: 14–15).

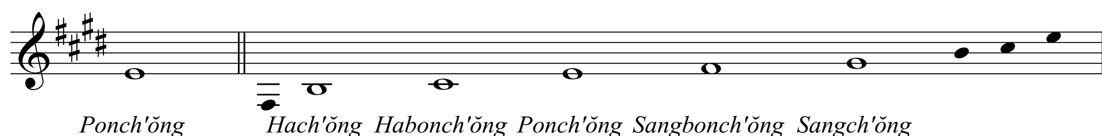
In terms of defining and classifying cho, a conceptual gap exists between Korean musicologists and musicians. The former have emphasized modal structure, while the latter are more interested in the singing style in cho (Um 2013: 79). In this context, Paek Taeung (1982, 1986, 1996) suggests two concepts, *sŏngŭm* ("vocal sound"), a collective term for vocal technique, style, timbre, and register, and *kil* ("path," modal structure; gil when used as a suffix) in order to embrace each emphasis in cho. Kil is distinguished from modal structure as it is understood in the West, not only by having the fundamental tones (pillar tones), but also by assigning each tone designated names, functions, ornamentations, and relationships to the principle tone (Paek 1982: 12). Thus, the proper understanding of this set of specific tones should be at the root of figuring out whether new p'ansori-making follows or alters the musical rule of traditional p'ansori.

Example 1. Kyemyŏngil (Paek 1982: 27)

Kyemyŏngil is the modal structure of kyemyŏnjo and consists of four pillar tones: *ttŏnŭnch'ŏng, ponch'ŏng, kkŏngnŭn araech'ŏng,* and *kkŏngnŭn witch'ŏng*. Located right below ponch'ŏng (a principle tone), ttŏnŭnch'ŏng (a trembling tone) features a wide vibrato and frequently precedes a final ponch'ŏng at cadences. Kkŏngnŭn araech'ŏng (lower breaking tone) and kkŏngnŭn witch'ŏng (higher breaking tone) appear together, as the former is typically followed by the latter to produce a downward sliding appoggiatura (P. Yi 1973: 223; Um 2013: 80–81).

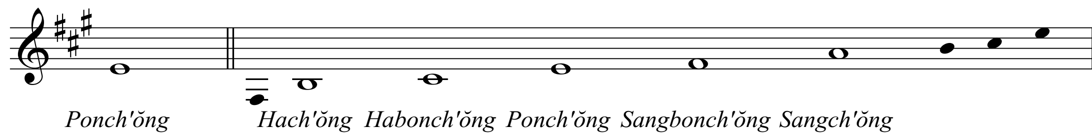
Marked by the dominant mood of sadness, the ornamentations of kyemyŏngil, such as vibrato, glissando, and breaking tones, are more intensified than they are in any other modes. Among these ornamentations, the one that most maximizes the sorrowfulness is the downward sliding minor second between kkŏngnŭn araech'ŏng and kkŏngnŭn witch'ŏng. It should be acknowledged in the compositional practice of Korean traditional vocal music that when this minor second progresses upwards, it is very likely to fail to "sound Korean" (Paek 1982: 28).

Example 2. *Ujogil* (Paek 1982: 35)



The pillar tones of ujo include *hach'ŏng* (low tone), *habonch'ŏng* (low-principle tone), *ponch'ŏng* (principle tone)*,* *sangbonch'ŏng* (high-principle tone), and *sangch'ŏng* (high tone). It features wide leaps of melody, "non-definable pitches" in exclamatory tones, and restrained ornamentations (Um 2013: 84). As it derives from classical vocal genres, it is often characterized by the use of classical singing styles and vocal techniques such as long melisma and voice shifts between head voice or falsetto (*sesŏng*) and straight voice (*t'ongsŏng*), a powerful vocal sound produced through *dantian* respiration from the lower abdomen (76, 84). Ujo is usually associated with a slow changdan to create solemn or elegant moods, or to portray majestic scenery.

Example 3. *P'yŏngjogil* (Paek 1982: 43)



The modal structures of p'yŏngjo and ujo are almost analogous*,* except that p'yŏngjo's melodic range is narrower and less dynamic than that of ujo. As p'yŏngjo is used with peaceful and delightful moods, it usually uses changdan with moderate tempo. Around the pillar tones of each kil, a variety of additional tones, or microtones, are built to create complex melodic progress in close association with moods and changdan.

Each section that constitutes an entire p'ansori piece is carried out with a designated changdan*.* Each changdan is assigned a certain tempo and rhythmic pattern by which it is distinguished from all other changdan. A drummer of p'ansori performance is allowed to improvise patterns within a basic frame, in accordance with the singer's

melodic development. Seven changdan are commonly used in p'ansori performance: *chinyang, chungmori, chungjungmori, chajinmori, hwimori, ŏnmori* and *ŏtchungmori*.[2] Along with the designated tempo, the storytelling nature of p'ansori has rendered changdan inextricable from the context, mood, and mode of a song. For instance, chinyang, the slowest changdan of all, is typically used for highly lyrical descriptions of scenery or scenes with a majestic, solemn, and sorrowful mood, while Chajinmori in a relatively fast tempo is commonly associated with violent, urgent, and agitated scenes. As changdan plays a significant role in producing, performing, and evaluating the music of p'ansori, it deserves a careful consideration in the p'ansori-making process.

Knowing the functions and relations among cho, changdan, and story in traditional p'ansori provides a framework for the new. Regardless of the extent to which new p'ansori makers transform the music, they need to consider this entanglement of rudiments, if intending their performance to retain the musical identity of p'ansori. In new p'ansori, the rudimentary network of cho and changdan is still heard, despite the addition of many new musical elements. The way in which new p'ansori makers negotiate the traditional elements in the age of modernity will be dealt in detail in chapters 3, 4, and 5.

Objectives and Arguments

In this study, I argue that p'ansori has traditionally functioned as political and social critique against the dominant ideology, and that this traditional function has remained unchanged. The power of traditional p'ansori lies in its underlying subtext of criticizing the Confucian ideology that is defended and promoted on the surface. This

critical function continues in the new p'ansori practices, where the subtext has become the text itself. In modern Korea, the texts directly challenge the dominant ideology and publicize issues that the state-implemented discourses avoid. In order to effectively present their contemporary critiques, new p'ansori performers are now developing p'ansori with new music, styles, and issues. Despite these changes, new p'ansori retains the function of providing social critique. Within this overarching argument, I will discuss how Badaksori strategically deploys the traditional elements of p'ansori in order to maximize the effectiveness of its critical function in modern Korea. The main strategy of Badaksori is, I argue, altering the textual and musical presentations of their p'ansori narratives to accommodate their political agendas and ideologies.

Significance

Historical studies of p'ansori (Jang 2014; C. Park 2003; Pihl 1994; Um 2013) have paid attention to its periodization in regard to the contextual changes (political contexts, social institutions, and audiences) that have shaped the genre. For instance, Um (2013: 39) brackets p'ansori of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century together as belonging to a period of intangible cultural properties. However, this approach overlooks different issues found in the repertories of each time period, while focusing on the institutional practices of the genre. This study alters this typical divide by shifting the criteria that determine historical periodization to *what is said* and *how the themes or topics are presented* through music. Though different from the conventional way of viewing p'ansori's history, this approach is in line with ethnomusicological scholarship that has endowed music with a reinforced focus. The thesis thus argues how p'ansori has

traditionally allowed performers to offer social critiques and shape a distinct political context among participants during their performances.

In addition, the majority of seminal publications on p'ansori in the English-speaking world (Jang 2014; C. Park 2003) focuses on the period prior to the twenty-first century. One exception is Um's work (2013), in which she enumerates several individual creators of new p'ansori of this century and their works, but pays little attention to their musical constructions. In South Korea, the study of new p'ansori has been led by a few of eminent p'ansori scholars such as Im Chint'aek (1990b), Kim Hyŏnchu (2003), Kim Ki-hyŏng (1994; 2003a; 2003b), and Yoo Young-Dai (2004), who have helped to define new p'ansori. However, they have focused almost exclusively on repertories that are traditional in musical style, excluding those that involve colorful experiments. In brief, because the practice of new p'ansori in the twenty-first century is so new, it has not been studied in depth. In this context, this study forwards contemporary p'ansori scholarship.

This thesis also rejects two conventional ways of looking at traditional p'ansori. While many scholars agree that p'ansori was initially an art form of commoners, some typically conclude that it became a tool for promoting Confucian morality in the late nineteenth century (M. Ch'oe 2008; Jang 2014; Um 2013; Yoo 2004). Others have argued that as a result of being temporarily taken over by the upper class, the texts of traditional p'ansori became bifurcated, containing both the Confucian and the commoners' ideologies (T. Cho 1989; Pihl 1994). By showing that traditional p'ansori is instead about the subtext that is covered up by the overt display of a dominant ideology, this study regards erstwhile approaches as superficial. In doing so, this study sheds lights on its function as social critique, which is integral to p'ansori.

Literature Review

P'ansori in Modernity

Two eminent p'ansori-focused ethnomusicologists, Chan Park (2003) and Haekyung Um (2008; 2013), take similar approaches to p'ansori in modern contexts, both valuing its adaptive nature. Chan Park (2003: 20) treats tradition as "the past reborn in a shifting context," rejecting the viewpoint that sees it as fixed and immutable. She calls for constant adaptation and revision of p'ansori traditions to conform to its communal and interactive spirit. Modeled primarily on Fornas's (1995: 22) notion of modernity as a reinforcer of the tradition, Um's work addresses modernity as a force that "shapes how traditions are reproduced and selected" and p'ansori as a tradition that has been reinforced by the modernity (2013: 3). In her extensive study, she provides an ethnography of p'ansori in modern Korea, arguing that aspects of modernity (nationalism, globalization, and sociocultural, economic, and political dynamics) have formed a complex new context for this tradition (4). She also stresses the necessity of recognizing new p'ansori as a healthy product of "creative syncretism," in which a mixture of "tradition and modernity are continuously reconfigured" (204). For Um, tradition and creativity are not incompatible but co-inspirational (205). In a similar vein, Philip Bohlman's case study of Central European Israeli music culture exemplifies how the cultural values of a tradition can be reinforced "while still permitting the tradition to embody new values" (1989: 7). Once "separated from its original context," Anna Maria Ochoa Gautier (2006: 820) argues, music can become modifiable and malleable to incorporate different modes of symbolic interpretations and semantic contents.

Im Chint'aek (1990b: 238) stresses that in p'ansori, a storytelling 'p'an' is prior to 'sori', which he defines as external to the story. For Im, p'ansori is not fixed, and should interlock with the lives of the audience members. He asks, "Is p'ansori still alive?"—and answers in the negative on the grounds that p'ansori has lost its roots as storytelling, as the existing stories have been fossilized and no longer allow for aliveness (203). He urges the revitalization of what he sees as almost-dead p'ansori, providing theoretical and practical mechanisms and requisites for new p'ansori productions, although there are strictly framed within minjung ideology.

One concern with a heightened focus on the fluidity of p'ansori lies in the possible dismissal of the core function that continues to be used as social critique in modern Korea. Thus, it is crucial to stipulate what aspect of a tradition is "reborn" (C. Park 2003), "reinforced" (Um 2013), and "revitalized" (Im 1990b) in the shifting modern context and political climate. If tradition is reinforced by modernity, what is reinforced by the modern transformation of the p'ansori tradition is the clarity of its critical message, not its traditional function that has remained unchanged.

Music, Identity, and Social Movement

Ethnomusicologists and cultural theorists have demonstrated that music is key to the process of identity formation, focusing on its demarcating nature and positing identity as fluid, "layered and multiple" (Averill 1994: 157–8). While agreeing with this view of identity as unfixed, Lau (2001: 38) also accentuates "the notion of the essential self" that "grounds an individual's sense of being," which is vital to identity construction and negotiation. For Hall (1996b: 4–5), identity is constructed within representations and

through the relation of the Other; Otherness conversely highlights the nature of those included (Lau 2001). Stokes (1997: 3–5) asserts that music has the power to include and exclude people, by demarcating the boundaries and intensely evoking collective memories. Reversing the essentialist assumptions that music reflects and represents the people, Firth (1996: 124) argues that "music constructs our sense of identity through the direct experiences…which enable us to place ourselves in imaginary cultural narratives," offering the experience of a collective identity (121). Keeping in mind this notion of music as a key to the formation of identity—whether fluid, uncontested, or both—this study's intention is to show the role of p'ansori (or narratives of p'ansori) in the formation of collective, political identity.

For Alexander (1992), collective identity is constructed in connection with commitments to symbolic codes understood by those who have legitimate membership in a community. These codes of collective identity underlie the ideologies of protesters, whose persuasiveness depends on their successful articulation of the relationships among background cultures, situations, and audiences: performance becomes effective in terms of mobilizing social power only when it "rings true to the background culture," connects the audience, and elicits their response (Alexander 2004: 550–1). Manabe (2015: 14) pays attention to ways by which musicians convey messages, especially how they combine references to preexisting songs with "indexes of present experience". The notions of musicians' conscious use of music (a style of music) in a certain political context and protesters making references to past movements will be visible in the following chapters, where minjung movements function as the reference.

Performing p'ansori in a certain context may offer a site for the construction of "counterpublics", a term coined by Nancy Frazer (1992) in a critical response to Habermas' idea of "public sphere (1989)". Explaining how the bourgeois public sphere emerged in eighteenth century Europe, Habermas (1989) attributes rational-critical debates of public matters to the construction of a public sphere as adequate to a democratic polity (51, 113). Critiquing the early elitist public sphere that comprised narrow segments of Europeans, he argues for expansion of participation and recovery of an institutional arena with normative ideals (Calhoun 1992: 1–5). Despite the very emphasis Habermas places on participation, his work has been criticized for its exclusion of gendered and proletarian public spheres. A feminist scholar, Nancy Fraser (1992), accentuates a multiple, sometimes contending, nature of the public sphere and conceptualizes alternative publics as "subaltern counterpublics." By this term, she means "parallel discursive arenas" where members of subordinated groups "invent and circulate counterdiscourses" (123).

Michael Warner (2002a: 85) critically responds to the Frazer's concept of subaltern counterpublics that depends on oppositional content and interpretation; for Warner, it sounds like a "discussion of political opposition" that does not differ from any other publics. He instead defines counterpublics as structured through "a conflictual relation to the dominant public" rather than just by expressing subaltern culture (2002b: 423–4). Placing importance on the publicity over rational-critical debate, he notes that the construction of counterpublics is premised on the use of different modes of address from those of the dominant public, a mode of address that clarifies the subaltern status. In counterpublics, normative speech protocols are suspended, and representations of

discourses may be received with “hostility” or “indecorousness” (2002b: 424). The “vulgarity” of p’ansori in the late nineteenth century was an affirmation of it as a discourse of a counterpublic that violated the decorum of Confucian-oriented dominant public. Badaksori’s intentional interjection of vulgar words into their public performances thus can be understood as a reaffirmation of p’ansori as a counterpublic discourse.

Robert Pattison (1987) defines vulgarity as “common, noisy, and gross, but above all...untranscendent (6)” and as a state free from “the limits prescribed...by culture (8).” For John Ruskin (1873: 333), vulgarity is the opposite of “gentlemanliness” (qualities of a gentleman), which is the evidence of “high breeding”. In constrast to nobleness indicated by sensitiveness, or softer and even sweeter ways of expressing sympathy, he continues, vulgarity takes on “coarseness of language or manners” (334–335, 342). Referring to those conceptualizations as well as Warner’s emphasis on ways of representation, the vulgarity of p’ansori in this thesis denotes a conscious presentation of indecorous expressions such as satirical humors and sexual innuendos that are frowned upon by “refined gentlemen” of a society and that break the restraints imposed by a public, or dominant culture.

Korean Nationalism, Politics, and Minjung

The study of new p’ansori entails discourses of Korean nationalism in the context of colonialism, de-colonization, modernization, and minjung movements, as new p’ansori emerged along with this trajectory. Gi-Wook Shin (2006: 18–19) regards Korean nationalism as distinctive, because ethnicity is a key marker of a national identity in

Korea and "a fairly homogeneous ethnic protonation" developed into "one ethnic nation, two states [North and South Koreas]." According to him, moreover, ethnic nationalism has posed merits and demerits in both Koreas: while it has advantageously functioned during the anticolonial movements, it was used to legitimate the building of authoritarian nations and to justify violations of civic rights (229–230). Hence, ethnicity, or one-blood discourse, has played a significant role not only in Korean nationalism but also in the overall trajectory of Korean modern history.

Lee Namhee, in *The Making of Minjung* (2007), points out that Korean nationalism and modernity are often described negatively with terms such as "reactionary" and "imposed." The typical presentation of Korean modern history is strongly influenced by Korea's colonial experiences and "failed" history of de-colonialization (2–3): liberation without the direct participation of Koreans; Korea's new subordinate relationship to the United States; and the Korean War and resulting division (3). These experiences brought about an ingrained sense of failure and collective frustration among intellectuals and students around the 1960s, which Lee conceptualizes as a "crisis of historical subjectivity" throughout her book (3–4, 25). She argues that it is this crisis of historical subjectivity that aroused in intellectuals the feeling of responsibility to rectify the failures of history, leading to minjung discourses and movements (23–25).

Scholars of Korean studies have varied in their view of the notion of minjung. According to Hagen Koo (1993: 131), minjung refers to "a broad alliance of alienated classes" that were isolated from sociopolitical power and "the distribution of the fruits of economic growth." He adds that minjung came to be constructed as a new social identity based on resistance to the authoritarianism from the 1960s through 1980s (132, 143).

According to Lee Namhee (2007: 5–6), this construction of an oppositional identity accompanied with the use of counterimages that were allegedly deleterious to minjung—the military dictatorship, business conglomerates, and foreign powers. As the definition of minjung has transformed from "common people" to include anybody capable of standing up to oppression, she states, it came to be constructed as "a true historical subjectivity" and as "protagonists of a political and cultural project that was posited as … resisting the meta-narrative of state-led development" (5–6). In order to build a true historical subjectivity, Lee points out, the minjung project[3] foregrounded the critical reevaluation and rewriting of Korean modern history that involved confrontations between official and counter memories (24). Lee's emphasis on the reworking of history in the construction of minjung discourses provides a theoretical and historical framework for studying Badaksori's identity and presentations of p'ansori.

Kenneth Wells (1995: 20) traces the emergence of minjung back to the Korean independence movement when two different streams of views towards the Korean people, culturalism and populism,[4] coexisted. While culturalists basically considered the Korean people as morally and intellectually immature and thus subject to education to be made into a nation, for populists, the people or the minjung themselves make the nation (Wells 1995: 17–22, 28; Kern 2009: 295). Wells (1995: 20) argues that minjung was emerged as a populist ideology in the context of a shift from culturalism to populism in the early 1920s rather than in the 1980s.

In line with this understanding of culturalist–populist tension during the independence movement, Thomas Kern (2009) provides another concept of ideological competition involving minjung discourses in his description of the postcolonial

contention over state legitimacy. The postcolonial authorities legitimized their dictatorships with references to the ethnic homogeneity, anti-Communism, and Neo-Confucian familism. In particular, the state nationalism was used under the name of national unity to suppress disobedience, threatening the principle of popular sovereignty (Kern 2009: 296; G. Shin 2006: 18, 112). In response, dissident intellectuals delegitimized the regime by exposing its involvement in national division and pro-Japanese collaborations, and denouncing any form of imperialism, whether it came from the Japanese, other foreigners, or the Korean postwar authorities (C. Choi 1995: 106; Kern 2009: 294–299). In this light, minjung were the victims of state-implemented nationalism as well as fighters for their own nationalistic pursuits, which aimed to recover subjectivity and build an anti-imperialistic utopia. This severe discrepancy between the state and popular was situated in the center of minjung movement.

The Minjung Cultural Movement and Madanggŭk Discourses

Cultural performances play an essential role in the process of regime change as successful democratization requires not only "a distribution of political interests and resources" but also "cultural legitimacy" (Kern 2009: 291, 313). This cultural legitimacy depends on how successfully cultural actors concretize and visualize their democratic values. When a collectively meaningful medium (i.e., one that is part of cultural heritage) that has the resonance to successfully mobilize people is used in an effective way, the degree of success in the enculturation of democratic ideas increases.[5] By connecting ideas of popular sovereignty to their cultural traditions, dissidents during the minjung movement mobilized their commitments and formed a collective identity (291–294, 312–

313). In challenging the established political order, the minjung ideology entailed a strong desire for an alternative reality. In this alternative reality, the minjung possibly transcended their misery, powerlessness, and rage, the emotional states that are traditionally described as han (301). The visualization of minjung identity and dissolution of han sentiment was the underlying principle of the search for "a genuine *minjung culture*" (302, original italics), which materialized as the minjung cultural movement.

Choi Chungmoo (1995: 107–110) addresses the minjung cultural movement in the 1980s as the cultural embodiment of minjung nationalism and a practical attempt to reinstitute and disseminate Korean indigenous culture. According to her, advocates firmly believed that a culture, allegedly shared by all members of the society, could be conducive to "the spiritual realm of national unity" (108–10). Through reaffirming the cultural past, this movement also aimed at overcoming the colonial psychology, constructing a self-esteeming ethnic culture, and rejecting the elite culturalism that devalued Korean culture (C. Choi 1995: 112; N. Lee 2003: 559; N. Lee 2007: 5). Choi (1995: 112) also claims that the project of healing the nation's wounds required the recuperation of history, which could be done by replacing the officially remembered history with the one that had been silenced. In this context, minjung intellectuals used musical and literary mediums, whose symbolic ambiguity allowed "magical realism", a practice of grafting the present self and revolutionary future onto memories of the past (112–114). They also recognized folk cultures as the symbolic ground for "the inversion of the power hierarchy" and "the triumph of subordinated people". Choi identifies this symbolic transgression as a subversive and revolutionary power of folk culture, in which the social order is strategically subverted and "counterhegemony" is developed (110).

