



Chapter V
Pansori in the View
of Literature

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‘Pansori is pansori’

In the 1966 symposium, ‘The Pansori Genre Question’ ended with the famous statement, ‘pansori is *pansori*.’¹ This remains a valid testimonial to the literary complexity of *pansori*, amalgam of poetic, dramatic, narrative, vocal, and musical. Emerged from ancient Korean orality, *pansori* raises an intriguing question: how orality, literacy, and recording technology in concert help transmit a style of singing that has long been out of circulation in the popular domain. Its narrative transcribed from singing resembles the written novel, but its strongly musical and dramatic nature stands in its way of being fully defined as such. Its staff notation—a standard requirement for graduate degree programs in *pansori* study in many Korean universities—resembles sheet music, but its musical execution hardly exudes the orality of *pansori*.

The textual and aesthetic contents of the voice evade the notational skeleton, just as stress, pitch, and other suprasegmentals of a spoken language escape linguistic transcription. Especially in Korean traditional music where individual notes are typically elongated into melodically undulating ‘play,’² staff notation fails to describe the in-between movements rendering character to the music.³

Literature has customarily been associated with written or printed materials. Its boundaries have consistently been challenged, however, by alternative textualities such as oral text, painting, illustration, storytelling, film, or hypertext. Traversing between story and telling, spoken and sung, reading and performance, and past and present, *pansori*, too, delimits literature. It is literary yet free from the conventional underpinnings of the discipline of literature, musical without being confined to music, theatrical outside the established paradigms of theatre, poetic without being restricted to prosodic rules, and epic despite the terminological monopoly by Western literary circles. An antique heritage, its folkloristic, nationalistic, and transnational imagination frequently intersects with contemporary stage, music, media, and film. Let us first examine its performative existence as national treasure. The canonization of *obatang*, ‘the five *pansori* narratives,’ responds to Mikhail Bakhtin’s location of epic in the absolute past. Dismissed as Korea’s past, its musical style is no longer in circulation but acquired in ‘completed and finished generic form’⁴ through mimetic training. Epic by Western literary standards should be dead as a dinosaur, but debatable is the death of *pansori* when it continues to be performed by trained singers today, long after ‘the conditions which produced the originals have passed.’⁵ How well does *pansori* withstand the frequently invoked assertion by Parry and Lord that for the epic to be genuinely oral it must be composed orally during performance?⁶ How do we apply the concept of improvisation to an art repeated almost entirely verbatim, but ‘live’? Marshall R. Pihl explains the way it was in the times past:

‘...*pansori* is essentially a product of serial composition by many singers over a long period of time. Thus, while the *gwangdae* receives an established tradition, he also innovates. The basic plot line of a given *pansori* work will be common to all performances, but the details may differ with the individual *gwangdae* and can also change from one of his performances to another.’⁷

For the life of its performativity that continues through shifted context, *pansori* is not to be sealed off as the absolute past yet, although keeping alive a quaint story-singing art against the tide of modernity is challenging to say the least.

‘...*pansori* indeed thrives much less on improvisation or new composition than confirmation of its past. Still, its performance is far from synthetic or superficial, as it is not a surgical reconstruction of the past but a continuing past. It is not valorized posthumously in fixed literary form but as the live performance of a ‘national treasure’ by a living ‘human national treasure.’⁸ The singers are recognized for their aesthetic sensibility, vocal competence, and authenticity in reenacting the tradition. In sum, the epic life of *pansori* includes the entire process of its tradition making and tradition bearing: ancient formation, proliferation, modernization, preservation, valorization, pedagogy, acquisition, adaptation, and performance here and now.’⁹

Structure: speaking, singing, in between

A vocal intertext of music and words, spoken and sung accompanied on drum, *pansori* customarily begins with a warm-up act in the form of *danga*, ‘short song,’ in *jungmori* rhythm. The term, *heoduga*, ‘song sung at the beginning,’ was used by Sin Jaehyo (1812-1884) who is known to have collected fifteen of these songs. There exist about fifty songs, but most singers choose from the following selections:

- ‘*Mangogangsan*’ (*Everlasting rivers and mountains*)
- ‘*Undampunggyeong*’ (*Thin clouds, light wind*)
- ‘*Jingukmyeongsan*’ (*Auspicious mountains calm the nation*)
- ‘*Honamga*’ (*Song of the south*)
- ‘*Gangsanpungwol*’ (*River, mountain, wind, moon*)
- ‘*Jukjangmanghye*’ (*Bamboo staff, straw sandals*)
- ‘*Bekbalga*’ (*Song of graying hair*)
- ‘*Jangbuhun*’ (*Sorrow of a man*)
- ‘*Bulsubin*’ (*Wince not*)
- ‘*Sachanghwaryu*’ (*Flowers and willows shadow on gauze window*)
- ‘*Chohanga*’ (*Song of Cho and Han*)
- ‘*Gogocheonbyeon*’ (*In the sky*)
- ‘*Hongmunyeon*’ (*Banquet of the Great Goose Gate*)
- ‘*Sacheolga*’ (*Song of four seasons*)
- ‘*Hyodoga*’ (*Song of filial piety*)¹⁰

In the duration of several minutes of *danga*, the singer’s voice must sufficiently warm so as to convincingly transport the audience to a different geographic, sociopolitical, and poetic zone existed in Korea of yesterday. *Jingukmyeongsan*, ‘The auspicious mountains calm the nation,’ for example, should help transport listeners to Seoul several hundred years ago where kings and queens reigned in a palace constructed on nothing less than geomantic correctness:

The auspicious mountains that calm the nation are standing tall.
 The peaks jutting into the sky blue are the shape of a golden lotus.
 The huge rock walls exposed here, there, everywhere.
 The northernmost is the head of Samgak mountain.
 Amazing boulders, the southward Ansan is the head of silkworm,
 Naksan to the left is the shape of Dragon, Inwang to the right is of tiger,
 Auspicious air envelops the sky, hangs over the palace,
 Great energies gather to produce great people.
 Beautiful is our Eastern Nation, the highest under the Range!

.....

The poet's odic consciousness is now turned to the dense and luxuriant pines of Namsan and the leisurely flowing Han River, a perfect gift of nature, ideal finishing touch to a superior geomantic designation named Seoul. Following an observance of the political correctness by wishing his Majesty a long peaceful life 'until these mountains flatten and that river dries,' the poet ends with a discourse on human existence:

When you enter mid-life,
 Let go of such worldly desires as fame and wealth,
 Find a nice spot at the foot of a mountain fronting a river,
 Build a structure like the Golden Crane Pavilion over Yangja (Yangtze) river,
 Enjoy the rest of your life in the company of good friends, wine, and poetry.

The majority of the existing *danga* songs incorporate heavily names, places, and anecdotal lines or phrases from ancient Chinese literature or history. It is impossible to fathom whether such Sino-centric literary behavior attracted or detracted the general audiences of the 19th century. Such 'erudite' languages and references were the likely result of the revision processes *pansori* is known to have undergone during the 19th century. *Jingukmyeongsan* is one of a handful of songs where poet's inspiration stays within the walls of domestic geographies and contexts except his reference to the Golden Crane Pavilion over Yangtze river. Another example is *Sacheolga*, Song of four seasons, contemplation of human life as seasonal passing. *Cheoringa*, Song of the Heroes, is a unique example where heroes of Korea from Dangun (BC2333) to Tasan (1762-1836) receive honorable mention exclusively. Lyric by Pak Heonbong, *sori* adaptation by Jeong Gwonjin,¹¹ and singing by Pak Chowol readily available online,¹² Song of the Heroes asserts Korean national identity:

The Eastern Nation of Civility, our great history,
 The land of great thinkers and warriors!
 The virtuous rulings of Dangun and Gija,
 The five millennial tradition!
 The meritorious General Eulchi of Goguryeo,

His accomplishments, most illustrious in history,
 When Wang Sanak the music master played the six-stringed *geomungo*,
 Black cranes came down to dance.
 Weonhyo the Great Venerable of Silla, the flowering of Buddhism...

Nature-friendliness, a distinct characteristic of *danga*, oddly strikes a cord with the contemporary yearning to be close to nature. Capitalism leads the destruction of nature with new-fangled technology. Mountains are flattened to make way for golf courses and apartment complexes. Trees are felled, and riverbanks are contaminated with the less than savory cultures of taverns and motels, and estuaries are filled for industrial land use. The vision of a poet yearning for a hermitage in nature as seen in the *pansori* warm-up songs likens contemporary urban Koreans' aspiration for *jeonweonjutaek*, a 'house in the country.' Be it reclusion or filial piety, shiftiness of life, eulogy of ancient heroes or benevolent kings, or sightseeing and travel, performance of *danga* is not only a vocal warm-up but an act of bridging many realities and consciousnesses. Not only the singer's voice but also the audience's consciousness readies for a storytelling about people, places, situations, and consciousnesses unlike our own.

Singing and Speaking

The singer enters the main narrative, in a tone 'not unlike that of a stern Confucian pedagogue'¹³ playfully commanding attention. He introduces time, place, and dramatic context in *aniri*, stylistic speech, and illustrates details or emotional responses in *sori*, singing. What necessitates the storyteller to shift from speaking to singing? Why do we sing when we sing, alone in the shower, over the waves, witnessing the passing of spring flowers or falling of autumn leaves? What relationship exists between mind, voice, and music?

'Music is (thus) the production of the modulations of the voice, and its source is in the affections of the mind as it is influenced by (external) things. When the mind is moved to sorrow, the sound is sharp and fading away; when it is moved to pleasure, the sound is slow and gentle; when it is moved to joy, the sound is exclamatory and soon disappears; when it is moved to anger, the sound is coarse and fierce; when it is moved to reverence, the sound is straightforward, with an indication of humility; when it is moved to love, the sound is harmonious and soft... All modulations of sound take their rise from the mind of man; and music is the intercommunication of them in their relations and differences.'¹⁴

If conversational speech is primarily for sharing of information and more of activity of the intellect, singing is the language of the heart that conveys feeling. Speaking and singing are not the binary of two separate mindsets but enthrall and frame one another, highlighting the psychological shift from intellectual frame of mind to affective mind, to feeling, empathy, and expressiveness. The following example is from the beginning of the Jeong Gwonjin version of the *Chunhyangga*:

Aniri: The township of Namweon, South Jeolla is the land of old Daebang.

To the east, Jiri mountain, to the west, Jeokseong river,
 Numerous rivers and hills to the south,
 and to the north stand boulders where clouds rest,
 A natural site for temples and shrines.
 Energies of mountains and rivers gather to produce outstanding men and women,
 The spirit of the loyal Gwanunjang¹⁵ is enshrined here,
 Is it any wonder many loyal hearts are born of this region?
 During the early reign of King Sukjong the Great lived a son of a magistrate.

