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Musical Encounters in Korean Christianity:
A Trans-Pacific Narrative

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in Musicology

by

Hyun Kyong Chang

2014
ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Musical Encounters in Korean Christianity:
A Trans-Pacific Narrative

by

Hyun Kyong Chang
Doctor of Philosophy in Musicology
University of California, Los Angeles, 2014
Professor Olivia Bloechl, Chair

My dissertation examines Protestant choral music in Korea from its introduction by American missionaries in the early 20th century through its transnational diffusion and development during the Cold War and after. Drawing on recent bodies of scholarship in postcolonial studies, Asian American Studies, and East Asian Studies, as well as a mixed approach involving ethnographic, critical, and historical methods, I argue that Korean Protestant choral music played an important role in mediating the experience of modernity in modern Korea and the Korean diaspora in the U.S. I explore the development of this music practice as a hegemonic cultural formation and contextualize its privileged position in the entanglement of secular and Christian musical conceptions of modernity and nationhood—an entanglement facilitated by Korean Protestantism’s close association with trans-Pacific modernity, with the U.S. at the center of this imagination. In addition to exploring the formation of normative choral and vocal music styles in historical context, I analyze the resistance of many practitioners to the demands and
claims of cross-cultural musical syncretism and consider the controversial composition of neotraditional styles, which encode embodied, contested conceptions of Korean identity within a Western-style choral musical framework. This dissertation is a dynamic study of the ways in which colonial discourse concerning voice, nation, class, and gender shapes the affective and stylistic conditions of colonial and postcolonial music practices.
The dissertation of Hyun Kyung Chang is approved.

Namhee Lee
Helen Rees
Nina Eidsheim
Timothy Taylor
Olivia Bloechl, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles
2014
This dissertation is dedicated to my family,
Sung Kyun Chang, Sook Hee Kwon, and En Kyong Chang.
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Introduction

Negotiating Modernity in a Century of Suffering

My interest in Korean Protestant choral music stems from a conundrum I experienced as an undergraduate student. Having just moved to the U.S. from South Korea via Guatemala, I was excited to discover Anglophone scholarship on “Korean music” in the university music library, but soon realized that almost all of it dealt with “traditional music” in Korea, which I had never heard or seen in performance (my first experience with this music was in my third year of college, when the university’s music department invited a Korean American kŏmun’go artist who was active in New York). None of these studies of “Korean music” talked about what I knew were widely performed music practices in South Korea and the Korean diaspora, such as Christian choral singing and classical piano performance. While growing up in Seoul in the 1980s, it was difficult to find female classmates who had not taken at least a year’s worth of piano lessons. Christian choirs for children and adults were also common phenomena, their weekly rehearsals and active recruiting efforts intertwined with the social lives of many in Seoul’s burgeoning urban middle class.¹ These music practices did not disappear from my surroundings and life when my family moved to Guatemala in 1992: if anything, they became even more important. The Korean diasporic community in Guatemala revolved around Korean-language churches, and church choirs were among the most beloved church groups, providing ample opportunities for active fellowship. All of my family members joined a church choir, and I accompanied the choir at the piano for seven years, in the course of which I met about 60 diasporic Korean choral singers and developed sufficiently advanced keyboard skills to be able to study with a renowned keyboard professor as an undergraduate student in the U.S.

This dissertation is devoted to the study of the music that my local church choir in Guatemala and many other Korean-language Protestant choirs in and outside Korea have sung for

¹ A number of studies indicate that more than 25 percent of South Koreans identified themselves as Protestants
decades. It locates the significance of this music practice in its social meanings and explores how these meanings emerged in trans-Pacific historical contexts. Proceeding chronologically, it examines Korean-language Protestant vocal music (with a particular emphasis on choral music) from its introduction by American missionaries in the early 20th century through its transnational diffusion and development during the Cold War and after. This dissertation employs a mixed methodology involving documentary research and field research with choirs—most significantly, my two years of field research in Southern California churches from 2008 to 2010. This field research not only taught me about the Christian constitution of the Korean diaspora in the U.S., but it also led me to view South Korean Protestantism as a transnationally (U.S.-Korea) inflected phenomenon. My field research thus shaped my selection of sources, which include mission and church publications, composers’ biographies, and musical scores, as well as the historical framework of this dissertation, which highlights the transnational aspects of Korean Christianity. This work is comprehensively secular: it is not an exploration or statement of religious experiences, but rather an examination of the tenuous border between the religious and the secular in Korean Christian music culture.

Based on the two types of research described above, I argue that Korean Protestant choral music played an important role in mediating the experience of modernity in modern Korea and the Korean diaspora in the U.S. I explore the development of this music practice as a hegemonic cultural formation and contextualize its privileged position in the entanglement of secular and Christian musical conceptions of modernity and nationhood—an entanglement facilitated by

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2 Throughout this dissertation I use the terms “Korea” and “South Korea” interchangeably. When I use the term “South Korea,” I mean to accentuate the post-division (post-1945) formation of South Korea, as well as its self-differentiation from North Korea.

3 This dissertation is concerned with Protestantism. Catholicism, which has had a smaller following and a more contested history in Korea, is not included in my use of the term “Christianity.” Reflecting its comparably smaller presence, Catholicism in Korea has been far less studied than Protestantism in Korea. See Chai-shin Yu, ed., The Founding of Catholic Tradition in Korea (Mississauga, Ontario: Asian Humanities Press, 1996). Chai-shin Yu estimates that about 8% of the South Korean population identified as Catholics at the turn of the 20th century. He also notes a paucity of English-language materials on Korean Catholicism. See Chai-shin Yu, preface to The Founding of Catholic Tradition, 1.
Korean Protestantism’s close association with trans-Pacific modernity, with the U.S. at the center of this imagination. Throughout this dissertation, I demonstrate that the practices of composition and performance that have pervaded Korean Protestant choral and related vocal music came to be regarded as practices of a new modern Korean nation by singers throughout the 20th century.

In discussing Korean Christian vocal music practice as the basis of hegemonic, official music cultures, I foreground the tension in Korean Christian communities over the question of what constitutes culturally legitimate music. This tension is marked by a keen anxiety about cross-cultural syncretism—i.e., the concern that Christian and secular culture in Korea is open to the influence of “un-Christian” local belief systems, considered by many Korean Christians to be “barbaric,” “backward,” and sometimes even “diabolical.” This concern, stemming from the late 19th-century North American mission in Korea, was applied particularly forcefully to shamanism, which was considered incompatible with Christian universalist metaphysics as well as with visions of “civilization” that are rooted in this metaphysics. A related anxiety concerns ethno-national musical conceptions of Korean Christianity that “risk” falling outside of the colonial-modern teleological categories of “universality” and “progress.” Chapters 1 and 2 demonstrate how such anxieties led many practitioners to regard music styles rooted in 19th-century Euro-American Christian collective songs (hymns and choral music) as natural music-cultural expressions of Korea’s modern identity. Chapter 1 considers the favorable reception of the North American mission’s project of collective hymn singing in Korea (1890s-1910), and Chapter 2 examines the reproduction of the mission’s musical ideology during the Cold War period via influential Korean Christian composers of sacred choral music and secular vocal music (1945-1960s).

Korean Christian anxiety about syncretism and particularism has also been accompanied by a peripheral yet protracted apprehension regarding the “Western” status of Korean worship.

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Chapter 3 considers choral compositions that resulted from this crisis of self-definition. I focus on a body of choral compositions that emerged in the early 1990s: although the (often-thwarted) desire for a distinctively “Korean” form of vocal worship goes back to the period of the mission, it was during the 1990s—almost a century after missionization—that a tangible body of “Korean-style” choral pieces emerged, enabling the notion of a neotraditional style. Chapter 4, the final chapter of this dissertation, shows how contemporary choral practitioners continue to attach notions of cultural acceptability to divergent choral music styles by exploring the reception of “Western” and neotraditional choral styles among a Korean diasporic church choir in Southern California, a location that exemplifies the transnational foundation of Korean Christianity.

I grapple with the tension between the two cultural orientations outlined above by approaching Protestant music as a trans-border music practice in the context of Korean modernity and modernization. My discussion of transculturation and translation thus pays close attention not only to the conditions of cultural imperialism that intimately shaped the musical Pacific crossing, but also to the local contexts against and through which Christian and Christian-affiliated music was adopted in Korea.

I propose that “Western-centric” and “nativist” views of Protestant music are interrelated. This interrelatedness arises, I argue, from historical conditions and memories of suffering that have engendered contradictory cultural orientations in Korea. The discourse of suffering, which came to be recognized through a post-Korean War local perspective known as “han” for many South Koreans (see Chapter 3), has been central to the postcolonial narratives of nation in Korea: suffering is attributed variously to the shared experiences of 20th-century events in Korea, such as Japanese colonialism (1910-45), national partition (1948-), the Korean War (1950-3), U.S. military occupation (1945-8; 1950), and compressed modernization (1960s-1990s). Because conditions and memories of suffering were so central to the Korean experience in the last century, they have mediated both hegemonic and counterhegemonic self-identification for modern
Koreans. On the one hand, discourses of suffering have provided the foundation for a wide-ranging desire to overcome national distress through categories of progress, which have included not only economic development but also the cultivation of Western tonal music.\(^5\) Thus, I situate the favorable reception of Western classical music styles and the resulting hegemony of Christian musicians in the political economy of suffering. On the other hand, I also document the strategic representations of suffering by dissenting Koreans, Christian or otherwise. Notions of suffering have inspired embodied constructions of Korean identity that resist the centripetal force of the U.S.-centric Asia Pacific, which banked on notions of progress at the expense of local heritages. Overall, the framework of suffering that informs my dissertation facilitates an understanding of the material and affective dynamics that underlie trans-border processes as well as an awareness of the extremity of oppositional thinking in modern Korea.

This dissertation joins a body of critical, secular scholarship in the U.S. and South Korea that articulates the role of Protestant institutions in structuring hegemonic Korean national and transnational formations. To a lesser extent, I engage critical works by self-identified Christian scholars who also contribute to this discourse. Many of these studies focus on several points in modern Korean history at which transnational power structures were reconstituted, asking how Korean Protestant developments reinforced these broader processes of reconstitution. Some of the most insightful works consider the role of Protestantism in Korea’s integration into a Western system of capitalism and international relations during the late 19\(^{th}\) century. Notably, Hyaeweol Choi’s *Gender and Mission Encounters in Korea* and Kenneth Wells’s *New God, New Nation* probe the ways in which the U. S. Protestant mission, in conjunction with politically influential Korean Christians, mediated practices and ideologies of modernity and nationalism in Korea.

during this period. The work of Dae Young Ryu and Albert Park explores the under-studied connection between capitalist ethics and mission-centric Korean churches: they analyze the capitalist ideologies that the U.S. Protestant mission advanced and administered in early Korean churches, in addition to exploring the mission as an institution already deeply embedded in U.S.-Korea transnational capitalism. These and similar studies have offered complementary and challenging perspectives to a field of study that has traditionally leaned towards analyses of Japanese imperialism.

Reconsideration of Korean Protestantism also has enriched scholarship on the Cold War. The Cold War provided the formative conditions for the establishment of South Korea by precipitating national division (1948-) and the Korean War (1950-3). The privileged position of Korean churches within the larger national and transnational terrain during the Cold War period was, to a large extent, an assumed knowledge; due to the pervasive, tacitly acknowledged nature of Protestant influence, the connection between the churches and South Korea’s official culture has been left unarticulated by critics and undefended by proponents. Han’guk ŭi kidokkyo wa pan’gong chuŭi (Korean Protestantism and Anticommunism) by In-ch’ŏl Kang, a Christian sociologist in Korea, is a pioneering work that breaks this silence. Kang argues that Korean Protestant churches, as institutions that could claim a symbolic affiliation with the U.S. and with lived experiences of communist persecution, became privileged institutions in an anticommunist South Korea. His 600-page monograph chronicles the penetration of Christian activism into the

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8 See, for example, Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson, eds., _Colonial Modernity in Korea_ (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 1999).

9 In-ch’ŏl Kang, _Han’guk ŭi kidokkyo wa pan’gong chuŭi [Korean Protestantism and Anticommunism]_ (Seoul: Chungsim, 2007).
domain of secular cultural management in Korea. Kang’s work is contiguous with a body of critical Asian American Studies monographs that uncover the role of U.S. Protestant institutions in engendering transnationally articulated and meaningful cultural formations during the Cold War decades (1945-1980s). Although these studies are not formulated as studies of Protestantism per se, they highlight how U.S.-South Korea transnational religious institutions shaped anti-communist, U.S.-centric sensibilities in South Korea while also providing the material and ideological conditions of the Korean diaspora in the U.S. Indeed, the central role of Protestantism in the Korean diaspora is well evidenced in the body of scholarly work on this diaspora; even when such works are not concerned with Protestantism per se, they cannot avoid mentioning diasporic churches, given these churches’ centrality to the lived experience of many diasporic Koreans.