This interpretation resonates with Bakhtin's (1984: 109) remark that this type of folk theater or festival "marks the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms and prohibitions" by endowing participants with a "temporal liberation" from the reality of the established order.

In searching for a new medium that could effectively inherit the spirit of traditional folk cultures, minjung intellectuals proposed the "*madang*" (courtyard), which historically signified a space for collective rituals and festivals (C. Choi 1995: 111–115; N. Lee 2003: 557; N. Lee 2007: 190). Madanggŭk emerged in the 1970s with this spatial as well as symbolic concept of madang, where intellectuals believed shared ecstasy (*chiptan shinmyŏng*) and the communal will to resist could be achieved (N. Lee 2007: 114–115). Lee Namhee (2003: 565) defines madanggŭk as a synthesis of "dramaturgical and aesthetic elements of the traditional folk dramas" such as *t'alch'um* (mask dance), puppet drama, and p'ansori. Through madanggŭk, activists tried to create a new form of community with no social boundaries so that they could produce a revolutionary power via "liminality," where observation was transformed to participation (N. Lee 2007: 11, 211). Thus, madanggŭk's significance was in its rendering of not only an alternative forum of social critique, but also of a borderless space where all participants became the subjects (N. Lee 2003: 555).

Lee (2007: 11, 211) also conceptualizes madanggŭk as an art of counterpublic spaces, in which the public agenda was reconstructed and an alternative world was projected. She explains that "working against the state's attempt to promote folk culture as a part of its intense, didactic modernizing efforts," minjung intellectuals "reinvented folk culture as a counternarrative of Korean modernity" (191). In order to challenge the

state, she argues that madanggŭk challenged the boundaries of social orders imposed by the capitalist system (188). Lee's attempt to apply the counterpublic theory to madanggŭk has been highly inspirational to this study in that it successfully links the articulation of counternarratives to the use of traditional art forms. However, primarily relying on Frazer's subaltern counterpublic theory, she does not discuss how madanggŭk's mode of representation also challenged the decorum of the elite public.

In the mid-1980s, two minjung intellectuals, Chae Hŭiwan and Im Chint'aek (1985), proposed a turn from the theatrical form of madanggŭk toward ritual enactment—*madanggut*. Ch'ae (1985: 5) defines madanggut as a social and cultural movement that exposes concealed reality and resolves together. Under the assumption that a ritual involves commonality, reconciliation and transformation, intellectuals believed that madanggut could potentially transform the audience from the detached individuals into collective members (C. Choi 1995: 115; N. Lee 2003: 571–572). This argument thus shares a similarity with a notion suggested by collective behavior theorists: that ritual-like expressive mediums may effectively mobilize mass enthusiasm with charged emotions (Morris 2000: 448). Im Chint'aek (1990a: 326) stressed the totality of *kut* (Korean shamanistic ritual), calling for a "total modality" in which divergent expressive modes would mutually cooperate to maximize the collective sensibility in madanggut performances.

In another layer of discourse, minjung realists problematized the practice of madanggut due to its highly emotionalized approach to revolutionary desire (S. Chŏng 1991: 278). Minjung realists urged to speak of a realistic victory or defeat of minjung through a medium that did not transcend the realm of reality. In other words, minjung

realism pursued a “non-prescribed modality,” discouraging a slavish adherence to a certain medium and rejecting unrealistic forms such as ritual acts (278–280).

The discourses of minjung and their folk culture practices discussed in this section, especially madanggŭk, help theoretically ground this study of the new p’ansori of Badaksori in the political dimension. Looking at the historical context of the rise of minjung ideology is also crucial, as it was under these minjung discourses that the function of p’ansori as a political weapon of commoners intensified. Unlike other folk traditions, whose subversive power was reconfigured or reinvented by actors in the postcolonial and minjung trajectories of Korean society, the power of p’ansori has remained constant and maintained its original essence.

Research Methodology

I conducted preliminary research from 2013, the year I was a member of Badaksori, to 2015. I did my fieldwork from May through August 2016 in Seoul, South Korea. My fieldwork mainly included interviews with Badaksori members and observations of their musical and political activities. The relationship I had with Badaksori from my involvement in 2013 allowed me to easily start off my fieldwork. I visited the Badaksori office, which is located in Hapjeong-dong, Seoul, when members had meetings. At the meetings, I learned of their schedules for practices and performances of new p’ansori repertories. My main interviewee was Choi Yongsuk (b. 1974), the founder and leader of Badaksori. Other interviewees included Ko Kwanu (b. 1977) and Yu Kiyŏng (b. 1985), Badaksori members in their thirties and forties, and Kim Sŭngchin (b. 1977), a guest composer.

One goal of my fieldwork was to observe how Badaksori members create their stories, music, and performances. Over the summer of 2016, Badaksori members were preparing a performance, *Taehanjeguk Myŏngt'amjŏng, Hong Sŏll*ok (*Detective Hong Sŏlrok of the Korean Empire*), and I was thus able to closely observe the process of producing a performance.

In addition, this study relies on historical resources and written documents about the minjung ideologies and experiences that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, and began to subside in the 1990s. I have no direct experience of this political movement, and I therefore relied on a rich collection of resources on minjung discourses, which was helpful in conceptualizing them in my mind.

In sum, the data for this research are drawn from (1) interview with Badaksori members, which I recorded and transcribed; (2) my observation of Badaksori's performances and the process of producing one of those performances, and (3) written documentary sources and published secondary sources.

Terminology

Several terms, such as "*ch'angjak* p'ansori" and "new p'ansori," have been employed by p'ansori scholars to indicate p'ansori pieces that have authorial and compositional aspects (Howard 2006b). Cho Tong-il (1989) describes this practice as "the intended re-creation of p'ansori". According to Cho, "the intention" should be emphasized in this type of practice, because p'ansori, as an oral tradition, has been naturally and endlessly created and recreated both in terms of musical styles and texts (205–206). Kim Yeon (2007: 40–41) asserts that even though the term ch'angjak p'ansori

(“newly created p’ansori”) has largely come to embrace all repertories other than the five traditional ones, its definition and scope remains unclear. A genuine attempt to refine these concepts began recently with Kim Ki-hyŏng’s (2003a) work. Kim provides a definition of ch’angjak p’ansori as a work with new lyrics sung in a new melody (30–31).

While the term ch’angjak p’ansori is prevalent in the South Korean scholarship, it appears less in English publications. After a brief mention of ch’angjak p’ansori, Chan Park (2003) quickly switches to utilize an English-friendly form, “the newly composed p’ansori,” to indicate the practice that, while referring to the old, straw-mat p’an*,* takes place in a modern context (126–127). As current practices of p’ansori-making have increasingly incorporated musical and stylistic hybridization, the necessity has arisen to find a new term that can embrace the new practices. Um (2013) suggests the use of new p’ansori, clearly distinguishing it from ch’angjak p’ansori. According to her, ch’angjak p’ansori follows musical and stylistic features of the tradition, that is, the one-singer–one-drummer format constructed as if to be performed in “the old, straw-mat p’an”. On the other hand, new p’ansori allows more creativity and experimentation in its texts, music, and style such as crossovers (6). This study follows Um’s use of the term new p’ansori in order to cover the wealth of creative attempts observed in Badaksori’s pieces. In order to avoid confusion, I will refer to the five repertories that have been passed down from the Chosŏn Dynasty as “traditional p’ansori,” although the term is not perfect.

Chapter Plan

Chapter 1 discusses the history of p'ansori from theories of its origin to new p'ansori practices, with a focus on text formations and presentations in each period. It mainly covers the five traditional tales of Chosŏn Dynasty and new p'ansori in the contexts of the Japanese colonial period, the postcolonial period, and the authoritarian regimes of the 1960s–80s.

Chapter 2 deals with the Badaksori group as a community. After providing a description of this group with a special attention to the leader, Choi Yongsuk, this chapter examines the formation of Badaksori's political and musical identity with reference to the minjung worldview.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 contain contextual, textual, and musical analyses of three major pieces of Badaksori. Each performance piece will be explained in terms of its historical and political background, text, and performing strategies. In addition, by analyzing transcribed excerpts, the chapter provides detailed illustrations of what strategies Badaksori has used to effectively convey its social criticism and political messages. These analyses demonstrate how the p'ansori tradition has been negotiated by contemporary artists in the modern, cultural environment of South Korea.

Chapter 6 is the conclusion. It summarizes the main points of the previous chapters and articulates the study's main findings and arguments. It also suggests different directions for further studies and some possible applications of this research. This thesis will conclude with ethnomusicological discussions, which include the ways this project can contribute to ethnomusicology.

CHAPTER ONE

FROM TRADITIONAL TO NEW P'ANSORI

Introduction

Studies in ethnomusicology have addressed and exemplified how music creates the context for human actions and provides means by which humans recognize, negotiate, transform, and articulate their identities and social hierarchies (Waterman 1990; Seeger 1994; Stokes 1997; Firth 1996). The scholarship on p'ansori has suggested that sociopolitical and cultural contexts have directly shaped its history and performance practices (K. Kim 2003a; Jang 2014; C. Park 2003; Um 2013). Waterman (1990) in particular problematizes the indiscriminate dependence on *contexts*, either as "a prefatory incarnation," or a sole means to rationalize musical production. He argues that these perspectives may be insufficient for a full "understanding of the influence of music and musicality on human social life in general" (214). His "conceptual reversal of foregrounded "object" and backgrounded "context" (214)" underlies this chapter's examination of p'ansori's history and historiography: p'ansori can fashion sociopolitical conditions within a participation space, where the social order is strategically subverted. While acknowledging the significance of the sociopolitical context, this study tries to complement the academically neglected historiography in order to draw equal attention to p'ansori as a genre that can affect human actions. In this regard, this chapter describes the history of p'ansori from its origins to the newly developed wave, focusing on how it has created sociocultural contexts and particular aspects of the genre that have been behind its ability to do so.

The Text of Traditional P'ansori

No theory on the origin of p'ansori has been firmly verified, but the enthusiastic investigations of several p'ansori scholars have given us with several origin theories. Two of these have been widely considered plausible: p'ansori as a derivative of shaman ritual traditions, especially narrative shamanistic songs, and p'ansori as a development of folk entertainments performed by groups of *kwangdae* (folk entertainers).[6] Chŏng Nosik (1940) proposed that p'ansori originated from the shamanist ritual music of the southwest Chŏlla Province, based on the musical resemblances of these two separate genres.[7] This theory traces the roots of p'ansori back to the Silla Dynasty, around the sixth century, when the ritual actions of *hwarang*—a group of noble, intelligent, and good-looking males who disciplined the mind, practiced martial arts, and studied music with religious devotion—gradually transformed into gut, and their musical pursuits passed down to kwangdae (N. Chŏng 1940). Kwangdae, especially from groups consisting of both entertainers and shamans, have been perceived as the main agents in this process, which suggests the connection between these two theories. In the second origin theory, according to Yi Pohyŏng (1990), p'ansori was derived from songs sung during a type of outdoor folk entertainment, *p'annorŭm*. Yi cites as evidence the stylistic similarities between the two as well as the etymologies of their names.[8] The word p'ansori arguably comes from combining sori with the prefix p'an from p'annorŭm (Um 2013: 33–34). This origin theory has a thread of connection with the former, by positioning narrative shamanist songs as the matrix of p'ansori. However, Yi (1990) argues that kwangdae, with their entertaining music, were direct agents in p'ansori's development as musical

performance. The kwangdae who performed p'ansori at its earliest stage of development included Yu Ch'untae, Ha Hantam, and Ch'oe Sŏntal.

P'ansori was presumably established as a performing genre by at least in the early eighteenth century, during the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392–1910). Song Manchae's poem "Kwanuhŭi," which was written in 1843, provides valid evidence that twelve pieces had already been established and performed by the late eighteenth century (H. Yi 1989: 275–276). This poem also depicts performing conventions of kwangdae, who mainly performed for the general populace and were occasionally hired to celebrate aristocrats' passing of the civil service examination (H. Yi 1989: 272–275; Ku 2013: 81; S. Chang 1991: 248–249). Table 1 lists twelve pieces of p'ansori that are believed to have been performed during the Chosŏn Dynasty.

Table 1. Twelve P'ansori Pieces[9]

Title	Transmitted to date
춘향가; *Ch'unhyangga*	O
심청가; *Shimch'ŏngga*	O
흥보가; *Hŭngboga*	O
수궁가; *Sugungga*	O
적벽가; *Chŏkpyŏkka*	O
숙영낭자전; *Sukyŏngnangjajŏn*	X
배비장타령; *Baebijangt'aryŏng*	X
장끼타령; *Changkkit'aryŏng*	X
변강쇠타령; *Pyŏn'gangsoet'aryŏng*	X
무숙이타령; *Musugit'aryŏng*	X
옹고집타령; *Onggojipt'aryŏng*	X
강릉매화타령; *Kangnŭngmaehwat'aryŏng*	X

It is widely agreed that these twelve p'ansori pieces began as an art of lower class people and were constructed within their ethos and from their standpoints. Cho Tongil (1969: 107) and Marshall Pihl (1994: 69–71) explain the textual construction of p'ansori as a mélange of a core, schematic story that is already known to the traditional audience and elements that reflect folk culture and life. Cho (1969) termed these two different levels of textual construction "*kojŏng* and *pigojŏng* (core and accretion)," and this notion has become the basis of discussions on p'ansori texts. Im Chint'aek (1990b: 201) contextualizes this fixed–unfixed (core–accretion) system as a life: The fixed story is the root of a life, which never dissipates, and the unfixed story is the circumference or margin of a life, where miscellaneous stories enter or are expelled. Chŏn Sinchae (1991) also maintains that p'ansori, an art of "secular and folkish realism," induces a strong sentiment by mixing tragic beauty and humorous sarcasm built upon lives at the grass roots. Yoo Young-Dai (2004: 188) argues that p'ansori was originally a minjung art of the Chosŏn Dynasty that entailed the minjung's ideology of the time. According to Kim Ki-hyŏng (2003a: 33), the essential nature of p'ansori lies in realism, improvisation, and "on-the-spotness" rather than its transmission as a canonized form. These studies have pointed out that this singing tradition reflects the lives of the general populace in the lower stratum of the Chosŏn social hierarchy.[10]

This grassroots realism took on a new aspect as the upper class began to pay attention to p'ansori. This presumably happened at least around the mid-eighteenth century, given that the earliest text on p'ansori written by an aristocrat was written in 1754.[11] Another poem, Sin Wi's "Kwan'guk Cholgu Sibisu" ("Twelve Quatrains on Viewing the Theater"), is also considered an invaluable resource in the study of Korean

traditional theatricals and folk entertainments. It provides a detailed picture of a p'ansori performance of the time, discussing performers, audiences, content, and order of performance (Um 2013: 43; Yun 1981: 264). Sin's account, which treats p'ansori as aristocratic high art, signifies the attempts of *yangban* (ruling class or gentry during the Chosŏn Dynasty) to absorb p'ansori into their collection of art (Chŏn 1991).

In the nineteenth century, this genre became situated as a crucial entertainment in literati circles (C. Park 2003: 59). P'ansori scholars (Jang 2014; C. Park 2003; Um 2013) have addressed that the literati facilitated p'ansori's proliferation through patronage, while also executing some degrees of Confucian censorship over its "inappropriate vulgarities," replacing them with "Confucian and cultivated nobleness". In this process, the five surviving texts became furnished with Confucian morality and rules. It is in this period that p'ansori as an art of the grassroots began to take a different shape, leading to divergent conceptualizations of the p'ansori texts among scholars.

For instance, Jang Yeonok (2014: 47) clearly shows that *Ch'unhyangga* highlights the virtue of marital fidelity; *Shimch'ŏngga* accentuates filial piety; brotherly love and order is found in *Hŭngboga*; loyalty to the king in *Sugungga*; and faith between friends and chivalry in *Chŏkpyŏkka*. Lee Hyeon Jeong (2013: 157) in particular argues that the subject of *Shimch'ŏngga* is filial piety per se, an extreme filial piety to the degree that a daughter sacrifices her life to open her father's eyes. Ch'oe Munchŏng (2008: 237–238) views p'ansori as a product of the dominant ideology and as a vehicle used by the ruling class to disseminate their worldview and values among the lower class. Um (2008: 26) argues that the main themes of the five pieces correspond to "the five cardinal principles of Confucian ethics." These Confucian-oriented p'ansori draw on a scheme of

narrative in which protagonists who fulfil Confucian morality are rewarded with upward social and economic mobility (M. Ch'oe 2008: 238).

Other scholars problematize this view of p'ansori as affirming the dominant, Confucian ideology. Cho Tong-il (1978: 26) addresses the way in which a p'ansori performance unfurls through the narration of two subjects; one is told with "erudite words" and the other "vulgar words". Cho suggests "a logic of conflicts" as a constituent of p'ansori narratives. For instance, in *Ch'unhyangga*, the conflict is between Ch'unhyang as a well-bred woman who is nevertheless the daughter of a *kisaeng* (female entertainer of the lower class) (26–28). Chan Park (2003: 114) also conceptualizes the texts of p'ansori as the products of complex juxtapositions of the secular and the elite. She suggests a central scheme of p'ansori texts that consists of faith, resistance, and healing. The resistance to which she refers is not resistance against the dominant ideology, but against evil; for example, Ch'unhyang does not fight against "the Confucian golden rules but against their abuse" (114). Although Park rejects a simple division between the folk and Confucian ideology, she situates Confucianism as the overarching frame of p'ansori texts. She calls the simultaneous pursuit of and resistance to Confucian ideology "thematic dualism" (C. Park 1998: 68). The contradictions create an irony that belongs to the conventions of oral narrative that arise nonlinearly from the depths of an oral tradition (Lord 1960: 97). For these scholars, the thematic contradictions arise from the dualism of social criticism from the grassroots and solemnness from the social elites.

However, p'ansori is neither a Confucian defender nor a bifurcated narrative. P'ansori began and has continued as an art of social critique, through which the grassroots have voiced their resistance to the dominant ideology and the ruling class. For

instance, *Ch'unhyangga* is not about promoting high chastity, but about fighting for humane liberation from the constraints of social hierarchy (T. Cho 1978: 26–28). The lesson of good triumphing over evil is less likely to elicit emotional responces from the audience, as the relevant scene is barely emphasized. Instead, what is highlighted in *Ch'unhyangga* is its heightened tragic ethos that comes from a young couple torn apart by Confucian norms and the ensuing suffering of a woman left behind. This manipulation of emotion, or the han sentiment, makes it possible to bring the audience up against the downside of Confucian rules.

Furthermore, *Shimch'ŏngga* does not celebrate the happy ending of a devotional daughter, but exposes an absurd and tyrannical world, where the social system imposes sacrifices on vulnerable children and women (T. Kim 2009: 29–30). *Hŭngboga* reveals the subhuman conditions and rampant exploitation of life in poverty in the nineteenth century. It also emasculates the dominant ideology by dwarfing Hŭngbo, a faithful follower of Confucian ethics, and exposing his incompetence (M. Ch'oe 2008: 222; M. Lee 1981: 337). *Chŏkpyŏkka* entails hostility to a nation that destroys grassroots people by highlighting them bemoaning enforced participation in unjustifiable war and deaths in vain (C. Kim 2000: 293–294). It also accentuates equality by occasionally ignoring the class, and resists authority and Confucian norms by degrading prestige of a commander (Kim and Kim 2000: 153–158, 161). In *Sugungga*, the power is overturned, as a wisdom of a powerless rabbit wins over a foolish dragon king, who enforces sacrifice by means of power. It satirizes a crumbling feudal order, tyranny, wrongful loyalty, and corrupt ruling class (T. Cho 2001: 165–166; T. Kim 2009: 17–19).

Thus, p'ansori is defined politically, rather than morally. Within the performance, the rigid power structure was strategically reconfigured and subverted, having the upper class unnoticed. By means of indirect utterance with oblique metaphors and manipulation of han sentiment, p'ansori practitioners of the time sought to appropriate their tradition that was otherwise engulfed by the dominant ideology. This sub-textual display of criticism was reinforced by a high degree of indecorousness that presumably gave umbrage the dominant public. In this regard, the use of vulgar expressions for social critique was an act of affirming p'ansori as a discourse of a counterpublic that violated the decorum of Confucian-oriented dominant public.

The transformation in the social status of the spectators and the corresponding ideological censorship has often been perceived as the main cause of the disappearance of seven of the twelve narratives from the traditional repertory (C. Kim 2000: 287). However, their disappearance in fact was due to their incompatibility with the political function of p'ansori, rather than the action or agency of the audiences or censors. The conflicts found in the lost seven pieces do not represent sociopolitical issues of the society, but the personalities of the characters. From the aesthetic point of view, in addition, these pieces solely highlight kolgye (humor), rather than alternating between kolgye and pijang (solemnness) to provide the emotional refreshment offered by the surviving five (288–289). In this sense, the repertories were naturally "expelled" during a process of negotiation in which performers manipulated narratives to conform to the essence of p'ansori as a space for articulating the political values of commoners. The fate of each of the twelve, therefore, was contingent on its successful engagement with political experiences, ideologies, and emotions (287).