Sori : Jungmori

Sixteen, handsome, well-mannered, good-natured, a true man of man!
 One spectacular day, feeling like going out, he calls Bangja to inquire.

Words spoken are simply not enough to effectively express the conviction the poet feels about Yi Mongryong's feature and person, so the descriptive transitions to singing. In the dialog that follows in *aniri*, Mongryong inquires about local *seungji*, 'temple sites,' worth visiting. Playful Bangja feigns ignorance, 'why would a student of Confucian scholarship visit a Buddhist temple?!' Mongryong's defense transitions to *sori*: in exuberant *jungjungmori*, he advocates the merits of 'manly' diversion by listing historic examples, and how he, too, is second to none. Switching to *aniri*, Bangja complies, and Mongryong chooses Gwanghallu. Returning to *sori* Bangja prepares for his master's outing in syncoating *jajinmori*: waltz into the stable, pick the handsomest stallion for the occasion, comb its mane, adorn, saddle, cushion, and ready is the horse! Yi Mongryong, washed, powdered, perfumed, hair combed with camellia oil, braided and tied with silk hair tie, pink sash tied around the waist of his coat, Sir, the horse is ready! Resting his feet on the stirrups, he mounts, and the procession passes the South Gate, a wisp of wind rises showering flower pedals on Eligible Bachelor Number One, the town heartthrob! Arriving at Gwanghallu, *sori* rests. Briskly dismounting down onto the stone platform and mounting up onto Gwanghallu, Mongryong looks around. At the amazing scenic unfolding, *aniri*, the narrator, once again retreats to make way for *sori*, the muse.

Sori: Jinyangjo

Morning on Jeokseong mountain, thick fog surrounds,
 Trees green, spring deepens, flowers, willows, east wind all around,

The high-pitched burst of emotion from the start of the song depicts Mongryong's emotional response to what he sees and feels, the season of rebirth all around him and a hormonal surge within. The style is reminiscent of the beginning of *jireum sijo*, 'yelling short song,' slow lyrical recitation beginning high-pitch exuding intensity of feeling.

Gwanghallu is beautiful, the Bridge of Crows and Magpies, even better.
 If it is the Bridge of Crows and Magpies, where are Gyeonu and Jingnyeo?¹⁶
 I will be Gyeonu, and who will be my Chingnyeo?

Today, amidst flowers and trees, will I meet my destiny of three lives?

Aniri: Beautiful! What a place! Bangja, it would be criminal not to have a drink at a place like this!



<Figure 1> Gwanghallu © Cultural Heritage Administration

Context and format

Storytelling is more successful if performed in accordance to the occasion. Formatting *pansori* appropriate to the context should be a primary concern: for whom, where, what occasion, and how long. ‘*Pansori* is organized into episodes. Each episode has a distinct character and is sometimes associated with some famous *gwangdae* of the past who contributed it to the narrative tradition.’¹⁷ The stories told are well-known plots, and there is no need to resort to ‘expectant uncertainty concerning the outcome of the plot.’¹⁸ No Aristotelian unity of action via plot suspension but effective vocal exhibition of crisis, climax, and denouement captures the audience’ imagination. ‘Retelling stories not unfamiliar to the audience allows the teller multiple points of departure, expansion, and destination, and not necessarily in linear movement from beginning to end.’¹⁹ The episodic nature of *pansori* narrative gave rise to ‘segmental episodic singing,’ a standard format where the plot as the ‘dynamic, sequential element in narrative literature’²⁰ gives way to the vocal dynamics. Segmental format is an ideal match for multi-genre variety performance events. In the 1960s, presentation of ‘*pansori* narrative in entirety’ (*wanchang*), generally credited to the singer Pak Dongjin,²¹ was introduced as a standard rite of passage. Segmental episodic singing is sometimes denigrated as *tomaksori*, ‘peacemeal *sori*,’ especially by those who judge singing largely if not entirely by the duration.

As *pansori* is now a designated cultural treasure, its appreciation shapes a ritual of cultural experience, and few in the audience question its duration. As believers piously attend hours of mass, modern audiences patiently attend a lengthy *pansori* performance. The confining aspects of the modern auditorium, where each spectator is seated separately and distanced from the stage in semi-darkness, requires a presentational format different from the flexible straw-mat setting of the past. *Wanchang pansori* in a modern auditorium is like staging the leisurely duration of ‘back porch music’ without the leisurely reality of the back porch...²²

In ‘consecutive singing’ (*yeonchang*) where a narrative is divided in sequence and by episode, the singers function as a group of ‘storytellers’ quilting the narrative at hand together. In ‘divided-role

singing' (*bunchang*), prototype of *changgeuk*, the singers together construct a kind of musical drama. Consecutive singing celebrates *pansori*'s fundamental existence as 'storytelling' where narrative virtuosity overrules gender or age specificity. 'Divided-role singing' (*bunchang*)—also referred as 'dialog singing' (*daehwachang*) or 'three-dimensional singing' (*ipchechang*)—is a decisive step toward dramatic characterization. When the latter was first experimented on proscenium at the turn of the 20th century, the audience found 'exotic'²³ 'the splitting of 'I' and 'you' once bound as a single psychological entity. As the term 'three-dimensional singing' implies, the audience discovered another dimension where characters were not mere telltales but materialized as individuals.²⁴

Storyworld of *obatang*, 'the five narratives'²⁵

***Chunhyangga* (Song of Chunhyang):** During the early reign of King Sukjong the Great (1674-1720), in the township of Namweon, Jeolla province, there stayed a young gentleman by the name of Yi Mongryong, handsome, intelligent, and outstanding son of the new magistrate from Seoul. One fine spring day, tired of books, Mongryong takes a tour of the town with the servant Bangja as guide. At Gwanghallu pavilion, he sees in the distance the beautiful Chunhyang, daughter of the retired *gisaeng* Weolmae, on the swing. That evening, Mongryong visits Chunhyang's mother Weolmae, and persuades her to let him have Chunhyang. The two exchanges nuptial vows. Meanwhile, Mongryong's father the magistrate is promoted back to Seoul, and Mongryong has to accompany his parents. In a Confucian society, it was unthinkable for a son of nobleman to take a concubine prior to passing the state examination and being properly wedded to a girl from a noble family. Pledging to meet again, sadly they parted. An official by the name of Byeon Hakdo, having heard of the beautiful Chunhyang, petitions to be stationed in the township of Namweon as the new magistrate. Immediately following his inauguration, Byeon relentlessly harasses Chunhyang to serve him. She refuses, saying she was already wedded, and Byeon orders her torture and imprisonment. Her beheading is scheduled as the highlight of the magistrate's birthday banquet. Meanwhile, Mongryong had been busy preparing for the civil service examination and won the first-place honor. He was awarded with royal insignia to serve the state as inspector incognito. He leads his secret police forces to Namweon, righting wrongs along the way. On the eve of Chunhyang's execution, Mongryong turns up at her gate. Weolmae, who had been praying fervently for his return as her daughter's savior, despaired at his beggared state. His return as an official higher ranked than the magistrate would have been the only recourse. At the prison cell that night, the lovers meet. At the height of the banquet the next day, the thunderous announcements for the arrival of the secret royal inspector are heard from every direction. Havoc breaks loose as the magistrate and all the guests rush around looking for places to hide. Justice is delivered at last, as the royal inspector orders punishment for the corrupt ones and freedom for the innocent. Chunhyang is brought before the royal inspector. He asks her if she would serve him. Deploring the inspector as worse than the magistrate, she demands her death without delay. The lady-in-waiting takes from him to her the jade ring she had given him at parting. Moments of recognition and celebration, and the story ends happily.

***Simcheongga* (Song of Sim Cheong):** Long, long ago, in Peace Blossom Village in the Hwangju district, there lived a blind man by the name of Sim Hakkyu with his good wife Gwak-ssi. She was diligent and resourceful, and took care of her husband with utmost devotion. Life was good, except they

did not have a son to carry on his name, an unpardonable breach of Confucian filial responsibility, so they prayed for a son. At last they begot a child, but to their great disappointment it was a girl. They named her Sim Cheong. Gwak-ssi, weakened by the birth, fell ill and died, and Blindman Sim was left alone to care for the newborn baby. Thanks to the kind women of the village who took turns nursing her, Sim Cheong grew to be a beautiful girl with a filial heart, and Blindman Sim found joy and happiness in her tender loving care. Sim Cheong turns fifteen. Having heard of her beauty and virtue, Lady Jang, widow of the late Minister Jang, one day sent for Sim Cheong to come to her mansion in Arcadia Village. While Sim Cheong was visiting Lady Jang, the sun was setting. Home alone, Blindman Sim was anxiously awaiting her return. Cold, hungry, and worried, he groped his way out into the drifting snow to look for her. He slipped into an icy stream and nearly drowned, but a Buddhist monk passing by pulled him out of the water. Feeling sorry for Blindman Sim, the monk told him that omnipotent Lord Buddha in his temple would help him regain his sight, but he would first have to donate three hundred straw-sacks of sacrificial rice to go with the prayers. Beside himself with excitement, despite his penniless state and against the monk's warning Blindman Sim pledged to donate the proposed sum. Back home, he sorely regretted his thoughtless blunder, but the pledge was final and, according to the monk, he would become crippled for offering false commitment to Lord Buddha. When Sim Cheong returned home and heard what happened, instead of scolding she comforted her father not to despair. From that day forth, she prayed to her guardian spirits to help procure the sacrificial rice. One day, a group of merchant sailors entered the village announcing they would pay any price for a fifteen or sixteen year-old maiden to be offered to the Dragon King of the four oceans as insurance of their safe and prosperous voyage. Sim Cheong committed to follow them to the sea in return for the delivery of the sacrificial rice her father had promised to the temple. Leaving her devastated father and the sympathetic villagers behind, Sim Cheong followed the sailors to the sea. At the divined hour she threw herself into the raging waters of Indangsu.