Scholarship on secular music and music cultures of modern Korea also has begun to acknowledge the ways in which church-mediated practices, sociality, and affect have defined secular musical and cultural life in Korea, nationally and transnationally. Broadly speaking, recent Korean-language monographs that take a composer-centered approach have demonstrated that major Korean composers of Western music were almost without exception first trained in missionary and/or Korean Christian circles before, during, and after the period of Japanese occupation (1910-45), even if the composer did not write a single religious work. Notable studies in this regard include Kyŏng-ch’an Min’s Han’guk ŭmaksa (History of Music in Korea), a comprehensive, textbook-style study of Korean composers; Kyŏng-bun Yi’s Irŏbŏrin sigan (A Lost Time), which examines the composer of South Korea’s national anthem, Ik-t’ae An; and Ch’ang-uk

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Kim’s *Hongnanp’a yŏn’gu (A Study of the Music of Hong Nan-p’a)*, which explores the life and works of a Korean composer known as the “father” of Western music in Korea.\(^\text{12}\)

Another interesting project to consider is the musicological journal *Minjok ūmak* (“People’s Music”), which was founded in Seoul in 1990 as a post-Cold War, Cold War-revisionist project with the goal of “re-examining the uncritical, anti-democratic fascination of Koreans for Western music.”\(^\text{13}\) In a telling passage in this inaugural issue, the “Western music” that this journal critiques is configured as “church music”: “Protestant hymn culture, which was introduced in conjunction with a teleological view of history and Eurocentric perspective, dismantled our traditional music.”\(^\text{14}\) Despite this rhetoric, however, the journal has not proposed a viable method for studying traditional music in subsequent issues, and many of the musicians that it has examined (in the spirit of “discovering” new Korean musicians) have been composers who write neotraditional music in chamber or orchestral genres. The biographical portions of these composer studies show (perhaps to the disappointment of the journal’s founders) that even these composers were first trained in churches, signaling the difficulty of drawing a strict border between secular and religious music formations in 20\(^{th}\)-century Korea.

In English-language scholarship, the recent works of Nicholas Harkness, a linguistic anthropologist, stand out as original studies that demonstrate the instrumentality of church-mediated affect in the timbral and musical life of contemporary South Korea. His 2011 article, “Culture and Interdiscursivity in Korean Fricative Voice Gestures,” shows that “the educated upper class and particular stratum of Protestant Christianity [i.e., Christians that do not belong to the Pentecostal denominations]” are much more likely to distinguish and perceive a particular


performed vocal timbre (in Harkness’s phrase, “audible gestures”) that they then attribute to sectors of the South Korean population associated with “the past,” such as the working class and farmers.\textsuperscript{15} In another article, Harkness documents the prevalence of Christian sociality in South Korea’s classically oriented vocal music culture by ethnographically examining the so-called “home-coming concerts” that are performed by Korean singers who return from voice studies from abroad (usually in the U.S. and Central Europe). He observes that this otherwise secular event is symbolically transformed into a religious event at its conclusion, as Christian hymns are appended to these recitals as encore pieces. Harkness concludes that “the specificity of Christian faith and worship is presented as a generalized and thoroughly pervasive aspect of public life in South Korea.”\textsuperscript{16}

My discussion of transculturation around the historical categories of colonialism and postcolonialism is informed by musicological and ethnomusicological studies that have adopted interdisciplinary approaches to illuminate the interrelationships of music, power, modernity, and colonialism (for example, Veit Erlmann 1999, Amanda Weidman 2006, Tim Taylor 2007, Olivia Bloechl 2008, Rachel Beckles Willson 2013). The questions I ask throughout the dissertation are informed by the contributions of scholars of postcolonial theory (for example, Partha Chatterjee 1986, Gayatri Spivak 1988, Nicholas Dirks 1992, Walter D. Mignolo 2000, Homi K. Bhabha 2004, Dipesh Chakrabarty 2007). The theoretical frameworks and insights in all of these studies help to advance my examination of Western colonial discourses of class, nation, “civilization,” and music—discourses engendered jointly by Korean elites and the North American Protestant mission in the Korean context—and their multivalent relationship to the affective and stylistic conditions of colonial and postcolonial music making.


The first chapter of my dissertation (“Confessions, Conversions: The Ideology of Protestant Expression in Korea on the Threshold of Japanese Occupation”) examines the introduction of American Protestant hymns and hymn singing through missionary institutions in Korea in the context of the shifting geopolitics of Pacific Asia from the 1890s to the 1910s. I document the mission’s celebrated projects of hymnal production and instruction in the “Korea mission field” (the term used commonly among the missionaries) and examine the local conditions and genealogies that informed and reinforced the imposition, reception, and appropriation of hymns. I argue that the institution of Protestant hymn singing became a symbolic site in which the increasing interlinked ideals of Western modernity, nationhood, and selfhood were staged and negotiated in the context of increasing Japanese colonial presence in Korea.

The second chapter (“Exilic Suffering: Music, Nation, and Protestantism in Cold War South Korea”) demonstrates how the perceived relationship between Christian choral music, modernity, and nationhood—a relationship that I discuss in Chapter 1—was reinforced through Cold-War cultural politics. I document the ways in which transnational (U.S.-Korea) Protestant institutions became dominant players in South Korea’s anticommmunist cultural politics upon Korea’s independence from Japan (1945) and trace the dominant positionality of Korean Christian composers within the larger cultural terrain. Of particular interest is a group of Korean Christian composers exiled in the south after fleeing religious persecution in the north around the time of the Korean War. I show that these mission-educated composers from P’yongyang became symbols of anticommunism in and outside the churches of the south and examine how their cultural attitudes played a role in shaping the musical “language” of South Korea’s official culture.

The third chapter (“Sounds of Suffering: Korean Christian Syncretism in an Age of Progress”) examines sacred choral musical styles that embody the politics of dissent. After a brief, preliminary discussion of a number of dominant choral music styles in the post-Korean War Protestant choral canon, I discuss the visible emergence of neotraditional and syncretic sacred
music within the wider choral repertory in the early 1990s. I argue that these choral pieces identify stylistically and affectively with secular counterhegemonic representations, many of which were constructed during the grassroots pro-democracy movement (the *minjung* movement of the 1970s and 1980s) as counter-narratives to the dominant vision of modernity in South Korea. My main interest is to explore embodied conceptions of Korean identity—especially conceptions of a suffering subjectivity—encoded into the familiar framework of Euro-American choral music, but I also demonstrate the limits of this project by discussing the neoliberal absorption of counterhegemonic representations in the secular cultural terrain, as well as the perceived and real difficulties of contesting the legacy of hegemonic music practices within the church.

The fourth chapter (“The Impossibility of Suffering: The Ideology of Choral Singing in the Christian Korean Diaspora”) uses an experimental approach to explore the reception of divergent music styles among a Korean-language church choir in Orange County. The Korean diaspora in Orange County and in Southern California in general owes its formation to the convergence of Christianity, U.S.-bounded immigration, and Cold-War politics in Korea, and has been a symbolic sector of Korean Christianity since the Korean War. The choir I worked with is part of a Korean-language church of approximately 500 members who live in the area. I worked with this choir for two years (2008 to 2010) as the choir’s paid piano accompanist and developed close relationships with the choir singers, many of whom are in their 50s and 60s. This last chapter, which unfolds as an ethnography of choir rehearsals, documents the diasporic singers’ resistant responses to neotraditional styles during rehearsals and engages these responses through interviews, which often touch on the singers’ lived experiences and memories of Korea during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. My analysis begins from the following question: what does it mean for a generation of Korean diasporic subjects—whose musical values have been shaped by the remembered and lived experiences of U.S. Protestant missionization, Japanese imperialism, and the U.S. military
occupation of South Korea—to adopt an ethnicized Protestant music? I conclude that the singers’ unsympathetic responses to these pieces stem from a socially entrenched desire to identify with music styles that have come to signify “being” in a temporal space after South Korea’s nationwide suffering.

Lastly, a note on romanization: Korean names and terms in Korean (e.g., musical works, genres, organizations, and sources) are romanized according to the McCune-Reischauer system. Exceptions are those Korean authors who have published in English using a different spelling in their English publications and well-known historical names (e.g., Syngman Rhee; Park Chung Hee). All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.
Chapter 1
Confessions, Conversions:
The Ideology of Protestant Hymn Singing in Korea on the Threshold of Japanese Occupation

In November of 1909, North American Protestant missionaries in P’yŏngyang mounted the “Million Movement,” a series of large-scale religious events that took place over the course of several weeks. The movement, though intended for Koreans in P’yŏngyang, was also an opportunity for the missionaries to “show off” the growth of Christianity in Korea to the larger Protestant community in the U.S. Among the evangelical dignitaries who were invited to P’yŏngyang for the Million Movement (the name originated from the evangelical slogan “A Million Souls for Jesus”) were Robert Harkness, a composer of more than 2,000 gospel songs; the world-travelling Chapman-Alexander gospel music duo; Arthur Pierson, the editor of The Missionary Review of the World; and Henry McCracken, the chancellor of New York University.17 As the inclusion of these world-traveling musicians suggests, music occupied an important place in the Million Movement. Mattie Wilcox Noble, a leading missionary in early 20th-century P’yŏngyang who hosted these guests, wrote excitedly in her diary that Robert Harkness was “so impressed with the watchword [A Million Souls for Jesus] that he composed a thrilling song on the ‘Million.’”18 The Million Movement also inspired the earliest known photograph of a Korean Protestant choir (see Fig. 1.1). This widely reprinted photograph captures Charles Alexander with his arms raised in the act of conducting, facing a crowd of several hundred Korean women (possibly he is teaching or conducting Harkness’s hymn “A Million Souls for Jesus,” either

17 Yong-gu Pak, P’yŏngyang taebuhŭng undong [The Great Revivals of P’yŏngyang] (Seoul: Saengmyŏng ŭi malssŭmsa, 2007), 616; Sung-deuk Oak, Hanbando taebuhŭng sajin ŭro ponŭn hang’uk kyohoe, 1900-1910 [The Great Revivals of the Korean Peninsula, Studying the Korean Church through Photographs, 1900-1910] (Seoul: Hongsŏngsa, 2009), 375, 379.

18 Mattie Wilcox Noble, The Journals of Mattie Wilcox Noble, 1892-1943, ed. Man-yŏl Yi (Seoul: Han’guk kidokkyo yŏksa yŏn’guso, 1993), 195. This quote is from Mattie Wilcox Noble’s diary entry on February 23, 1910. Noble and her husband William Arthur Noble were Methodist missionaries in Korea from 1892 to 1943. The Journals of Mattie Wilcox Noble is hereafter cited as JMWN.
translated into Korean or in the original English version). The aerial photograph shows the Korean women from behind. Their braided hair and chōgori (upper garments) fill the bottom half of the frame, and their faces are not shown.

Figure 1.1: Alexander Harkness conducting a women’s choir in P’yŏngyang, 1909

This photograph probably was taken by a missionary who wished to use it as evidence of the mission’s success: the North American Protestant mission in Korea was fond of advertising and commemorating its own accomplishments, and a common element of these self-celebratory narratives involved citing the number of Koreans who sang hymns that the missionaries had introduced. These narratives, which were featured in the mission’s publications, provide
descriptions of Koreans singing hymns in a variety of settings, including mission schools, church services, bible classes, and revival meetings in Korea’s cities and countryside, and emphasize the missionaries’ roles as directors, always portraying them as hardworking and self-sacrificing. The photograph of Alexander is a distillation of this narrative: Alexander is positioned at the center of the frame, opposite a crowd of indistinguishable Koreans. But there is a question the missionaries rarely asked amidst this celebratory chronicling, which this chapter attempts to address: what was the significance of Christian collective singing to the participating Koreans?

This chapter explores the relationship between the North American Protestant mission and early Protestant vocal practices in Korea, which primarily consisted of congregational and choral singing of Korean-texted, American-style Protestant hymns. The mission’s vocal music projects, introduced in the context of unequal relations between Koreans and missionaries, fundamentally changed the way singing was practiced in Korea and set the conditions for hegemonic modes of singing and composition that would be replicated and reinforced throughout subsequent decades (see Chapters 2 and 3). I argue that mission-directed hymn singing during the years of the mission was not simply a religious practice, but also constituted an important socio-cultural space in which Koreans could negotiate the interlinked ideals of modernity, nationhood, and selfhood. Protestant vocal music, introduced by a mission that for an increasing number of Koreans represented the ideals of Western modernity, gave expression to two of the period’s major socio-political formations—the bourgeois self and modern national community—and effectively enabled Koreans to “live” these ideals. In other words, the vocal music practices of early Korean Christianity were loci at which “new” conceptions of selfhood and community could be rehearsed and expressed.
Modernity, which Nicholas Dirks defines as “a people’s condition of being in a teleological time,” or “a time of history,” was intimately related to the construction of nationhood in the Korean context, as it was elsewhere. A brief discussion of two perspectives on the relationship of modernity and nationalism in the non-West will highlight how this relationship shaped early Protestant vocal practices in Korea. Benedict Anderson defines nationalism as a vernacularly imagined community created through print capitalism, which enables “a homogeneous, empty time” within linguistically bounded spaces. This view advances a modular view of modernity and nationalism, thus highlighting the principally horizontal processes through which nationhood and modernity are constructed and experienced across the globe, first in the West and subsequently in the non-West. Other theorists emphasize the role of colonial relations of power in shaping negotiations of modernity and nationalism and argue that modernity has entailed the assimilation of Euro-centric ideologies of history and progress into the narratives of self and nationhood in the non-West. Nicholas Dirks, for example, argues that many nationalist Indians “replicat[ed] the historical framework of imperial Europe,” which revolved around the language of “struggle for both freedom and for the modern.” Partha Chatterjee makes a related point in his study of Indian nationalism: “Nationalism... produced a discourse in which, even as it challenged the colonial claim to political domination, it also accepted the very intellectual premises of ‘modernity’ on which colonial domination was based.”