P’ansori in the nineteenth century signified a power struggle between the ruling and the ruled. It was reshaped with a text–subtext structure, as the grassroots critique was converted into the subtext while the surface text was transformed into an edifying apparatus (M. Ch’oe 2008: 237–238). The adaptive, flexible, and fluid nature of p’ansori’s textual presentation has created a particular context in which different strata of the audience manipulate the text, or subtext, according to their ethics and values. Under the sociocultural tension between feudalistic and antifeudalistic ideologies, nevertheless, p’ansori remained the weapon of the weak, which then became re-embodied as the text in the next phrase.

The Emergence of New P’ansori and Patriotic P’ansori

Key elements of the transformed milieu of twentieth century p’ansori were the establishment of indoor theatres, the change of its performing venue from a mat to the proscenium stage, the development of *ch’anggŭk*[12], the canonization of the surviving five repertoires, and the standardization of the performers’ repertoire of expression and gesture. Through the experiences of Japanese annexation of Korea, modernization, and industrialization, p’ansori, along with other folk cultural traditions, entered a life-threatening competition with massively imported branches of performing arts of Western culture (K. Kim 2003a: 34; C. Park 1995: 75–6). This cultural crisis brought about a new awareness of ethnic identity among Korean intellectuals and artists. Accordingly, heightened attention was paid to Korean native cultural practices including p’ansori. In this context, many attempts were made to restore and recreate Korean culture with “the spirits of the age” in which it is performed (K. Kim 2003a: 35).

On the national level, the Park Chung-hee regime (1961–1979), which aggressively pushed the modernization project, simultaneously carried forward policies to preserve Korean cultural heritage. In 1962, the government first laid down a regulation regarding the system of intangible cultural properties, with the first designation being enacted in 1964 (S. Chŏng 2008: 188, 196). Rooted in cultural nationalism, this cultural policy "constructed a notion of 'authenticity'," endorsing "authentic, national arts" at the state level (Um 2013: 200). Furthermore, this state-led construction of "Korean brand identity (Howard 2006a: 176)" signified its deep association with the nationalist agendas: First, by attributing the duty to preserve the cultural traditions at risk from modernization to a national responsibility, this cultural policy was expected to mobilize the popular psychology in favor of Korea's modernization project; second, it was a necessary process to enhance Korea's cultural competitiveness in the international society; and finally, these visible publicity effects were thought to strengthen the nationalist legitimacy that the authoritarian Park regime lacked (S. Chŏng 2008: 196–7). The twofold endeavor to save Korean cultural traditions, whether through re-creations or institutionalized strategies, shaped the unique atmosphere and soundscape of this performing art in the twentieth century.

P'ansori was also designated as the fifth Important Intangible Cultural Heritage of South Korea in 1964. Based on the official patronage, p'ansori has been elevated to "a high-art form" or a national prestigious and iconic tradition (K. Kim 2003a: 35; C. Park 1995: 76; Um 2013: 200). This national drive to brand p'ansori as a cultural emblem guaranteed its performers a sustainable and stable system for its preservation and transmission. While the preservation system is often viewed as a positive apparatus that

provided cultural pride (Howard 2006b: vii), it also caused practical problems: the transmitted repertories have been canonized and p'ansori with "participatory ethos (Turino 2008)" have been transformed into sori, which is only listened to (D. Shin 2010: 228–229). A mastersinger Park Pongsul once problematized the lack of *kongnyŏk* (ability to weave sori with inexhaustible transitions) among p'ansori singers nowadays, as the system rendered apprentices focused on copying their teachers (M. Kim 1988: 28–29). P'ansori scholars have attributed the canonized practice of p'ansori to the excising of its vital characteristics, including the "on-the-spotness (K. Kim 2003a)" and "grassroots realism (Chŏn 1991)". The function of p'ansori as social critique also seem to have been overshadowed, as it has served as one of Korean cultural brands under the nationalist agendas.

However, the subversive spirit of p'ansori has continued, especially with the emergence of new p'ansori, which traces back to the early twentieth century. The practice of creating a new p'ansori piece was initiated by mastersingers, mainly Kim Changhwan (1854–1927), who performed *Ch'oe Pyŏngtu T'aryŏng* (*The Song of Ch'oe Pyŏngtu*) in 1904 (Pak 1976: 29).[13] Signifying an antifeudalistic ideology, it portrays a real event, in which the protagonist is wrongly persecuted by a corrupt official (Um 2013: 182; C. Kim 1996: 260). As Ch'oe Pyŏngtu rejected his privilege as a yangban and accepted progressive ideals, he has often been conceptualized as the first citizen to appear in p'ansori (C. Kim 1996: 306). As the first attempt to depart from the traditional canon in order to embody a recent and real-world experience, *Ch'oe Pyŏngtu T'aryŏng* seems to be entitled as the first new p'ansori (268). However, its original purpose of composition, which was arguably for ch'anggŭk,[14] and its apparent Japanophilism complicates its

status as new p'ansori (K. Kim 2003a: 34; Y. Kim 2007: 47). Still, the significance of this work lies in its converting the subtext into the text and its development of united realism, annihilating any feudalistic ideologies. The existence of *Ch'oe Pyŏngtu T'aryŏng* also weakens the contention that seven repertories vanished due to the literati class outweighing the lower class in p'ansori's textual space, because it was born based on growing awareness of commoners (W. Ch'oe 1978: 289). Despite the issues regarding its position in new p'ansori, *Ch'oe Pyŏngtu T'aryŏng* did begin a new phrase of p'ansori, instigating a shift to modernity with stories based on the lives of the people (C. Kim 1996: 273).

In addition, the performance of p'ansori under Japanese colonial rule was inevitably shaped by the context of cultural invasion and suppression (Yoo 2004: 187). Under the coercive influence of Japanese imperialism, p'ansori was either suppressed or modified in favor of Japanese militarism (M. Kim 1988: 290–291; Yoo 2004: 189; Um 2013: 51). For example, such scenes as delightfully joining the Japanese army were inserted; texts were translated into Japanese for pre-censorship; and the pledge of allegiance to the Japanese nation was required to do before performances (M. Kim 1988: 287–291). With no choice but to follow, some mastersingers chose to quit performing p'ansori and led a wretched life or died of hunger (56, 277, 287). Due to forcibleness and absurdity in this practice, scholars of new p'ansori generally agree that new p'ansori in the true sense was initiated after the end of the Japanese occupation (Jang 2014: 124; Um 2013: 181).

The most representative repertoire of postcolonial new p'ansori is *Yŏlsaga* (*Songs of the Patriots*), which was formulated by Pak Tongsil (1897–1968) around the time of

liberation. It comprises four pieces that eulogize four fighters for independence and sovereignty, and it became popular as a "retrospective expression of resistance" (C. Park 2003: 127). Categorized as patriotic p'ansori*,* it protests Japanese colonialism and projects a strong nationalistic sentiment. Musically, it features much of the *kyemyŏn* style that expresses very desperate, solemn, and resentful themes, highlighting pijang than kolgye. Other mastersingers such as Han Sŭngho and Kim Yŏnsu also contributed to its dissemination and expansion, by adding songs of historical figures from prior to the colonial period to stir up a higher sense of national consciousness. This participatory music-making process as well as the installation of a particular aspiration in the narrative is significant, as it conforms to the thematic nature of traditional p'ansori (K. Kim 2003a: 35; Y. Kim 2007: 47; Yoo 2004: 189–191). Other patriotic p'ansori repertories that followed *Yŏlsaga* include Park Tongjin's *815 Kwangbok* (*The 815 Liberation*) and Cho Sanghyŏn's *Yunbonggil Ŭisa* (*The Martyr Yun Bonggil*). The high musicality of the mastersingers enabled them to enhance the vitality of their new pieces (Y. Kim 2007: 48).

Minjung P'ansori: The Heyday of New P'ansori Productions

This series of patriotic, nationalistic, or anti-Japanese p'ansori in the mid-twentieth century soon gave way to a new group of repertoires, so-called minjung p'ansori (Um 2013: 183). In the midst of the political upheaval in the 1980s, the minjung cultural movement was situated as a vital domain of revolutionary movements. As the cultural embodiment of minjung nationalism, the minjung cultural movement aspired to re-disseminate Korean indigenous cultural practices in order to construct a self-esteeming ethnic culture and to encourage the use of those practices to materialize minjung ideology

(C. Choi 1995: 112; N. Lee 2003: 559). In this mission, minjung p'ansori emerged as a central tool for social activism and criticism through a creative process that relied heavily on the genre's satirical power (Y. Kim 2007: 55; Yoo 2004: 191).

Amongst several participants in this new wave, the discussion on minjung p'ansori centers on a key figure, Im Chint'aek (b. 1950). After graduating from Seoul National University with a degree in diplomatic science, he created a handful of p'ansori repertories, which had a crucial role in awakening the critical consciousness of the masses. In 1974, he met Kim Chiha (b. 1941), a famous activist poet, and promised Kim to produce "a good work" based on Kim's ballade, *Piŏ* (*Rumor*) (Yoo 2004: 192–3). His first p'ansori performance was of *Sorinaeryŏk* (*The Origin of Sound*), one of the episodes of *Piŏ,* in jail in 1974. After his release, he officially premiered *Sorinaeryŏk* at Myŏngdong Cathedral on December 31, 1974. At about the same time, he saw a performance by mastersinger Chŏng Kwŏnchin by chance, after which he reportedly told the people around him, "P'ansori is the best monodrama" (Park and Hŏ 2011). After several years of learning p'ansori from Chŏng Kwŏnchin, Im created and performed *Ttongbada* (*The Sea of Dung*), *Owŏlgwangju* (*Kwangju Upheaval in May*), and *Ojŏk* (*The Five Bandits*) in the 1980s and 1990s.

In 1985, Im Chint'aek performed *Ttongbada* based on Kim Chiha's burlesque, *Punssimurŏ* (*The Story of Mr. Dung*), the name of which was later changed to *Ttongbada* as well. It criticizes the Japanese reattempt to politically and economically imperialize Korea with the Korean elites' assistance (Im 1994b). The plot revolves around a Japanese man whose ancestors were killed by excrement while invading Korea. In order to avenge them, he holds in his ordure as much as possible until he can take a dump on top of an

emblematic statue of a heroic general in Korea, Yi Sunsin. Yet he then dies himself after slipping on the bird droppings and falling into the sea of his own mess. The central material, ordure, permeates the piece in a semantic network: The Japanese pooping in Korea indicates their imperialistic ambitions; the praise by a group of Koreans for the scent of his mess exposes the dependence of Korean political circles on a foreign country; and the ordure of the birds and himself that leads to his death is a warning to Japan against self-destruction (K. Kim 2000: 348–349). The premeditated dirtiness imposed throughout the piece enhances both its satirical characteristic and the thrill of hearing the tale of a self-punishing enemy in an imagined world.

Premiered in 1990, Im's *Owŏlgwangju* is an epic p'ansori that develops around incidents that happened during the ten days of the 1980 Kwangju Democratic Movement, a watershed event in South Korea's progress toward democracy (Im 1994a). It is perceived as unique in that it embraces the protest culture's soundscape, including rallying chants, activists' songs, and street broadcasts, which add a sense of immediacy and uplift (K. Kim 1994: 118). The realism that saturates this piece comes not only from the use of realistic words, but from Im's insertion of his friend, who actually died trying to defend a provincial office, as a main character (Boo 2014: 102).

Kim Ki-hyŏng (2003a: 36) describes Im's performance as musically incomplete compared to the fullness of his work's sense of purpose and critical thought. For Im, who began to learn p'ansori in his mid-twenties, composing and singing p'ansori was not an easy task (Park and Hŏ 2011). As his view of p'ansori emphasizes the mastery of vocal projection (Im 1990b: 200–202),[15] he initially hoped to find mastersingers to perform his pieces. But those he approached were unwilling to do so on the grounds that an amateur

composition would compromise the "high bravura of p'ansori" and that dealing with sociopolitical issues would contaminate "the pureness of p'ansori" (249). This situation lasted until a mastersinger Yun Chinch'ŏl (b. 1964) performed *Owŏlgwangju*, showing a changed attitude toward new p'ansori. Im's lack of musicality also led to a transformation in the audience, from p'ansori lovers to a group of students, intellectuals, and citizens, who valued the political and ideological identity embedded in his work more than music (Boo 2014: 196; Y. Kim 2007: 55).

The use of p'ansori within the discourse of minjung movement suggests a recuperation of the politically reflective and satirical function of traditional p'ansori, which had been neglected in its canonization process (Yoo 2004: 191). Im Chint'aek, with both his performances and publications, played a major role in manifesting p'ansori's function in a true sense, in sharp contrast to what mastersingers had imposed on the p'ansori tradition. Again, minjung p'ansori continues its traditional function as the weapon of the weak, perhaps more effectively and powerfully than ever.

New P'ansori from the 1990s to the Present

In the 1990s, South Korea witnessed the victory of minjung and the establishment of the first civil government (1993–1998) led by the fourteenth president Kim Young Sam. However, minjung ideologies and movements continued to be remembered and retroactively expressed in the new p'ansori practice. For example, several mastersingers, including An Suksŏn (b. 1949) and Kim Suyŏn (b. 1948), sang in 1993 *Kŭnariyŏ yŏngwŏnhara* (*Forever, That Day*) that deals with the 1980 Kwangju Democratic

Movement. Moreover, a mastersinger Yun Chinch'ŏl rearranged and performed Im Chint'aek's *Owŏlgwangju* in 2000.

In the post-authoritarian era with a relatively stable, democratic political order, p'ansori performers continue to retain its subversive function by means of summoning other objects of criticism, either from the past or the present. An Suksŏn performed *Chŏptongsae* (*Lesser Cuckoo*) written by the famed poet Ko Un (b. 1933), consoling victims of Japanese sex slavery in their suffering in 1998. Kim Yeon mainly performed new p'ansori pieces about the Tonghak Rebellion of 1894 that called for an end to officials' exploitation and corruption (Y. Kim 2007: 57).[16]

Studies on new p'ansori have suggested that at the turn of the twenty-first century, the overall trend of themes switched from heavily political and solemn ones to more personalized stories with light mirth (Boo 2014: 99; K. Kim 2003a: 37; Yoo 2004: 199; Um 2013: 187–188). However, p'ansori performances produced in this century also contain themes as heavy as those of the previous productions, such as issues regarding the government, national tragedies, and historical misfortunes. It is the way of presentation, which incorporates entertaining expressions, that makes those pieces sound less serious. Leaving solemnity about issues inside, the new p'ansori practice in the 2000s represents an aesthetic balance between pijang and kolgye that both patriotic and minjung p'ansori often failed to attain.

P'ansori does not always infer anti-government issues. Under the progressive Kim Dae Jung (1924–2009) and Roh Moo Hyun (1946–2009) administrations (1998–2003 and 2003–2008, respectively), for example, members of Badaksori, whose political dispositions corresponded to those ruling parties, focused instead on criticizing perceived

social injustice and foreign imperialist power. They frequently sang p'ansori at the House of Sharing, a rest home for survivors of Japanese military sexual slavery, and also at relevant demonstrations.[17] Badaksori also criticized the U.S. invasion of Iraq through a piece called *Panjon P'ansori, Sumatup'oktanga* (Anti-war P'ansori, *The Song of Smart Bomb*) in 2003. New p'ansori in the 2000s will be dealt with in detail in the following chapters' analyses of the works of Badaksori.

In terms of music, new p'ansori in the 2000s features a growing amount of amateurism (K. Kim 2003a: 38) and experiments. From an insider's perspective, "amateurs" denote performers whose educational backgrounds and professions do not lie precisely in p'ansori. For example, Kim Myŏngcha, who majored in Russian, gained popularity with her piece, *Syup'ŏdaek Ssirŭmch'ulchŏnggi* (*The Story of Syup'ŏdaek's Participation in Korean Wrestling*) at the *Ttorang* Kwangdae ("small-time p'ansori performer") Contest (K. Kim 2003a: 37; Um 2013: 196).

Although the majority of new p'ansori performers major in p'ansori in higher education these days, they usually start performing before they reach their musical peak, which is believed to come after their forties. This phenomenon increases the concern regarding the neglected musicality in the current p'ansori practices, as literary content and theatrical effect are more emphasized here than in patriotic p'ansori produced by mastersingers (Um 2013: 200). However, young performers' youthful creativity and energy, along with open-mindedness about collaborations with other artistic sectors, have allowed the soundscape of p'ansori to flourish and diversify.

Performers of new p'ansori in the 2000s in general have engaged in active and practical activities for creating a dynamic p'an that invites the audience to be participants

(K. Kim 2003a: 37). By purposely appointing themselves as ttorang kwangdae, which traditionally indicates singers holding a marginal position outside of major schools, p'ansori performers have promoted creativity, innovation, dynamics, and informality (Um 2013: 196–197). This self-declared amateurism is also an act of resistance against the totalized and formalized cultural expression "imposed by institutionalized tradition" (203). Positioning themselves as amateurs irrespective of their actual status, some p'ansori performers want the symbolic exclusion from the established p'ansori world, which has embraced the cultural elitism that jeopardized the essence of p'an.

Conclusion

This chapter challenged the idea of traditional p'ansori as a device to promote Confucian morality by constructing a new conceptualization of p'ansori as a challenge to this ideology. This counternarrative has existed all along as a form of subtext. By maximizing its expression of the suffering of commoners that results from practicing Confucian morality, traditional p'ansori subverts the promotion of this ideology and reveals the harsh reality of everyday life.

Experiencing modernity, performers at the onset of the twentieth century began to project antifeudalistic and anti-imperialistic ideas in a more straightforward and pronounced way: the *subtext* was foregrounded, becoming the *text*. In the late twentieth century, this function of p'ansori was recognized and accentuated as part of minjung discourse, challenging the public agenda of the authoritarian state. At the turn of the twenty-first century, several p'ansori performers began to vigorously create new performances with colorful experiments that strove to be culturally interactive with

contemporary audiences. Also, South Korea's altered political climate toward democracy has allowed performers to consider effective ways to politically engage the audience. The performers strategically fulfill the critical function of p'ansori by manipulating traditional sentiments and producing commodities more accessible to a modern audience. In sum, new p'ansori signifies a transformation in textual and musical presentations for the purpose of perpetuating the tradition as social critique.

CHAPTER TWO

BADAKSORI'S POLITICS

Introduction

At the turn of the twenty-first century, some p'ansori performers in their twenties and thirties began to discuss issues surrounding p'ansori practices and to work together to produce new p'ansori pieces. These performers, who shared similar ideas on performance styles and philosophies, began to establish organizations. Through the organizations, they engaged in performance activities with the intention of carrying on their tradition while also addressing their own musicality, worldviews, and cultural demands. Among the handful of organizations of p'ansori performers that emerged in this period,[18] Badaksori, the focus of this study, was one of the pioneering groups. Established in 2002, Badaksori is a private organization that has actively engaged in creative activities related to p'ansori. It relies on funding from government-affiliated cultural foundations and organizations, such as Arts Council Korea and the Seoul Foundation for Arts and Culture. The members are loosely affiliated to this group, so their number varies. As of September 2016, Badaksori included fifteen p'ansori performers and one administrator. They ranged in age from their early twenties to early forties.

This group is interesting for several reasons: (1) Badaksori is one of the most long-lived private groups that comprise of professional p'ansori performers currently in action; (2) Badaksori members have engaged in healthy debates regarding their artistic production and political stance; (3) they have both produced p'ansori as a trendy, cultural commodity, and conducted outreach activities and political actions outside the stage; (4)

they possess a broad spectrum of repertories that they have created themselves, with diverse purposes, formats, styles, contents, and musics; and (5) Badaksori is widely acknowledged to be a representative group for p'ansori performance, as substantiated by several official awards. This chapter will delve into multiple aspects of the group's practices.

The Bottom of Life: Defining Badaksori

"The bottom of life," Choi Yongsuk (b. 1974), the founder and leader of Badaksori, said in a small, bashful voice, when asked the meaning of "Badaksori." He continued to explain it as "doing sori (singing) that talks about the stories of people who are suppressed and suffered in their positions" (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm). Officially, Badaksori is defined as a group that does "sori of the history and lives of the people of the bottom" of the socio-economic strata, with a mission to "cultivate a cultural community of ch'angjak p'ansori in the lives of the people" (Badaksori; D. Shin 2010: 226). Despite the activist tendency of Badaksori, Choi says that the group has no official mission statement that is relevant to their political activity; the mission of the organization is simply to create new p'ansori.

Looking at the lyrics of *Badaksori-ga* (*The Song of Badaksori*) sheds more light more on the direction of their creative activities. Composed in 2002, *Badaksori-ga* is the first piece that members created after the group was established, and has been sung as the group's main theme song.

I shidaeŭi sorikkunŭn toksuriŭi nun'gwa kat'ŭn nalk'aroumŭro sesangŭl chŏnghwak'i parabogo...songjangdo tŭlssŏginŭn hŭnggyŏpko choŭn soriro p'urŏnaeya i sach'ŏnŭi sorikkun. yŏksaŭi sori, in'ganŭi sori, sallinŭn sori, hŏnshinhanŭn sori...padagesŏ norabose urinŭn i ttangŭl, saramŭl, yŏksarŭl sŏmgigo saranghanŭn padaksorikkun!