Virtuous deeds do not pass unnoticed by omniscient Heaven. Sim Cheong was sent back to float on the surface of the sea in a magical lotus bud. The sailors, on their way home from a profitable journey, in passing Indangsu, were reminiscing on Sim Cheong's sadly ended life. To console her spirit, they offered a ritual ceremony. Drums and chants were invoking her from the other world and, lo and behold, they spotted a mysterious lotus bud floating afar. The sailors brought it onto the deck and returned home. Meanwhile, the empress had passed away, and the emperor, instead of remarrying, tried his hand at horticulture by collecting in his garden all sorts of plants from all over the world. He was delighted when the captain of the merchant ship presented him with the mysterious lotus bud from sea. One night, the emperor was unable to fall asleep, and he was strolling through his flower garden. He was drawn to the fragrance of the lotus bud, and suddenly it bloomed, and from within emerged Sim Cheong. She became the empress. Though Empress Sim had the whole world at her disposal, she missed her father. To help her find her father, the emperor decreed that all blind men of the country attend the royal banquet for the blind to be held at the palace for one hundred days. Back in the village, Blindman Sim had been living in grief and remorse until a woman by the name of Ppaengdeogine appeared and married him. When the royal decree arrived at the village, Blindman Sim set out to the capital with his new wife, but on the road at an inn she took all the valuables and eloped with a younger blind man. After numerous hardships, on the last day of the banquet Blindman Sim arrived at the

banquet. Commotion erupted as his name was announced. Several officers rushed out to escort him to the inner palace where Empress Sim was anxiously awaiting the good news of her father's arrival. Seeing it was her father indeed, the empress dashed down the isle in stockinged feet to embrace her father. In the intensity of surprise, Blindman Sim regained his sight. Wonders did not cease! Blessed by Empress Sim's heavenly piety, all the blind people of the country one by one regained their sight. The story ends with a great jubilation.

Heungboga (Song of Heungbo): Long ago in a valley where Gyeongsang, Jeolla, Chungcheong Provinces meet, there lived two brothers, Nolbo and Heungbo. The younger brother Heungbo was good, but the older brother Nolbo was obnoxious and greedy. As the Confucian law of inheritance dictated, Nolbo inherited the family assets with which he would fulfill his basic responsibilities of caring for his family. Instead, he chased Heungbo and his family out into the cold. After much wandering, Heungbo and his family settled in a valley among the homeless. The children sang for food daily, and they were about to give up when one day a Dosa (Taoist monk) visited them. Seeing the family had nothing to spare for the alms, the monk instead took Heungbo deep into the valley, found for him an auspicious home site and disappeared. Heungbo fashioned a mud hut there and moved his family in. Life seemed a bit more bearable indeed, and all of them survived the harsh winter. One fine day next spring, a pair of swallows flew in and built a nest under Heungbo's eaves. Soon two babies were hatched. During the first flight one of them fell and broke its legs. Kind Heungbo and his wife treated it with utmost care and put it back in the nest. Autumn came. All the birds began preparing their journey to their winter lands in the south. Bidding farewell to his benefactor, Heungbo's Swallow took his leave.

It was homecoming in the Great Hall of the Swallow Kingdom, as millions of swallows from all over the world flocked in to report their arrivals. Heungbo's Swallow limped in and recounted to the Swallow King his birth, broken leg, and resuscitation thanks to the man Heungbo. Greatly impressed, the Swallow King presented a magic gourd seed for Heungbo's Swallow to take back home the following spring. Next spring, Heungbo's Swallow returned home with the gourd seed. With thankful heart Heungbo planted the seed behind his house. The plant climbed and climbed, and soon yielded three beautiful gourds on their thatched roof. Chuseok, Korean Thanksgiving, was approaching, and having nothing else to celebrate the holiday with, the family one day gathered and sawed the gourds open one by one. Out poured money, rice, gold, silver, silk, and they became the wealthiest family in the country. Nolbo heard in the wind that Heungbo became very wealthy. Seething with jealousy, he came over one day to see for himself. Determined to get wealthier than his brother, he caught a dozen swallows and, one by one, broke and bandaged their legs. The next fall, he, too, harvested three beautiful gourds. When they were opened one by one, instead of treasures and rice, demons and goblins rushed out amidst oozing feces and shrill curses. Nolbo became destitute overnight. But good Heungbo took in Nolbo and his family to share his wealth and his living quarters, and they lived happily ever after.

Sugungga (Song of Underwater Palace): The Dragon King of the Underwater Palace is bedridden with a grave illness, and all the medicine in the world cannot cure him. One day, a Taoist monk

descends from the sky to tell him that his only cure is a hare's liver. None among the members of the king's aquatic cabinet has the courage or integrity to venture to the land to find a hare for the king except loyal Byeoljubu the Turtle. With nothing except a portrait of the Hare folded and inserted deep in the fold of his neck, Byeoljubu exits the Underwater Palace out to sea. After a lengthy journey through the icy waves, Byeoljubu lands on a shore and looks around. In the valley, on land and on air, animals and beasts were engaged in a heated argument: 'who among us is the oldest and deserves the highest seat of honor?' Confident that there has to be at least one hare among them, Byeoljubu calls out from his hiding place, 'Mr. To (Hare)!' But his chin was locked and his tongue was numb from navigating through the icy water, and the words staggered out as 'Mr. Ho (Tiger)!' Inadvertently he invited trouble upon himself! After many more life-threatening hardships, Byeoljubu finds a hare and by hooks and by crooks succeeds to allure him to the Underwater Palace. Arriving at the palace, the hare realizes he has been tricked. Gathering his wits together, he tells the Dragon King that he regrettably left his liver in his mountain dwelling and needs to be fetched back for it. Desperate for survival, the Dragon King orders Byeoljubu to fetch him back to the land. Byeoljubu is no fool, but he would not dare contradict his king. Landed safely, the hare insults Byeoljubu profusely before hopping away. In his flighty celebration, the hare lets himself get caught again, this time in the grip of an eagle. Again, the hare outsmarts his captor and survives. Meanwhile, Byeoljubu's loyal heart moves Heaven, and he is awarded with the heavenly medicine with which to cure his king.

Jeokbyeokga (Song of Red Cliff): (historical anecdote) Toward the end of the Later Han dynasty, the political power of China was divided among warlords and its land, looted by bandits. The emperors in the capital were mere puppets in the triangles of power struggle among the eunuchs, relatives of the dowager queens, and the scholar-gentry. As a son of an adopted son of a eunuch, Cao Cao had no family background to boast of, yet through a series of conquests and brilliant strategic manipulations especially against the Yellow Turbans, he rose to the position of prime minister for the puppet emperor. With the imperial authority behind him, he brought one warlord after another to surrender until the entire North China came under his control. In the meantime, situated in the southwest was Liu Bei who, although a minor official, retained his pride as a descendant of Liu Bang, the founder of the Han dynasty, and he felt it was his responsibility to restore the Han court. Meanwhile, Sun Quan was in control of the eastern territory south of Yangtze. In 208 CE., Cao Cao led his 830,000-man army southward against the allied forces of Liu Bei and Sun Quan, the last hindrance to 'his' unification of China. As recounted in the Chinese *Romance of Three Kingdoms*, the river battle at Red Cliff (Chibi) along the Yangtze River in the modern Anhui province in which Cao Cao suffered devastating defeat is the background of the *pansori*, the *Song of the Red Cliff*.

(Pansori version): Yu Bi (Liu Bei),²⁶ having lost his trustworthy strategist Seo Weonjik (Xu Yuan Zhi) to the snare contrived by Jo Jo (Cao Cao), at the recommendation of the departing Seo seeks Jegal Yang (Zhuge Liang) to replace Seo. With three humble visits to Jegal Yang historically known as the 'Three Visits to the Grass Hut' (*Samgo choryeo*), Yu wins the heart of the era's wisest man. The next episode is the Battle at 'Three Visits to the Grass Hut' (*Samgo choryeo*) fortress, in which Yu Bi with

Jegal Yang's help wins a minor battle. It is followed by Jegal Yang's visit to Son Gweon's (Sun Quan) headquarters to reveal another of his clever ruses to instigate Son's advisor Chu Yu (Zhou Yu) to join the battle against Jo Jo. Next scene is the Jo Jo's camp on the eve of the battle of the Red Cliff: the soldiers are drunk, homesick, and in anticipation of a bloody battle. Back in his camp, Jegal Yang performs a ritual prayer to Heaven to bring about the southeasterly wind, an unlikely phenomenon in the middle of winter. But Heaven helps, by sending the southeasterly wind with which Jegal Yang would destroy Jo Jo's force. The battle of the Red Cliff ends with Jo Jo's utter defeat. Gwan U (Guan Yu) the noble warrior captures him on Hwayongdo (Hwa Rongdao) path but, remembering the previous favor, releases him.

Theme

'Pansori developed in the nineteenth century to become a favored form of entertainment among royal and aristocratic patrons and audiences. Still outcast, it strove to naturalize its own contradictory existence. A unique sociolinguistic construction, the language of *pansori*, a blend of provincial orality and bookish literacy, was 'keyed'²⁷ to entertain social superiors.²⁸

Pansori repertoire, too, became selected for their ethical content upholding the dominance of Neo-Confucian cardinal virtues. Overemphasis on *oryun*, the five Confucian moral rules, as *pansori*'s thematic raison d'être does poetic injustice to the narrative complexities of storytelling, however. While the surface motifs uphold the Confucian morality, 'conflict among the dramatic characters betrays the inside story, the social awareness that struggles to be freed of the medieval social bondage.'²⁹ Interaction between bondage and freedom is no one-way struggle but often contradictory. Chunhyang for example volunteers orthodox emulation of a chaste Confucian wife despite her impunity as *gisaeng*'s daughter. She demands the bondage of chastity not granted to her kind, insisting 'how can loyalty and filiality, or womanly virtue, differ between high born and low?'³⁰ Wherefore is the tour de force of her revolt? Her soulful aria, 'I must go to him' (*Galkkabuda*), delivered shortly before her arrest reveals:

'I'd die this very instant and become a swallow, and in the easterly spring wind,
Under my love's eaves I would build a nest and linger.
At night, when I am with him,
Will I share all my feelings and loving memories.
What to do, what to do, without him what am I to do!
All alone, she weeps.

Venus reincarnate, armed with love, Chunhyang rewrites the meanings and applications of bondage and freedom. Legalistically, her refusal to accommodate the magistrate's patriarchal and official authority is treason punishable by death, but she taunts death as a way to be free of the pain of separation and die in the manner of her preference, a chaste wife. Deeply introspective especially when executed vocally, these soul-searching arias reveal protagonist's 'real' reasons behind the choices and actions. From these songs the nineteenth century revisionists supposedly found ammunition for essentializing *pansori* as text for popularizing Neo-Confucian morality. The same songs hold resource

for understanding *pansori* as storytelling of human affairs.