The tension between these two sets of perspectives on modernity is at the crux of my discussion of hymn singing practice in late 19th- and early 20th-century Korea: hymn singing can be conceptualized as a transnationally distilled practice that subsequently became an important

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21 Dirks, “History as a Sign,” 27.
form of Korean vernacular nationalism (especially by 1910); at the same time, this seemingly “horizontal” practice was instituted from the top down through processes of imposition that involved the entanglement of groups of differential power: the North American missionaries, Koreans of elite social status (Christians or otherwise), and Korean Christians of lower-class backgrounds. The present chapter highlights this central contradiction while further enriching this framework by reading the ways in which American-style, Korean-texted Protestant hymn singing at elite and non-elite levels was interpreted by local conditions and genealogies—a reading that marks the difference of a specifically Korean Protestant vocal music (despite its apparent conformity). These conditions and genealogies include the idealist framework of a Neo-Confucian worldview, which defined the culture of the Korean elites (i.e., Koreans who belonged to the ruling yangban class in the Chosŏn period, 1392-1910; see below for further discussion), and experiential, spiritualist expressive practices rooted in shamanism that characterized non-elite cultural formations.23

This chapter considers the period from 1884 to 1910 as the focus of its discussion of Protestant vocal music practice in Korea. The political developments in Korea during these 26 years make the discussion of modernity and nationhood particularly important to this music practice as well as to the larger cultural terrain in Korea. This period was marked by the decline of the Korean court’s sovereignty: Western and Japanese gunboat diplomacy forcibly “opened” Korea to global capitalism, administrative intervention, and the possibility of official occupation, and the growing presence of foreigners, including diplomats, military staff, and businessmen from Japan, the U.S., Russia, and Britain reminded Korea’s residents of its status as an exploitable

23 A detailed overview of shamanism is outside the scope of this chapter. For a comprehensive study of Korean shamanism, see Yong-Shik Lee’s *Shaman Ritual Music in Korea*. Lee states: “Shamanism is an accumulation of five thousand years of Korean life, thought, and culture, so [it] is the representative folk belief of the so-called “grass roots” of the Korean society… throughout the course of Korea’s long history, shaman music exerted a forceful effect on the development of other folk music traditions, and still remains a fundamental musical grammar that supports the underlying Korean cultural pattern… even though most Koreans are ambivalent about shamanism.” Yong-Shik Lee, *Shaman Ritual Music in Korea* (Edison, New Jersey: Jimoondang International, 2004), 1-2. For a study of Korean shamanism in the context of 20th-century cultural politics, see Laurel Kendall, *Shamans, Nostalgias, and the IMF: South Korean Popular Religion in Motion* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009).
This development also eroded the grip of Sino-centric and Neo-Confucian ideology, which had provided the rationale for the hegemony of the yangban group during the Chosŏn period. Two major foreign interventions are notable: the first of these is Japan’s increasing control over Korea’s administrative, legal, economic, and military affairs, which eventually led to the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1905 (through which Korea was proclaimed a protectorate of Japan) and formal occupation in 1910; and the second is the U.S.’s religious and cultural work. These two interventions co-existed, competed with, and informed each another. The direct experience of Japanese colonial control and the resulting sense of vulnerability shared among Koreans shaped the largely positive reception of the North American mission in the same period: an increasing number of Koreans came to consider the mission as offering an opportunity for their desires for modernity and nationhood to be realized. As Kenneth Wells argues in his study of mission-directed Protestant culture in Korea, “Christianity... offered a new ideology and symbolism around which to rally and by which to interpret the nation’s woes.” The mission’s music projects became a symbolic religious-political medium through which many Koreans “lived” their desires, which developed in the shadow of Japan’s rising hegemony.

In examining the meaning of mission-directed hymn singing for Koreans, I bring a concept of entanglement to bear on the relationship between the missionaries and Korean elites, in order to avoid reading this musical tradition simply as a product of a one-way civilizing mission. To be sure, the music projects of the North American Protestant mission in Korea, like those in many other missions, often amounted to an exercise and imposition of Western colonial categories (in short, cultural imperialism), and this was especially true in Korea, given the politically favorable

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26 Wells, New God, New Nation, 29.
status of the missionaries. As I discuss at length in this chapter, missionaries in Korea were rarely concerned with the question of what Korean Christian worship music might sound like and were quick to classify local performance practices as “idolatry” and “superstition.” Yet it seems to me that to classify the mission’s music projects as a Western colonial venture is to re-incorporate the centrality of the West and the Western point of view, especially given that the music taught and inspired by the mission was actively practiced and appropriated by multiply situated Koreans. 27 Thus my goal is to provide a balanced reading that captures the “messy” nature of the formation of modern subjectivity through a multivalent examination of hymn singing and related music activities. In other words, while acknowledging that the Protestant mission framed the “modern” Korean experience of singing, I also reinforce the local interests and knowledge through and against which the mission’s colonial categories of music were received. This framework, I suggest, grants more agency to the historical subjects of missionization (here, Korean Christians) while also acknowledging the compromised nature of their agency. 28

The following discussion begins with an overview of the late 19th-century North American Protestant mission. I highlight the mission’s emphasis on public discourse and print capitalism and argue that this orientation was instrumental to the mission’s promotion of bourgeois selfhood and sociality in the field. Subsequently, I discuss hymns and hymn-related practices that emerged from the alliance between the mission and the Korean elites, emphasizing the ways in which the

27 In this regard, it is interesting to read South Korean musicologist Kyŏng-ch’an Min’s commentary on the adoption of U.S. Christian hymns as the first meaningful experience of Western music in Korea. Min notes: “The most important route through which Western music was disseminated in Korea was the Protestant mission. The mission’s hymns had an important influence on Koreans’ singing culture. Churches and mission schools provided hymns systematically, resulting in a collective singing culture. Hymns also provided the base melody for various nationalist hymns, as well as influencing the birth of children’s songs and secular classical songs.” Kyŏng-ch’an Min, “Han’guk kŏndaehwa yangaksa kaeron,” [Introduction to Modern Western Music in Korea] in Kyŏng-ch’an Min et al., Tong asia wa sóyang ŭmak ŭi suyong [East Asia and the Embrace of Western Music] (Seoul: Ùmak segye, 2008), 19.

28 A number of recent studies have used a similar framework to complicate simple narratives of cultural imperialism in examining non-Western cultural formations that emerged in the context of Western domination. Veit Erlmann’s Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination stands out as a pioneering study. Erlmann demonstrates that Christian and Christian-affiliated choral music genres in 1890s South Africa (especially Nguni “traditional” choral music) operated as intercultural, intersubjective sites of “global imagination,” through which South Africans came to understand and live “Western fictions of modernity and progress.” See Veit Erlmann, Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination: South Africa and the West (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 10.
latter group understood Protestant hymn practice as an instrument of creating a “new” sociality, similar to what Hyaeweol Choi terms “Christian modernity.” Hyaeweol Choi advances this term to characterize the intersection between the ideologies of both the mission and the Korean elites: “by ‘Christian modernity’,” she writes, “I mean an ideology that advocates the idea of an inevitable historical movement toward material and technological modernity and places the moral, cultural, and spiritual role of Christianity at the core of that enterprise.”

I propose that such an idealist notion of Christianity also shaped religious vocal music practice within this group. I then advance the discussion to focus on Koreans converts who occupied the lower strata of the Neo-Confucian hierarchy. I consider this group separately in order to stress how the terms of “entering” modernity were different for these Koreans. Importantly, this condition is illustrated by the dearth of written accounts from this group: the non-elites rarely spoke for themselves but were spoken for by the elites and the missionaries, and when they did speak, they did so through the “representational structure [that] corresponds to structures of power.”

Given the difficulty of “reading” non-elite voices, I strategically scan the mission’s literature against and with the grain of local genealogies and developments to probe the non-elite Koreans’ interests in the mission’s hymns and their sensibilities while singing this music. In particular, I consider several early 20th-century large-scale religious meetings during which many commoner-class converts sang hymns—meetings that are considered less in critical secular studies of early Korean Christian culture due to the impression of high religiosity that emerges from the records of these meetings at first

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I suggest that it is productive to understand hymn singing as a both a transactional practice and a nationalist ritual.\(^{32}\)

**The North American Protestant Mission and Evangelicalism**

Like many other Western religious missions in Asia and Africa, the North American Protestant mission in Korea took on the character of a civilizing mission. But this broad orientation was fundamentally inflected by the specific make-up of the mission. As Dae Young Ryu argues in a critical study of the North American Protestant mission in Korea, “no mission field, perhaps except Brazil, was so much dominated by America’s mainstream Protestantism as Korea.”\(^{33}\) Approximately ninety percent of the 419 Western Protestant missionaries who came to Korea between 1884 and 1910 belonged to Methodist and Presbyterian mission societies of the U.S. and, secondarily, Canada (thus I use the term “North American mission” throughout this chapter).\(^{34}\)

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31 For instance, secular critical studies of early Korean Christianity like Choi’s *Gender and Mission* tend to focus on Korean elite narratives and thus tend to gloss over non-elite Christian cultural formations. Similarly, non-religious Korean musicologists who study early Christian music culture (for example, Kyŏng-ch’ŏn Min) tend to privilege documentary evidence and thus focus on elite institutions such as mission schools and hymnals. Scholars who examine the revivals of the 1900s extensively tend to be religious scholars (including Yong-gu Pak and Sung-deuk Oak). They usually narrate these revivals through a nationalist perspective—a perspective that the present chapter seeks to engage critically.

32 I take the term “nationalist ritual” from Danielle Kane and Jung Mee Park’s 2009 article that critically explores why Christianity was much more successful in late 19th-century Korea than in China or Japan. They argue that the success of Christian mission in Korea should be attributed to “macrolevel, geopolitical networks [that] provoked nationalist rituals” rather than “microlevel network explanations that dominate the research on conversion.” In their reading, Christianity took root in Korea because it became compatible with the phenomenon of nationalist rituals arising from regional circumstances. See Danielle Kane and Jung Mee Park, “The Puzzle of Korean Christianity: Geopolitical Networks and Religious Conversions in Early 20th-Century East Asia,” *American Journal of Sociology* 115, no. 2 (2009), 365.


34 A majority of the missionaries were married men with children, but there were a considerable number of single and married female missionaries as well. Methodist missionaries were outnumbered by Presbyterians by a narrow margin. Methodist and Presbyterian missionaries sustained collaborative relationships throughout their tenures in Korea, leading to a joint society in 1905 (The General Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea), although the mission literature also suggests friendly and not-so-friendly competition between the two groups. See Elizabeth Underwood, *Challenged Identities: North American Missionaries in Korea, 1884-1934* (Seoul: Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch, 2003).
Mainstream U.S. Protestant culture in the mid-to-late 19th century was shaped by evangelicalism, which spread American middle-class, late-Victorian values in the mission field while reinforcing them at home. Broadly speaking, evangelicalism privileged the personal experience of faith rather than specialized study of scripture, and it prompted social expressions of personal faith through interpersonal exchange and print publishing. This key class-oriented attribute of evangelicalism profoundly shaped missionary education and institutes in the mid-to-late 19th century U.S. As Dae Young Ryu notes, most of the missionaries who arrived in the “Korea field” were not theologically inclined as much as “hard-working, success-driven, self conscious youths of the middle sorts,” who were recruited through networks that targeted white middle-class college graduates in the Northeast and the Midwest. These networks included the Student Volunteers Movement, which portrayed missionaries as “ambitious, responsible, and heroic people.” Other evangelical institutes that primed the missionaries prior to departure included the Moody Bible Institute, which advocated for bible study among the non-ordained—this Institute was central to the work of Hudson Taylor in China—as well as the YMCA, the Holiness Movement, and the Salvation Army.

The evangelical aspirations of the missionaries in Korea explain their enthusiasm for public religious discourse. Missionaries held bible classes and hymn singing sessions regularly, both among themselves and with Koreans. They also communicated actively through mission publications, and as a result the Korea mission was heavily documented in an astounding archive of “minutes of meetings” and journals. Through these publications, missionaries reported on the growth, progress, and achievements of the mission to its participants, to the global community of American missionaries, and to the audience at home. Missionaries also promoted Christian publications for and by Koreans by funding religious and para-religious journals in Korean, which

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“praised the missionaries for their honesty and support of victims of injustice, their tireless work in hospitals and schools and their service in printing works in the vernacular han’gul script.”

More importantly, the North American mission promoted ônmun (today known as han’gul)—an easy-to-learn script used by the lower classes in Korea since the 15th century—rather than Chinese ideograms—the script of the upper class—as the official writing system of the mission and, by extension, of Korean Christianity. This decision was linked with the mission’s evangelical desire to disseminate print materials, including the scriptures, to as many Koreans as possible. All of the leading male missionaries in the field, including Horace Underwood, Henry Appenzeller, and James Gale, made attempts to translate portions of the scriptures from English to ônmun in collaboration with Korean assistants. Records show that the missionaries engaged in this project with the typical evangelical zeal that they brought into the field: they worked very hard at creating vernacular ônmun editions and often criticized their Korean assistants, whom they considered less conscientious than themselves and too entrenched in “Chinesisms” and “Oriental recitative.” The project of bible translation not only served to rationalize the mission but also to legitimate ônmun over Chinese ideograms, which in earlier periods had been the Korean upper class’s claim to “privileged access to ontological truth” (to borrow Benedict Anderson’s phrase).

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36 Wells, New God, New Nation, 30. A major publication of this sort was the bilingual newspaper The Independent / Tongnip Sinmun. It was active from 1896 to 1899.

37 In “How We Translated the Bible,” which appeared in the 1910 issue of the Union Seminary Magazine, W. D. Reynolds writes that translation work by Koreans was characterized by “a stilted, awkward style, abounding in Chinesisms and provincial expressions, with frequent errors, obscure renderings, queer spellings, and archaic type,” and that their Korean assistants had problems “such as coming on time, keeping awake, grasping the meaning, selecting the proper synonym, protecting [their] native language from violent distortion at the foreigner’s hands, copying accurately, spacing-and spelling according to rule...” Reynolds explains that these motivated the missionaries to take a larger role in directing the translation of the bible. W. D. Reynolds, “How We Translated the Bible into Korean,” The Union Seminary Magazine 23, no. 4 (1911), 296-297.