P'ansori singers of our times must look at the world as precisely and trenchantly as eagles' eyes…and deliver it through good p'ansori cheerfully enough to excite even a corpse. Sori of history, sori of humanity, sori for saving lives, and sori for sacrificing...Let's enjoy being on the ground. We are Badaksori-*kkun* (singers, performers, or kwangdae) who care and love our land, our people, and our history! (Badaksori 2006)

The song's declaration focuses on correctly knowing the world and history and caring for humanity, as well as delivering these messages by means of "good p'ansori." It seems to put more weight on what p'ansori singers must tell their audience through the tradition than on how they promote or preserve the tradition. How did they come to develop this distinct direction with nationalist, realist, and even philanthropic approaches?

Figure 2. Members of Badaksori in 2014 (source: Badaksori)

The Founding of Badaksori

Badaksori began in 2002 as a small movement to invigorate the practice of new p'ansori by several performers who found they had similar attitudes toward p'ansori. Choi Yongsuk, who had long been interested in creating new p'ansori repertories, suggested the name Badaksori (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm.). It comprises two nouns, *badak* and sori. Badak indicates the floor, ground, or bottom, and sori implies sound, and, in this context, p'ansori. In addition, badak is a metaphorical expression for the marginalized and the weak of society. As the group's name suggests, the members attempt to provide consolation and amusement for the masses living in contemporary Korea through their tradition (Um 2013: 202). With this goal, their main interests have been centered on producing and performing new p'ansori repertories, to which modern commoners can strongly relate, with a range from light mirth to current sociopolitical issues.

After the group was launched, members worked to establish its mission. At the initial stage, Choi explains, conflicts and concomitant ill feeling were frequent. The very first disagreement among the founding members was a radical split regarding the creative activity itself.

> Around the time when we began to work on ch'angjak p'ansori, the prevailing view of the p'ansori world was like, "who do you think you are making p'ansori?"...It was only after endeavors of several groups including us came to fruition that [this practice] became a must-do for the young p'ansori performers of today. It took ten years to become natural. Anyway, these [divergent ideas on the practice] brought Badaksori to a crisis, and it fell apart (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm).

Despite the initial impetus for forming the group, the "conservative" views of some members and p'ansori society in general gave rise to quarrels on the matter of continuing new p'ansori practices. For the conservative sector, acquiring musical perfection took precedence over creating new pieces. In the end, Badaksori stopped working together after about two or three years. It soon regrouped, this time with performers who showed a keen interest in creative and experimental practices (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm.). Since then, the identity of Badaksori has been deeply rooted in creativeness.

Another critical issue around Badaksori's identity lies in its involvement in political activism. The early members often failed to agree on the content and venues of performances. Several of them felt compunction about performing p'ansori at the spot of demonstrations. Choi views this reluctance as connected to their concern about the role of artists rather than their political stance. Even if the ideas conveyed through p'ansori conformed to their political disposition, exhibiting their vocal tradition at scenes of protest was another story. Since modern cultural policies branded p'ansori as a dignified and authentic art of the nation, using it to deal with sociopolitical issues has been regarded by some practitioners as contaminating its pureness (K. Kim 2003b: 178; Im 1990b: 249). Some of Badaksori's early members held this view as far as their tradition was concerned and did not want to sing on the street like a propaganda squad (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm.). Their pursuit of p'ansori as a high art form often brought them into conflict with those who denied the possibility of completely neutral, apolitical art. The latter corresponds to Bourdieu's view that "even the 'purest' artistic intention cannot completely escape from sociology," as artistic creation depends on certain

historical, social, and political conditions (Bourdieu 1971: 167). For Choi and others, artistic production is bound to be social and political, and to operate within "an intersubjectively constructed context (Robbins 2006: 5)". A co-representative, Ko Kwanu (b. 1977), considers those early experiences to have been a good stepping stone for today's Badaksori. For him, the early debates supported the later sustained and effective running of the group (Ko Kwanu 2016, pers. comm.).

The conflict and instability that the early members experienced have decreased over the course of Badaksori's existence, but not entirely vanished. The strategy they chose to become stable was to ask all members for consent at every event and regarding every issue. Badaksori holds regular meetings every Monday, where all members are welcome to express their ideas on matters from significant to trifle. When the leading members plan events based on the thoughts voiced during the regular meetings, the other members decide individually whether to join or not. Some members still shrink from engaging in activism, and confine their role in this group to performing on stage, while others do not. Choi stresses "no coercion or pressure" in the name of unity (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm). Similarly, Ko emphasizes that decisions are never made under the influence of a single individual (Ko Kwanu 2016, pers. comm.). In this way, Badaksori is open to all the possibilities of production and participation, unless an idea is diametrically opposed to its political identity. Repeated meetings and occasional quarrels provide members with considerable opportunity to negotiate varied issues and interests. As a result, Badaksori has been able to establish an identity as a cultural community grounded on liberal activities of p'ansori creation, performance, and study (D. Shin 2010:

226). Members are self-practicing and self-representing in their political pursuits, which center on building a world free of oppression, division, and violence.

Badaksori and the Minjung Worldview

Unlike members' denial of being labeled as political or leftist-leaning, their performing activities clearly show their political orientation, which highly overlaps with the minjung ideology. Based on this parallel and Choi's mention of minjung as an influencer, this study brings minjung discourses and missions in examining and revealing Badaksori's political nature, despite the temporal gap between the two.[19] Choi acknowledges the high probability of minjung's influence over his and Badaksori's identity, especially through a key figure in the minjung cultural movement, Im Chint'aek. As a semi-professional p'ansori singer and minjung intellectual, he created several new p'ansori pieces such as *Ojŏk* (*Five Bandits*) and *Sorinaeryŏk* (*The Origin of the Sound*), bringing about a new subgenre, minjung p'ansori. Choi explains that the works of Im Chint'aek were highly inspirational to him, especially *Ttongbada* (*The Sea of Dung*) and *Owŏlgwangju* (*Kwangju Upheaval in May*) (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm.)

Ttongbada strongly resonates with Badaksori's solid nationalistic and anti-foreign sentiments. Furthermore, its intended dirtiness or underlying "indecorousness" as a counter to elitist "novelty" echoes a frequently used strategy in Badaksori's performances, such as *The Demise of King Rat* and *The Bulletproof Iron Case*. *Owŏlgwangju* shares a central context with *The Bulletproof Iron Case* and features a high degree of realism, bringing in the real sounds of protest scenes as well as a real figure. *The Bulletproof Iron Case* also features a realistic approach, by weaving realistic indexes into a fictional

world.[20] After encountering these performances by Im, Choi appreciated the possibility of changing society through the voice in this way, and began to aspire to do "that kind of sori" (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm.).

Choi also places himself in a lineage that descends from madanggŭk movement, a branch of the minjung cultural movement. Madanggŭk, as a postcolonial theater of resistance, was a site for recuperating a national essence and negotiating "between history and contemporary social reality" (N. Lee 2003: 572, 578). As a derivative of madanggŭk, madanggut was a ritualized venue where shared emotions and experiences were thought to shift the individual identities into collective members, based on a total modality (Im 1990a: 326). Badaksori's performance practices echo this total modality, as its musical identity in doing p'ansori has always held the central place while allowing other expressive mediums. Practicing total modality in the twenty-first century has a different meaning: If a musical totality in the minjung context was promoted to maximize a collective sensibility (Im 1990a: 326), this approach in the cultural context of Badaksori's era should be understood as the prerequisite for commencing the moment of attention. As the onset of modernity with the influx of Western cultural commodities has marginalized p'ansori in Korean popular culture, it has been stigmatized as "difficult and boring music" and has suffered from "the lack of recognition" from the public (K. Chŏng 2011: 92; J. Yoon 2014). It is not popular on a nationwide level: Koreans may know of it, but barely listen to it on a daily basis. Thus, adding elements of popular culture, or "popular flavors" becomes crucial in attracting a larger audience (Y. Chang 2010: 3). In this context, Badaksori's willingness to use other expressive mediums is more or less necessary in order to draw attention and to convey their message. In doing so, narratives that are

written to mobilize emotions are delivered in the presence of attention. Expressive mediums can bridge the gap between p'ansori and the hegemonic soundscape of the modern musical arena in South Korea.

As a counter argument to madanggut, minjung realism called for a nonprescribed modality that rejected mindless obedience to a certain medium. The idea of nonprescriptiveness in fact *prescribes* modality by excluding ritualized mediums, and overlooks the significance of collective emotion in mobilizing the popular. Although Badaksori's desire to emotionally engage the audience deviates from minjung realism, the fundamental emphasis of minjung realists on receptive approach is echoed in the musical practices of Badaksori. Despite the conflicting approaches of ritualists and realists to the use of expressive mediums, the broad spectrum of Badaksori has permitted the group to build a loose link between minjung and itself.

Badaksori's p'ansori production also contains some neat parallels with the minjung worldviews and emphases. As examined in the introduction of this study, minjung discourses (1) supported national unification; (2) criticized imperialistic power and divisions; (3) attempted to reread history to remember the past, heal colonial wounds, and redeem the present; (4) located the marginalized in the center of Korean history and narratives; (5) called for attention to contemporary reality; (6) hoped for a peaceful, egalitarian utopia; and (7) emphasized the aesthetics of folk cultures with special attention to humor, satire, subversive power, intentional vulgarity, collective energy, shared space, and empowerment of the oppressed (C. Choi 1995; Koo 1993; N. Lee 2007). Likewise, new p'ansori performances of Badaksori directly or indirectly refer to the values of understanding history correctly, fighting for justice and peace, and revealing

the situation of the weak of society. These pursuits, even at a glance, share much with those of minjung advocates. For example, *The Dream of the Chicken, Flying,* fits into the overarching utopian ideal by figuratively touching on problems with the established order, the lives of the marginalized, and unification. In particular, the story of the twins separated by the DMZ stresses civilian suffering due to ideological conflicts and national division. Badaksori takes on these issues to navigate toward a construction of utopia for the people. The following chapters elaborate this connection between the pursuits of these two temporally separated groups with distinct identities by analyzing several Badaksori performances contextually, textually, and musically.

While Choi agrees that Badaksori is inspired by minjung practices, he does not embrace these practices uncritically. Through observing minjung p'ansori and *madanggŭk* practices, he has learned what should be avoided in his own p'ansori-making. Examples include the direct use of protest cultures, such as shouting slogans, which effectively functioned as a trigger for charged emotions in the context of the turbulence of the 1980s and 1990s (K. Kim 2000). He adds,

> Those things, such as Im Chint'aek's p'ansori and madanggŭk movement, were artistically ahead of their time. Unfortunately, its form and style has been fixed, which I think they should have not been. So, I have been searching for new [forms and styles] every time [I am involved in p'ansori-making]. I have a lot in my mind regarding which form can aptly contain the story that I want to tell (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm.).

Choi strongly rejects fixed performing formats or styles, and emphasizes the necessity to keep searching for an apt medium. Yet he also suggests his perception that he has failed to progress artistically since being initially inspired to compose p'ansori. This conclusion seems premature, however, as his continual search for the best medium of

expression is still ongoing. For instance, Badaksori members have been involved in many experimental performances, such as *Badaksori-p'an* (*p'an of Badaksori*, a street performance) and a song-through technique that minimizes narration in *The Sun and the Moon*. Furthermore, they have shown musical diversity as a result of their narrative-centered p'ansori-making process: Depending on a given purpose, some performances take a highly realistic approach and others do the opposite. This diversity has allowed the multidirectional connections with minjung cultural discourses. Conversely, Badaksori's openness keeps it from being bound to a certain ideology. In this respect, minjung ideology for Badaksori is a single body of trends that they have absorbed as one of their sources of inspiration.

My attempt to link minjung discourses to Badaksori is not to group them in a single arena. This would be logically faulty, because the space and sensibility of the performances have been significantly transformed. Nor do I argue here that Badaksori consciously tries to preserve a minjung tradition in the post-minjung era. Instead, I posit that Badaksori has constantly negotiated their contemporary political and cultural situations with what they recognize as p'ansori tradition, a tradition that has been accumulated throughout its history. It may include the musical characteristics passed down from the eighteenth century, the function as social critique, or the minjung ideology imposed on new p'ansori. The Badaksori's negotiation between the *accumulated* tradition and the modern cultural market aims at the effective presentation of their ideological agenda and at the same time, the continuity of p'ansori's subversive function.

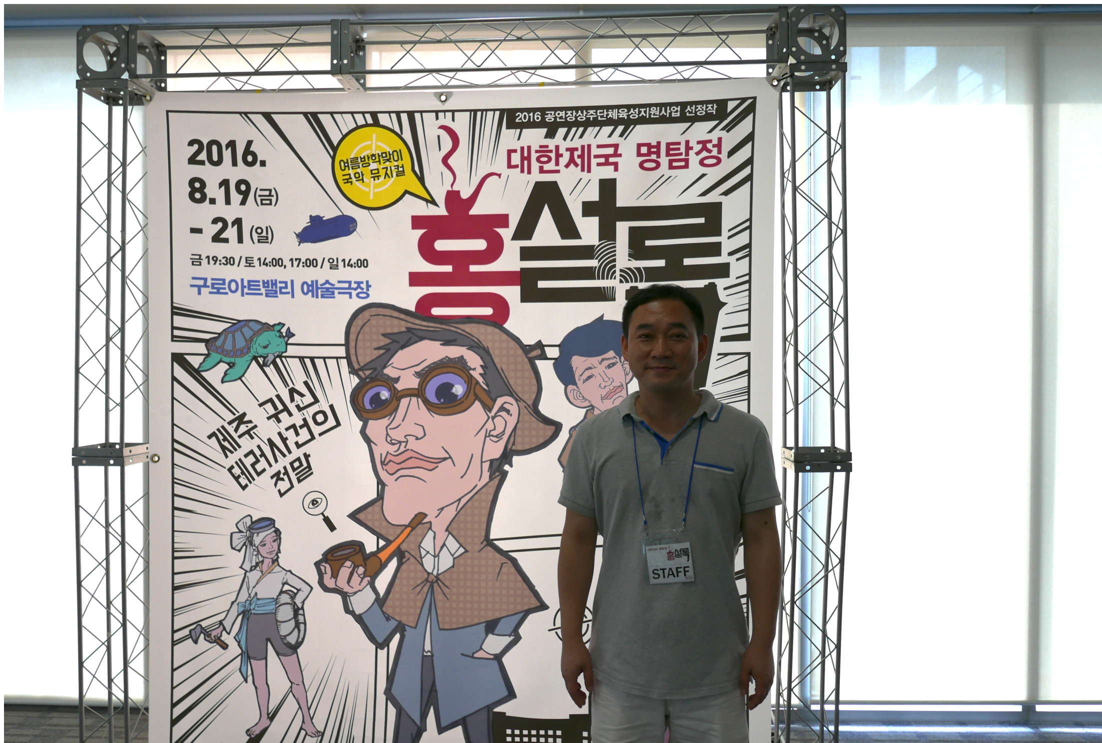
The Founder: Choi Yongsuk

Despite the members' large measure of autonomy and freedom, the founder, Choi Yongsuk, has been powerful in directing and shaping Badaksori. Choi received his education in p'ansori at Chungang University, one of the universities renowned for Korean music. Choi has led this group since its first day, and most of the scenarios of Badaksori's pieces have emerged from his hands. Unsurprisingly, his worldview permeates performances of Badaksori as well as the group itself. He strongly believes that artwork always entails a certain objective. Based on this belief, his intent in producing new p'ansori is to pursue justice in history and to shed light on the lives of the poor and neglected (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm). These clear interests have become basic inspirations for his p'ansori pieces. Representative examples of dealing with "justice in history" include *Pangt'an ch'ŏlgabang* (*The Bulletproof Iron Case*) and *Taehanjeguk Myŏngt'amjŏng*, *Hong Sŏlrok* (*Detective Hong Sŏlrok of the Korean Empire*). These repertories also accord with his emphasis on the weak of society, as the plots develop from their viewpoints. Issues related to the harsh reality of oppressed and discriminated-against laborers are revealed in *Haennim Tallim* (*The Sun and the Moon*), whose motif comes from a fairy tale but whose development is brutally tragic. His prolificacy has distinguished Badaksori as a self-productive group, enabling their full ownership over their products, their consistency in intent, and their strong identity.

The identity of Choi Yongsuk as a new p'ansori performer and creator was established prior to Badaksori's birth. As a person who valued the power of story, p'ansori's narrative feature appealed to him greatly. At one point, he became curious as to why p'ansori singers clung to "the old version with obsolete jokes" and showed

reluctance to try something new (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm). Behind his curiosity lies the fact that the practice of new p'ansori was not thriving in the mid and late twentieth century, except for the pieces produced by a few noted figures, such as Pak Tongchin (1916–2003), Chŏng Ch'ŏlho (b. 1923), and Im Chint'aek (Y. Kim 2007: 44–45, 51–59).

Figure 3. Choi Yongsuk in front of a poster of *Detective Hong Sŏlrok of the Korean Empire* at Guro Art Valley, Seoul (photograph by Sangah Lee)



With this viewpoint, he began to engage in new p'ansori practices, creating and performing short pieces. He also performed Im Chint'aek's *Owŏlgwangju* (*Kwangju Upheaval in May*) during a performance class in college. He says that he decided to make new p'ansori from the first day of learning p'ansori, and thereafter, he did so whenever opportunities arose. Meanwhile, he wished to embark on a new p'ansori movement with

congenial fellow-performers, a wish he soon brought to realization. Several young performers gathered in response to Choi's proposal for a new p'ansori organization. Once Badaksori was founded, their first performance was for victims of Japanese military sexual slavery (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm).

The enthusiastic participation of Choi and Badaksori members in creative practices of p'ansori concurred with a sudden boom in new p'ansori productions at the turn of the twenty-first century (K. Kim 2003a: 37, 41). The context behind this boom was a shift from the military-dominated government to civil government in the 1990s. South Korea's political climate had been stabilized with the construction of a democratized society, during which the limitation on free expression had diminished (Y. Kim 2007: 59–60). Along with other contemporary creators, Badaksori reshaped the p'ansori-scape, putting an end to a discontinuity with the period of prolific new p'ansori practices around the independence of Korea. Choi and Badaksori members were thus pioneers in revitalizing the new p'ansori tradition.

Defining the Political and Musical Identity of Badaksori

Alongside their repertories that allude to their political sensibility and progressive ideology, as I shall describe in the following chapters, Badaksori members have participated in numerous protests and rallies that accord with members' political identity. They have sporadically shared their musical tradition in the weekly demonstrations demanding the Japanese government acknowledge the truth about Korean "comfort women" and make a public apology. They have also participated in the candlelight vigils regarding the Korea–United States Free Trade Agreement. In addition, some members

are often invited to perform at large-scale political events or demonstrations organized by liberal politicians and civic groups. Choi, for instance, performed a repertory that criticized the conservative Lee Myung-bak administration of South Korea in front of thousands of people at left-leaning concerts. Their visible political actions and performances have led to the group being labeled as left-leaning or liberal.

Figure 4. Badaksori members at the Wednesday demonstration regarding the Korean comfort women issue (source: Badaksori)

In spite of the activist nature of their public actions, members reject any characterization of their political identity as belonging to a certain side. Both Choi and Ko argue that they have dealt with current issues that they view as crucial and unjust, but their activities and practices are not equivalent to being leftists (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers.

comm; Ko Kwanu 2016, pers. comm.). For them, an act of resistance against perceived injustice does not directly represent their political disposition. Their actions are driven by their morality, ethics, and worldview, not by leftist policy. However, their moral judgment of justice necessarily intersects with their political stance. The political characterization depends more on the image that those outside the membership—basically the audience—have of Badaksori's members rather than the members' images of themselves. In addition, their connection to minjung ideology belies their contention that they are not ideologically driven.

A self-contradiction occurs when Ko himself states, "As long as we keep formulating p'ansori that deals with social issues, we will be leftist forever" (Y. Lee 2016). Yet his use of the powerful term "leftist" may or may not signify a denial that his acts of "dealing with social issues" boils down to leftism. If no gray zone between right and left exists, Badaksori can hardly avoid being labeled a leftist group, as their musical products and actions explicitly and implicitly pertain to leftist ideology. However, falling back on such a clear-cut distinction may impede any postmodern discussion on the perplexingly tangled interests and "multiplicity of possibly identities" of an agency (Hall 1996a: 598). Considering all of Badaksori's images—including those imposed by the Self and the Other—the identity of Badaksori can perhaps best be defined as a highly political group which, in its liberal, nationalistic, anti-foreign, egalitarian, and revolutionary pursuits, is seen to be leftist-driven. This identity is best embodied through its performances.

As Seeger (1994: 13) addresses, the attached musical style associated with a given group is not enduring, as any member can associate with a variety of musical styles. With

the variability of musical identity in mind, this study loosely categorizes musical styles that Badaksori has frequently shown into two: (1) following the traditional way of music-making that highlights the interconnections among cho, changdan, and narrative, and (2) creating a new sound, arguably based on the tradition. The former musical style is mostly concomitant with a traditional performing setup that consists of one singer and one drummer.