In pre-modern Korea, especially since the foundation of Joseon (1392-1910) on the continental Neo-Confucian ruling principles, women were categorically shielded from public domains, forbidden to openly take part in political processes. Interestingly, women are favored as central characters in the world of storytelling, not for who they are as individuals but for what they should be, i.e., exemplary wife and daughter in male-dominant society. Are they real? Are they warm?³¹ Are they mirages of Neo-Confucian patriarchal visions of perfect women for all Korean wives and daughters to follow? By raising wifely and daughterly moral standards to such levels, Korean patriarch could perhaps sleep better knowing their wives and daughters were safe from transgression. A study of gender in Buddhism, an equally deep influence on Korean culture, informs men base their power on the subjugation of women on the belief that women can undermine masculinity.³² By mounting center stage women perfected in every Confucian way, Korean storytellers of pre-modern eras accommodated the Korean patriarchy's surveillance of women. For this very reason, study of female protagonists in *pansori* offers exciting challenges of counter-imagination and revelation: who were they really? What were their thoughts despite their actions?

Pansori is first and foremost storytelling about human beings withstanding difficult social, political, or moral choices while protecting the ideal principle of humanity. The Confucian doctrine may serve as a general descriptive terminology, but falls short of explaining the complex workings of humanity. In fact, the systemic Confucian hierarchy adopted for and by the status quo powers often is the source not solution of the sufferings and conflicts. For its gender and class-specific ethics and morality—therefore half or incomplete morality—Confucian ideology is also a subject of comic or allegorical attack. Without resorting to binaries of classes and genders, *pansori* narrative illuminates exemplary characters and deeds rising above the frays of worldly disparities or injustices. Being human requires higher levels of consciousness and discipline than political or social correctness that shifts with time and place. Bringing society together and not dividing despite glaring injustices is healing, as the story of the abandoned Princess Bari, Korea's rightful goddess of resurrection and healing, teaches us. Perhaps for that reason, *pansori* singing maintained wide spectra of audience, from royal and aristocratic to the denizens of farming and fishing villages, covering from center to margin of Korean society. The poetics of *pansori* singing equally upholds the principle of humanity: '*Jeongsim jeongeum*: 'Correct mind, correct sound,' that if you wish to be a good singer, you must first be a human being.'³³

Rooted deep in Korean cosmology to be invoked in times of trouble is *Hananim*, 'Heaven,' and various subsidiary guardian spirits. Heaven intervenes to 'promote virtue and reprove vice' (*gweonseon jingak*). Faith in the interventionist Heaven adds conviction to the actions of the major characters of *pansori*. The ultimate toll is *salsin seonghyo* ('sacrifice life to serve parent') Sim Cheong exemplifies in her drowning death. A happy ending awaits the end, though the stories seem more concerned with the suffering processes by the protagonists.³⁴ Divine powers are customarily invoked in slow six-beat *jinyangjo*, as deliverance of reverence must be in avoidance of rushed manner. The answers come in all shapes: abrupt appearance of a monk in mysterious *eotmori* most characteristically, as the one that saves Heungbo in his hour of despair or the one who saves Blindman Sim from drowning. In the *Song of the Underwater Palace*, an air-borne *dosa* appears before the ailing Dragon King.

One day, black clouds and dark mist,
 One day, dark clouds and black mist,
 Covers the sky,
 Storm and drizzle
 Wraps the directions all four,
 A dosa,³⁵ clad in blue
 Wide-sleeved long hemp cloak,
 A jade ball in his palm,
 Descends the sky,
 Two royal bows and advancing, speaks.

‘Along three thousand li³⁶ of legendary waters of Yaksu
 The sweet briars to view,
 To Yojiyeon³⁷ wrapped in white clouds,
 The three thousand-year White Peach to acquire,
 I came down to Earth,
 I heard in the wind
 Your Majesty’s illness,
 Most serious,
 Thus I come.’
 (Jeong Gweonjin version)

Divinity works via secular hands as well, like the merchant sailors approaching in effervescent twelve-beat *jungjungmori* rhythm to deliver Sim Cheong to her next absolution, death.

One day, outside the gate, a loud shouting.
 ‘We are the merchant sailors from the Southern Capital.
 At the Waters of Indangsu, a human sacrifice we want to offer,
 A 15- or 16-year-old
 Virgin we wish to buy.
 Anyone interested in dealing?’
 The sound of their announcement
 Hovers over the village.
 (Jeong Gweonjin version)

More likely than in reality, folk narratives bring sweet confirmation of heavenly justice where ‘pain is gone, and pleasure is come’ (*gojin gamnae*). Often dream is the carrier of confirmation, most consistently in the *Song of Sim Cheong* where the panorama of her birth, death, resurrection, and reunion are forewarned: on the eve of Buddha’s birthday, her parents dream an identical dream in which the spirit of the moon enters mother’s body; In the morning of her departure to the sea, father relates his dream, ‘you were in a carriage, toward the endless sea you kept going. I jumped up and

down, stamped my feet, wailed, and raised havoc and woke up'; in a dream during her voyage, she is visited by the spirits of the two legendary wives of King Sun (Shun), who foretell her resurrection, 'Pray, return safely from the journey far and long'; in a village toward the end of his journey to the capital, a blind woman An-ssi proposes to Blindman Sim saying, 'In my dream last night the sun and the moon fell and submerged in the water, ³⁸ I knew it was you. I held them in my arms, it is our destiny'; Blindman Sim wakes up from his nuptial bed recounting a dream that he was 'in a fire, the leaves fell and covered the roots, an animal was skinned and mounted on drum, what nightmarish dream!' An-ssi replies that 'entering fire is experiencing pleasure, drum mounted with skin means loud announcement, fallen leaves covering the roots means your offspring embraces you, that you will meet your children.' *The Song of Chunhyang* is marked by its share of dreams and divinations: Weolmae gives her daughter to Mongnyong, as she had 'an auspicious dream the previous night'; tortured, imprisoned, and left to die, in her dream Chunhyang visits the spirits of two legendary wives of King Sun who resuscitates her with a 'cure for after-torture sickness.' Incorporated more in *changgeuk* dramatization than in *pansori* singing is the scene of her nightmare in prison.

Chunhyang: The cherry blossoms outside the window dizzily fell.

Interpreter: 'Flowers fall, fruits are borne.' You'll be pregnant.

Chunhyang: My full-view mirror cracked in the middle.

Interpreter: 'Mirror cracks, a big noise.' You'll make a big splash.

Chunhyang: Over my door hung a scarecrow.

Interpreter: 'Over the door, scarecrow hanging, everyone looks up.' Everyone will admire you.

Chunhyang: On the prison wall a crow sat and, 'Ga-ok, Ga-ok!' cawed at me.

Interpreter: Gaa- means 'beautiful,' -ok means 'house.' Excellent! Only if you meet a noble person tonight at O-si, the fifth hour (O- also means 'crow'), you'll have an unbelievable luck and fortune!.....³⁹

Tragic-comic-grotesque

Balancing the tragic in *pansori* is the comic, tension breaker usually in the form of underdeveloped characters of minor proportions and actions. The narrative has several well-known stock characters of such proportions and functions: Bangja the all-knowing butler, Weolmae the *ex-gisaeng* and meddling mother of Chunhyang, swindler by profession and Blindman Sim's erstwhile sweetheart nicknamed Ppaengdeogine. Blindman Sim with all the sorrows he bears including loss of sight, death of wife and daughter should be a saddest character in Korean narrative, yet he is a funny reflector of all the thieveries, lies, and adulteries committed by his beloved. That he is physically blind to all of her transgressions happening right under his nose amplifies not only the comic but the pathetic. Tragic-comic is the word when he realizes Ppaengdeogine had eloped with a younger blindman, and he is abandoned far from home.

(*Jungmori*)

Having said farewell to the sympathetic innkeeper,

He is alone on the road to the capital far away.

Stepping outside the inn, unable to let go of the thought of her,
Deolsseok! He flops down on the ground,
 ‘Deogine-----! Deogine, Deogine---Ppaengdeogine!
 The cruelest hag there is!
 Betraying a husband who can see is inhuman,
 Abandoning a blind husband, and do you dare hope for a future?
 Fare you well with that new fling of yours, Bitch!’

Blindman Sim bathes away his hurt in a stream and begins to feel better, but a thief has taken all his clothes. ‘Did they get blown in the wind? Is someone joking with a blindman?’ Sightlessness, root of Blindman Sim’s tragedy, consistently introduces the comic in the midst of the pathetic and vice versa.

(*Jungmori*, Jeong Gweonjin version)

‘Huh huh! I am dead!
 Huh-----! I am truly dead!
 In this fiery, scorching heat, I am stark naked up and down,
 I will either be burnt to death or starved to death.
 You! Ignorant and uncouth bastards, bring my clothes back!
 If you steal from a blind, your posterity will be blind down to the 12th generation!
 Bring my clothes back!
 A deaf or a cripple is better off than I.
 Though the sun shines daily, I see it not,
 This miserable life persists,
 This pathetic, miserable me!
 A true gentleman he is, decency must be intact.
 If you are a woman passing, detour please!
 I happen to be naked as you see.
 How low have I fallen!’

Who is Heungbo? His aristocratic pride under ragged attire and growling stomach, his naïve and rigidly moral persona, boundless optimism, sexual drive and productivity provide unlimited source of hilarity, humor, and pathos. Who is Nolbo then?

(*Jajinmori*, Han Nongseon version)

He’d cut trees in the direction of Daejanggunbang,⁴⁰
 Recommend relocation toward Samsalbang,⁴¹
 Build a house in Ogwibang,⁴²
 Fan the fire so it spreads,
 Drive stakes into the still growing pumpkins,
 Invite a traveler in to stay the night,

And turn him out when dark.
 He'd attack a Chorani⁴³ and tear his mask to bits,
 Steal drum from a minstrel,
 Steal needles from an acupuncturist,
 Approach a gentleman and rip his horsehair cap,
 Rape a young girl,
 Spread false rumors about a chaste widow,
 Give a hungry baby a smelly toe to suck,
 Knock down a defecating man right on his release,
 Urinate into a ceremonial wine bottle,
 Pour poison in a soju⁴⁴ bottle,
 Cut strings off a new horsehair headband,
 Wrestle a cripple to the ground,
 Thump a hunchback on his back,
 Smear feces on a blind man,
 Kick a pregnant belly,
 Dig hollows on a busy road,
 Shoot water gun at the silk shop display...