38 Consider, for example, Heber Jones’s reflection on the role of the Korean Bible. Jones was among the missionaries who translated portions of the scriptures into ônmun. “It has elevated women; it has brought protection to childhood; it has given an impetus to learning. Before the Bible came, there were no halls or buildings where men and women gathered to listen to any music, lectures or sermons or to see any kind of an entertainment, but after the Bible came both sexes met in the same room to hear and see all of the above.” Heber Jones, The Bible in Korea; or, The Transformation of a Nation (New York: American Bible Society, 1916), 370-371.

39 Anderson, Imagined Communities, 36.
The mission’s privileging ofŏnmun over Chinese ideograms had far-reaching consequences not just in Korean religious life but also in the broader social and literary spheres, as it reinforced the Korean elites’ campaign to promoteŏnmun as the basis of Korean national-vernacular literature in the context of rising Japanese aggression in Korea. Moreover, as a number of scholars in South Korea note, the missionaries’ philological work had an influence on the textual features of this emergent secular-vernacular literature; for instance, O-man Kwon demonstrates parallels between the typical verse structure of the mission’s biblical passages in Korean and the metrical and spatial conceptions in siga, an early 20th-century form of Korean poetry.

The evangelical project of vernacular literacy and print literature complemented other ideals of the bourgeois individual, capitalism most importantly. The Protestant mission in Korea was carried out well within the framework of modern capitalism: bibles and hymns were sold, not given; the pursuit of material wealth was encouraged, not frowned upon; the concept of private property was promoted during religious teaching. In addition to this broad orientation, the mission was directly linked to U.S. transnational capitalist interests. Dae Young Ryu demonstrates that a number of well-known missionaries served as brokers between individual Korean buyers

40 A number of missionaries praisedŏnmun over Chinese ideograms, which had a considerable influence on Korean elite discourse. For example, Lillias Underwood, the wife of the well-known missionary Horace Underwood, wrote in 1905: “These foolish Koreans who have a wonderful alphabet of twenty-six letters which has not its peer in the East, hardly in the world, an alphabet which is the wonder of savants and which with the constitutional monarchy sets her far above her haughty neighbours, China and Japan, yet despises her chief glory, considers the Ernmun as it is called unfit for scholars and gentlemen, relegates it to the common and vulgar and writes its official documents, its gentlemanly calling cards, and its scholarly books all in indefinite, difficult, sight-ruining Chinese. A Korean gentleman would scorn to read a book, or write a letter in any character but Chinese, but since missionaries have come they have printed the New Testament and the hymns that the people love in the Ernmun and are trying to teach them what a jewel they have hidden away there in the dust.” Lillias Underwood, With Tommy Tompkins in Korea (New York and Chicago: F. H. Revell, 1905), 27.

41 For example, W. D. Reynolds’s report on the missionaries’ negotiation ofŏnmun during bible translation projects suggests that the missionaries were guided by their own Western notion of a rational script. He says that before the missionaries’ intervention, “syllables [inŏnmun] were spaced, not words, resulting in a drawling, singing, unnatural style of reading. Foreigners have introduced word spacing and natural reading, but to one well versed in the vernacular the former is unnecessary, and the latter lacks the picturesque musical quality of the oriental recitative. The first time we heard it was at family prayers, when a scholar of the old school volunteered to read the Scripture for us—it nearly “broke up the meeting!” Reynolds, “How We Translated,” 89.

and American exporters from the beginning of the mission, and that they effectively did the work of advertising American products by maintaining a late-Victorian lifestyle and its attendant clothing fashions in the mission field. According to Ryu, the Koreans’ encounters with American goods in the missionaries’ homes cultivated a taste for “tokens of Western ‘civilization’” such as “soap, silver ware, watches, clocks, lamps, furnaces, glass windows, sewing machines, and other conveniences [that] fascinated the Koreans.” Indeed, it seems that many missionaries (especially the leading ones) did not find it unethical or unpalatable to “entice potential Korean converts” by exhibiting material wealth. Consider the following scene described by Mattie Wilcox Noble, one of the most commemorated missionaries in Korean church history:

> Last night a Korean school boy and his mother came to see me. I talked with them as much as I could with my little Korean. Afterwards showed them pictures of America, then played on the organ. The Koreans are very much interested in our organs. This boy and his mother took great interest in observing the articles of furniture in the room.

Similar narratives abound in Noble’s diary and the larger mission literature. Ultimately, however, the greater importance of the mission for the introduction of capitalism in Korea lay in its attempt to shape a bourgeois subjectivity in the mission field—a subjectivity commensurate with the modes of sociality of a globally monetized world. I turn now to the formation of this subjectivity.

The Mission and Korean Elites in Seoul

The widely noted success of the North American Protestant mission in Korea was in large part due to the semi-colonial conditions that uprooted the ideological and material foundations of Korean society between 1876 and 1910. Koreans had their first substantial encounters with foreign

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45 Noble, JMWN, 13 Apr. 1893. Also consider a similar narrative in JMWN, written on August 15, 1898: “Today an old woman, a Christian, brought five other women from the country to see me. They had never seen a foreigner or foreigner’s house & she thought if they could only be allowed to sight see they might believe Jesus.”
imperialism during these decades, a period that marked a high point of Western imperialism worldwide. The most imminent threat came not from European powers or the U.S. but from a newly modernized neighbor, Japan. From the 1850s onward, Japan was transformed from a relatively isolated feudal society into a centralized, militaristic state as a response to its own experience with the West’s gunboat diplomacy, which opened Japan to Western commerce and inspection.\textsuperscript{46} Korea was forced into Japan’s semi-colonial rule in 1876 through the Japan-Korea Treaty of Amity, which placed the Korean court and ports under Japanese supervision. Japanese officials in Korea also began to eliminate forces that interfered with Japan’s domination of Korea and, more broadly, its interests in Northeast Asia. Internally, this meant the persecution, and in a few cases assassination, of Koreans who were openly opposed to Japan. For example, in 1895 the Japanese Minister to Korea (Miura Gorō) ordered the assassination of the Korean queen (Myŏngsŏng Hwanghu), who had advocated stronger ties between Korea and Russia in an attempt to block Japanese influence.\textsuperscript{47} Externally, Japan sought to oust competing foreign interests from Korea. The most important developments in this respect included two wars that Japan won: the Sino-Japanese War (1894-5) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5), which were fought in Korea, Manchuria, and the surrounding coastal waters. The first of these wars meant the end of Korea’s “semi-vassalage to the Middle Kingdom.”\textsuperscript{48} It also undercut the orthodoxy of Sino-centrism and the related Neo-Confucianism that formed the ideological basis of Korea’s traditional upper class.\textsuperscript{49} The Russo-Japanese War put an end to Russian interests in Korea as well as some Korean courtiers’ furtive efforts to form an alliance with Russia against Japan. Japan’s victory in this war

\textsuperscript{46} Most importantly, the U.S. Navy’s expedition led by Commodore Matthew Perry in 1853 played a role in ending Japan’s isolationist policy.

\textsuperscript{47} Cumings, Korea’s Place, 122.

\textsuperscript{48} Wells, New God, New Nation, 29.

\textsuperscript{49} Wells, New God, New Nation, 21-46.
also served to announce its imperial status to the Western powers. The Taft-Katsura Agreement (1905), signed by the U.S. and Japan at the conclusion of the war, mapped a bipolar power structure in the Pacific that sanctioned the interests of both the U.S. and Japan. Through this agreement, the U.S. rescinded any imperial intentions in Korea, and in exchange Japan recognized U.S. interests in the Philippines. This agreement facilitated the Japan-Korea Treaty in the same year and the beginning of formal occupation in 1910.

Studies of foreign imperial operations in Korea from the 1870s to 1910 have documented the responses of Korean elites in Seoul who had influence over the direction of the Korea’s foreign relations. These political elites were, with a few exceptions, men from the yangban group, the aristocratic class of Korea during the Chosŏn period. Traditionally, yangban men considered it their duty to be scholarly officials in the service of the king; in the period of increasing foreign influence, many of them took it upon themselves to submit recommendations to the Korean king on matters of foreign relations. Studies show that Korea’s political elites in Seoul were divided over the issue of how to respond to Japanese aggression and, more broadly, to the imposition of foreign interests. Some advocated strengthening diplomatic relations with powers other than Japan, such as Russia, to undercut Japan’s power. Others insisted on a reinforced policy of seclusion, coupled with a call for a return to Sino-centric, Neo-Confucian order. Despite these regressive urgings, however, the so-called reform faction (kaehwap’a) and the related reform party (kaehwadang) became the predominant forces in court politics as Japan demonstrated the efficacy of modernization through its wars with China and Russia. The reform-minded elites saw themselves as proponents of the ideology of kaehwa (開化), which literally means “opening to


51 Benedict Anderson’s discussion of the nature of political power in the pre-modern period is applicable to the yangban class as well. Anderson observes that prior to print capitalism, the operation of political power was more “centripetal and hierarchical” and centered around a “bilingual intelligentsia” who mediated between the vernacular and a “higher” language, such as Latin. See Anderson, Imagined Communities, 15-16.

52 Cumings, Korea’s Place, 86-138.
change.” The members of these groups advocated transforming Korea in the image of the modern West, particularly the West’s social, medical, political, military, and educational institutions. This position was reinforced through these Koreans’ diplomatic expeditions to Japan. There, they witnessed the landscape of Japan transformed by Prussian-style educational, economic, and military reforms.

The *kaehwa* elites guided the Korean king’s decision to permit the entrance of the North American Protestant mission in 1884 as an important component of Korea’s modernization program. These elites saw the figure of the (white) American missionary as an agent of “Western civilization” and hoped that the missionaries would help to pilot and institutionalize modern reforms in Korea, especially in the arenas of education and medicine. This understanding of the missionaries, one shared among *kaehwa* circles, was shaped by a number of factors: their encounters with missionary-established schools in Japan during their expeditions, an understanding of the missionaries’ origins in the West, and the missionary’s perceived status as a social figure, rather than a political one. An environment of alarm within the Korean court also informed this idealistic interpretation: the courtiers and the king were under mounting pressure to adopt modern reforms to avoid formal occupation by Japan. This anxiety indeed played a crucial role in the legalization of the North American Protestant mission. Up to this point, Western religious missions and indigenous conversion to a Western religion were strictly forbidden and punishable by death. In the 1830s and 1840s, for example, the Korean court executed several French Catholic missionaries in Korea and several thousand Korean Catholics, many of whom came from underclass (*ch’ŏnmŭn*: “base people”) backgrounds. But it seems that in the 1880s, the fear of Japanese occupation outweighed concerns over the alleged heterodoxy of Western religion. This change in attitude is suggested in a message conveying the king’s approval, relayed from the U.S. minister in Korea (Lucius H. Foote) to a Methodist missionary in Japan.

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(Robert Samuel Maclay) in 1884: “[I received] renewed assurances from His Majesty [the Korean King] that not only will no obstructions be thrown in your way, but that you will be tacitly encouraged in founding a school and hospital at Seoul.”

The missionaries were able to establish a basis for working with kaehwa elites and the larger political elite class within a few years of their arrival in Korea by deftly managing this class of Koreans’ expectations and concerns regarding their work. As one missionary noted, this meant that the missionaries fulfilled their expected roles as “foreign teachers who came to teach in the Government School, which is entirely apart form the missionary work.” Broadly speaking, they strategically positioned themselves as brokers of social change rather than promoters of religious conversion in the 1880s. The work of the Methodist medical missionary Horace Newton Allen in particular helped to assuage the Korean court’s apprehension toward the mission as well as satisfying the elites’ curiosity for Western science. Allen successfully treated one of the Korean king’s officials, Min Yong-il—an episode still narrated with pride by many Korean church historians—and as a result was regarded as the king’s personal physician and consultant. The self-positioning of the missionaries, combined with many Korean elites’ earnest desire for Western-style reforms, made missionaries respected figures in Seoul. As Mattie Wilcox Noble wrote in her diary in 1892, “The foreigners [the missionaries in Korea referred to themselves as “foreigners”] here are highly respected contrary to the custom in China where they are called the foreign devil. We are here called the great man or the great lady.” The missionaries’ lifestyles also played a part in eliciting the Korean elites’ admiration. Many of them lived in “picturesque

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54 Quoted in Choi, Gender and Mission, 88.

55 Noble, JMWN, 23 Feb. 1895.

56 See, for example, Tŏk-ju Yi, Han’guk kyohoe iyagi [The Story of the Korean Church] (Seoul: Sinang kwa chisŏngsa, 2009), 50-56.

57 Noble, JMWN, 14 Nov. 1892.
European-style houses” in proximity to the U.S. Legation to Korea in Seoul, especially during the mission’s first two decades.58

Beginning in the mid-1880s, the reform faction’s support for the North American Protestant mission became enmeshed with this group’s idealistic understanding of “civilization” and nationhood. The members of this faction came to view these two categories as interconnected, like many other nationalist elites across colonized or semi-colonized territories around this time. They measured Korea against “modern” nations (Japan and nations in the West), thereby engendering a discourse that lamented the “lack of civilization” in Korea. This perceived lack, according to major kaehwa figures, was a primary impediment to independent nationhood. The litany of a leading kaehwa thinker (Pak Yŏng-hyo) presented to the Korean king in 1888 exemplifies this rhetoric: Korea is “still in a state of unenlightenment, like an imbecile or fool, a drunkard or lunatic, and without knowledge of world affairs, thereby inviting insult from the rest of the world.”59 This typically elite response to imperialism emphasized the need to civilize the commoners, who were always configured as more uncivilized, superstitious, and backward than the upper class Koreans and thus depicted as a barrier to Korea’s progress.