In performances in the latter style, a variety of extra devices and strategies may be added. The number of cast expands from one who monopolizes the spotlight to several singers, the number of whom is usually determined by the number of characters in the plot. Now the competence prerequisite for a solo storyteller becomes less of a challenge, with more emphasis on the performers' ability to become fully engrossed in their given characters and perform in harmony with the other singers. In addition, having more than a few singers produces a vocal richness due to new techniques, such as heaping up harmonies and overlapping dialogues with background choral singing. The drum is now usually accompanied by other instruments, which may be native Korean (*kayagŭm, haegŭm, changgu*, etc.) or foreign (synthesizer, guitar, snare drum, etc.). This constellation of diverse timbres that come from both voices and instruments enriches the overall sound presentation of the performance. One may wonder how this discursive change in music is justified as p'ansori. The following chapters discuss what musically makes this new style p'ansori in detail.

Embodying the Identity of Badaksori

The most representative performance piece of Badaksori is probably *Taktŭrŭi Kkum, Nalta* (*The Dream of Chicken, Flying*), which premiered in 2009 (M. Lee 2014). This is the piece most frequently staged in the Badaksori collection.[21] Also, it also has had an award winning career,[22] which provides a crude measurement of its theatrical quality and popular demand. Before the performance begins, members appear on the stage and offer a song that opens with the following verse:

Sorip'anesŏ sorip'anesŏ ŏttŏk'e nona?

(At *sorip'an*, at sorip'an, how do we play at the sorip'an?)

The term sorip'an, an inversion of p'ansori, refers to the place (p'an) where singing (sori) happens. It accentuates the p'an in p'ansori performances: p'an as opening up the space for communal amusement. Through this song, members stress the spatial significance, which wields less influence in today's p'ansori stagings, as well as the shared enjoyment of their tradition. Their emphasis on p'an on the modern stage signifies their negotiation between "its authenticity as a communicative performance" (Um 2013: 199–200) and the contemporary performance culture. This song also functions as a path, on which the audience symbolically enters the world of the chickens who are the piece's protagonists.

This p'ansori performance unfurls the journey of chickens who have dreamed of flying. After escaping a poultry farm where dreaming is forcefully banned, the two chickens befriend a wingless eagle and an old lady who longs for her twin sister living across the DMZ. The chickens endeavor to fly over the boundary between the North and

South to convey the lady's message, by attaching themselves to the eagle and becoming its wings. With every dream involved, they make a last jump off a cliff with a great flapping of wings.

Designed for the whole family, this storyline provides a didactic message for the younger audience members about the importance of pursuing one's dreams despite the hardships of the world (M. Lee 2014). Their parents, on the other hand, are likely to be moved by the longing song of the old lady, realizing the tragic reality of dispersed families once again. The performance brings up virtually every modern issue in and out of Korea, ranging from lost dreams and environmental issues to constant war, violence, and ideological division. As these ideas are hidden beneath jocularity and joviality, they would naturally remain as a deep echo in the audience's minds rather than as a feeling of discomfort about the heavy subject matter (K. Chŏng 2011: 94; M. Lee 2014). The use of consecutive symbols and metaphors aids in effective delivery of ideas about values. It is the performers' theatrical competence as well as the piece's judicious approach towards these issues that have helped it retain its long-lived popularity.

What is stressed through this performance is unity, the unity of people. A dream of individuals, which is portrayed as threatening to and thus oppressed by the powerful class, comes to realization through the unity of "different" kinds of animal. The image of the physical combination of the chickens and the eagle embodies Badaksori's longing for unity across all kinds of division. As Saussurian semiotics expresses, "the *is* defines itself by means of the *is not*" (Leppert 2012: 413; original italics), Badaksori defines justice by means of clearly calling upon several forms of oppression, tyranny, and fear common in today's society. By depicting the pain that comes from divisions and concomitant

violence, Badaksori defines peace. This performance, Choi states, was created in the hope of embodying people's poverty and loneliness (K. Chŏng 2011: 94). If the chickens and their friends represent "the people," the negative experiences they undergo come from the acts of authorities. It is in this grid, where a utopian worldview of the people intersects with an underlying animosity toward division-creating powers, that one might find a clear link to minjung ideology.

The Public Recognition of Badaksori

Measuring the degree of popularity and success of a cultural organization requires establishing criteria that provide relatively perceivable evidence, such as award-wining records. In 2002, Badaksori's performances, *T'okkiwa kŏbugi* (*The Rabbit and the Turtle*) and *Haennim Tallim* (*The Sun and the Moon*) won first and third prize at the second Ttorang Kwangdae new p'ansori contest, respectively (Um 2013: 188). Recently, Badaksori has enjoyed a series of occasions to be celebrated: *The Dream of Chicken, Flying* won the second prizes at the Ch'angjak *Kugakkŭk* (newly produced Korean musical theater) Awards.[23] In the winter of the same year, the Second Ch'angjak Kugakkŭk Awards was held. This time, Choi was awarded Best Male P'ansori Singer for his solo performance of *The Bulletproof Iron Case*. These two consecutive awards provide a glimpse of Badaksori's position in the sphere of new p'ansori or Korean musical performances.

In 2016, Badaksori also won the prestigious grand prize at the Third eDaily Culture Awards, the only awards in Korea that incorporate both popular and fine arts, which was held at the National Theater of Korea. Badaksori members could more or less

expect that the group would receive the first prize in the Korean music section, because of the good results of the open poll. The nominated performance was *The First Badaksori-kŭk* (*Badaksori's Theater*) *Festival*, the first and only attempt in the *kugak* (Korean music) world to perform an assortment of the self-produced repertories of a private organization (M. Kim 2016). When Badaksori was called by the presenter of the prize, Ko, as a representative, went on stage and gave an acceptance speech. The next award was the grand prize in the all-around category. No Badaksori member would have expected to earn this high honor due to the keen competition. The other candidates, who were all those who had received the first prizes in each sector, were celebrated and distinguished figures in the Korean cultural industry. When the presenter called "Badaksori!," Ko recollects, time stopped with silence, which was soon broken by the shouts of Badaksori members (Ko Kwanu 2016, pers. comm.). According to the eDaily Awards, Badaksori's performance had created a venue where people of all ages could enjoy culture and had suggested a new direction for the future popularization of Korean music (M. Kim 2016).

Being awarded this prize was especially meaningful in that the Awards embrace all fields of performative art in South Korea, including music (kugak, Western classical, and k-pop), theater, dance, and other types (magic, comedy, etc.). Also, the winners are determined by the experts of each sector and a popular vote, raising the level of fairness. Hence, this award can be seen as a partial indicator of Badaksori's position in the market of Korean culture.

Figure 5. Badaksori members at the Third eDaily Culture Awards (source: Badaksori)

Furthermore, Badaksori has been referenced in new p'ansori studies as representative. A kugak critic, Yoon Jung-gang (2003: 48), includes Badaksori in the list of groups leading the practice of new p'ansori. A p'ansori scholar, Shin Dong Hun (2010: 226), considers Badaksori to be noteworthy due to its systemized collaboration, reflection of the *zeitgeist*, and creative impulse. Other kugak scholars, such as Kim Ki-hyŏng (2003a; 2003b), Kim Yeon (2007), and Yoo Young-Dai (2004), mention Badaksori as a representative group in which young performers have contributed to invigorating new p'ansori practices. Defining Badaksori as "grassroots p'ansori," Um (2013: 192, 202) describes it as a group that "promotes new p'ansori for the masses." Studies on new p'ansori are still small in number, but those that exist rarely omit the name of Badaksori.

This fact suggests that, along with other groups, Badaksori is one of the key agents in making the history of new p'ansori in the twenty-first century.

Conclusion

This chapter has made several points regarding Badaksori's history, identity, and politics. Equipped with a clear objective and direction, that is, to perform p'ansori for the marginalized people, Choi and his colleagues established Badaksori. What followed was manifold disputes, especially concerning the matter of creative activity—preserving the old versus creating the new—and degree of participation in social activism. These early and ongoing debates allow us to view Badaksori as a microcosm of p'ansori society, as similar conflicts have been witnessed in the broader world of p'ansori. Yet Badaksori eventually found a way to effectively run the group, by giving all members full autonomy in deciding their degree of involvement. However, this chapter has observed the strong influence of the leader Choi on shaping the identity of the group, as his works constitute a vast proportion of Badaksori's performing repertories. Despite the absence of a political mission statement, they have produced new p'ansori pieces in accordance with their political agenda with liberal, nationalistic, antiforeign, and egalitarian pursuits. The following chapters will focus on how those pursuits are embedded and articulated in the performances of Badaksori.

CHAPTER THREE

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS I: *THE DEMISE OF KING RAT*

Introduction

This chapter as well as the following two chapters will provide the contextual, textual, and musical analyses of new p'ansori performances of Badaksori. This analytic work will show what strategies Badaksori has utilized to effectively convey its social critiques and political messages. In doing so, this study shows what aspects of traditional p'ansori have been altered or retained in the twenty-first century Korea, with a special attention to its function as social critique.

Choi Yongsuk recalls the time when he most effervescently expressed his longing for social reform through p'ansori with *Chwiwangŭi Mollakki* (*The Demise of King Rat*). Written in 2010, it soon became imprinted as the emblematic political artwork of Choi as well as of Badaksori. The piece was produced during the 2008–2013 presidential term of Lee Myung-bak (known widely as MB). In it, Choi expressed a strong hope for regime change, fusing outright criticism of MB's policies and perceived injustices in the performance. *The Demise of King Rat* became well-known, especially among liberal proponents, as it aired on Kim Ŏchun's *New York Times*, a liberal Internet broadcast program discussing current affairs.[24] This single appearance led to another chance to work for a Podcast program, *Nanŭn Kkomsuda* (I Am a Cheater).[25] Choi provided shortened versions of his new p'ansori repertories, singing narratives on a central issue in each episode. This influential Podcast program brought numerous listeners to *The Demise*

of King Rat and other pieces, re-catalyzing new p'ansori as a political weapon in the public sphere for the first time since Im Chint'aek's minjung p'ansori.

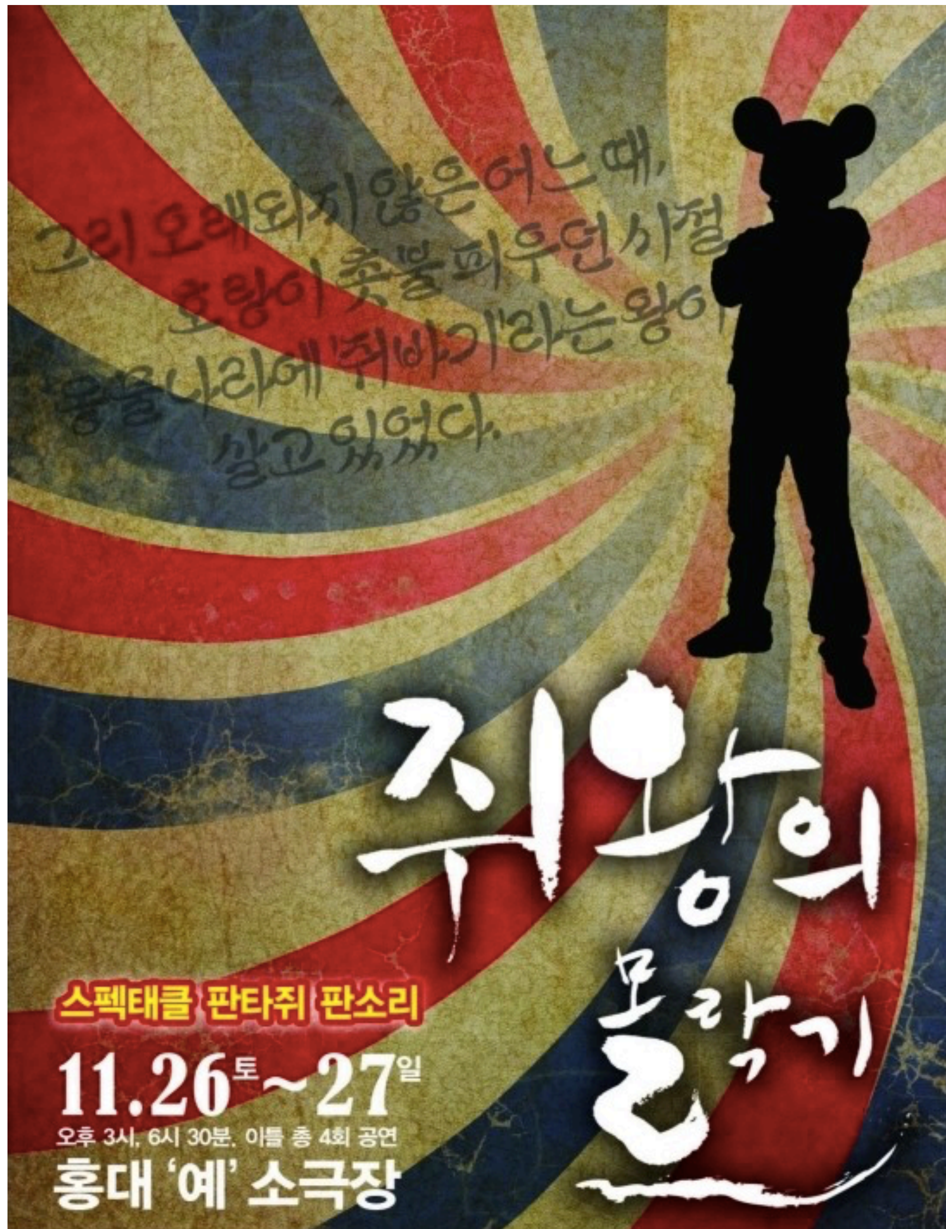
The Zenith of Political Asperity

The Demise of King Rat is arguably one of the boldest political p'ansori performances of Badaksori, as well as in the history of new p'ansori. It is a one-hour-long piece that Choi composed, wrote, and performed with the aid of the other members. The plot begins with King Rat's inauguration. The rumor that the rat has the power to transform a wasteland into high-priced land, and his pledge to provide meat soup to all, arousing an inner desire of the vegetarian animals, eventually secure the rat's ascent to the throne. The performance ultimately divulges that the hidden plot of King Rat is to turn back the wheel of history located under the Four Major Rivers to manipulate history and to perpetuate a governance structure.[26]

Although framed as an allegory, the narrative was blunt enough to allow the audience to immediately grasp what it implied. If activist performances occupy a continuum from "direct exposure of reality" to "sophisticated sarcasm," then *The Demise of King Rat* is very nearly at the "reality" endpoint. In addition, this highly expository and straightforward text counters the overall affect of general Korean singing culture, which has an inherent opacity that guarantees the secrecy of the singer or protagonist (Pilzer 2006: 13). Rather, Choi's strategies for sarcasm in this piece seemingly aimed at immediate recognition and effective imprinting on the audience's consciousness. The name of the protagonist, King Rat, suggests this straightforwardness, as Lee Myung-bak's appearance has been often maliciously likened to that of a mouse. Moreover, once

the animal citizens become disappointed with the king, they say he is *not the mouse* they knew, and they nickname him "M Pi" (M for "mouse" and *pi*, a negative), which is phonetically similar to "MB."

Figure 6. The poster of *Chwiwangŭi Mollakki* (*The Demise of King Rat*) (Source: Badaksori)



Choi also brought up the issue of imported U.S. beef in 2008, which was banned after reports of BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or mad cow disease) from Washington in 2003. Many observers felt that the decision to rescind the ban was rushed in order to finalize it before a summit meeting between President Lee and U.S. President George Bush in April 2008, as well as to accomplish the Lee administration's economic vision (Heo and Roehríg 2010: 126–7). This perceived pro-American move, alongside concern over the safety of beef from the United States, triggered an eruption of public discontent and led to large-scale candlelight vigils (Ha 2008). These demonstrations brought about some changes to the import policy and were politically damaging to Lee's administration. (Heo and Roehríg 2010: 127).[27] In addressing this matter, Choi used word play, pronouncing "Made in U.S.A." as "mad-in-woo-sa" (*woo*, meaning "cow"; *sa*, meaning "to sell"), implying "the nation that sells mad cows." Through playfully addressing the story around "mad-in-woo-sa," he alludes to the subordination of public safety to MB's pro-American goals, and reveals his own antiforeign stance.

The direct utterance of reality may damage the satirical aesthetic of p'ansori. Nevertheless, its satirical characteristics were distinctly displayed in the introductory catchline, "This is by no means the story of *kak'a* [a derisive expression that refers to MB], because kak'a is not at all the person he's perceived to be." This line quotes a famous remark that the hosts of *Nanŭn Kkomsuda* regularly used after their harsh criticism of MB to enhance their sarcasm.[28] The use of this line that was already familiar with the audience reinforced the degree of satire of the performance as a whole. The plot ends with the appearance of ants, which are usually trampled to death by other animals who don't even realize it, but which now punish the King Rat for all of them in order to

build a world of equality. These layers of jokes and narratives evoked both laughter and critical consciousness of political situations and issues among the audience members who shared political views.[29]

Counterpublics, Political Experiences, and Vulgarity

The audience's consensus on the political criticism that Choi expressed fostered a high level of attention to this performance. This led him to do a nationwide tour with a small team. In 2011, *The Demise of King Rat* played to crowded provincial theaters, with high ticket sales enabling Choi to compensate the staff. According to Choi, the attitudes of the audience toward this piece surprised him, being very different from what he had experienced when performing traditional p'ansori. It was unusual for a singer outside of the mainstream musical/cultural market to bask in such popularity.

Choi attributes the success of this piece to the shared knowledge and political experiences upon which it draws (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm.). The audience's unusual response to this piece largely resulted from the political issues *being shared* and *being experienced* that temporarily became part of their culture. When a cultural performance successfully articulates the background culture and fuses the audience, as Alexander (2004: 550–551) states, it becomes effective in social power. Through p'ansori, Choi displayed the meaning of a political situation for others in a way that elicited the audience's response and raised the power of the collective identity. To succeed in this "fusing" of background culture and audience, Choi strategically altered a traditional way of articulating social criticism by taking the subtext of sophisticated sarcasm and making

it the text of direct exposure. The musical presentation was also altered, as I shall address in the next section.

The Demise of King Rat also created a distinct space that considerably differed from the usual p'ansori performances at scenes of protest. From an empirical viewpoint, Choi contends that p'ansori is not the best option for protests, because of its epic narrative nature. Demonstration sites favor short songs that allow participants to easily and dynamically sing along, such as *minyo* (folk songs) or *kayo* (pop songs) (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm.)—p'ansori is "presentational" rather than "participatory" in Turino's terms (2008: 21–22). The dynamics of protests are less likely to value p'ansori, which requires a certain amount of time to develop the story and a proper space (p'an) in which the audience can pay close attention. Yet Choi's performance was much in demand, especially from 2011 to 2012, when the resentment of liberal civic groups toward the MB government was at its height.[30] This political tension brought Choi up on stage at protests and assemblies, held usually in front of Seoul City Hall or Gwanghwamun Square. For instance, over ten thousand participants gathered for a tribute concert for Chŏng Bongju, an imprisoned liberal politician at that time, at Yeouido Square (Kang and Kwŏn 2012), an example of the magnitude of these demonstrations as well as Choi's unusual experiences with this performance piece. Choi remembers:

> There was a kind of special energy during the MB time, energy with rage. Every single participant pricked up his ears and listened to me, which was astonishing. It was a rally that called for Chŏng Bongju's release. The Yeouido Square was filled with people. Looking out from the stage, I could see people even at the end of my field of vision. Yet, all of them attentively listened and vigorously made ch'uimsae, and even sang along with me, although I sang for over ten minutes. What was that all about? I doubt if an experience like this will come around again in my lifetime (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm.).

The Demise of King Rat reshaped the soundscape of a political scene, transforming it from slogan-centered to narrative-oriented. This altered ambiance was possible because Choi's performance met the conditions to build up the text's persuasive power—the extent to which it brings culture, political experiences, and the audience into harmony (Alexander 2004: 550)—to a high degree. By connecting collective, present experiences to a traditional form of narrative (Manabe 2015: 13–14), this performance became a legitimating one, exerting a formative power.

This performance also showcased the vulgarity of p'ansori. Choi's criticism of authority takes the form of outright mockery rather than rational articulation. In doing so, it breaks with normative speech protocols and modes of representation, temporarily creating a space for a counterpublic. This heightened vulgarity or indecorousness met resistance from those outside the boundary of the community. In comments on the video of *The Demise of King Rat* on YouTube, for instance, several netizens expressed discomfort, using words such as "cheap" and *ppalgaengi* (slang for "communist").[31] Choi also confessed that he experienced external pressure to stop performing the piece, recalling for example a moment when he was threatened by a member of the Election Commission. He also sensed disapproval from the established kugak community, especially in terms of financial support, but said that this was an unverifiable impression (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm.). While publicizing vulgar expressions or throwing off "the restraint of decorum (Warner 2002a: 78)" might arouse aversion that is an obstacle to broadening social activism, it might also reinforce collective codes and sensibility among the audience in a counterpublic sphere.

Another limitation comes, ironically, from the time-sensitive nature of this type of performance, which was so closely linked to Lee's administration. A high level of sympathy and concentrated attention may only occur in a single time frame. A product centered on a temporally narrow issue dies out as a musical commodity as soon as the issue loses its current-ness. *The Demise of King Rat*, which once enjoyed unexpected popularity, would find it challenging to recreate a public space, as the public "cease[s] to exist when attention is no longer predicated (Warner 2002a: 61)".