Modern materialism blurs the tragic-comic distinction in us, as ‘the day-to-day choices and strategies through which the new middle class contributed to the creation and re-creation of the cultural practices of South Korean capitalism, the pursuit of material interests.’⁴⁵ In some recent studies, Nolbo’s pathological greed is grotesquely applauded as modernistic capitalism, and his perverse and glaringly homicidal deeds are pampered as ‘churlish’ acts that ‘every healthy male has engaged in as a youth.’⁴⁶

Satiric

None in the *Song of Underwater Palace* is without frailty: the Dragon King is ill due to his indulgence; the ministers are cowardly or incompetent; the loyal Byeoljubu is insecure about his wife’s fidelity; the birds and beasts, allegories of human, are liars; caught between his two legs the tiger begs the tiny turtle to spare him; for his vainglory, hare fools himself to follow the turtle to the Underwater Palace; desperate for survival, the Dragon King releases the hare so he will ‘return with his liver’; happy that he has returned safe and sound, the hare lets himself be trapped in a snare; blinded with greed for the ‘magical pouch,’ the eagle, the hare’s final adversary, loses the hare. Consistently happening in the story is ‘the stronger is exposed, and the weaker survives,’ satiric twist on ‘the stronger preys on the weaker.’ Below, ministers debate to decide who should go to the land to fetch a hare to save their king, classic satire on the political sanctimony of our world.

(Jeong Gweonjin version)

(*Aniri*)

‘How about you, Duke Mullet?’

‘I really want to go to the land, but I am their favorite for sasimi, and on ancestral

ceremonial table I make the top priority plate?I really shouldn't go.'
 'Count Red Snapper, how about you?'
 'On a fine spring day, I'd be put in a stew tangled up in fresh ferns... wouldn't want to
 go like that. I'd rather die sitting at home.'

.....

(Jungmori)

'How about Monsieur Catfish, the Chief Gate Keeper?
 Monsieur Catfish is indeed blessed with long mustaches and large mouth,
 Great physique with impressive beard.
 But with an appetite too great to contain,
 He would prowl valleys and rivers for food and,
 One day an old fisherman in straw rainwear
 Would take one look at him and, *Sewu sapung bulsugwi!*⁴⁷
 He would surely bite the old man's bait and
 Die of starvation.
 Into the cure for dysentery, minor indigestion
 And hangover, brewed he will be, surely.
 No, we cannot send him.'
 'Baron Otter the County Magistrate, will you go?'
 'Otters are too libidinous,
 At every waking moment they crave sex,
 Indulgence leads to shame,
 No, forget the idea of sending him.'
 'How about Lord Shrimp?'
 'Lord Shrimp is most courageous,
 He jumps high,
 But his countenance betrays
 The sign of premature death.
 No, we cannot send him.'

Politics and poetics of pansori beyond obatang

In every developmental stage before 'archetypal' preservation, pansori has shown its genius at adaptation. Emerging originally from the fusion of ritual, narrative, and lyrical traditions, and incorporating the ethical, textual, linguistic, and aesthetic preferences of its patrons in the nineteenth century, *pansori* unfolded as a proscenium extravaganza in the twentieth century. Where does *pansori* go from here? In a sense, its designation as 'treasure' in the recent era is the most daunting stunt so far, indulging the cultural and psychological need to reconstruct one's 'traditional heritage.' Beyond strategies of valorization, is there life left in its power of adaptation? Is *pansori* merely camouflaging itself as an archetypal fixture as required by the zeitgeist?⁴⁸

Reflection of society, art evolves with changes occurring within the society, and insofar as the society is ‘a world in becoming, not a world in being,’⁴⁹ artistic expression as human social metaphor would at best be in transformative modes. ‘Meaning’ in narrative art is a function of the relationship between the fictional world created by the author and the real, ‘apprehendable’ world, and understanding a narrative is finding a satisfactory relationship between the two worlds.⁵⁰ As the tale world moves from ancient fictional reality to modern social reality, the narrative world makes room to include the socio-political realities of here and now. Outside *changgeuk* activities off the mainstream *pansori*, new compositions termed *changjak pansori* have emerged as well, mostly as expression of political resistance. In terms of performative identity, the *obatang* pieces may be likened to native speakers of the culture where *pansori* originally emerged, while new *pansori* can be called second language *pansori*, reconstructed from a socio-artistic environment much removed from the culture of its original emergence and proliferation.

‘... a transplant consciously assimilated to the ‘old’ soil. In existing *pansori*, the tale and the telling are integrated in its native existence, but in the newly composed *pansori*, tales of here and now enter the mechanics and spirit of telling long discontinued. Through generations of revising and polishing, the narrativity of traditional pansori has been ‘completed,’ while newly composed pansori are skeletal and in the making.’⁵¹

The authorship of the *Songs of Patriots*, eulogies of five historical figures martyred in their resistance against Japanese aggression respectively, is presumed unknown. It is widely believed, however, to have been composed around the time of the Korean Independence by Pak Tongshil who defected to North in 1950. Following the 1945 Independence, it spread like a political manifesto among singers, but unlike the long-rooted *obatang* proper the new ‘five songs’ failed to capture the *pansori* mainstream. For its historical significance they have recently been given limited media recognition and performance venues. Defending its artistic merit is the singer Jeong Sunim, ‘Where Yu Gwansun cries out Daehan dongrip manse! (‘Independence to the Great Korea, Hurrah!’), everyone in the audience stood up and joined! It’s a musically sound composition, great rhythmic variation.’⁵² The five martyrs include Admiral Yi Sunsin who defended Korea against Hideyoshi’s Invasion in the 16th century and four others who resisted Japan’s 20th century aggression. A year after the 1905 Korea-Japan Protectorate Treaty that evoked bitter resentment and despair among the entire Korean population, Yi Jun, leader of the Society for the Study of Constitutional Government (Heonjeong yeon-guhwe), accompanied by two other envoys, carried Emperor Gojong’s credentials to The Hague, Netherlands to appeal to the world against Japan’s colonial infiltration into Korea. The leaders of the world present were indifferent to Korea’s suffering, and would not heed that ‘without the royal seal the treaty is invalid.’⁵³ In protest, Yi Jun took his own life at The Hague. In 1909, An Chunggeun shot Ito Hirobumi, former prime minister and elder statesman sent by the Japanese government to carry out its aggression, and was executed shortly after. Yun Bonggil (1908-1932) in 1932 set off a bomb in Hung-k’ou Park in Shanghai, killing and wounding a number of Japanese dignitaries before he was arrested and executed. Yu Gwansun, student at Ewha Girls’ High School, organized and led an independence protest in her hometown during the March First Independence Movement (Sam-Il undong) of 1919, and was tortured

and killed. The rhetorical style of the songs is solemn, tragic, and reverential. They are *salpuri*, ‘ritual of purge,’ for the souls of the martyrs who did not live to celebrate the Independence.

The *Songs of Patriots*, though off-mainstream, provides an important clue to the study of narrative formation and canonization of pansori. First, formation of ‘five’ martyrs may be a structural adherence to the iconic *obatang*, the ‘five narratives.’ Secondly, spoken narrative passages resume an active role in the exposition of the complex historical background and facts. The bulkiness of spoken passages contrasts with the lesser role they hold in the traditional pansori narratives. It can be imagined that *pansori* at earlier stages had a heavier allotment of spoken passages, and as narrative details became familiar to the audience, singers progressively transported lines and phrases into the lyrical domain.⁵⁴ Thirdly, the *Songs of Patriots* formulaically take from the classical *pansori* narratives interpolated or paraphrased words, phrases, sentences, images and actions, confirming that a narrative invention is a formula for reinvention. The patriotic Yi Jun’s departure for The Hague in early spring 1906 resonates with several voices from the classical *pansori*.⁵⁵

Meanwhile, Yi Jun Seonsaeng,
 Bearing the mission for Korea in his heart,
 In simple attire,
 Solemnly dressed,
 Bids farewell toward the direction of his Majesty,
 He’s on his way at last,
 His walks, tall, sign of a man of virtue,
 His face grim with determination,
 His heart burning for his king and his country.

(From the *Song of the Red Cliff*: Gongmyeong receives Yu Hyeondeok on his third visit.)

Look how Gongmyeong carries himself.
 Entering the rear cottage,
 Calms himself,
 Puts on his attire,
 Receives Hyeondeok with due respect.
 Both gentlemen ascend the grass parlor, greet, and are seated,
 Gongmyeong eyes Heondeok,
 His face is like jade,
 His earlobes so long they touch his shoulders,
 His arms so long they touch his knees,
 In black hat, red coat, he is seated with dignity,
 Sign of a true leader.

(From the *Song of the Patriot Yi Jun*’s: Yi Jun begins the journey.)

Samgak Mountain recedes, the road is
 Far, a sad whist of a sound

Heard in the wind,
 A cuckoo weeps tears of blood
 As if bidding a heartrending farewell,
 Having left the full moon in the empty mountain,
 You cry with all your might to see me off,
 The sorrow of Ju deepens.
 He stops, sadly turns around,
 To bid farewell to his Majesty again. ‘Alas, when will I ever
 Walk this land again? Everywhere, in and out of the city wall,
 Men and women, grieve the loss of the country!’

(From *the Song of Simcheong*: Sim Cheong is on her way to board the ship.)

The villagers, men, women, old, and young, their eyes puffy from weeping.
 Heaven must see this, for the sun disappears, and dark clouds cover the world.
 The blue mountains, too, seem to wince,
 Trees and grass seem to weep, they droop languidly,
 Flowers once so brilliant, are colorless,
 Spring birds, so caring, cry and cry,
 ‘Let me ask you, Oriole, who are you leaving behind that you cry so?
 A cuckoo weeps tears of blood, Gwichokdo! Gwichokdo!
 You cry with all your might to see me off,
 On a tree branch, you sit and cry,
 They’ve paid the price for my life,
 When will I ever return?

(Yi Jun’s voyage continues.)

Listlessly the sun sinks in the west,
 On board the ship off Incheon, out to the East Sea,
 Endless sea, blue waves,
 The sea and the sky are one, fog gathers, against
 The gunwale, Tang! Tang! Storm roars Urururu--!
 Waves rock Chulleong! Seagulls wail Kkaok-Kkareureu!
 An indifferent white bird casually flies to and fro.
 ‘In spring chill, crying, where is it that you go?
 Should you pass the palace of my lord in Hanyang in Korea, please deliver,
 ‘Yi Jun will always pray for His Majesty,
 Should misfortune befalls me, I will serve him in my next life!’
 Please deliver my words to His Majesty.’

(From the three parts to Sim Cheong’s voyage and drowning death: 1. lengthy voyage, 2. sudden rise of storm and her drowning at Imdangsu, 3. calm that follows.)

1. There in the middle of the sea, the boat glides away.

Endless sea, blue waves....

2. Arriving at a place, this is Imdangsu!
Like a battle of sea dragons,
Like the earth's quaking from under,
The vast sea, right in the midst of it,
Wind roars and waves crash, fog presses in,
Wet and watery is the day, still a thousand leagues to go,
Ten thousand leagues more to go, the whole world turns black
Evening approaches quick, a lone boat in vast universe,
Magpies flutter in, on the gunwale, hits their heads Tang! Tang!
Storm roars Urururu--! Waves rock Chulleong!
The captain and his assistant, and all the deckhands,
Rush to and fro, prepare the ritual table for the sacrifice.