The discourse of the reform faction soon became entangled with the late 19th-century American missionary project, which justified itself through a similar argument that stressed the need to “civilize” the natives. The burgeoning mission-related publications in Korea emphasized this need and served as a forum that scrutinized the native “heathendom” for “superstitions.” In particular, shamanist practices, associated with the non-aristocratic population across Korea, became objects of contempt. Among the practices singled out for disapprobation were various


sacrificial rites and exorcist rituals (*kut*), regularly described as “sorcery.” The mission societies fed the content *kaehwa* ideology with these views, in addition to funding Korean publications that voiced this ideology. Together, the *kaehwa* faction and the North American missionaries came to constitute the loudest critics of the culture of Korean commoners and became ardent champions of a top-down modernization program (more on this later).

As missionaries came to exert more influence on Korean elite discourse, Christianity and, by extension, Christian conversion came to be intertwined with the social institutions of the “Christian West.” The first Koreans at this class level to convert (in the late 1880s and early 1890s) argued that it was the ethical component of Protestantism that gave rise to the social and economic “success” of Western civilization—most importantly, the ethics of individual rights, legal equality of subjects, and capitalism. This idealist (and highly idealistic) understanding of Christianity was bolstered and reinforced by the testimonials of Christian *kaehwa* intellectuals who traveled abroad and studied in the U.S. These figures include well-recognized figures of (South) Korean history, including Sŏ Chae-p’il, Yun Ch’i-ho, Namgung Ok, and Syngman Rhee. Their overseas experiences, usually funded by U.S. missionary money, were initiated with the very purpose of fostering admiration for a Christian U.S.—symbolically understood as the “West” (*sŏyang*)—and mediated through the missionaries’ ethnocentric representation and pathways before and during the visitor’s stay in the U.S. The travel writing that resulted from these experiences expressed an admiration for schools, industries, civil societies (e.g., mission societies), and the general wealth encountered in the U.S., which were in turn attributed to

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60 For example, consider the following entry from JMWN, written during the Chinese New Year celebration season (5 Feb. 1898): “I saw more heathendome than I think I ever saw before in so short a time. It being this great holiday they were all sacrificing to the Spirits... On the way home we saw, over many houses, suns & moons & shoes cut out of paper, & put up in sacrifice. Over each gateway was new paper fetish in honor of the gateway evil Spirit. Inside the fishermen’s homes was the sound of the sorcerer’s drum and dancing while over their roofs were the fantastically made flags, all in the effort to gain the fish god’s favor for the coming year. As we neared home, we again saw the crow going to the stone fight. One pitiable sight was the bold sinful faces of the dancing girls from 13 years. Old and upwards with the wealthier, higher classed men. One yangban climbed on the back of his dancing girl as she walked along.”

Christianity. Importantly, such a view was an extension of these Korean elites’ encounters with the well-funded North American mission in Korea and the missionaries’ lifestyles.

The *kaehwa* thinkers’ idealist understanding of Christianity was not only a consequence of the transnational, capitalist character of the American Protestant mission, but importantly also a symptom of their Neo-Confucian worldview—the very worldview from which they wished to disentangle themselves. Typically, Neo-Confucian thought privileged moral, idealist conditions over material, practical ones. As Kenneth Wells notes, the Korean elites applied this epistemological framework in interpreting Christianity, thus viewing Christian conversion as an *a priori* condition of receiving the social and economic benefits of Christianity.62 Yun Ch’i-ho, one of the first Korean converts and an influential *kaehwa* thinker, held this view. He linked the material and social affluence of the West to Christianity while attributing poverty and social inequality in Korea to Neo-Confucianism.63 Particularly interesting is Yun’s thesis on the Neo-Confucian principle of filial piety: he argued the weak sense of self and self-interest that stemmed from this principle was the reason capitalism did not emerge in Korea—an argument that seems to turn the Weberian thesis on its head.64

The idealist view of Christianity not only prompted ideological-religious conversion across elite factions (especially beginning in the late 1890s) but also gave rise to a strand of elite nationalism that sought to insert Korea into a linear historical trajectory via Christianity.65 A number of leading Korean Christian elites who had traveled overseas advanced an argument about history and Christianity that demonstrates the influence of stagist, teleological historiography.


65 The soon-to-be-Christian elites began to regard Neo-Confucianism and Christianity as competing worldviews, with the former being considered “the villain behind Korea’s humiliation” and latter gaining increasing appeal as a result. Kenneth Wells notes that the conversion of Yi Wŏn’gŏng, “then considered to be Korea’s greatest living Confucian scholar,” was symbolic of the elites’ resentful attitude toward Neo-Confucianism. See Wells, *New God, New Nation*, 30-32.
According to their view, history represented the progress of nations in a linear, hierarchical trajectory, with Christian nations the most advanced in the system. This belief demonstrates the influence of historiographical thinking that was well integrated in late 19th-century secular and religious scholarship in Europe, the U.S. and Japan, places where these Christian Koreans joined a minority contingent of students who were elite “natives” from the non-West. The writing of Yun Ch’i-ho, who studied at Vanderbilt University and Emory University through missionary sponsorship (1890-1895), exemplifies this view. He wrote in 1887:

There was a time when the most enlightened nation of this age was as low-down as the Coreans; and there may come a time when the Coreans shall be as enlightened as any people. This is one comfort at least. Christianity is the salvation and hope of Korea.

Statements like this made Yun one of the Koreans most beloved by the missionaries, who had a knack for citing Korean “confessions” in mission publications, and his statement was indeed quoted in a number of missionary journals. Among similar religious-nationalist arguments, none were as resolute (and alarming) as those of Syngman Rhee, who would earn a doctoral degree at Princeton in 1910 with missionary funding and later become the first president of South Korea in 1948. In the 1903 issue of Sinhak wŏlbo (Theological Monthly), the first theological publication in Korea funded by the Methodist missionary Herber Jones, Rhee wrote:

Without Christian conversion there cannot be a Korean independence. Thus those Koreans who are insightful are hoping to find the future in Christianity... From today, by making our nation like the nations of Europe and the U.S., we will send our missionaries to diverse nations of the world, propagating the Christian faith to barbaric [yamanhan] and savage [mijaehan] races. Thus our fortunes, rights, and our nation’s glory will increase, just like those of Europe and U.S.


67 Ch’i-ho Yun, *Yun Ch’i-ho Ilgi* [The Diaries of Yun Ch’i-ho], 12 Feb. 1895. Yun’s diaries are available online at the website of Kuksa p’yonch’an wiwŏnhoe (http://db.history.go.kr/). Translated and quoted in Choi, *Gender and Mission*, 35.

68 Choi, *Gender and Mission*, 35.

69 Quoted in Pak, *Pyŏngyang taebuhŭng*, 58. This is my translation.
Versions of this line of thought, which held sway well into the colonial period (1910-45), constituted the backbone of nationalisms that privileged “culture” as a pathway to nationhood, for example, bourgeois nationalism and the so-called “self-reconstruction nationalism.”

The idealist adoption of Christianity and the idealization of the missionaries conditioned the reception among the Korean elites of the mission’s hymns and its overall ideologies concerning music. In what follows, I outline the ideals and practices of the mission’s music projects in detail in order to demonstrate the kinds of musicality advocated and staged by the missionaries in the field.

**Music in the Mission Field**

The most symbolically significant component of the Protestant musical mission in Korea was the publication of hymnals in the vulgar script (ŏnmun). During the early years of the mission, when religious work was discouraged (1874 to the mid-1880s), missionaries translated a number of American hymns into Korean and taught them under the rubric of secular cultural education in mission schools that attracted Korean elites. A number of missionaries then began to compile more extensive Protestant hymnals when the religious mission became acceptable. From 1892 to 1910, approximately ten editions were published in the context of the developing rivalry between the Methodist and Presbyterian sectors of the mission. Among the noted editions are those published by the Methodist society and overseen by Heber Jones (the 1892, 1895 and 1897

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71 These schools include Ewha School, Pai Chai School, Jōngsin School, and Yōunghwa School. The instruction of these makeshift versions, taught in singing (ch’angga) classes, was one way in which the missionaries could insert religious content into secular teaching.
versions, called *Ch'annmiga*) and those assembled by the Presbyterian missionary Horace Underwood (the 1894 and 1895 editions, called *Ch'anyangga*).\textsuperscript{72}

The mission’s publication of Korean vernacular Protestant hymns was a project of reproduction, rather than one guided by the principles of “indigenization.”\textsuperscript{73} As a rule, the creation of the editions involved selecting around 50 to 120 hymns and gospel songs from the existing American Protestant hymnals and creating loose translations with melodies that corresponded to those of the original versions. In most of the missionaries’ editions, each hymn begins with an annotation indicating the English title of the original hymn and presents the Korean texts without music. The 1894 Underwood edition (titled *Ch’anyangga Hymns of Praise*) stands out as an ambitious early edition that reprints the four-part settings of the American hymnals (see Fig. 1.2).\textsuperscript{74} In this edition, Korean texts are printed under the music notation, with each syllable matched to one or more notes. This 1894 edition provided the basis for the authoritative 1909 edition (used throughout the colonial period), which in turn provided the blueprint for most postcolonial hymnals in South Korea (1945-).\textsuperscript{75} There is a large overlap between the 1909 edition and the one used widely today: over 90% of the 267 hymns included in the 1909 edition are included in the currently-used 1983 edition (*T’ongil ch’ansongga*), which has 558 hymns.

\textsuperscript{72} I thank South Korean musicologist Kyŏng-ch’an Min for sharing with me eight of the early hymnals compiled and edited by various North American missionaries in Korea.

\textsuperscript{73} The English prefaces of the hymnals, which often pose the question of why a new edition is necessary, suggest a competitive environment among the leading missionaries along denominational lines as well as within the denominations. The prefaces suggest a particularly intense competition between Heber Jones, who was influential in Methodist editions, and Horace Underwood, a Presbyterian who compiled his 1894 and 1895 editions as a solo project, to the annoyance of the larger Presbyterian society. The competition waned after 1905, when the Methodist and the Presbyterian mission societies joined forces under the General Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea.

\textsuperscript{74} Horace Underwood, ed., *Ch’anyangga Hymns of Praise* (Yokohama, Japan: Yokohama Seishi Bunsha, 1894).

\textsuperscript{75} The 1909 edition was published by the General Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea (established in 1905) and used across denominations during the colonial period. *Chan Song Ka, The Hymnal of the General Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea* (Yokohama, Japan: Fukuin Printing, 1909).
The Korean hymnals’ close resemblance to their American antecedents was in large part a product of the mission’s monopoly on editorship, a condition that was facilitated by the elites’ idealization of missionary work. The prefaces of most of the editions from 1892 to 1910 suggest limited collaboration with Koreans, whose names remained unacknowledged in the prefaces. Underwood’s comment in the preface to his 1894 edition is representative: he states that translations were made in view of “the suggestion or concurrence of several scholarly native
Christians.” The absence of Koreans from the editorial boards of all of these early hymnals also suggests the mission’s reluctance to share the editorial process even with Korean elites, whom they considered close allies in the mission field. One Korean Christian elite (Yun Ch’i-ho) compiled a hymnal in 1909, but this was rejected from the Methodist mission society, as I discuss below. In this respect, the hymnal project was similar to the mission’s practice of bible translation: as discussed earlier, the missionaries dismissed translations by Koreans, questioning the Koreans’ competence and privileging their own translation work. The mission’s dominance in Korean-language hymnals, which it sustained despite a proclaimed need for “hymnwriters of the Korean Church...from her own midst,” set the precedent for the U.S.-centric orientation of postcolonial Korean Christian musical culture. As Christian historian Chŏng-min Sŏ notes, the absence of meaningful feedback from Koreans in early hymnal projects explains why “Korean” Protestant hymns have continued to be marginal forms of expression from the perspectives of confession literature and indigenization, especially in comparison to Korean Catholic musical practices.

The mission’s control of “Korean” hymnals was one example of its practice of unidirectional cultural transmission, which it conducted “without any serious intercultural sensitivity” in an environment of unequal power relations. The missionaries were in fact quick to acknowledge the ways in which collective hymn singing conflicted with local vocal practices. For instance, one of the early observations of the mission regarding expressive vocal cultures in Korea concerned the association of singing, especially public singing, with social outcasts—public singing in the Chosŏn period was associated with the lowest strata of the social hierarchy, especially

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76 Underwood, preface to Ch’anyangga Hymns of Praise.

77 G. H. Jones, L. C. Rothweiler, and D. A. Bunker, preface to Ch’annya, A Selection of Hymns for the Korean Church (Seoul: the Korea Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1897). This is the third Methodist edition.


79 Ryu, “Understanding Early American Missionaries,” 2.
female entertainers, shamans, and male laborers. Mattie Wilcox acknowledged this longstanding taboo when she wrote in 1892, “singing is not much practiced in this country... Dancing girls (disreputable women) sing. The first thought when Koreans hear our Christian girls and ourselves sing is to wonder if our characters are good.”80 Observations like this nevertheless gave the missionaries even more justification and impetus to disseminate their own musical values and to understand this dissemination as a civilizing mission. The reflection of Sylvia Allen Wachs (a missionary and music teacher in Korea) on the mission’s hymn education illustrates this attitude: “There is a psychological something in music that touches an answering chord in the human heart. That ‘music hath charms to soothe the savage breast’ is not fancy but fact.”81

A point of conflict that most roused the missionary community during their efforts to expand hymn education was Koreans’ “inability” to sing half-step descending or ascending intervals due to the “gapped” five-tone orientation of melodic patterns across Korean folk and court traditions. From as early as the late 15th century, melodic conceptions across traditions converged around p’yŏngjo and kyemyŏnjo, two differently ordered anhemitonic pentatonic systems open to ornamental notes and structured around a central tone (kung).82 This aspect of Korean performance culture, which essentially characterized the music of all social classes, dominated the colloquy of the 1915 issue of The Korea Mission Field, an issue devoted specifically to the topic of music. This issue, published with the title The Musical Uplift of Korea, featured the views of nine missionary music teachers on the “progress” of the musical mission in Korea, or, as

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80 Mattie Wilcox Noble, JMWN, 3 Apr. 1892.