Shifting the Presentation and Soundscape

In his performance of *The Demise of King Rat*, before the p'ansori proper begins, Choi exchanges conversation with the audience. He mentions the background of writing the piece—he embarked on it, he explains, when he got riled up after being blasted by a water cannon—and makes the remark that "this is by no means the story of kak'a." Then, he explains that he will need ch'uimsae, the stylized calls of encouragement that the p'ansori audience sporadically throws in to participate in a performance. As the literal meaning of ch'uimsae, "spirit lift (C. Park 2003: 234)," indicates, the audience's performative involvement arouses emotions in all the participants, helping them connect and eventually build a spiritual oneness through the performance ritual. In this context, ch'uimsae is significant in the "authenticity" of the performance of p'ansori. In this case, Choi suggests the audience not use some of the conventional calls, such as *ŏlssigu!* ("right on") and *chot'a!* ("great"). Instead, he encourages them to use his own ch'uimsae creations to reinforce the degree of empathy and collectivity: *kkomkkomhada!* (literally, "meticulous"; a satirical expression that ridicules MB, by doubling *kkom* from *kkomsu*

“cheats”) and *tcholchima!* (“Don’t be shrunk!”). He also encourages the audience, who are already having a good laugh at his suggestions, to mimic the voice of King Rat when interjecting ch’uimsae. This is an attempt to urge them to be more engaged in the performance, by aligning themselves with the protagonist and the storyteller. By thus adjusting an element of the tradition, Choi not only summons the audience as an agent of constructing “authenticity” in the p’ansori performance, but also opens a p’an for angry citizens to dissolve dissatisfactions that have become congested on the level of public media (Kwŏn 2012: 67). In doing so, performers and receivers see each other as a politically identical entity with heightened comradeship.

Choi’s *kwangdaesŏng* (“kwangdae nature”) is strongly manifested, as he becomes the subject of criticism in the performance. His task of portraying King Rat basely enough to induce negative sentiment requires high quality acting. One strategy is voice mimicry: King Rat sounds like an exaggerated version of MB. His voice mimicry, as indicated with asterisks in measures 1, 3, and 15 in Example 4, exaggerates MB’s husky voice and transforms it into a low-toned sound similar to vocal fry, suggestive of beasts’ growling. As the audience bursts out laughing, he rounds out this song by soliloquizing: “It wasn’t similar, why were they laughing?”

Example 4. "Yŏbwara Tŭtkŏra" by Choi Yongsuk (Performance, 2011; drum: Cho Chŏngrae; transcription by Sangah Lee)[32]

Semachi changdan ♩. = 75

Male Voice

Soribuk (Right / Left)

Yŏ bwa ra tŭt kŏ ra na nŭn chwi wang tong mul tŭ rŭi wang i ro gu na

3

ŏ sŏ ŏ jŏn hoe ŭi rŭl shi ja k'a ra na nŭn p'yŏng so in ga ne i rŭm nan

5

ko so yŏng_kang bu ja p'aen i toe ŏ ssŭ_ ni__ kŭ dŭl to chae sang e an ch'yŏ no k'o

7

na rŭl ki ppŭ ge man dŭ rŏ ju ra________ tto han chwi wang i hŏ nŭn ma ri

9

u ri tong mu - l na__ ra__ nŭn tae dae ro yu esŭ ei u sa na ra

11

so u cha e sa go p'al go hal ttae_ sa cha ssŭ nŭn so sa na ra wa u jŏng ŭl ssa a wa ssŭ ni

13

i bŏn e____ na ŭi___ tŭng gŭk ŭ l ki nyŏm ha yŏ na ŭi kong yak tae ro che han jŏg in yuk shik ŭl

15

hŏ yo_______ ng ha ge___ n no ra___

accel. *dim.*

Yŏbwara tŭtkŏra. Nanŭn chwiwang tongmultŭrŭi wangiroguna.
Ŏsŏ ŏjŏnhoeŭirŭl shijak'ara.
Nanŭn p'yŏngso in'gane irŭmnan kosoyŏng kangbuja p'aeni toeŏssŭni
Kŭdŭlto chaesange anch'yŏnok'o narŭl kippŭge mandŭrŏjura.
Ttohan chwiwangi hŏnŭn mari uri tongmul naranŭn
Taedaero yuesŭei 'usa' nara,
So 'u' chae sago p'algo hal ttae 'sa' cha ssŭnŭn
'Sosa' narawa ujŏngŭl ssaawassŭni ibŏne naŭi tŭnggŭkŭl kinyŏmhayŏ
Naŭi kongyaktaero chehanjŏgin yukshikŭl hŏyonghagennora

Listen, I am King Rat, the king of the animals.
Begin with a counsel in the royal presence.
As I became a fan of Ko Soyŏng and Kang Puja,[33] famous among people,
Job them into prime ministers and please me.
Also, King Rat says, as our animal kingdom has formed a friendship with
USA, a nation of "woosa," "woo" from a cow (*so*) and "sa" from buying (*sago*)
and selling (*p'algo*), that is, a nation of "Sosa" for generations,
in commemoration of my enthronement,
I permit restrictive meat eating, as I said.

When Choi sings this excerpt, he brings in a changdan named *semach'i*,[34] which is also indexical; it is commonly used in ragingly mournful (e.g., "Shipchangga" ["A Song of Ten Lashes"]) and solemn scenes (e.g., "Ch'unhyangbanggŭrimga" ["A Song of Drawings in Ch'unhyang's Room"]) in kyemyŏnjo and ujo respectively. The solemn mood of this excerpt is close to that of ujo, as it tells of a scene where the rat, as king-

elect, gives a grave speech. It features the wide leaps of melody often found in ujo-style songs, providing "masculinity." Ornamentations are highly restricted. The cadence shows a series of head voice (sesŏng) and straight voice (t'ongsŏng), also indexing ujo. However, the long melisma of ujo is replaced with a syllabic style in order to reduce the degree of solemnness. By manipulating the indexes of a given cho, Choi formulates the image of King Rat.

The network of these indexes is explicitly betrayed at a moment of the performance when the holistic soundscape is significantly altered by the audience's laughter at a song in ujo. In the middle of this laughter, Choi, as King Rat, continues to sing even more proudly and solemnly. This moment highlights the paradox of the scene, as the protagonist employs the traditional indexes while the spectators overturn the expected soundscape and its affect. Thus, by altering the musical presentation, Choi manipulates the soundscape in favor of his political objective.

Conclusion

Addressing political issues in an exceptionally blatant way enhances the degree to which *The Demise of King Rat* exposes "the truth of reality," to use a minjung term. Behind the performance's scathing criticism, it also expresses the aspiration for a world of democracy, egalitarianism, and peace, as manifested in the ants' commentary at the end. Several episodes regarding the relation between the Lee and Bush administrations reveal a clear rejection of any form of imperialistic power. This performance was also limited, failing to broaden the boundary of collectivity, as its outspokenness and indecorousness aroused the aversion of those who did not already share its ideals.

However, it did succeed in helping to transform, for a time, the individual identities of the participants into a collective identity, by providing a narrative that fused the background culture, the political situation, and the audience. The strategy Choi used to effectively mobilize social power was to alter the p'ansori tradition's textual and musical presentation. Thus, through the practice of p'ansori with an altered presentation, "The Demise of King Rat" may have created a temporary counterpublic sphere that mapped out "oppositional and alternative positions against the dominant ideology (N. Lee 2007: 9)".

CHAPTER FOUR

PERFORMANCE STUDY II: *THE BULLETPROOF IRON CASE*

Introduction

Among Badaksori's recent works is *Pangt'an Ch'ŏlgabang* (*The Bulletproof Iron Case*), performed by Choi Yongsuk in 2014. This piece is also one of the representative repertories of Choi and Badaksori, as it was acclaimed for its high theatrical and musical quality, bringing him an honor of being awarded Best Male P'ansori Singer at The Second Ch'angjak Kugakkŭk Awards. Yet the significance of this piece lies in that its projection of ideological agendas gives a more concrete clue to Badaksori's identity as a highly political, leftist-leaning group than any other repertories of the group. By analyzing this piece, which is an aggregation of Badaksori's pursuits, this chapter will shed more light on its political identity with reference to minjung worldviews.

Articulating History from the Viewpoint of an Ordinary Man

The Bulletproof Iron Case revolves around the story of a deliveryman, Ch'oe Paetal, during Kwangju Democratic Movement context of 1980, and tells about the lives of civilians during this period. This movement was a popular uprising against the government of South Korea in May 1980 in the city of Kwangju, which is located in the southwestern part (South Chŏlla Province) of the peninsular (Lewis 2002: xv). It began unexpectedly when the government took a hardline policy against a student protest in Kwangju, bringing in troops and imposing martial law, although similar protests had been happening throughout South Korea from the 1970s (G. Shin 2003: xv). The brutal attack

of specially trained paratroopers roused the resentment not just of the students but of ordinary citizens, and the size and severity of the clash quickly grew (Lewis 2002: 3–4). "An absolute community" was formed as Kwangju citizens became willing to shed blood in the cause of human dignity and national democracy (J. Choi 2003). The clash lasted eight days,[35] leaving casualties of approximately five hundred civilians (G. Shin 2003: xvii). This historical event became a watershed in Korean modern history and has been ceaselessly rearticulated and counterremembered (N. Lee 2007: 48–49).

Figure 7. The poster of *Pangt'an Ch'ŏlgabang* (*The Bulletproof Iron Case*) (Source: Badaksori)

As addressed in Chapter 2, Choi's enduring interest lies in singing about justice in history from the stance of the weak and oppressed. Accordingly, this piece spends half of its running-time portraying the background of the protagonist's life. At the very beginning of the play, Ch'oe Paetal utters the line, "The childhood of a great man in history is bound to be wretched, and so was mine," which contrasts the tragic ending. In the first, humorous episodes, Ch'oe Paetal, born in the countryside and raised by his poor grandparents, learns to ride a bicycle from a girl, Pang Aekyŏng. The playful love story between them epitomizes a poor but happy and pure life. Pang Aekyŏng soon moves to the city of Kwangju, leaving Ch'oe with the words, "I will treat you to black noodles when we meet again." He also leaves for Kwangju and reaches Kŭmnamno (Kŭmnam Avenue), where he becomes known as a master of the delivery of black noodles. In these episodes, this mono-play begins with a lightheartedness that amplifies the following tragedy as the characters' small pleasures are trampled by the political interests of the authorities.

The climax comes when Ch'oe discovers armed frogs (paratroopers in frog-like combat uniforms) blocking Kŭmnamno, and begins to fight them, shielding himself from their bullets with his iron noodle-delivery case. With the fast tempo of chajinmori changdan (12/8), Choi portrays a chaotic battle with a hint of humor, following a commonly used technique in traditional p'ansori. In this song, one of the frogs says, "We are here only to catch ppalgaengi". This remark alludes to one of the proposed reasons for the state's sudden and violent action; it has been suggested that the soldiers were misinformed that the Kwangju protesters were North Korean spies. (G. Shin 2003: xvii).

After the battle, Ch'oe loads the dead bodies of his friends onto his bike, singing a song in kyemyŏnjo and chinyang changdan, which shifts the mood to the tragedy.

Example 5. "I ch'ŏlgabangŭn [This Iron Case Is]" by Choi Yongsuk (performance, 2015; drum: Lee Chunhyŏng; transcription by Sangah Lee)[36]

12

Ko rŭn pae rŭl ch'ae wŏ ju nŭ n

13

pae da l wŏ n ch'oe bae da ri ra

I ch’ŏlgabangŭn ch’ongal maganaenŭn pangt’anch’ŏlgabang aniyo.
I ch’ŏlgabangŭn tchajangmyŏn narŭnŭn paedalch’ŏlgabangira.
I chajŏnch’anŭn songjang narŭnŭn changŭich’a aniyo.
I chajŏnch’anŭn tchajangmyŏn narŭnŭn paedalchajŏnch’ara.
Nanŭn kongsudŭlgwa ssaunŭn paedarae chŏnsaga aniyo.
Korŭn paerŭl ch’aewŏjunŭn paedarwŏn ch’oebaedarira.

This iron case is not bulletproof, but for the delivery of black noodles.
This bike is not a hearse that carries the deceased,
but a delivery bike that carries the black noodles.
I am not a warrior who can defeat paratroopers,
but the deliveryman, Ch’oe Paetal, who satisfies one’s hunger.

The text, sung in a sorrowful and raving voice, criticizes this act of suppression in that it was a group of ordinary people that the paratroopers fought against. After this song, a street broadcast in a desperate woman’s voice resonates from the provincial government building, exclaiming, “The martial law army is coming. We will defend Kwangju to the death. Gee, I want to eat black noodles…” Recognizing the voice of Pang Aekyŏng, his loved one, Ch’oe heads to the provincial office with black noodles loaded in his iron cases. However, he fails to find her. The civilians fighting courteously suggest him that they would search for her in return for black noodles. After serving their “last supper” to the citizens who choose to die rather than surrender their dignity and humanity, Ch’oe

soliloquizes, "I've never tried black noodles, waiting for the moment we meet again. But I am going to eat some now. I guess it is okay to do so." After this, he does *kuŭm* (Korean style humming or oral sound), and the play then ends with a loud gunshot.

There are many indications suggesting that *The Bulletproof Iron Case* makes reference to the historical reality of 1980: Kŭmnamno was a main site of protests and civilian encounters with the army (G. Shin 2003: xvi); the South Chŏlla Provincial Office Building was the last assembly area for the citizens, who were mostly killed or taken prisoner right away; and a woman, Pak Yŏng-sun, made a street broadcast that resonated throughout the city, urging citizens to rise up to defend Kwangju (Lewis 2002: 53–54). Choi balances humor and tragedy as he projects the reality of the past onto the fictional life of a nonheroic figure, to share the story with contemporary audiences. This is a project that corresponds to Badaksori's pursuit of "justice in history."

The Bulletproof Iron Case criticizes the authoritarian regime of the past and also addresses the ongoing unification issue between the two Koreas. The name of the Chinese restaurant that the protagonist works for is "P'yŏngyang," the capital of North Korea. Based on this single cue, Ch'oe quickly judges the owner to be a ppalgaengi, who are in his eyes man-eating monsters. Yet his evil image of the owner soon transforms to a feeling of sympathy, when he learns the owner is a refugee from P'yŏngyang and simply misses his hometown. The text contrasts Ch'oe's initial and exaggeratedly biased image of North Koreans with the actual, inoffensive personality of this North Korean character. It thus allusively criticizes the anticommunist education and policies that postcolonial South Korean authorities used to bolster their own legitimacy. After these two characters become "friends," the protagonist, Ch'oe, is on the phone with a customer who is

ordering all the different kinds of dishes. He shouts, “Order after unifying (*t’ongil*) the menus into one!” This episode in particular projects the left-leaning disposition or minjung worldview that, in conjunction with nationalist sentiment, suggests the desire for ethnic unification. Overall, p’ansori is aptly utilized as a medium to voice the suppressed both of the past and the present. In this light, Badaksori members use p’ansori not only in ways they find meaningful in their society, but also in ways that manifest the p’ansori’s traditional function as social critique.

Creating P’ansori Music and Performance

Choi explains the p’ansori-making process for these types of performance, which employ a traditional style. While working on a draft of the performance script, he usually predetermines the changdan for each song, or at least writes the lyrics with a rhythmical sense in mind. The lyrics are written with reference to the style and structure of wordings and rhymes that songs with the same changdan commonly show. Thus, the lyrics become equipped with rhythms and ready for more sophisticated music-making. Once the network of lyrics, moods, and changdan is roughly in place, the melody is developed accordingly. As apprentices rely entirely on oral transmission, their p’ansori-making rarely takes the highly analytical and premeditated approach that is typical in musical composition that requires transcribing and analyzing the musical structure of a genre. The aforementioned relation among components of traditional p’ansori may be naturally engrossed in their musicality during the course of their apprenticeship. Likewise, Choi, after developing the lyrics, the moods, and the changdan, draws on some melodies that he already has in his arsenal of musical references. In other words, his lyrics with a certain

story development suggest the musical direction he should take; for instance, a new song might have a similar mood as that of "Chŏksŏngga" from *Ch'unhyangga*. (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm.).

This process of p'ansori creation reveals that, in developing new pieces, Badaksori basically and intuitively works within a grid of cho, changdan, mood, and narrative. In addition, their music-making usually involves a good use of musical references based on their deep knowledge of p'ansori music. This strategy has benefits. First, it can produce familiarity for an audience that has musical knowledge of p'ansori. Second, by using references to music whose artistry has long been admired and is already established to some extent, new p'ansori pieces more easily achieve a higher level of musicality than they might otherwise, given the time limits within which most contemporary p'ansori-makers must work.

An exception to the reference-oriented strategy is one excerpt from *The Bulletproof Iron Case*, the song, "This Iron Case Is". Choi explains it as a song created based only on an image, and thus, it recalls none of the usual referential or indexical songs. As indicated in example 5, this song does not index any musical cliché that derives from traditional p'ansori. By listening to the modal structure, ornamentations, and overall mood, we can only identify it as a song framed in kyemyŏnjo. In fact, the song does seem to maintain a set of expected relationships among traditional p'ansori constituents, employing kyemyŏngil as its modal structure, chinyang as the changdan, frequent gliding and breaking tones as the ornamentations, and grief with rage as the mood. From measures 1 to 7, ttŏnŭnch'ŏng, ponch'ŏng, kkŏngnŭn araech'ŏng, and kkŏngnŭn witch'ŏng are respectively D, G, A, and B, whose modal structure is identical to that of

traditional kyemyŏngil. It also uses designated ornamentations on certain notes: downward breaking tones from B to A and deep vibrato at D (marked with asterisks in measures 4, 5, and 6).

However, several elements, such as the use of F and B, represent the uniqueness of this song, distinguishing it from kyemyŏnjo. A frequent use of F that originally acts merely as a passing tone, with no reaching to G, not only makes it difficult to identify the kil, but also provides a feeling of imperfection. However, it is well suited to evoke a feeling of insecurity that can be linked to the turbulent political context, the unstable mood of the protagonist, and even a realistic representation of an unremarkable character's amateurism. In measure 4, B, which usually functions as appoggiatura, is sustained without immediate relief by A (kkŏngnŭn araech'ŏng), postponing an eruption of emotion and instead expressing the character's dazedness. Furthermore, measure 2, with a series of descending by the half pitch, sounds as if it is outside of the p'ansori soundscape.

Modulation occurs between measures 7 (the implied g minor) and 8 (the implied a minor). Whether intentional or not, this strictly follows the rules of a traditional p'ansori mode. In kyemyŏngil, the note above the perfect 4th from ponch'ŏng is *ŏtch'ŏng* (irregular tone), which is assigned to bridge the modulation (Um 2013: 81). C from the implied g minor neatly passes the baton to D from the implied a minor, producing a perfect transition. After the modulation, measure 8 repeats measure 4, with an identical strategy of a sustained appoggiatura, C. The emotional burst now occurs in measure 10, where ornamentations are frequently and properly injected. After measure 12, a modified reprise of measures 4 and 8, another emotional moment occurs in measure 13 with

heightened vocal techniques and a fermata. While the song employs various atypical strategies, great and small, the cadence goes back to the tradition, ending from ttŏnŭnch'ŏng to ponch'ŏng.

Furthermore, the song's vocalization stands in between singing and wailing. This strategy of betweenness creates a crevice through which the audience is wholly invited into the spatiotemporal setting of the protagonist. By reducing in this way the likelihood of the audience's "distanciation"—appreciating the performance as entertaining singing—Choi creates a liminal space in which ritualization enhances realism, a realism that opens the audience to the historical reality and recalls the minjung project of rewriting history.

Despite its altered musical presentation, this song captures an identity as p'ansori, as it is built upon a traditional framework of p'ansori music-making. Through actively using features of kyemyŏnjo, this song amplifies the tragic sentiment, or the han sentiment, of the theme, which will help the audience to easily relate to the story. In addition, by altering the musical presentation, this piece reinforces the political sensibility of p'ansori. The piece transforms a cultural practice for the sake of a political objective, that is, to drag the audience into a historical reality that, from Choi's point of view, should not be forgotten. *The Bulletproof Iron Case* is thus a prime example of how transforming the musical tradition can consolidate the political tradition of p'ansori.

Conclusion

The Bulletproof Iron Case tells about an ordinary delivery man, whose iron case fails to save his life during a massive democratic movement that occurred in historical

reality. Situating an ordinary man as the main narrator resonates with the minjung positioning of the masses in the center of history. By apparently contrasting "righteous" citizens with "evil" paratroopers, Choi defines justice on his terms. In particular, by highlighting the citizens who were willing to risk their lives for their beliefs, he portrays the cost and value of democracy and human dignity. Furthermore, this performance creates a venue of "magical realism (C. Choi 1995)", where a fictional figure from a historical reality autobiographically tells his story to contemporary listeners. In combination with musical and textual strategies applied in ways to evoke the han sentiment, this performance tactic helps mobilize the audiences' emotions. Again, the performance retains an essential function of p'ansori as the voice of dissent, by projecting Kwangju citizens as true subjects of history and revolution.