3. 'My dear sailors,
Which way is the Peach Blossom Village?'
Stepping forward, the captain raises his hand and points.
'The Peace Blossom Village is over there!
Wrapped in fogs and rain, that's Peace Blossom Village!'
Sim Cheong, hearing this, falls on her knees,
'Alas, Father!
Don't think of this un-filial girl even for a moment,
Hurry up and regain your sight, and see this bright world again,
Marry a good stepmother and beget a son!
My dear sailors,
May you profit millions and billions from this voyage,
On your way back home, please comfort my father.'
'We'll do, don't worry, hurry and jump!'

The rushed manner with which the three key signature songs of Sim Cheong's drowning death get crammed into one song of lesser textual significance, i.e., Yi Jun's cliché pledge of loyalty to his king, demonstrates wasteful borrowing. 'On board the ship off Incheon, out to the East Sea' seems a lyrical incoherence, unless at that time ships bound for Europe left Incheon then voyaged to the East Sea before heading out West again. Unable to provoke the feeling as compelling as Sim Cheong's pledge of love for her father before drowning, Yi Jun's tone rings melodramatic at best. Given another century or two of continuing performance, the *Songs of Patriots*, too, 'might have expanded into five full-length songs with better defined character and scene development.'⁵⁶ Still, the textual importance of the *Songs of Patriots* entrenched in traditional heroism and ethos is not so much the question of its narrative perfection as its being the first case for study of the mechanics of formulaic borrowings in creating new *pansori*.

During the recent era of movement for democracy, there emerged in literature ‘the analytic endeavor to group the people’s place within the organic interconnections between individual and society, nation and the world.’⁵⁷ Sarcasm and satire were the dominant tone among the ‘folk’ theatrical activities termed *madanggeuk*, which did ‘not only want to revive traditional culture; it also wanted to use culture to make political statements more effectively.’⁵⁸ Kim Jiha’s *damsi*, ‘rhapsodic poetry (1970),’ conceptualizes *pansori* as vehicle of political satire. Survivor of death sentence, imprisonment, and torture, Kim discovered ‘the means to dramatize the plight of the common man.’⁵⁹ Three of his collections have been *pansori*-tized by Im Jintae: *Sori-naeryeok* (History of a sound, 1974), *Tongbada* (Sea of excrements, 1985), and *Ojeok* (Five bandits, 1980s). Aside from his political message, Kim brings forth the ‘poetic’ urgency to locate the ‘life’ of Korean language largely abandoned in the heavily West-centered modern Korean literary styles.⁶⁰ He claims that the narrative poetic structure of *pansori* contains Korean ‘grammar of life,’ that ‘transmits without hindrance the sympathetic rapport between the speaker and the subject of the speech.’⁶¹

In a sense, Kim Jiha’s search for the narratological and poetic ‘life’ of the Korean language corresponds to modern literary scholarship’s search for ‘orality,’ the acoustic life of language shortchanged in literacy-based cultures.⁶² Citing Chae Mansik, Kim Yujeong, and Yi Haejo as exemplary user of the kind of Korean language he aspires to, Kim laments the injection of the ‘frozen language of translation’ into Korean modern literature. Literary modernization means linguistic Westernization, hybrid resembling Indo-European languages. Below I include translation of the beginning of *Ojeok*⁶³ and its likely formulaic inspiration, the beginning *aniri* from Han Nongseon version of the *Song of Heungbo*.

1. In writing poetry, be not so trivial, write like this.
Somehow, sharp-penned, dragged to the court,
Been a while since the flogging, now this body itches,
This brash mouth, wrist, itches omul-omul, sumul-sumul,
Like to write anything, can’t resist, heck, why not?
These rumps, beaten before, again, let it be,
But got to tell a bizarre story of thieves.
2. Long, long ago, on the third of the tenth lunar month,
Founded at the foot of White Head Mountain,
Swearing by the bellybutton and shithole, the best,
This Eastland, since Dangun’s era, the best,
The best, prosperous, happy happy days are here.
3. Poverty would there be? Thieves could there be?
Well-fed farmers often die of over-eating,
Sick of silk clothing, live naked all through the year,

Go Jaebong, he was a thief alright,
 But even in Confucius' era, thieves lived,
 Corruption and exaction are rampant alright,
 Even during the reign of Yo-Sun (Yao and Shun), four criminal types existed,
 Even wise rulers and good ministers have kleptomania
 They can't control till death.
 At the heart of Seoul, five thieves lived together.

4. In the south, piles of feces Dungdung!
 Skirmish edge of Han River, Dongbinggo town [standing] Uttuk!
 In the north, the hairless rooster's asshole [feeling] Mindung!
 Bare hill, below, Seongbuk town, Suyu town [jutting] Ppyotchuk!
 Across south-north Ojongjongjong, shanties [jammed] Ttadak ttadak!

...

(Aniri from the *Song of Heungbo*)

Our Eastern land is the land of gentlemen, and of etiquette.
 Even in a ten-family village, people practice filial piety,
 Even in the era of Emperors Yo-Sun (Yao and Shun) there lived thieves,
 Even in the era of Confucius, lived four evils.
 Perhaps, life is such, accept it as is.
 Where Gyeongsang, Jeolla, Chungcheong provinces meet, lived the Nolbo brothers,
 Nolbo is the older, Heungbo is the younger.
 Everyone has five organs and six entrails, but Nolbo has seven.
 How? Just below his left rib cage,
 About the size of the chess piece 'Gung' ('Palace') is his entrail of perversity.
 To chase out his good brother Heungbo, everyday he would practice foul play.

Kim's denunciation of corruption among the powerful, 'loaded with cynicism, irony, and calculated profanity,'⁶⁴ closely emulates the tone of accusation of Nolbo's abhorrent behaviors in the *Song of Heungbo*. His citation of 'the public metonym for the 'five bandits,' the known geography of their residences in Seoul'⁶⁵ with extensive use of onomatopoeia triggers vibrant kinetic responses visual, aural and textual, in place of lifeless verbal predicate.

Composition by Jeong Cheolho, 5.18, *Haneuldo ulgo ttangdo ulgo* ('May 18, heaven and earth cried,' 1993) is a *pansori*-style eulogy of the victims of the 1980 Gwangju Military Massacre. Shortly after the assassination of Pak Jeonghui and as a way to bolstering his own presidency, Cheon Duhwan ordered a military raid of the municipality of Gwangju to retaliate against the citizens demonstrating against his illegitimate martial law. A powerful narrative of injustice, invocation, and purging, the work demarcates the demise of the long years of political censorship imposed by the military dictatorial regimes.

(Jinyangjo)

Eoheo, eoheo, Heaven, Buddhas, Boggies,
 All the ghosts in the world,
 All gathered and wept sadly,
 On May 1980,
 In Gwangju, in the municipality of Gwangju.
 The day is long gone and time has lapsed, ten years.
 Today, we gather here again,
 To consecrate a monument.

(Dongsalpuri)⁶⁶

Heoheo, Ghosts of those gunned and stabbed,
 Ghosts of those gunned and sliced,
 No peaceful rests by rivers and mountains for you,
 Your remains abandoned, no graves, no tombstones, no flowers for you,
 Nowhere, faraway, buried namelessly,
 When the moon rises in Mangweoldong (graveyard), Gwangju, Jeollado, Ghosts,
 Your deaths were not in vain.

(Jungmori)

Leaving home, my child held me and spoke hurriedly,
 ‘Our friends are being trampled under the soldiers’ feet, shot to death,’
 My child, you were lamenting, Yeonjeong-ah, Yeongjeong-ah!
 My child, where are you,
 On the garden bed, your phantom only, but no’you.’
 You turn ghost to come and see your mother, linger, and disappear.
 Fallen by a bullet, No. 69, turned a handful of dirt, deep in Mudeung valley,
 Buried deep in the ground, did you leave for a place too far to return home?

(Jinyangjo)

Ah-ah, how could this ever be under the heaven?
 Same people, same blood, brothers and sisters,
 Confront each other with guns and daggers,
 Shooting and stabbing men, women, old, young indiscriminately,
 Turning the entire city into a sea of blood,
 They stripped female students, molested them, raped them, shot them,
 And those who would not expire immediately,
 They stabbed their white breasts with knives,
 Blood squirting up red.
 Pale-faced pregnant mothers begged for mercy,

The devils stabbed their bellies, strewed their remains on the ground and departed.
 Aigo, the fiends with license to kill,
 Even starving beasts, once full, kill no more.
 Devils, have you gone mad with the taste of blood?
 You turned the quiet peaceful Gwangju into a sea of blood.

(*Jungmori*)

The May Revolution of the Municipality of Gwangju
 Has become the revolution of the world.
 You did not enter the world of forgetfulness.
 Your chests, bared on May 1980, is still confronting the bullets,
 Your raised fists are still fighting the injustice and,
 From your fallen bodies,
 Countless revolutionary souls are being born again and again.

The still fresh historical reality brings pansori narrativity closer to representation of modernity.

The scale and means of modern-day destruction are no doubt inscrutable for the traditional formulaic consciousness: tanks, machine guns, tear gas, and gas masks are unlike the boats, arrows, horses, spears, and swords from the Red Cliff battle; the perverted sexual violence indiscriminately committed on the boulevards makes Chunhyang's torture an act of compassion by comparison, and *minju* (democracy), *gyeom* (martial law), *demo* (demonstration) are but a few concepts challenging the traditional political semiotics.⁶⁷

New pansori

The concept and practice of new pansori continued to expand. As Christian doctrines gain ground in the Korean religious consciousness, some prominent singers converted to Christianity have expressed their Christian faiths by adapting to *pansori* singing excerpts from the Bible and other religious materials. Some Buddhist singers have also followed suit in pansorizing Buddhist faiths. Usually commissioned by a church or temple, 'It often depicts historical figures and events that are closely associated with nationalist and anti-colonial struggle, therefore merging religion with national politics.'⁶⁸ Buddhist ritual and performative expressions boast a lengthy historical rooting on Korean soil since the fourth century. Buddhism also has significant textual and stylistic affinity with the existing *pansori* narrative as in the *Song of Sim Cheong*. Christian *pansori* sounds an oxymoron in that Korean Christians have largely been taught to condemn native Korean beliefs and their performative associations as hedonist idol worship, so for them to resort to *pansori*, a closest kin to the southwestern regional shaman chant, as newfangled stylistics of their worship seems a self-contradiction at best, unless Christian *pansori* is for Korean Christians a path to find their long abandoned roots.