81 Sylvia Allen Wachs, “Teaching Music To Young School Children,” The Korea Mission Field 11, no. 4 (1915), 103.

82 I am describing a general orientation. In practice, the use of p’yŏngjo and kyemyŏnjo can vary according to the setting and the genre. I discuss these variations in some detail in Chapter 3. Also see Junyon Hwang, “Melodic Patterns in Korea: Modes and Scales,” in The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music, ed. Robert C. Provine, J. Lawrence Witzleben, and Yoshihiko Tokumaru (New York: Routledge, 2002): 847-851.
Wachs phrased it, “the musical uplift of Korea and the uplift of music in Korea.”\textsuperscript{83} The colloquy is replete with elaborate descriptions and ethnocentric judgments concerning the pentatonic basis of Korean performance traditions and the resulting “inability” of Koreans to sing half steps. Paul Grove, a contributor, gives one of the most debasing accounts of this “inability”:

> When [half steps are] imposed upon the unsuspecting Korean, he dodges under, and over, and all around them, twisting this way and that with amazing dexterity, tho if you questioned him closely, you would discover that he is not cognizant of just what he is doing, for he cannot differentiate our scale, that is he cannot by hearing, but just seems to feel that something is wrong, and consequently rights it in his own way, much to the detriment of congregation singing... They were born with a capacity of hearing only five tones where we hear seven.\textsuperscript{84}

While Paul Grove concludes that the mission should concentrate on the minority of American hymns that are already in five tones (he gives the example of “Auld Lang Syne”), the other contributors argued that it was their duty to help the Korean students to “hear correctly,”\textsuperscript{85} a duty that must be executed with “our sympathy, patience and consecration.”\textsuperscript{86} For example, Grace Harmon McGary, another contributor, detailed a systematic, disciplinary approach: “I believe the only hope for the half tones is through the cultivation of the voice and ear of the school children... Besides the monthly written examinations, once every term, we have a singing examination in each chorus class. Each girl must stand before the class and sing either a solo in a duet or a quartette with the different parts.”\textsuperscript{87}

The mission’s attempts to reform the singing practices of Korea in its own image had a firm basis in the mission’s assumptions regarding what is beautiful in music as well as the more fundamental question of what counts as “music.” This missionary ideology, which concerned not just vocal practices but performance traditions in general, was reinforced through active vigilance.

\textsuperscript{83} Wachs, “Teaching Music,” 103.

\textsuperscript{84} Paul Grove, “Adequate Song-Books,” \textit{The Korea Mission Field} 11, no. 4 (1915), 110.

\textsuperscript{85} Wachs, “Teaching Music,” 103.

\textsuperscript{86} Wachs, “Teaching Music,” 103.

\textsuperscript{87} Grace Harmon McGary, “Music in the School,” \textit{The Korea Mission Field} 11, no. 4 (1915), 103.
against those local practices that did not fit the metaphysical and material frameworks of the mission’s music. Korean elites, both Christian converts and non-converts, played an important role as intermediary figures in this missionary vigilance. The elites often interpreted the mission’s ideology of music through the lens of “civilization,” which reinforced a binary understanding of superstition and modernity, and disseminated this interpretation via publications directed at mass audience. Local performance cultures in all social classes, many of which were tied to ritual, became the target of this jointly conducted campaign against “superstition.” The missionaries themselves were less critical of the performance traditions of the Korean court and yangban culture (whether vocal or instrumental), most likely because the expressive aspects of these traditions featured an element of restraint that did not fit the categories of “heathendom” and “sorcery” (in fact, a few missionaries expressed admiration for Korean court music). However, major Korean elite figures began to portray even these practices as “old” or “outdated” (if not superstitious) in the context of the declining prestige of the upper-class ideologies of Sino-centrism and Neo-Confucianism that had informed court-based and literary music styles. Most importantly, this view was promoted through emerging Korean-language literature, which began to circulate widely in the form of daily installments in a number of newspapers. In particular, the fiction works of Yi Kwangsu, considered the father of modern Korean literature, depicted court and upper-class music as a “shameful remnant of the past” symbolized by the figure of the

88 For example, J. D. Van Buskirk observed in The Musical Uplift of Korea issue that although he despised street performances in Seoul, he found the melodies played by court musicians (“the old orchestra of the palace”) “hauntingly beautiful and always so elusive that I could never even think it.” He also added: “The Korean music is untrammeled by conventions and is a more natural music than our own.” See J.D. Van Buskirk, “Old Korean Music,” The Korea Mission Field 11, no. 4 (1915), 101.

89 According to Korean music theorist Junyon Hwang, the growing influence of Neo-Confucianism on the Korean court during the Chosŏn period resulted in tangible changes in certain performance practice. Neo-Confucian ideals, as practiced by Chosŏn-period Korean upper class, privileged “moderation and concord” and shunned “open expression of emotions like joy, anger, sorrow, and pleasure.” An interesting modification concerns the minor-third interval used in a folk-shamanist pentatonic scale called kyemŏnjo. This minor-third interval was modified in courtly and aristocratic settings because it was deemed too emotional. See Hwang, “Melodic Patterns,” 848-850.
courtesan, and set courtesan characters in direct opposition to hymn-singing, piano-playing daughters of elite Korean families.\textsuperscript{90}

It took much less effort to target shamanist rituals because they appeared to fit the categories of heathenism, “backwardness” and superstition. In particular, missionaries and Korean elites decried the shaman’s ritual (\textit{kut}), which entails improvisational vocal-physical performances by a shaman (usually female) who acts as an intermediary between humans and spirits.\textsuperscript{91} \textit{Kut} in fact was the object of many missionaries’ emotional musings and testimonies from the beginnings of the mission, giving rise to descriptions such as “a great noise of drums and cymbals,” “talking and making a great confusion,” and “some weird incantations by a young woman more like an evil spirit than anything I could imagine.”\textsuperscript{92} Overall, the persistent vigilance against local performance traditions, informed by a profound uneasiness regarding their metaphysical status, foreclosed the application of Korean performance styles in “Korean” hymns during the first decades of the mission—an orientation that would continue well into the postcolonial period. Significantly, as the church music historian Chŏng-min Sŏ notes, there is only one hymn in all of the early hymnal editions that attempts to reference “local” expression.\textsuperscript{93} This is “Korean Music or Old Hundred,” the 10\textsuperscript{th} hymn in the 1909 joint-denomination edition. It presents a short, sanitized interpretation of an unattributed folk melody.

\textsuperscript{90} Kwang-su Yi, \textit{Yi-Kwang-su and Modern Korean Literature: Mujŏng}, trans. and ed. Ann Sung-Hi Lee (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University East Asia Program, 2005), 338. This is a recent translation of Yi Kwang-su’s \textit{Mujŏng} (The Heartless), considered the first full-length work of fiction in vernacular Korean. It was published in 1917 as serial installments in a major newspaper.

\textsuperscript{91} See Lee, \textit{Shaman Ritual Music}, 2-3.

\textsuperscript{92} Noble, JMWN, 7 Mar. 1897.

\textsuperscript{93} Sŏ, “Han’guk ch’ansongga kaegwan,” 3.
A number of missionary records suggest how the mission’s Korean-texted hymns were integrated into Korean religious worship at the elite level. Consider Noble’s description of a Protestant service in Seoul that she attended in 1896:

It is wonderful to see what grand Christians there are in this kingdom. Not a generation removed from blackest heathenism, and showing forth glorious fruits of the Gospel of Christ... One day as the increase in the membership during the last year was read, it was so great that the foreigners rose in a body & sang the Doxology; the Koreans wished to sing too & in their tongue sang the Doxology. The increase has been doubling for two years, It is 200 now.94

This and other similar observations demonstrate the associative yet hierarchical relations between the North American missionaries and the Korean elites and the expression of these relations through the re-production of hymn singing.

The mission’s music projects were equally important as a means of introducing the Korean elites to a broadly defined field of Western music. This aspect is noted both in the mission’s archives and in the Korean elites’ writings. From the early years of the mission, the missionaries were eager to teach singing, organ playing, and general music theory to interested Koreans using the churches’ equipment, not only because they wanted to train Koreans who would be able to

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94 Noble, JMWN, 23 Aug. 1896. Consider a similar account (23 Oct. 1892): “Arthur attended a Korean Men’s meeting. We could not understand a word that was said, but the tunes were very familiar. It seems beautiful to hear the grand old Methodist hymns sung in different languages.”
guide congregational singing but also because they were aware of the tremendous appeal of “cultural learning” to the upper-class Koreans in Seoul. Missionaries in Saemunan Church, the very first Protestant church in Korea (Seoul), set the precedent for religious-secular music education in 1887, the year that the church was established. Generally, elite Koreans in Seoul welcomed the prospect of obtaining general music lessons in churches, in some cases arousing the concerns of a number of missionaries regarding the secular leanings of an avowedly religious mission. The enthusiasm of Korean converts and non-converts was more fully articulated in the mission schools, which were less strictly constrained by the ideal of religious conversion. Grace Harmon McGary’s report on the state of music education in her mission school, included in the 1915 issue of The Korea Mission Field, demonstrates how hymn education reinforced secular keyboard education:

The teaching of the organ is the same here as everywhere. They must have scales, exercises and pieces, and each girl learns to play a song from the hymnal every week, for in the hymns they have the music of the masters—Handel, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Beethoven, etc. We teach the piano to those who are ready for it not only as an accomplishment, but as a foundation for things that are to be. Each girl who studies piano also teaches five or six organ pupils.

The perceived and advertised relationship between Protestant hymn music and European classical music turned mission schools into privileged cultural institutions for many elite families in Seoul, who were actively re-fashioning themselves according to the shifting terms of upper-class respectability (particularly women’s respectability). Western music education, especially instruction in hymn singing and keyboard education in well-staffed mission schools in Seoul, became one of the ways through which the unmarried daughters of upper class families rehearsed

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95 Underwood, Challenged Identities, 20-45.
a “new” womanhood that was articulated in terms of Victorian womanhood via the mission schools.97

The upper-class Koreans’ enthusiastic adoption of Protestant hymns and related secular music, nevertheless, was linked not simply with the shift in cultural capital and reproduction of the late-Victorian class hierarchy but also with the ideals and practices of Korean elite nationalism. As I demonstrated above, Christianity was rarely a matter of individual faith for the elites but rather the socio-cultural basis of an independent nation: the elites attended the mission schools and churches because they saw a connection between Christianity and Korean nationhood. These ideals motivated strategic appropriation of Protestant hymns for the purpose of fashioning nationalist anthems. This project entailed setting new texts in Korean to the melodic materials of existing hymns. According to the South Korean musicologist Kyŏng-ch’an Min, who has collected and studied several dozen such hymns, their texts reflected “the ideas of civilization and patriotism, which characterized this period.”98

Popular among young Korean men and women who attended mission schools in Seoul, these songs were used for collective singing in emerging Christian nationalist circuits, which encompassed churches, mission schools, and after 1899, various Korean branches of the YMCA.99 Such performances also entered the vernacular imagination as authors such as Yi Kwang-su began to insert fictionalized episodes of patriotic hymn singing into their works; these fictional hymns are sometimes depicted as reworded, makeshift versions of Protestant hymns. In fictionalized settings, the hymns are typically performed by the Korean elites for the poor, whom the elite

97 See Choi, Gender and Mission, 86-120. Ewha School, a mission school for women, became a prestigious school popular among the elite families in Seoul. The missionary teachers started piano classes in 1910 and through them trained the first generation of female pianists in Korea as well as the first Korean woman to study piano in the U.S. (Ae-sik Kim). The school’s prestige continued into the postcolonial period.

98 Min, “Han’guk kandboxha yangaksa,” 19.

99 Min, “Han’guk kandboxha yangaksa,” 50-59.
characters pledge to “teach,” “guide,” and “save” “through education and civilization.” One portrayal of such a concert reads: “Yong-chae sang a hymn that she had learned from Pyong-uk entitled ‘When I think of the past, I am ashamed.’”

The earliest songs in this para-religious genre were “Hwangje t’ansin kyŏngch’ukka” (Celebrating the Birthday of the Korean Emperor) and “Aegukka” (National Anthem), both of which were composed in 1896. The first of these, fashioned by the Korean congregation of Saemunan Church (the first Methodist church in Korea), made note-for-note use of the melody of “God Save the Queen,” which was introduced to this group as a Protestant hymn by the missionaries and subsequently included in the Korean hymnals (see Fig. 1.4). The second song, “Aegukka,” was created by the students of Pai Chai School, the first all-men school established by the mission in 1885. The text was set to the melody of “Auld Lang Syne,” also included in the Korean hymnals. Both songs appeal to the Christian god to protect the Korean nation and the Korean court and to re-confirm Korea’s status as a modern independent nation. The project of re-texting religious hymns continued into the colonial period; these nationalistic hymns served as underground anthems in the context of the Japanese government’s censorship activities during this period.