CHAPTER FIVE
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS III: *DETECTIVE HONG SŎLROK OF THE KOREAN EMPIRE*

Introduction

In order to appeal to a wide audience in modern Korea, Badaksori members often produce new p'ansori pieces that take a different form, on the surface resembling a musical, a trendy and well-liked genre in the Korean music and theatre industry.[37] The group possesses a variety of selections constructed in this style. Among them, this chapter will consider the example of *Taehanjeguk Myŏngt'amjŏng, Hong Sŏlrok* (*Detective Hong Sŏlrok of the Korean Empire*), as the most innovative and the farthest in style from traditional p'ansori. Premiered in September 2015, it is also the most recent work of the group when this thesis was written, with its second version put on stage in 2016. The original version was produced to mark the seventieth anniversary of Korean independence from Japan, and the second version was performed during the week of Independence Day, August 15. This piece centers on a mysterious incident that occurs on Korea's Cheju Island[38] during the Japanese occupation.

Revealing a Forgotten History

In *Detective Hong Sŏlrok of the Korean Empire*, the Japanese Governor-General of Korea requests the protagonist, Hong Sŏlrok, to investigate a report of ghosts and terror on Cheju Island. Hong heads to Cheju with his best friend, Chŏn Wasŏn. Once there, they hear from a magistrate who has been frightened by several bizarre happenings such as the sudden disappearance of a female driver and a car automatically ascending up

a hill. While discovering that these terrifying incidents were all due to trickery carried out by Cheju's famed female divers, *haenyŏ*, using their unique skills and the geographical traits of their island, the detective Hong gets the inside story.

Figure 8. The poster of *Taehanjeguk Myŏngt'amjŏng, Hong Sŏlrok* (*Detective Hong Sŏlrok of the Korean Empire*) (Source: Badaksori)

The plot revolves around common people, instead of historically renowned independence fighters, who are widely revered in national discourses. It deals with ordinary citizens of Cheju Island, who tried to fight Japanese colonialism in their own way. Through this plot, the performance attempts to reveal the downplayed history of what is known as the Cheju Haenyŏ Strife.

In the early twentieth century, when Korea was under Japanese colonial rule, the Japanese government militarized Cheju Island and expanded the insular road and sea routes in order to utilize the area for capital circulation. Japanese officials protected their interests through several controlling unions including fishery and agricultural organizations. Both Japanese and pro-Japanese Korean men exploited such organizations to financially terrorize and sexually harass the female divers. The divers began to clamor against the exploitative Japanese colonial policies, founding the Cheju Woman Divers Fishery Association along with others in the community. This group's requests clearly articulated the need to rectify unreasonable tax and price policies (Ŭ. Kim 2010: 38, 53–54).

The well-organized nature and actions of the haenyŏ group have been attributed to a night school founded by socialist youths. These intellectuals brought literacy to the female members and stirred up their professional and national consciousness (55–56). The struggle for survival soon developed into a larger-scale independence movement against Japanese annexation of Korea (C. Park 2007: 30). All in all, this movement was arguably the biggest among the anti-Japanese movements led by a female community (Jo et al 2006: 169). It is also noteworthy that the effective and systemized development of

its protest action, which lasted for eight months, was empowered by their full awareness of their occupational and ethnic identity (Ŭ. Kim 2010: 59).

Given this movement's high degree of solidarity, organizational power, and large scale, there is a relatively small amount of research on it, compared to research on other independence movements. Several scholars have suggested that the scarcity of studies on the Cheju Haenyŏ Strife is related to the socialist involvement (I. Kim 1985; Ŭ. Kim 2010; C. Park 2007). In the context of South Korea's prevailing anticommunism from 1960 on, and especially under the military regimes, the haenyŏ movement has been characterized as a struggle for rights rather than an independence movement (C. Park 2007: 13). Revering those divers under the socialist influence as heroic fighters for independence would have been an act of self-denying for the anti-communist regime. On the other hand, the Japanese dismissed it as an ideological incident manipulated by socialists, neglecting its essence as an independence movement (Ŭ. Kim 2010: 58). In both cases, the socialist influence was manipulated, leading to a distortion of the historical truth and hindering proper appraisal. From the end of 1980, however, the elation of the new democracy allowed a reevaluation of the public movement of the Cheju female divers, and it became acknowledged as an official memory (C. Park 2007: 13–30). The new evaluation largely agrees that the female divers led an independence movement, regardless of its ideological orientation, on the ground of the female divers being the prime movers (Ŭ. Kim 2010: 60).

Badaksori's piece, *Detective Hong Sŏlrok of the Korean Empire*, deals with an account of the historical past based on this reevaluation. In doing so, Badaksori not only tries to create a moment, though fleeting, in which the female divers are raised to the

status of heroes, but also officially places a forgotten or distorted history in the public eye by means of its performance. In addition, the performance shows many of Badaksori's pursuits, especially those of knowing true history and situating the marginalized as the subject of history.

Creativity and Hybridity in Musical Theater

One of the novelties of this theatrical performance lies in its juxtaposition of motifs derived from Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories with Korean sentiment and storytelling strategies. The Koreanized character names, Hong Sŏlrok (Sherlock Holmes) and Chŏn Wasŏn (John Watson), most apparently manifest the connection. A haegŭm (a two-stringed fiddle) is played in scenes where Hong Sŏlrok is engrossed in contemplation, parodying Holmes's violin playing. Several scenes in the performance resemble famous scenes from the original stories, such as the falling of Holmes and the villain Professor Moriarty from a waterfall in "The Final Problem".

The intriguing scene composition and theatrical devices enhance the quality of this work. In the first scene, the stage is divided in two: Upstage, two men are falling over a cliff with a waterfall,[39] while downstage, other actors are dancing in an intense and strained musical atmosphere. This high-energy prologue scene may lead the audience into seeing it as a common time-warp device that presages the climax. But it is instead a trick that helps maximize the surprise of the story's later twist, as the detective Hong faked his own death in order to start a new life free from Japanese influence. Another important figure, Im San Moriyama, next appears, ringing up the curtain on a new story development, in which the ghostly incidents are revealed as a smokescreen for a plan to

blow up a Japanese submarine anchored off the island. Before this point, the audience has been positioned with the deceived pro-Japanese characters. Intensifying the moment of the thrilling twist possibly brings about an emotional charge, or escalated national sentiment in conjunction with a highly nationalistic plot. These performance strategies, which help arouse highly charged emotions among the audience, may bring Badaksori members closer to their political purpose in doing p'ansori.

This performance also takes on a musical variety. The whole performance features successive transformations from one particular style to another. The tail of a song in traditional p'ansori style is overshadowed by background theme music in a jazz style. The instrumentation—haegŭm, *taegŭm* (large transverse flute), *puk* (drum) including *soripuk* (barrel drum) and *modŭmbuk* (a set of drums), flute, synthesizer, contrabass, bass guitar, and drum set—gives a glimpse of the show's musical diversity. This instrumentation is quite effective, with a bass guitar player grasping the contrabass and a taegŭm player often playing the flute, in contributing to the mischievous and clever image of Hong Sŏlrok (Yu Kiyŏng 2016, pers. comm.). A particular melodic segment played by haegŭm, taegŭm, contrabass, and synthesizer is inserted to signal his appearance and bridge scenes, for example, from the prologue to Act 1. The use of the background theme music also promotes the musical unity of the play (Kim Sŭngchin, pers. comm.), and enriches the overall acoustics by filling gaps that would otherwise be silent.

Example 6. A melodic segment (theme music) from *Detective Hong Sŏlrok of the Korean Empire* (Composition and transcription by Kim Sŭngchin)

Because the plot revolves around an incident on Cheju Island, the performance inevitably borrows Cheju minyo (Cheju folk songs). The director, Yu Kiyŏng, explains that borrowing Cheju minyo was necessary to provide a flavor of Cheju, but that the music does not necessarily take on all the elements of Cheju minyo (Yu Kiyŏng 2016, pers. comm.). The music director, Kim Sŭngchin, composed songs drawing on several Cheju minyo songs. She mentions that it would be more apt to regard her music-making

process as arrangement rather than new composition. Her process began by transcribing minyo sung by Cheju grandmothers. She recalled this stage as demanding, due to the unintentionally heterophonic nature of Cheju minyo. Thus, her transcriptions had to negotiate the heterophony to grasp an average melodic contour. Her work was informed by her meetings with the Badaksori members in charge of the other creative dimensions and the story in general (Kim Sŭngchin, pers. comm.).

Figure 9. Badaksori members in preparation for *Detective Hong Sŏlrok of the Korean Empire* at the Badaksori office, Seoul (Photograph by Sangah Lee)

Example 7. "Iŏdosana" (Composition by Kim Sŭngchin; transcription by Sangah Lee)

♩ = 100

Female Voice 1
I ŏ do sa na ah i ŏ do sa na ah

Female Voice 2
Ah ah

Taegŭm

Guitar

Bass Guitar

♩ = 100

Keyboard

8

I ŏ do sa na ah i ŏ do sa na ah yo nel chŏ sŏ ng ah

I ŏ do sa na ah i ŏ do sa na ah yo nel chŏ sŏ -

15

ŏ dil ga ri ah chin do ba dang ah han gol ro ga ja

ng ah ŏ dil ga ri ah chin do ba dang ah han gol ro ga ja

"Iŏdosana" is a Cheju minyo that female divers sing on a boat, going out to sea to do their work of collecting marine products. This minyo is distinguished from the boating songs or haenyŏ songs heard in Japan, as it is sung only by Cheju haenyŏ while rowing out to their work place. (Y. Kim 2002: 75, 155). This fact, along with its frequent appearance in media and cultural spaces, has positioned this song as representative and archetypal of Cheju minyo. Typically sung in a call-and-response form, it features a relatively wide vocal range as well as dynamic emotion that may signify the movement of the place it is sung (a boat on the waves) and the demanding nature of the singers' work (H. Cho 2009: 126–7; Y. Kim 2002: 162). The pillar tones of Cheju minyo are considered to be G, A, C, D, and E (Chae 2006), but not all of songs employ this modal structure. In fact, Cheju minyo has an enormous repertoire of songs.[40]

"Iŏdosana," a single song of Cheju minyo, has a vast number of variations,[41] making a comparative analysis impossible between the "original" version—which would have to include every version of "Iŏdosana" sung by Cheju grandmothers—and the "new" version.

Example 8. "Haenyŏsori" ("Iŏdosana") (Source: *Hanguk Chŏngsin Munhwa Yŏnguwŏn,* 1984: 264–5)

♩. = 80-90

Female Voice

I yŏ do sa na e e i yŏ do sa na e e i yŏ do sa na e e

Chorus

I yŏ do sa na e e i yŏ do sa na e e i yŏ do sa na

7

i yŏ do sa na e e yo bael ta go o o ŏ dil gal go ŏ ŏ chin do pa da ng

i yŏ do sa na i yŏ do sa na e e i yŏ do sa na e e

14

a a kol lo gan da a a i yŏ do sa na i yŏ do sa na e e

i yŏ do sa na a a i yŏ do sa na i yŏ do sa na e e i yŏ do sa na

Example 9. "Iŏdosana" (Song by Kim Chuok and Her Party (1982); transcription by Sangah Lee)

♩. = 80

Female Voice

I ŏ do sa na I ŏ do sa na i ŏ do sa na

Chorus

I ŏ do sa na i ŏ do sa na i ŏ do sa na

4

Yo nel chŏ sŏ ŏ dil ga na chin do pa da ng

yo nel chŏ ŏ ŏ dil ga ri chin do pa dang

7

kol lo na ga ja i ŏ do sa na i ŏ do sa na

kol lo na ga ja i ŏ do sa na i ŏ do sa na

I interviewed one of the audience members about her opinion on "Iŏdosana" heard during the performance. She answered that not only did this song not conjure up the melody of "Iŏdosana" for her, but it rendered her skeptical of the logic behind this fragmentary borrowing. It seemed to her that "Iŏdosana" had been chosen just because the narrative context was Cheju, but she believed that Badaksori's version of "Iŏdosana" obscured the real music of Cheju (Yoon Sora 2016, pers. comm). The melody of "Iŏdosana" that the audience, including her, may have in mind is likely the version canonized nationwide through school textbooks and professional kugak performances held in inland cities (J. Lee 2013; Song 2015). Meanwhile, Badaksori's version retains some musical resemblance of "Iŏdosana" (from the composer's transcriptions), but the instrumentation and chords hardly make it sound *Korean.*

In such cases, musicality is wholly subordinated to the story, in a way that musical identity is temporarily sacrificed for a theatrical totality that ultimately, it is hoped, facilitates the production's ability to communicate its message. The performance's rich acoustics with instruments and vocal harmonies enhances the dynamics of the music. More importantly, it gives the music a popular flavor in order to grasp the audience's attention at the moment the performance begins. This helps entice the audience into the play at the beginning. At the cost of sacrificing the music that has become the standardized image of Cheju, Badaksori members try to capture the audience for their political purpose. This sacrificed musical identity is quickly recovered by following songs that *sound* p'ansori. The next example is situated midway between "authentic" p'ansori and the other extreme.

Example 10. “Haenyŏdŭri Sumyŏnwiro” (Composition by Kim Sŭngchin; transcription by Sangah Lee)

Hwimori Changdan ♩ = 150

Male Voice

Chorus 1

Chorus 2

Hae nyŏ dŭ ri su myŏn wi ro ol la gan da nam a in nŭn him ul nae ŏ cham su ha e ta ga gal je

5

sŏr hyang i cham su ham e mom i kki ŏ kkom tcha - k ta l ssa ŭ l mo

Ah

Ah

Ah

Ah

11

t'ŏ nun gu na I ttae yŏ hal mang hae nyŏ sŏr hyang i e ge ta ga gan da tagagago tagagago tagagago tagagago

16

sŏr hyang i e ge ta ga gan da chŏng shin i rŭn sŏr hyang i rŭl cham su ham e tte ŏ nae ŏ i ri pi tŭl cho ri po tŭl

20

a mu ri kka wŏ bo a do um ji gi ji l an nŭn 'gu na

Ah

Ah

Ah

Ah

26

i dae- ro__ nŭn an doe get ta nam a__ in nŭn ma ji mak su mŭl sŏr hyang i e ge nae ŏ ju ni

Ah Ah Ah

Ah Ah Ah

32

Ah Ah

Ah Ah

Ah Ah Ah Ah

39

Ah Ah

Ah Ah

Ah Ah

Haenyŏdŭri sumyŏnwiro ollaganda.
Namainnŭn himŭl naeŏ chamsuhame tagagalje.
Sŏrhyangi chamsuhame momi kkiŏ kkomtchaktalssakŭl mot'ŏnŭn'guna.
I ttaeyŏ halmanghaenyŏ sŏrhyangiege tagaganda.
Tagagago tagagago tagagago tagagago sŏrhyangiege tagaganda.
Chŏngshin irŭn sŏrhyangirŭl chamsuhame tteŏnaeŏ iri pit'ŭl chŏri pit'ŭl.
Amuri kkaewŏboado umjigijil annŭn'guna. Idaeronŭn andoegetta.
Namainnŭn majimang sumŭl sŏrhyangiege naeŏjuni A-

Female divers are rising to the surface.
Sŏrhyang does not budge an inch, as her body is stuck on the submarine.
A grandma, the Dragon King's daughter, approaches Sŏrhyang.
Gets closer, closer, closer, closer, gets closer to Sŏrhyang.
She tears unconscious Sŏrhyang away from the submarine, shakes her from side to side. Not a single move, no matter how hard she tries to wake her up.
"It won't work"—she gives her last breath to Sŏrhyang… A-

This scene depicts the female divers trying to plant explosives on the Japanese submarine, during which a grandma, the Dragon King's daughter, dies after saving another diver. While three female performers dance and act out this scene in the middle of the stage, the song is delivered by one male narrator's voice with two male chorus voices. The song is in a hwimori changdan at a fast tempo driven by grandioso drumbeats of modŭmbuk (a set of Korean drums), intensifying the tension of the scene. The cho shifts between p'yŏngjo and kyemyŏnjo, as the song carries both urgent and woeful moods. Several measures (1 to 4 and 13 to 19) marked by more explanatory and less emotional lyrics follow the modal structure of p'yŏngjogil with G, C, D, and F; the transition to kyemyŏnjo (the rest measures) signals intensified emotions. The tragic and grieving sentiments explode with the heterophonic kuŭm of three male voices (measures 33 to 44) that project high pitches with heightened kyemyŏn ornamentations, such as breaking tones from E to D.

As the climax of the entire play, this song amplifies the emotional charge of the audience. This emotion comes both from the loss of the frail grandma who has become a heroine in the audience's minds, and from the musical intensity. A neat network of kyemyŏnjo, hwimori, and the moods of tension and sorrow appeals well to the emotions, which are maximized with the kuŭm. In such cases, the instruments exist as helpers to upgrade the intensity of emotion without penetrating the realm of p'ansori. The vocal rendition of kuŭm replaces a direct representation of a death, by emotionalizing the misfortune with fierce vocal projection and kyemyŏn ornamentations. By means of this combination of tragedy and kuŭm, it effectively performs the han sentiment. In doing so, the performance not only showcases the emblematic sentiment of p'ansori, but also

manipulates emotion as a way to successfully deliver the political message to the audience.

The narrativity of p'ansori, which is traditionally carried by a single voice, is visualized and emphasized by positioning a third person as an omniscient narrator who leads the entire scene particularly. Conforming to this theatrical essence can easily alienate the audience, in contrast with offering the musical diversity that is considered being "kind to the audience" (Choi Yongsuk and Yu Kiyŏng 2016, a dialogue with the audience). This theatrical performance does not kindly offer explanatory, realistic devices to help the audience understand. Choi and Yu both clarify that this simplicity is intentional and designed to carry the nature of p'ansori into this performance piece. Choi begins:

> We are p'ansori-kkun (performer of p'ansori). Since this is a play performed by p'ansori-kkun, we thought it would be good if we maintained p'ansori-*sŏng* (the nature of p'ansori). As you know, p'ansori is originally done solo, thus one unfolds [the narrative] all by oneself. We also tried to use such techniques as satire and compression. We could have shown everything through theatrical devices or real images, but we decided not to (Choi and Yu Kiyŏng 2016, a dialogue with the audience).

Yu adds that they tried to utilize the essence of p'ansori that empowers the voice to convey all of the emotions and stories of a piece. As a theatrical genre, p'ansori permits only the single prop of a fan, which the performer transforms into a baby, a walking stick, a letter, and so forth. In *Detective Hong Sŏlrok of the Korean Empire*, Badaksori takes advantage of the theatrical merits of p'ansori, in which symbolism and imagination outweighs realistic and audience-friendly narrative development. This "unkindness" to the audience is compensated by the musical diversity of the piece. While

seizing the identity of p'ansori performance, this strategy also helps the consumers to be fully immersed in the product. Yu asserts that Badaksori members could have expressed all the emotions using p'ansori's musical elements only, but it would not have been enough for the ears of the modern audience.

As Badaksori members have said what they have wanted to say at various periods, their music has been the music of their time and space. Choi Yongsuk states:

> When [kugak musicians] explain their music, they still talk about popularization and modernization, which makes me feel that we have never proceeded.…What do they mean by modernizing "their music" while living in modern times?…Unless they confess to the audience, "Our music sucks, so we try to mix in the sophisticated music that you enjoy," they have nothing to say (Choi 2015, pers. comm.).

Choi rejects conceptualizing Badaksori's musical expressions and experiments as a process of modernization or popularization. Nevertheless, their musical presentation of p'ansori has apparently been modernized. Regardless of which styles it is performed in, Badaksori's music takes on modernity, as it is grounded in their society at large. The difference lies in their intention: the modern sound of their music is not a result of their strive for modernization, but it is instead driven by their desire to make their musical productions in conformity with the cultural atmosphere of their society. Their music, even in the most traditional form, always signifies current-ness.

Badaksori's music exists as an externality for a story that comes from their time and place. Their musical negotiation is driven by their desire to convey stories built upon their political identity, not by their desire for "sophisticated music". In this context, their practice relocates p'ansori's aesthetics from musical excellence to storytelling, or the telling of social critique.

Conclusion

The attempt to bring a work of British fiction (Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories) into a p'ansori performance (*Detective Hong Sŏlrok of the Korean Empire)* is another step forward in search of an artistic medium suited to a certain purpose. By finely weaving foreign and fictional indexes into a p'ansori-styled narrative, this action creates a cross-cultural and intergeneric mode, which helps to generate public interest and thus call attention to a forgotten history. Such translocal and transnational cultural work epitomizes new p'ansori themes in the 2000s, whose representations produce "complex networks of intertextuality (Um 2013: 192)," in which morphological, geographical, and temporal classifications become meaningless.

Detective Hong Sŏlrok of the Korean Empire acknowledges the Cheju Haenyŏ Strife as an independence movement, following the notion of knowing history correctly. The real protagonists, the Cheju female divers, stand out in the performance, displaying heroism. Badaksori's attempt to raise these common people to the level of heroes echoes the minjung aspiration to relocate the marginalized at the center of history. This is especially significant because the haenyŏ's movement had been subjected to intentional concealment in the ideological power games of the times. By introducing the forgotten historical fact to Korean audiences and correcting the misrepresentations of the past, this work fulfills the goals of rewriting history and healing the colonial psychology. Most importantly, this piece conveys a strong critique of both the Japanese imperialist of the past and pro-Japanese collaborators or right-wing anti-communists responsible for the distorted history.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

Summary and Limitation

One journalist states that members of Badaksori have recognized “the role of sorikkun (p’ansori singer), that is, to speak for the powerless commoners” (U. Chŏng 2013). This one sentence contains two layers of ideas that this study has aimed to formulate: that the role of p’ansori is to voice the opinions of the weak and their resistance against the dominant ideology, and that Badaksori has explicitly represented this function.