At the threshold of twenty-first century, the new *pansori* movement gains even greater momentum to explore alternative creativities in form, content, and performative venues. *Pansori* in this context seems less an endangered species than resuscitation of possibilities. While singers of classical

pansori remaining at the central or regional epicenters with protected venues and recognitions tend to thrive on the impression of endangerment, a growing number of younger generation students of *pansori* depart from the narrow path of conventional success to find home in the domain of popular culture, at least for the time being. Interestingly, conventional *pansori* positions as high culture, a centripetal force strengthening its hegemonic authority within, while pop *pansori* seeks centrifugal freedom outwardly. Developing as commentary of everyday Korean life and society incorporating linguistic and meta-linguistic expressivenesses of today, *pansori* has 'given way to a gentler form of cultural nationalism and cosmopolitan attitudes.'⁶⁹ The unleashing of creativity may be an extension of the energy of *hallyu*, 'Korean wave,' that continues to sweep through Asia and beyond. The designation of *pansori* as 2003 UNESCO world oral heritage also serves as stimulus not only for protection of *pansori* but also for creating *pansori* interactive with audiences of today. The mainstream media more closely follows the new *pansori* phenomena for greater coverage, including the 2004 *Segye munhwa yusan pansori* (World cultural heritage, *pansori*), video production by MBC, Jeonju, Korea, and '*Pansori Hanbogeul Beotda*' (*Pansori takes off hanbok*), 2006 SBS TV Documentary. 'Taking off hanbok' is a proclamation artists will free themselves from the narrow confines of conventional *pansori* to freely explore artistic possibilities on their own terms. Branding themselves as *ttorang gwangdae*, 'small ditch *gwangdae*,' or *badaksori gwangdae*, 'rock bottom singer,'⁷⁰ new *pansori* artists position themselves at various points of creative curves performing, teaching, and sharing news, thoughts, and feedbacks among the ever increasing memberships online. *The National League of Ttorang Gwangdae* formed in 2004 takes as their primary mission the job of 'creating and disseminating *pansori* art that continues to be relevant to our changing world.'⁷¹

Pansori and film

Seopyeonje is a South Korean film directed by Im Gwontae in 1993. Its story tells of a family of traditional Korean *pansori* singers trying to make a living in the modern world. The film was originally expected to only draw limited interest, and was released on only one screen in Seoul. At the height of its popularity, it was shown on only three screens at once in the entire city of over 10 million.[1] Nevertheless it ended up breaking box-office records and became the first Korean film to draw over a million viewers in Seoul alone. When it was released, *Seopyeonjes* success also increased interest in *pansori* among modern audiences. The film was acclaimed critically, both in South Korea and abroad, getting screened in Cannes Film Festival and winning six Grand Bell Awards and six Korean Film Critics' Awards. Im Gwontae also used *pansori* as a narrative tool in his later films *Chunhyang* (2000), based on the popular Korean story *Chunhyangga*, and *Beyond the Years* (2007), an informal sequel to *Seopyeonje*.

What thematic, narrative, or stylistic connection exists between the three films above mentioned? What socio-artistic semantics do we construct from the unexpected attention *pansori* in contemporary Korean feature film receives? Why was *Seopyeonje* originally expected not to be a hit, and with what ammunition did it break expectation? How successfully did Im Gwontae use *pansori* as a narrative tool in his later films? It is not as if Im was the first to introduce *pansori* narrative into film. In fact, the

character Chunhyang, quintessential favorite in Korean gender consciousness, has been cast in numerous film versions since the beginning of the history of Korean film. Sim Cheong, too, has been fairly film-friendly. As Korean sentiments shift from traditional mores and aesthetics what excited viewers of the bygone eras (such as Chunhyang the icon of Korean femininity) hardly impresses the audiences of today. For the film's association with such outdated impressions of *pansori*, the producers and distributors had not expected to see *Seopyeonje* soar as a rare cultural phenomenon. But *Seopyeonje* was not another film about premodern characters and values but a captivatingly contemporary narrative of characters who happen to be singers of *pansori*. The extensive *pansori* singing could easily have been a liability considering its foreignness, but with cinematographic genius Im made *pansori* singing the very focal point instead. The film was for the majority of Korean viewers perhaps the first opportunity to view singers of *pansori* as intriguing characters within a movie.

‘The film utilizes the musical form of pansori for metaphoric purposes, and it eventually caused a resurgence in the genre, even amongst the pop-rap/dancehall-obsessed youth fans of Rora and other KPop icons... Add to this the fact that film was a medium Koreans, especially Korean youth, had all but given up on, and that the film carried no big name actors. Korean audiences found exactly what they were searching for in *Seopyeonje*, an opportunity to reclaim and rejuvenate Korean culture.’⁷²

From following the lives of singers in *Seopyeonje*, Im Gwontae in *Chunhyang* enters the interior world of *pansori*. He does so by traveling between two narrative positionalities that frame each other: the world of *pansori* singing on stage with singer, drummer, and audience, and the world of enactment unfolding from singing. In *Chunhyang*, Director Im once again takes risks, this time in the form of duality of extensive *pansori* singing and extensive sexuality. An audience capable of appreciating both the lengthy *pansori* singing and sexualized Chunhyang engaging in risqué sexual acts simultaneously would be limited in size. For example, for those who prefer Chunhyang to represent essential Korean womanhood, denuded Chunhyang reaching for an orgasm should be disorienting to say the least. Those used to the commercial nature of Hollywood movies would find frequent interpolation of *pansori* singing in the film cumbersome.

Director Im Gwontae and screenwriter Kim Myeonggon approach the story with reverence for classical tradition and provide a rarified atmosphere that does justice to the age-old theme of love subverted, deepened by awareness of class differences and conflicts. The film packs strong emotional power, but I wish it could have been separated from the narration, or that for film purposes the narration could have been toned down. Admittedly, that result would have probably fallen short of what the subject and the style properly demand.⁷³

Im Gwontae's *pansori* journey comes to a screeching halt with *Cheonmyeonhak* (Beyond the Years or A Thousand Cranes, 2007), a film based on the novel *The Wanderer of Seonhakhong* and develops as a deconstructed sequel to *Seopyeonje*. The close relationship between sister and brother from *Seopyeonje* unravels into kind of latent incestuous feelings for each other. The story progresses as

Dongho the brother who is mostly absent in the second half of *Seopyeonje* obsessively searches for his sister Songhwa. Their relationship does not materialize physically, but the signature passion and reverence for the art of *pansori* singing that made *Seopyeonje* so successful gives way to the traffic of an all too ordinary iteration of desire, longing, and attachment. *Pansori* singing in *Cheonmyeonhak*, despite the more matured singing skills demonstrated by the leading actor in the person of Songhwa, fails to move viewers' heart for that matter. Songhwa's *han*-filled singing acquired at the expense of her sight in *Seopyeonje*, in *Cheonmyeonhak* is a mere fugitive running from the pursuit of her obsessive brother. The plot structurally fails to let *pansori* singing ring above all sufferings and lingering attachments as in *Seopyeonje*. J. Chang comments:

‘It does act well as a companion piece, but the lack of narrative focus, especially on *Dongho*'s story in relation to his sister, coupled with some harder to swallow reaches for melodrama in the third act cools the effect of this work. It's not bad and is certainly a watchable, and even at times appreciable, film. Being tied to *Seopyeonje* just raises the question if it was really a necessary one.’⁷⁴

The *Hangyoreh* newspaper under the tile, ‘Im Gwontae's ‘Beyond the Years’ fails to attract audiences,’ introduces possible reasons for the film's failure from several angles: ‘the film's subject matter and actors failed to connect with moviegoers in their twenties and women, the film industry's main ‘consumers’; the film is fundamentally an art film and should have been shown for long periods in theaters specializing in art movie which Korea does not have; critics failed to predict moviegoers' reactions to the film; the audiences and distributors do not like movies that are not funny from the beginning; the Korean movie industry has entirely turned to Hollywood style.’⁷⁵ *Cheonmyeonhak* as failed film has much to offer to our study of *pansori* as a feature film subjectivity, however, as it galvanizes questions of artistic merit, venue, circulation, criticism, and various other sociopolitical and cultural and intercultural considerations in terms of *pansori* as a film subjectivity.

Transnational pansori

For some, the voice of *pansori* touches your heart in uniquely inspirational way so its listening should not be interrupted with subtitles. Such flamboyant dismissal of the narrative content in *pansori* singing may impress as high praise, but it also demonstrates absence of respect for the fundamentally storytelling art. How could *pansori* be made enjoyable to audiences outside the Korean language base? Aside from the art's status as a national treasure and across the cultural and linguistic barrier, what could be done to performatively engage the audience without resorting to such cumbersome distractions as subtitles? With training in the tradition while living between two cultures and languages, I happen to see the urgent need to make *pansori* understandable to the audiences outside the Korean language base. My bilingual *pansori* builds on the basic structure of *pansori*, i.e., alternation of *chang* (singing) in Korean and *aniri* (speaking) in English.⁷⁶ In *aniri*, I weave the essential contents from the song and crosscultural commentaries in English. The following sample is part of my work premiered at the 2008 Society for Ethnomusicologists gathering at Ohio State University. In this adaptation from the *Song of Chunhyang*, I attempt to humanize Chunhyang in her very difficult hours. She is a complex human

being ‘with multiple and contradictory feelings and desires.’⁷⁷ Her decision to refuse the magistrate’s order is the result of her exchange with the magistrate, rather than predetermined



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During the early reign of King Sukjong the Great (1674-1720),
In the township of Namwon, Jeolla province,
Yi Mongryong, young handsome scholar son of the new magistrate was staying.
One spring day, tired of books,
He was touring the town with the servant Bangja as guide.
At the Gwanghallu pavilion,
He saw on the swing the beautiful Chunhyang, daughter of a retired gisaeng.
The same night, they got married.
Soon after,
Mongryong’s father the magistrate was promoted back to Seoul and,
Mongryong, pledging to meet again, departed.
Chunhyang misses Mongryong:

I miss him at moonrise,
I miss him at sunrise.
I jump at the sound of the horsebell in the night rain,
And the droppings of paulownia leaves in the autumn rain,
The cuckoos mate in the pine grove, I’m all alone.
Can’t eat, can’t sleep,
The fire that burns me within, what water will put it out?

Hanggung-gyeonwol....

Meanwhile,
an official by the name of Byeon Hakdo of Jaha village north of Seoul,

something of a playboy having lived in many places,
 desiring to score the famed Chunhyang down his list of achievements,
 successfully petitioned to be the new magistrate of Namwon.
 Immediately following his grand inauguration ceremony,
 The new magistrate orders a gisaeng pageant,

At the pageant,
 The host Bob Barker of The Price is Right!
 sing-songs the names to a languid, sensuous, strip-tease fanfare,
 On the runway the beauties flit in.
 ‘Contestant Number One,
 the irresistible ‘Snow Cometh’
 with velvety skin and bones that melt at your touch!
 Look at the way she walks!’