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100 Yi, Mujŏng, 341.  
101 Yi, Mujŏng, 339.  
102 Min, “Han’guk kŭndaehwa yangaksa,” 50-51.  
103 Min, “Han’guk kŭndaehwa yangaksa,” 54.  
104 Min, “Han’guk kŭndaehwa yangaksa,” 48-58.  
105 Christian god indicated as sangju in the former and sŏnja in the latter.
1. Glorious god, merciful god, have mercy
Protect this nation and land, preserve this nation

2. All hail our sovereign, the king, all hail
On this blessed day give us grace, give us long life

Another noteworthy project in the genre of Christian nationalist hymnody is Ch'anmiga, an unpublished hymnal edited by Yun Ch'i-Ho. This compilation featured 15 hymns, three of which interweaved explicitly nationalist content with religious content. These three are “Korea,” the first number of the hymnal, “Patriotic Hymn No. III,” and “Patriotic Hymn” (these are Yun’s own English titles; he did not use Korean titles). According to Kyŏng-ch’an Min, Yun’s text for “Patriotic Hymn,” set to the melody of “Auld Lang Syne,” provided the textual basis for South Korea’s national anthem (see Fig. 1.5). Yun’s Ch’anmiga thus proved to be significant in the history of nationalist compositions in Korea, yet it was not considered a legitimate project by the Methodist mission society in Korea. The hymnal was denied publication when Yun submitted it to this society in 1908, presumably because of its secular nationalist leanings.\(^{106}\) This divergence of

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\(^{106}\) South Korean Christian music historian Chŏng-min Sŏ re-evaluates the mission’s rejection of Yun’s hymnal: “It is difficult to understand why the mission society rejected Yun’s hymnal. It is a contradiction. They regularly mentioned that they looked forward to the publication of a Korean-style hymnal but at the same time they also considered heretical what was a sincere expression of the Korean people at that time.” Sŏ, “Han’guk ch’ansongga kaegwan,” 3-4.
views between a prominent Korean elite and the mission is one instance of the tension between
the two groups over the identity of Korean Protestant expression—a tension that became more
visible as the mission expanded into non-elite terrain beginning in the mid-1890s. I turn to this
portion of the North American Protestant mission in the next section.

Figure 1.5: “Patriotic Hymn,” Yun Ch’i-Ho’s Ch’anmiga, 1908

The Mission and Korean Commoners

The North American Protestant mission initially was based around Seoul’s political elites,
but the scope of the mission became much larger in the course of the 1890s and 1900s. During
these two decades, the mission expanded beyond the confines of Seoul’s aristocratic sphere and
infiltrated towns and smaller cities with remarkable speed and effectiveness, leading to the
establishment of churches, schools, and other religious and cultural institutions throughout Korea. Motivated in large part by the ideals of evangelicalism, this mission aimed at people of all class backgrounds, particularly those who did not have hereditary yangban status. A majority of these Koreans belonged to the commoner social class, sometimes known as sangmin or pyŏngmin.

Constituting the backbone of Chosŏn-period Korea, this class included peasants, laborers, fishermen, craftsmen, and merchants. Throughout the Chosŏn period and particularly during the 19th century, they were exploited by the yangban class, who owned land and taxed them heavily. The commoner class’s increasing hostility toward the aristocrats, who did not conduct physical labor but owned much of the wealth in Chosŏn, is indexed in the frequent eruption of peasant rebellions throughout the 19th century. The mission also had a marked interest in religious and social projects for widows and orphaned girls and women, who ranked very low in the social hierarchy. Merchants, who also held low rank (lower than farmers), constituted a group that was particularly attracted to the mission. I use the term “commoner” and “common Korean people” to indicate these various groups of Koreans who were of lower status than the yangban class.

Early 20th-century mission publications in Korea and beyond unanimously heralded the non-elite mission in Korea as one of the most successful enterprises in the history of the North American Protestant mission and certainly the most successful one in Asia. Although this narrative was in large part shaped by the typically self-congratulatory tone of missionary discourse, the evident growth of Protestant Christianity outside of Seoul seems exceptional by any standard. By 1910, Methodist and Presbyterian missionaries ran 805 mission schools nationwide. Growth was especially high in the northern parts of Korea. According to a mission

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107 Lower than these women in the social hierarchy were those who belonged to the ch'ŏnmin ("base people") class, which included kiseang (female entertainers), mudang (shamans), and butchers. See Henry Em, “Minjok as a Modern and Democratic Construct: Sin Ch’aeho’s Historiography,” in Colonial Modernity in Korea, ed. Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 1999), 336-339. Also see Cumings, Korea’s Place, 40, 54, 80.

108 Wells, New God, New Nation, 32.
report in 1909, 96,668 Koreans attended 900 churches in the north and contributed a total of $81,075 to the churches.\footnote{Editorial, \textit{The Korea Mission Field} 5, no. 11 (1909), 183.} P'yŏngyang, a northern city with a sizeable population of Korean merchants and craftsmen in the 19th century, became the center of the northern non-elite mission by the late 1890s. William Noble (the husband of Mattie Wilcox Noble), who moved from Seoul to P'yŏngyang in 1903, reported to the larger U.S. Methodist mission that in 1906 each of the Methodist churches in P'yŏngyang attracted 700 people every Sunday and 400 people on Wednesday, with Changdaehyŏn Church (one of the largest churches in the city) attracting 1,400 Koreans on Sundays.\footnote{Editorial, \textit{Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Mission} (New York: Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1907), 332.} The growth of Protestant churches was also documented with great attention by the Japanese governing bodies although this documentation was conducted for the purpose of imperial survey and administration. The Japanese Residency-General noted in 1909: “in all provinces save South Hamgyŏng and North and South Ch’unch’ŏng, the Christian churches were replacing the traditional \textit{yangban}-centered institutions as national foci.”\footnote{Translated and quoted in Wells, \textit{New God, New Nation}, 32.}

The mission project oriented towards Korean commoners was intertwined with the elites’ mission in significant ways. The mission constituted the primary institution that administered to the commoners the program of “civilization,” which was formulated by the Korean political elites in conjunction with the missionaries. Churches and mission schools indeed engendered lived pathways through which sanctioned knowledge was taught, received, and circulated. These pathways encompassed swelling ranks of Korean religious workers, including Korean pastors, elders, and the so-called “bible women,” many of whom were widows or married women from lower-status families who studied the bible in order to teach it to others on their own (some of them were former shamans).\footnote{Choi, \textit{Gender and Mission Encounters}, 113-120.} These Koreans linked Protestant institutions in the towns and

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109 Editorial, \textit{The Korea Mission Field} 5, no. 11 (1909), 183.


112 Choi, \textit{Gender and Mission Encounters}, 113-120.
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smaller cities, where missionaries had considerable presence, with smaller rural groups sometimes consisting of five to six people. The discourse that was disseminated through this far-reaching network included not just scriptural knowledge but also ideals of bourgeois family, hygiene, child-rearing, basic science and geography, and a glossary of “superstitions.”

The mission’s administration of “civilization” depended on the instruction of the vernacular script. This project—which centrally informs the top-down yet horizontal nature of Korean modernity—was one that had the full support of the elites and the missionaries. In supporting universal literacy, the mission was guided by its evangelistic ideals while the Korean elites believed that the education of the “backward” masses would facilitate nation building. The experiences of non-elites are much less chronicled, but a number of extant records demonstrate that they felt empowered by this education. For example, Hwak-sil Kim, a twelve-year-old girl from Anju who attended a mission school, wrote in 1907:

The rise and fall of the nation depends on women’s education... the more education women receive, the more advanced the country is, as exemplified by western countries... My church already realized the importance of education for girls and established one. My parents sent me to the school and let me study. First, I thank the blessings of God, second, I thank the enthusiasm of the church, and third, I thank my parents for their benevolence.

This understanding was especially strong among women from the lower classes, who had been barred from any means of education before the mission instituted the elite-sanctioned reforms.

Hymn singing was introduced to Korean commoners as part of this program of modernity administered by the mission. Unsurprisingly, it is difficult to find records of this group’s views on hymn singing although there are ample missionary records of hymn singing by Korean commoners. Among these records, William Kerr’s portrayal highlights commoners’ hymn singing practice as a fraught experience of modernity:

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113 Choi, *Gender and Mission Encounters*, 113-120.

It takes only a glimpse of the swaying of the bodies and the intent expression of the faces, not only of the children but of the adults as well, to show that the music, however foreign it may have been at the beginning, is one of the powerful inspiration features in a large gathering. Old women, who have not gotten so far with their reading that they can fathom the mystery of a page of Scripture, still carry their hymns-books to service and follow the lines with a finger which would say that the owner of the book has made great progress with her letters, while the probability is that she is repeating most of them from memory.  

Kerr interprets the eagerness and sincerity of the Koreans as an attempt to “enter” modernity, applying the typically top-down gaze of the “agents of modernity.”

But are there other ways of reading the motives and interests of the Korean commoners’ hymn singing, which became one of the most popular activities for this group by the 1910s? Overall, the mission publications suggest that hymn education and hymn singing grew to be some of the most beloved activities of the mission and the churches in the course of the first decade of the century. From among about 30 extant records of this phenomenon (to my knowledge), I will cite two examples. One missionary stated, “whenever there is a concert announced, it is not difficult to get a respectable good sized audience. We have had three concerts in Pyeng Yang during the last year and it was almost impossible to carry out the program creditably because of the great number of people.”  

Another noted the difficulty of teaching “a crowd of 500 enthusiastic Korean singers, a number by no means seldom found at the Bible Classes in this country.”

The Great Revivals as Common Koreans’ Nationalist Rituals

Contextual reading of the mission’s archive may shed some light on the social significance of hymn singing for common Koreans—meanings that are largely unaddressed in scholarship but that might ultimately help to illuminate the nature of early Korean Christianity. In this final

section, I will analyze mission documents that demonstrate a growing national consciousness at the commoners’ level. The common people’s grasp of nationhood was somewhat different from that of the elites because it was inflected by their lived experiences of the large-scale Japanese colonial military apparatus outside of Seoul, in addition to being subject to the elites’ notions of modernity and nationhood. Studies show that churches outside of Seoul attracted Koreans seeking shelter from the Japanese military campaigns; as a result, these churches became replete with anti-Japanese sentiments and the accompanying psycho-social conception of a national community. The connection between Japanese violence and church growth indeed structured the pattern of Christian conversion and expansion: church growth was most marked in areas that were directly affected by the Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese War (i.e., central and northern Korea). Generally speaking, the Koreans who chose to attend these churches represented a segment of the population that did not join the old and new armed resistance movements. These movements, including the Tonghak Movement (comparable to the Taiping Rebellion or the Boxer Rebellion in China) and the Righteous Army, attracted a great number of low-status Koreans throughout the 19th century.

North American missionaries’ writings from 1900 to 1910 record the extent to which non-elite Koreans flocked to the churches as refugees from real violence and thus illustrate the importance of anti-colonial sentiments to the non-elite mission. Among the reported incidents of colonial injustice include Japanese police brutality, military violence, forced evacuation from towns and cities, and confiscation of property and food. Mattie Noble’s diary is full of such reportage after 1902 (before this year, she lived in the comfortable missionary quarter in Seoul.

118 Pak, P’yŏngyang taebuhŭng, 96-147.
119 The Tonghak movement was a series of spontaneous guerrilla acts that began during the early 19th century. The movement started as spontaneous class-based rebellions against the landowning class (yangban), but by the late 19th century it had accrued characteristics of an anti-colonial, anti-foreign movement. The Righteous Army, in contrast, was an explicitly nationalist movement. The formation of the Righteous Army is attributed to the assassination of the Korean queen in 1895. See Cumings, Korea’s Place, 115-120.
and was mainly interested in documenting “heathendom,” “demon altars,” and “sorcerers”). An entry from 1906, a year after the Japan-Korea Treaty, reads:

The Japanese in housing their soldiers on the Koreans are causing such discomfort to the people. Day by day, for many months, some family is made homeless, without any redress, and the Japanese are continually so insolent to the Koreans. All travelers who come say that outside of Korea the world cannot understand conditions here, for the news has been kept from getting beyond Korea.120

Similarly, J.R. Moose, a Methodist missionary (in Korea from 1899 to 1924) recounted in the 1906 issue of the Korea Mission that he often encountered the expression “Wei-chi hal kot tonuchi oup so (there is altogether no place to trust)” in his everyday interactions with Koreans and argued that this response was linked to the inability of the Korean government to provide trustworthy support to its population.121

Given the documented sympathy of the missionaries for the Korean commoners in the context of Japan’s military campaigns, historians have reflected on the precise nature of the missionaries’ role in emergent non-elite nationalisms. In fact, this question informs one of the major divisions within scholarship on the North American Protestant mission in Korea. Responses to this issue have been diverse in part because of the diversity of positions among the missionaries: a few openly endorsed the occupation, one took the matter to an international peace

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120 Noble, JMWN, 30 Apr. 1906. In adjacent entries, Wilcox expressed frustration at the refusal of the U.S. to intervene on behalf of the Koreans, as well as at the anti-Korean nature of the U.S. Protestant mission in Japan. For example, she wrote on August 16, 1906: “The poor Koreans suffer thus all the time, and no one to help them. A number of Japanese soldiers had been quartered out in Korean houses near the Presbyterian compounds, the Koreans, of course, driven out from their homes... The Christians are trying very hard to love the Japanese... Our dear Bishop Harris, having such faith in the Japanese and so sure they will make all things right, seems to us to forget to even mention the trials of the Koreans and the indignities to which they are subject.” An entry dated 27 Jul. 1904 describing a scene from the Russo-Japanese War is also interesting: “Pitiible sights... babies tied to their backs & steadying themselves with canes, men & women with their clothing & all their household goods they could carry wrapped in clothes & bedding & piled high on their heads, little children with burdens on their heads & in their hands running along beside their parents & grandparents, feeling many knowing not whither, having no friend to whom to go, and running from danger at home, & leaving their homes to be demolished, and many of them meeting robbers on their toilsome way. Most all the women had to go and with them our Christian women & many of their husbands & fathers, so in our Church of about a thousand members & probationers, only a little handful was left.”