Challenging the view of traditional p’ansori as a Confucian defender or as an ideologically bifurcated genre, this study has shown that p’ansori has always been about social critique of the dominant ideology and the ruling class. In the nineteenth century Confucian society, this form of counternarrative existed as an oppositional undertone to evade detection. The themes shaped by Confucian didactics were not what emotionally stirred the audience, but were only necessary to meet the approval of the socially powerful class (T. Cho 1978). By manipulating the han sentiment instead of uttering directly, p’ansori performers of the time made it possible to open the audience’s eyes to the dark side of Confucian society and to simultaneously avoid Confucian censorship.

The shifting sociopolitical environment in modern South Korea has allowed performers to rearrange the textual presentation, foregrounding the subtext as the text. Performers’ desire to politically and culturally engage the audience has also brought forth vigorous and youthful experiments on new p’ansori productions. From the Chosŏn

Dynasty to this very moment, p'ansori, despite various changes in its music and text, has continuously functioned as social critique and created a counterpublic sphere, where counternarratives are articulated in non-normative or indecorous ways.

The strategy Badaksori uses to effectively mobilize social power is to alter the textual and musical presentation of p'ansori narratives, which in turn consolidates the political sensibility of p'ansori tradition. In particular, Badaksori manipulates han and hŭng sentiments to emotionally associate with the audience and thus, to successfully convey their political messages. Combining the p'ansori tradition with modern political narratives and cultural aspects, Badaksori has succeeded in transforming, at least temporarily, the individual identities of the participants into a collective identity. In addition, the intentional interjection of indecorous expressions into their public performances can be understood as a reaffirmation of p'ansori as a counterpublic sphere. In this sense, the contemporary use of p'ansori as a subversive vehicle is not a modern phenomenon of politicization, but an act of perpetuating the historical function of p'ansori as social critique.

Future work will be able to strengthen my argument by scrutinizing a broader spectrum of new p'ansori practices by other groups and individuals. My conceptualization of p'ansori as a counterpublic sphere requires more in-depth ethnographic research on the level of audience participation at the spot of protests, which I intend to continue in further studies.

Ethnomusicological Discussion

In 2013, I was a member of Badaksori, but during the time I was engaged in this research project, I was not. Although my experience as an insider facilitated my initial approach to Badaksori and the understanding of members' worldviews, it also brought the problems of positionality and consequent confusions. I, as an insider, once uncritically related to their reluctance to be seen as a leftist-leaning performing troupe. I understood this refusal of political labeling, because I was able to see and feel what was truly meaningful to them: it was, and still is, to tell their audience about what they want to say. For them, the decision is made based on their moral values, not on the progressive ideas and political agendas. When I began interpreting their words and actions, I recognized a considerable discrepancy between the two. My analysis quite explicitly revealed their political missions, which were completely denied by insiders. I was put into an academic state of confusion. Perhaps, I was just hesitant to write something that they would hate to hear.

As examined in previous chapters, Badaksori calls for an end to social oppression and inequality. Members exhibit unwillingness to link their worldview to their political outlook. From an outsider's stance, however, their performances have been inevitably guided by their liberal democratic ideas, which resemble the overtly political minjung ideology. Thereby, this study has shown their intentional avoidance of looking at themselves as activist performers. Notwithstanding my initial confusion, the complementarity between emic and etic approaches has helped to unveil the paradox between their self-definition and actual behavior. This inconsistency is also what makes

this group interesting. I hope this project adds to ethnomusicological studies as another example of the interplay between practitioner's and academic individual's insights.

Continuity: P'ansori and Minjung

Minjung frequently signifies a certain period of political turbulence, during which several large-scaled movements occurred to challenge the national agenda of the South Korean military-dominated government in the 1970s and 1980s. Nevertheless, before being taken to denote a certain political ideology, minjung traditionally represented people who resist oppression in a society. Even if minjung as a political discourse lost its currency in the twenty-first century, people extend this idea of resistance in their new sociopolitical condition that now has different types of oppression. Despite transforming definitions of oppression in each time period, minjung continues to fight for social justice. If minjung persists, p'ansori will continue to create a venue for voicing the minjung.

P'ansori is a music of continuity. The indexical use of a certain cho and changdan continues in p'ansori performances with an aim to communicate a certain sentiment. The han sentiment in particular is constantly utilized to elicit the audience's response in Korea. Performers continuously seek for response from the audience to direct their attention to the dissident opinions. The continuing associations of p'ansori with the han sentiment, the marginalized and oppressed, and the minjung idea of resistance boil down to the function of p'ansori as social critique.

NOTES

1. These are the four essential aspects of p'ansori performance that were suggested in *Kwangdaega* (*Song of the Kwangdae*), written by Shin Chaehyo (1812–1884). He was a low-ranking government official who had a tremendous impact on the revision and canonization of p'ansori in the late nineteenth century Chosŏn (C. Park 2003: 7; Um 2013: 452).

2. Chinyang, the perceivably slowest changdan of all, consists of twenty-four beats with four subdivisions (*gak*) of six beats. Considered the basic changdan*,* chungmori has twelve beats in 12/4 meter with the accent on the ninth beat in medium tempo. The rhythmic structure of chungjungmori is similar to that of chungmori, but is in 12/8 time. Chajinmori consists of twelve beats in the faster tempo. Hwimori is in the fastest tempo of all, in 4/4 meter consisting of four beats with duple subdivisions. The characteristic of this fast cycle is also indicated by the literal translation of the name, "chasing" or "driving hard" (C. Park 1995: 234). As indicated by its prefix "*ŏt*," which means "irregular," ŏnmori comprises the asymmetrical rhythm of ten beats divided into a 3+2+3+2 pattern with the accent on the eighth beat. The rhythmic cycle of ŏtchungmori is the same as the first half of chungmori, as indicated by its another name, *tan*-jungmori (severed chungmori), resulting in 6/4 meter in medium tempo (P. Yi 1991: 238).

3. Namhee Lee distinguishes two terms that are used interchangeably: Minjung movement (*undong*) and minjung project. While the minjung movement accentuates the historical context and distinctiveness of social movements at stated periods, the minjung project was a comprehensive process during which minjung was articulated "as endowed with a coherent and unifying political identity" (2007: 2; 2015: 22).

4. Growing out of the neo-Confucian belief in "the civilizing function of education," culturalism in Korea viewed the people as "citizens serving a modernized nation-state" (Wells 1995: 17, 20–23). In the hope of building a new and powerful nation, culturalists emphasized people's obligation to receive training to become "responsible political and economic beings" (17–22, 28), Partially inspired by the Marxists faith in the workers as makers of history, on the other hand, populists viewed the minjung as the people, "in whom repose[s]…the dynamic of Korean history" (16, 23).

5. According to Snow and Benford, resonance is pertinent to "the issue of the effectiveness" or potency of collective action (2000: 619).

6. See Marshall Pihl (1994). He expounds on the origin of kwangdae and the historical context of hwarang.

7. See also Marshall Pihl (1994) and Sŏ Taesŏk (1999).

8. Kim Insuk (2015: 13–15) argues that although this kwangdae origin theory was proposed and established through Yi Pohyŏng's work, the idea was first Yi Hyegu's, who suggested that Yi Pohyŏng do research on it.

9. This table is based on the list provided by Chŏng Nosik in his book, *Chosŏn Ch'anggŭksa* (1940). The twelve pieces differ from source to source; "Kwanuhŭi" has *Waltchat'aryŏng* and *Katchashinsŏnt'aryŏng*, instead of *Musugit'aryŏng* and *Sukyŏngnangjajŏn* respectively. *Waltchat'aryŏng* and *Musugit'aryŏng* are perceived as the same piece (C. Kim 1996: 257).

10. See also Cho Tong-il (1978), Lee Ŭnhŭi (1984), and Chan Park (2003).

11. Yu Chinhan (1711–1791) wrote "Kasa Ch'unhyangga Ibaekku" ("200 Phrases of Ch'unhyangga Text") (Um 2013: 40).

12. Ch'anggŭk is the staged form of p'ansori featuring several singers accompanied by Korean or non-Korean instruments. It is often called "traditional Korean opera," which only partially satisfies each element of this genre: it is "opera" but "unaccompanied spoken dialogue" constitutes more portion of a performance than would be expected in a Western concept of opera; it is "Korean" but its theatrical presentation began with being inspired by a foreign model; it is "traditional" as based on elements of Korean traditional performing arts but has not yet gained a full recognition as a "traditional" art form in Korea and has been subjected to the ongoing experimentations. In this vein, Killick proposed a category that is marginal to "traditional," which he calls "traditionesque," to elucidate the relation of ch'anggŭk to concepts of tradition in Korea (Killick 1998: 1, 9–11).

13. Kim Chong-ch'ŏl (1996: 275) suggests it was performed for the first time in 1908.

14. Kim Chong-ch'ŏl (1996) argues that *Ch'oebyŏngdu T'aryŏng* existed as a p'ansori repertory before it became staged as ch'anggŭk.

15. Im (1990b) explains that there are three elements of a life of p'ansori: its nature as storytelling, a lively p'an, and vocal mastery.

16. Tonghak was founded by Ch'oe Cheu (1824–1864) around 1890 as a new Korean creed based on Confucian, Buddhist, Taoist, and Shamanist faiths. It rejected Western thoughts and called for an egalitarian social order.

17. For the detailed information on the House of Sharing and Wednesday demonstrations, See Pilzer (2006: Chapter 2).

18. Representative organizations in this practice include Badaksori, P'anse, T'aru, and Soriyŏse (K. Kim 2003a: 37; Y. Kim 2007: 60–61).

19. The dynamics of minjung worldview conceivably subsided on the level of public discourse, as the rise of post-authoritarian state in 1990s reconfigured social activism in South Korea (Y. Park 2014: 12–13). The timing difference between the two era is approximately two decades.

20. See chapter 4.

21. Since its premier, it has been staged about two hundred fifty times, being regularly performed in diverse formats and venues, approximately twenty times a year. It has also had long runs of about thirty performances each (Choi Yongsuk 2016, pers. comm.).

22. This performance won Best Musical as well as Music Prize at the first Ch'angjak Kugakkŭk (The newly produced Korean musical theaters) Award in February 2014.

23. The Korean Traditional Performing Arts Foundation launched this award in 2014, supported by the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism of Korea. The purpose of the award is to discover original performances based on Korean traditional music and to inspire creative consciousness (http://www.kotpa.org/newhome/support/support_09.asp).

24. It was produced by Hankyoreh TV of Korea.

25. *Nanŭn Kkomsuda* ran from April 27, 2011 to December 18, 2012. Calling itself "the only broadcasting [program] in Korea that is dedicated to *kak'a*" (a derisive expression indicating President Lee Myung-bak), it was hosted by Ŏjun Kim, Bongju Chŏng, Chinwoo Choo, and Yongmin Kim, and produced by an online newspaper, *Ddanji Ilbo*. The hosts raised and discussed criticisms of the conservative camp. The number of downloads, over six million per episode, shows its popularity. The term *kkomsu* ("cheating, petty means") in the program's name pasquinaded Lee's political behavior that, from the program's point of view, frequently involved trickery and cheating (K. Kwon 2012: 64–5).

26. This plot element suggests the Four Major Rivers (Han, Nakdong, Gŭm, and Yŏngsan) Restoration launched by MB's government as part of the "Green New Deal" policy in response to Korea's water-related challenges (United Nations Environment Programme 2010). This policy sparked opposition movements mostly led by environmental organizations, religious bodies, and progressive groups.

27. The adjustment was to import beef from cattle younger than 20 months (Heo and Roehríg 2010).

28. The original remark is, "Kak'a is not that kind of person. He is moral and perfect."

29. This statement is based on my observation of the audience in a video clip of a performance of *The Demise of King Rat* (November 26, 2011; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IR3
JoQ9ee24).

30. The Imprisonment of Chŏng Bongju, a former member of the Democratic United Party, on charges of spreading false information regarding President Lee Myung-bak's possible connection to the BBK financial scam, again triggered huge rage among liberals, in addition to the other criticisms already heaped on Lee's policies.

31. One netizen wrote "it's so cheap, hate to hear" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IR3Jo
Q9ee24).

32. This transcription is based on the performance that was held at 3pm in November 26, 2011 at Ye Small Theater in Sŏgyo-dong, Seoul, South Korea (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IR3JoQ9ee24).

33. These names, of famous actress in South Korea, represent the composition of MB's cabinet. The syllables of *Ko So-yŏng* represent Korea University, Somang Church, and the Yŏngnam region (the southeastern section of Korea), respectively. *Kang Puja* implies Kangnam Land riches. These lines criticize MB's appointments by bringing attention to his school ties and personal connections and the fact that they are mostly large land owners.

34. The name shares with different changdan, which is used in ritual music and minyo, especially of Kyŏnggi Province.

35. Lewis (2002: vx, 59) suggested that it actually lasted for ten days, and even after ten days was "far from over".

36. This transcription is based on the performance that was held in May 23, 2015 at Chŏndong Cathedral in Chŏnju, South Korea (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3aD3vZpdOBw).

37. Various names for the genre are used, such as p'ansori musical, kugak musical, ch'angjak kugakkŭk*,* *sorigŭk*, and so forth. Productions adopt or create the most suitable name for the product depending on its musical characteristics or target audience.

38. Cheju is the largest island in Korea, located off the southwest corner of the Korean peninsula. It is known for its female-centered culture. In particular, the female divers of Cheju have earned worldwide attention for their unique techniques and endurance (Y. Kim 2002: 43–50, 169). Their diving ability is often considered "superhuman", as they can stay under water for longer periods than most, and dive for several hours at a time in water that is too cold for many (Hong and Hermann 1967).

39. It is the scene that parodies a scene from 'The Final Problem,' one of Sherlock Homes series of Arthur Doyle.

40. One collection of transcriptions for Cheju minyo contains 220 repertories, in which no more than 3 transcriptions of the same repertory is presented (Hanguk Chŏngsin Munhwa Yŏnguwŏn 1984: 6–9, 23).

41. Seminal collections of Korean music transcriptions (Hanguk Chŏngsin Munhwa Yŏnguwŏn 1984; Kungnip Kugagwŏn 1991; Im and Hanguk Chŏngsin Munhwa Yŏnguwŏn 2004) have different transcriptions of "Iŏdosana".

GLOSSARY

Ch'anggŭk	창극	A theatrical or staged form of p'ansori with multiple singers and instrumental accompaniment
Ch'angjak	창작	"Creation"
Ch'uimsae	추임새	Calls of encouragement
Ch'unhyangga	춘향가	The Song of Ch'unhyang
Chajinmori	자진모리	A type of rhythmic cycle in a fast tempo (12/8); "Chajin" means "fast" and "mori" means "to drive"
Changdan	장단	"Long and short"; Metric framework with certain tempo and rhythmic pattern
Changgu	장구	A double-headed hourglass-shaped drum
Changkkit'aryŏng	장끼타령	The Song of a Cock Peasant
Cheju	제주	An island located off the Southwest corner of the Korean peninsula
Chinyang	진양	A type of changdan in the slowest tempo (18/8)
Chiptan shinmyŏng	집단신명	Shared joy or ecstasy
Cho	조	"Mode"; a collective term that covers the concepts of mode, vocal style, ornamentation, emotion, and other elements related to p'ansori singing
Chŏkpyŏkka	적벽가	The Song of Red Cliff
Chosŏn	조선	A Korean kingdom that lasted from 1392 to 1910
Chungjungmori	중중모리	A type of changdan in a moderate-fast tempo (between chungmori and chajinmori) (12/8)
Chungmori	중모리	A type of changdan in a moderate tempo (12/4); "jung" means "not too fast and not too slow" and "mori" means "to drive"
Dantian	단전	Lower part of the abdomen

Habonch'ŏng	하본청	Low-principle tone
Hach'ŏng	하청	Low tone
Haegŭm	해금	A two-stringed fiddle
Haenyŏ	해녀	Female divers
Han	한	A sentiment of pathos, sorrow, or resentment peculiar to Korean and central to p'ansori
Hŭng	흥	A communal state of joy
Hŭngboga	흥보가	The Song of Hŭngbo
Hwarang	화랑	"Flower lad"; a group of young, noble, intelligent, and good-looking males selected to perform various rituals in the Silla Kingdom
Hwimori	휘모리	A type of changdan in the fastest tempo (4/4); "hwimori" means "to drive hard"
Inmul	인물	Appearance
Kak	각	A Unit that makes up a cycle of changdan
Kangnŭngmaehwat'aryŏng	강릉매화타령	The Song of Maehwa (a name of a celebrated female entertainer) of Kangrŭng (a city located on the east coast South Korea)
Katchashinsŏnt'aryŏng	가짜신선타령	The Song of a Fake Taoist Hermit (bogus mountain god)
Kayagŭm	가야금	A twelve-stringed zither
Kayo	가요	Popular song
Kosu	고수	A drummer for p'ansori performance
Kut	굿	Korean shamanistic ritual
Kil	길	"Path"; modal structure in which functions and aims of tones are assigned
Kisaeng	기생	Female entertainer
Kkŏngnŭn araech'ŏng	꺾는 아래청	Lower breaking tone

Kkŏngnŭn witch'ŏng	꺾는 윗청	Higher breaking tone
Kojŏng	고정	Fixed
Kolgye	골계	Humor
Kongnyŏk	공력	Ability to weave sori with inexhaustible transitions
Kugak	국악	Korean music
Kugakkŭk	국악극	Korean music theater
Kuŭm	구음	Korean style humming or oral sound
Kwangbok	광복	"Liberation"; Korean liberation from Japanese colonial rule
Kwangdae	광대	Folk entertainer
Kwangdaesŏng	광대성	The nature of kwangdae
Kwangju	광주	A city located in the southwestern part of the Korean penninsula
Kyemyŏngil	계면길	A modal structure of kyemyŏnjo
Kyemyŏnjo	계면조	A type of cho that associates mournful feelings
Madang	마당	Courtyard
Madanggŭk	마당극	"Courtyard Theater"; a theatrical form that combines dramaturgical and aesthetic elements of the traditional folk dramas
Madanggut	마당굿	"Courtyard Ritual"; a ritualized form of Madanggŭk
Minjung	민중	"People"
Minyo	민요	Folk Song
Modŭmbuk	모듬북	A set of Korean drums placed horizontally
Musugit'aryŏng	무숙이타령	The Song of Musuk (a head of scoundrels)
Nŏrŭmsae	너름새	Skill with accompanying gestures or dramatic actions; stage manner

Onggojipt'aryŏng	옹고집타령	The Song of the Pigheaded
Ŏnmori	엇모리	A type of changdan featuring an asymmetrical rhythm (10/8); "ŏt" means "irregular" and "mori" means "to drive"
Ŏtch'ŏng	엇청	Irregular tone
Ŏtchungmori	엇중모리	A type of changdan same as the half of one cycle of chungmori; "ŏt" means "irregular"
P'an	판	Open Space
P'annorŭm	판놀음	Outdoor folk entertainment
P'yŏngjo	평조	A type of cho related to delightful or plain scenes
P'yŏngjogil	평조길	A modal structure of p'yŏngjo
Paebijangt'aryŏng	배비장타령	The Song of the Official Attendant, Pae
Pigojŏng	비고정	Unfixed
Pijang	비장	Solemnness or sorrow
Ponch'ŏng	본청	Principle tone
Ppalgaengi	빨갱이	The Reds or commie, demeaning expression for communist
Puk	북	Drum
Pyŏn'gangsoet'aryŏng	변강쇠타령	The Song of Pyŏn'gangsoe
Sangbonch'ŏng	상본청	High-principle tone
Sangch'ŏng	상청	High tone
Sasŏl	사설	Text or libretto of p'ansori
Semach'i	세마치	"To hit three times"; A type of changdan, a fast version of chinyang
Sesŏng	세성	Head voice or falsetto
Shimch'ŏngga	심청가	The Song of Shimch'ŏng

Sigimsae	시김새	Ornamentations used in Korean music
Sŏngŭm	성음	"Vocal sound", a collective term for vocal technique, style, timbre, and register
Sori	소리	"Sound"
Sorikkun	소리꾼	P'ansori performer
Soripuk	소리북	A barrel drum used exclusively for p'ansori performance
Sugungga	수궁가	The Song of Underwater Palace
Sukyŏngnangjajŏn	숙영낭자전	The Tale of a Maiden, Sukyŏng
T'aru	타루	P'ansori ornamentations
T'ongil	통일	Unification (of North and South Korea)
T'ongsŏng	통성	Straight voice
Taegŭm	대금	A large transverse bamboo flute
Tan-jungmori	단중모리	"Severed chungmori"; another name for ŏtchungmori
Ttŏnŭnch'ŏng	떠는청	Trembling tone or vibrato
Ttorang kwangdae	또랑광대	Small-time p'ansori performer
Tŭkŭm	득음	"Achieving sound"; a state of vocal mastery
Ujo	우조	A type of cho that exudes solemnity
Ujogil	우조길	A modal structure of ujo
Waltchat'aryŏng	왈자타령	The Song of Scoundrels; another name for Musugit'aryŏng
Yangban	양반	Ruling class or gentry during the Chosŏn Dynasty

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