Odeonnal Gichangyeoneu Yeonyeonokgol Seolhangil

‘Stop!’
 The bored and irritated magistrate interrupts:
 ‘If we go at this pace, it’ll take days,
 Hurry up and show some substance!’
 ‘Yes, Your Excellency!’
 The pageant host quickens his tempo to an upbeat salsa!
 Oh Yeah! Viva, Bond!

Jounmou Yangdaeseoni, Useonyuji Chunheungi!

I was sure you have a gisaeng by the name of Chunhyang.
 Where is she?
 Your Excellency,
 Chunhyang is indeed of gisaeng background,
 But she was never officiated as such.
 Then she was taken by the son of the former magistrate,
 Now she is practicing wifely chastity for him.
 A gisaeng, practices chastity?
 Is there such a thing as chaste whore?
 Nonsense! Bring her at once!
 In the next song,
 The head gisaeng is dispatched to retrieve Chunhyang,
 An old archrival of Chunhyang’s mother Wolmae,
 She is happy to exact her revenge on her daughter.



Arriving at her enemy's gate,
 She claps her hands vengefully and snarls:
 The paragon of feminine virtue!
 The symbol of dazzling virtue!
 The whole court is berserk,
 All because of your nonpareil virtue, Chunhyang!

Hangsugisaengi Naganda.

Chunhyang instantly snaps out of her poetic melancholy.

Conclusion

A literary study of *pansori* text and performance as fundamentally human drama in shifting historical and socio-artistic context, this chapter has examined the tradition of *pansori* as both the past and the future. Starting with the classic genre question, we have covered some of the major issues surrounding the existence of *pansori* in contemporary times: the overall structure and the transitioning of poetic consciousness through warm-up, speaking, and singing, context and formatting of *pansori*, thematic and gender concerns in the storyworld of the five-narrative canon, the poetics and politics of new and pop *pansori*, *pansori* as new subjectivity in modern film, and my own bilingual *pansori* constructing a transnational narrativity in performance. So what is *pansori* 2008 as literary art? Is it still a brittle treasure to be kept within the walls of the national museum? For maintaining and transmitting all the vocal intricacies of singing to future generations, yes. Claiming the original spirit of *pansori* outside the thick museum walls, new generations of *pansori* sprout, however, galvanized by political upheavals and shifting popular trends. Tradition is the creation of the future out of the past, and history is an artful assembly of materials from the past, designed for usefulness in the future and remain open to endless revision.⁷⁸ *Pansori* seems a model past from which new generations of singers build the future.

- ¹ Seo Daeseok cites Gang Hanyeong in 'Issues in Pansori Research,' in *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies*, vol. 1 (Seoul: Seoul National University, 1988), p. 114.
- ² Termed as *nonghyeon*, 'string play,' in string performance, enacted as formulaic patterns of undulation or vibration. Voice as the instrument of vocal performance enacts its own patterns.
- ³ Chan E. Park. *Voices from the Straw Mat: Toward an Ethnography of Korean Story Singing*. University of Hawaii Press, 2003: 13.
- ⁴ Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*. Ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), p. 15.
- ⁵ Scholes and Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative*, p. 11.
- ⁶ Albert Lord, 5.
- ⁷ Marshall R. Pihl, 5.
- ⁸ The official title for the designated teacher/performer of an Intangible Cultural Asset is 'Preserver,' but commonly referred as 'Human National Treasure.'
- ⁹ Chan E. Park, 2003, 15.
- ¹⁰ Korean Traditional Music 3, 64-66.
- ¹¹ In *Changak kyobon*, 4.
- ¹² http://blog.daum.net/_blog/BlogView.do?blogid=07liS&articleno=15294894&_bloghome_menu=recenttext#ajax_history_home.
- ¹³ Chan E. Park, 2000, 3.
- ¹⁴ From Sacred Books of the East, Book 17: Yo Ki or Record of Music, 92-95.
- ¹⁵ 關羽, Guan Yu in Chinese pronunciation (?-219), general under Yu Bi (Liu Bei) during the late Eastern Han dynasty and Three Kingdoms of China, played a significant role in the civil war that led to the demise of Han and rise of Shu, with Liu Bei as the first emperor.
- ¹⁶ The Altair and the Vega, East Asian mythological lovers who for their overzealous love were punished into separation, allowed to meet once a year on the seventh day of the seventh month, with the help of magpies and crows gather to form a bridge over the Milky Way.
- ¹⁷ Marshall R. Pihl, *ibid.*, 6.
- ¹⁸ Karl Beckson and Arthur Ganz, 272.
- ¹⁹ Chan E. Park, 2003, 106.
- ²⁰ Scholes and Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative*, 207.
- ²¹ In 1969, Pak Dongjin sang his eight-hour *Song of Chunhyang* at National Theatre in Seoul, Yu Ilseo et al, *Myeongin myeongchang*, 10.
- ²² Chan E. Park, 2003, 107.
- ²³ Pak Hwang, 20-21.
- ²⁴ Chan E. Park, 2003, 109.
- ²⁵ Also available in Chan E. Park, 'Pansori, the Ancient Korean Art of Storytelling,' in *Traditional Storytelling Today* edited by Margaret Read Macdonald. Fitzroy Dearborn Pub. 1999:122-129; 2003, 6-11.
- ²⁶ The Chinese pronunciations of the proper nouns are included in the parentheses.
- ²⁷ Erving Goffman, cited in Bauman, 15.
- ²⁸ Chan E. Park, 2003, 56.
- ²⁹ Jo Dong-il, 'Two Stages of Transition from Premodern to Modern in Korean Literature,' 3.
- ³⁰ Ki-baik Lee, 244-245.
- ³¹ Lines from Mona Lisa, sung by Nat King Cole.

- ³² Serinity Young, 6.
- ³³ Chan E. Park, 2003, viiii.
- ³⁴ Jo Dongil, 1978, 23-24.
- ³⁵ Better known in Chinese pronunciation, 'Taoist.'
- ³⁶ A traditional unit of distance, comparable to a league.
- ³⁷ Yao Lake, the abode of the Queen Mother of the West, a mythical Taoist character that planted the heavenly peach tree that ripens only once in three thousand years, and is eaten by immortals as they gather.
- ³⁸ The meaning of 'Sim' is 'to submerge' or 'sink'.
- ³⁹ From *Chunhyangga pansori pubon* (The Song of Chunhyang pansori supplementary text), 145-150. Pak Heonbong transcribed the recording of the *Song of Chunhyang*, sung by Kim Yeonsu, Pak Nokju, Kim Yeoran, Pak Chowol, Kim Sohui, and Jeong Gwangsung representing several different schools and styles: no publishers cited.
- ⁴⁰ *Daejanggumbang* in the ancient Korean cosmology refers to one of the eight directions guarded by eight spirits. It is believed that cutting trees within its perimeter invites disaster.
- ⁴¹ *Samsalbang* is a direction that invites three kinds of damnation: sudden death, bad timing, and other disasters.
- ⁴² Geomantically avoided as the most ominous and unnatural direction.
- ⁴³ A cross-dressed actor of the traditional era, dressed in red jacket and blue/green skirt, wearing a grotesque female mask and carrying a flag on pole.
- ⁴⁴ Inexpensive Korean liquor.
- ⁴⁵ Roger Janelli, 238.
- ⁴⁶ Jeong Hyeong, 77.
- ⁴⁷ 'In drizzle and passing wind, (a fisherman) forgets to return home,' a metaphoric phrase for the joy of fishing from 'Fisherman' by a Tang poet Zhang Zhihua.
- ⁴⁸ Chan E. Park, 2003, 25.
- ⁴⁹ Victor Turner, 98.
- ⁵⁰ Scholes and Kellogg, 82-84.
- ⁵¹ Chan E. Park, 2003, 127.
- ⁵² Interview with Cheong Sunim continued, January 30, 1998, Seoul.
- ⁵³ Ki-baik Lee, 311.
- ⁵⁴ Chan E. Park, 2003, 129.
- ⁵⁵ *Pansori yeongu*, Vol. 3, 351-354. I also refer to Yi Seonggeun's rendition recorded in the CD *Changjak pansori yeolsa ga*, Sinnara Record, 1993.
- ⁵⁶ Chan E. Park, 2003, 129.
- ⁵⁷ Chwe Hyeonmu, 173.
- ⁵⁸ Eugène van Erven, 107.
- ⁵⁹ David R. McCann, Introduction in *The Middle Hour: Selected Poems of Kim Jiha*.
- ⁶⁰ Chan E. Park, 2003, 135.
- ⁶¹ Interview with Kim Jiha, Seoul, July 15, 1993. Kim credits coining of the terminology to Im Ugi in 'From the grammar of medium to the grammar of rapport' (*Maegae ui munbeop eseo kyogam ui munbeop ūro*), in *Munye jungang*, Vol. 2.
- ⁶² Chan E. Park, 2003, 136.
- ⁶³ Kim Jiha, *Ojeok*, 25-44, excerpt translation in Chan E. Park, *Voices from the Straw Mat*, 137-138.
- ⁶⁴ Chan E. Park, 2003, 138.
- ⁶⁵ Chan E. Park, 2003, 139.
- ⁶⁶ Originated from the Jeolla ritual music, upbeat 6 beat cycle.

⁶⁷ Chan E. Park, 2003, 139-140.

⁶⁸ Hae-kyung Um, 28.

⁶⁹ Hae-kyung Um, *ibid.*, 32.

⁷⁰ See www.dorang.org and www.badaksori.com.

⁷¹ Hae-kyung Um, *ibid.*, 42-43.

⁷² Adam Hartzell, (<http://www.koreanfilm.org/kfilm90-95.html#sopyonje>)

⁷³ Wolf Entertainment Guide: (<http://www.wolfentertainmentguide.com/pub/filmsearch.asp?record=1005>)

⁷⁴ ‘A story of familial love, but perhaps an unnecessary companion to *Seopyeonje*’ by J Chang of United States, July 12, 2008 (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1018101/>)

⁷⁵ http://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_entertainment/206728.html

⁷⁶ For further discourse on the topic see Chapter 9: The Cross-cultural voice, in Chan E. Park, 2003, 245-272.

⁷⁷ Michael Mills, The Actor’s Studio: A Look at the Stanislavski Method, <http://www.moderntimes.com/palace/method.htm>.

⁷⁸ Henry Glassie, 395.