121 J. R. Moose, “A Great Awakening,” The Korea Mission Field 2, no. 3 (1906), 51.
convention (the Hague Convention) and was subsequently barred from working in Korea, and the majority offered sympathetic responses while sometimes speaking for Koreans in local situations of conflict. Another challenge to reaching a consensus on the missionaries’ role is that missionary records must be weighed against the Taft-Katsura Agreement of 1905, which authorized the U.S. government's recognition of Japanese interests in Korea. This agreement caused paranoia among the Japanese disciplinary forces in Korea regarding the U.S. mission, which did not abort in 1905 (the year of the Japan-Korea Treaty) or 1910 (the beginning of formal occupation). Consider, for example, a 1910 report of a Japanese official in Korea, which seems to overstate the subversive character of the North American mission: “Wherever a dispute arises between Japanese and Koreans, missionaries take up the case of the Koreans. Christian schools showed ‘evil tendencies,’ mixing impurities (i.e. Politics) in their education.” The Japanese colonial government’s suspicion and the ensuing censorship of Christian publications limited what could be written in mission publications after 1905 and more definitively after 1910.

This chapter follows the dominant reading of the situation among secular and critical Christian historians, which holds that although the mission was sympathetic toward nationalistic causes at the non-elite level, it promoted de-politicized, religious pursuits rather than encouraging the commoners’ nationalism. The mission literature born out of the non-elite mission offered a religious-historical interpretation of Korea’s political situation, thus largely avoiding the trickier question of political independence; importantly, this position was not at odds with the desires of a number of missionaries, who were frustrated by the roles ascribed to them by the Korean elites during the mission’s first years. Many missionaries recognized that the political situation (Japan’s

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122 The missionary who went to the Hague Convention in 1905 on behalf of the Korean king was Homer Hulbert. Upon return to Korea, he was expelled by the Japanese governor general. For this reason, Hulbert has been praised rather uncritically as a Korean independence fighter by South Korean historians who privilege anti-Japanese nationalist narratives. For instance, see Tong-jin Kim, *Parannun e han’guk hon hŏlbŏtŏ han’guk in poda han’guk ŭl tŏ saranghan hwangjae ŭ milsa* [Blue Eyes, Korean Soul, Hulbert, The King’s Secret Envoy Who Loved Korea More Than Koreans] (Seoul: Ch’ăm chŏn ch’in’gu, 2010).

military campaigns, in particular) was precisely what drew common Koreans into the churches, and they concluded that this was a great opportunity for the mission. Consider, for example, C. T. Collyer, a Methodist missionary, who argued that the growth of the Christian church in Korea after 1905 was due not to the skills of the missionaries but rather to the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5). According to Collyer, peasants and merchants in central Korea turned to churches because they believed that affiliation with a symbolic Western power would give them some leverage against the Japanese soldiers, who regularly confiscated their possessions and were rumored to have a plan to forcibly move groups of Koreans to Sakhalin, Russia as migrant laborers. After detailing the incidents that drew these Koreans to the churches, Collyer argued that this political situation was “a glorious opportunity.” A detailed study of such missionary narratives is outside the scope of this chapter, and here I will merely cite two further examples. The first of these is an editorial by Homer Hulbert entitled “Now or Never,” which appeared in the 1903 issue of the Korea Review. The celebrated missionary argued that “the delicate political situation” of Korea provided the rationale for the American Protestant mission:

Nowhere is the cry louder than in Korea... Korea's argument is her present opportunity. The delicate political situation; the beginnings of civilization with its drawbacks, always a bar to Christ; the multitudes beyond, yielding to the least persuasion; the utterly inadequate force of workers to fill the need; these are facts that stand out. One man now is worth a dozen ten years hence. The hour of Korea's opportunity is peculiarly now. We can take Korea now for Christ. Perhaps we can't ten years hence. Is the Church going to let this golden opportunity go by?

James Gale, a Canadian Presbyterian missionary also widely celebrated in Korean church history, expressed a similar view in his book Korea in Transition. Written in 1909, a year prior to

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124 C. T. Collyer, “Report of Chun Chen Circuit,” Minutes of the Eleventh Annual Meeting of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1907 (Yokohama: Fukuin Printing, 1907), 38. Such missionary views would set the tone for some of the most uncritical narratives within Korean church history, including the narrative of North American Protestant salvation of a “backward” Korea and others that consider religious redemption as an ethno-national redemption.

125 Homer Hulbert, “Editorial Comment,” The Korea Review 3, no. 12 (1903), 548.
the formal Japanese occupation, it invokes “God’s plan” as it interprets the fear and helplessness that characterized all classes of the beleaguered Korean society:

A mad sort of spurious patriotism started into being, with suicide, chopping off of fingers, sworn oaths, guerilla warfare, flint-lock resistance. It still goes on to a considerable degree, while the poor people in the valleys, caught between the contending forces, have to pay the price of Korea’s past failure. With the question as to how in other ways she came to such a pass as this, as to where the right and wrong of it lay, as to what ought to have been done and what ought not to have been done, it is not in our province to deal. Here she is today. If it had not been the Japanese, certainly the twentieth century single-handed would have crushed the old emperor and all he represented out of existence. Evidently the purpose in this plan of God was to bring Korea to a place where she would say, “All is lost, I am undone.”

As Kenneth Wells aptly summarizes in his study of the early 20th-century North American mission in Korea: “the troubles of one were fortunes for another.”

The generally depoliticized nature of the mission guided some of the mission activities that were directed towards common people and informed a fascinating phenomenon referred to as the Great Revivals (taebuhŭng), which revolved around the confessions and conversions of individual Koreans in public proceedings. During these heavily recorded revival meetings, the mission’s depoliticized direction and evangelical worldview converged with certain expressive elements that provides clues to the commoners’ religious practices, especially those based on the experiential, spiritual sensibilities of shamanism. These practices disappointed the Korean Christian elites and turned some of them against the missionaries, as these high-class Koreans feared that the revivals were provoking the commoners’ “reversion to the traditional modes of behavior and thought.”

The scale of the revival meetings alone—the number of participants ranged in the hundreds—points to past and existing non-elite conditions of community life as formative factors: village-level, communal activities such as kut, itinerant theater, and harvest-related festivals were aspects of non-elite life throughout the Chosŏn period; moreover, Koreans who did not belong to the

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127 Wells, New God, New Nation, 29.

128 Wells, New God, New Nation, 38.
yangban class were not constrained by rules restricting spatial domains, which served as a distinction between classes (put simply, the lower one’s social rank, the freer one was to move through public places and attend public gatherings). The complex, multivalent, and intersecting meanings of the mass revivals and confessions—as a transactional site, a shamanist practice, a location of empowerment and discipline, and a place of unofficial national community—provide additional contexts for understanding collective hymn singing among the non-elites.

Current Christian historiography of the Great Revivals centers on three formative meetings that unfolded under the leadership of the Canadian Methodist missionary Robert Hardie: meetings in Wonsan (now North Korea) in 1903, Songdo in 1904, and P’yŏngyang (now North Korea) in 1907 and again in 1910. According to Korean church history, it was Hardie’s personal confession of his weaknesses and failure as a missionary during a sermon in Wonsan that started the “fire,” which then spread to two other major cities and subsequently to adjacent cities, towns, and villages. Records show that each revival spanned at least several days and included different pre-planned and spontaneous activities, including learning and singing hymns, sermons, confessions, testimonies, prayers, and street proselytization by the Korean participants. Typically, revival meetings featured one or more charismatic guest preachers. These were usually North American missionaries in Korea and from other mission fields in Asia, as well as some well-known Korean pastors such as Sŏn-ju Kil.

Recorded observations of the revivals by missionaries almost always focus on the personal confessions of the participating Koreans rather than on the sermons. Robert Moose’s description of a Seoul meeting in 1904, led by Hardie, is a representative account:

In March [1904] Dr. Hardie came to Seoul and conducted a ten day meeting in the Chat-Coal Church which was attended by most of our people living in the city and

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129 Pak, P’yŏngyang taebuhŭng, 47-50. Also see Chil-Sung Kim, “The Role of Robert Alexander Hardie in the Korean Great Revival and the Subsequent Development of Korean Protestant Christianity” (PhD diss., Asbury Theological Seminary, 2012), 132-142.

130 Pak, P’yŏngyang taebuhŭng, 44-45.
some few came in from some of the country churches. This was a most wonderful meeting in which conviction for sin was so deep that it led to many most disgraceful confessions and restitution of stolen goods. Many of our people were brought to know for the first time what sin and forgiveness really mean... Too often it has been the case that our converts to Christianity in this country have had only a conversion of the head, while the heart remained ignorant of the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{131}

This testimony outlines a number of features that were observed across a great number of missionaries’ testimonies: the emotional character of the confessions, the participatory context of the confessional events, and repentance for personal actions. These commonly noted features allow for a reading of the confessions as transgressive, transactional experiences that were carried out from the reference point of the commoners’ pre-existing sensibilities. Importantly, the example above highlights one particular transgression (or, a transaction between the “old” and the “new”): a departure toward capitalist ethics of private property that were sanctioned and sanctified in U.S. Protestant ideology. This notion of bourgeois subjectivity, advocated through missionary teachings and discourse, seems to be at the center of the “new” conceptions of selfhood and social community that were performatively articulated during the Koreans’ confessions (especially as interpreted from the missionaries’ point of view).\textsuperscript{132} At least 70 similar testimonies of the confessions appeared in missionary publications of the first decade of the century.\textsuperscript{133}


\textsuperscript{132} An interesting example in this regard is a peculiarly arrogant piece by Robert Hardie, which appeared in a 1934 publication. In this example, Hardie is taking on the position of a Korean (“Sung-Kun Yun”) who is returning home from a revival meeting that Hardie himself led in 1903. Hardie writes, “On his way to his home in Kangwon Province he kept praying that God would bring to his mind all past sins for which amendment could be made. He then recalled that twenty years before when he was working in the Royal Mint (long before he had heard of Jesus Christ) he had been overpaid to the amount of four dollars. He gave that amount to Dr. Hardie to be returned to the finance department of government. The receipt for this reinstitution, perhaps the first conscience money ever returned to the Korean government is still in Dr. Hardie’s possession.” This example suggests that capitalist ethics (“conscience money”) were among the most emphasized ideals during the mass meetings and a central framework for negotiating the modern subject-hood of the participants. It also suggests intimate connections between the revivals, evangelical capitalism, and the missionaries’ self-regard as the voices of conscience. Robert Hardie, “The Methodist Episcopal Church, South,” in \textit{Within the Gate: Comprising the Addresses Delivered at the Fiftieth Anniversary of Korean Methodism} (Seoul: The Korea Methodist News Service, 1934), 41.

\textsuperscript{133} For example, Pak’s \textit{P’yŏngyang taebuhŭng undong} (The Great Revivals of P’yŏngyang) cites at least as many accounts.
A slightly different missionary account is Graham Lee’s description of one of the meetings of the P’yŏngyang Revival (1907), which evidently drew almost 1,500 participants living in and outside the city on each day of the revival. I quote at length, as the account suggests that the meetings may have functioned as both an instrument of mass discipline and a site of non-elite sensibilities and interests:

After the prayer there were a few testimonies, and then the leader announced a song, asking the audience to rise and stating that all those who wished to go home could do so, as we intended to stay until morning, if there were men who wished to remain that long and confess their sins. A great many went, but between five and six hundred remained. These we gathered into one ell of the building, and then began a meeting the like of which none of us had ever seen. After prayer, confessions were called for, and immediately the Spirit of God seemed to descend on that audience. Man after man would rise, confess his sins, break down and weep, and then throw himself to the floor and beat the floor with his fists in a perfect agony of conviction. My own cook tried to make a confession, broke down in the midst of it, and cried to me across the room “Pastor tell me, is there any hope for me, can I be forgiven?”… Sometimes after a confession the whole audience would break out in audible prayer, and the effect of that audience of hundreds of men praying together in audible prayer was something indescribable. Again another confession they would break out in uncontrollable weeping, and we would all weep, we couldn’t help it. And so the meeting went on until two o’clock A. M. with confession...A few of us knew that there had been hatred in the hearts of some of the prominent men of the church, especially between a Mr. Kang and Mr. Kim, and we hoped that it would all come out and be confessed during these meetings. Monday night Mr. Kang got the strength and told how he had hated Mr. Kim and asked to be forgiven. It was wonderful to see that proud, strong man break down and then control himself and then break down again as he tried to tell how he had hated Mr. Kim. When two o’clock came there were still men who wished to confess, but as the building was growing cold, and as we had still another evening, we thought it best to close.

Lee then goes on to recount other confessions he observed this night. There was a “Mr. Kim,” who “came forward” during the meeting to confess his “hatred in his heart for the other brethren and especially for Mr. Blair [a Presbyterian missionary]” and who then “fell to the floor and acted like a man in a fit”; there is also “one of the college students,” who “asked that he might be allowed to make a public confession to God” and who then “confessed to adultery, hatred, lack of love for his

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134 Graham Lee, “How the Spirit Came to Pyeng Yang,” The Korea Mission Field 3, no. 3 (1907), 34.
wife, and several other sins that I do not remember.” Lee also mentions an “Elder Chu,” who “confessed to misuse of funds” and who “was in the most fearful agony I have ever seen expressed by any mortal being.” Mr. Chu’s confession ended with “the Korean brethren gather[ing] about him, put[ting] their arms around him, and comfort[ing] him in his time of anguish.” Moving his attention to meetings in other buildings of the church, Lee noted that women, girls, and even primary school girls experienced the same kinds of commiseration.

Testimonies by Korean Christians were far fewer in number, but the few extant records from this group demonstrate some affinities with the mission’s portrayals, while underscoring differing priorities. Consider, for example, the testimony of the Korean preacher Kyŏng-ho Mun, which appeared in a 1903 issue of Sinhak wŏlbo (Theological Monthly), a journal funded by the Methodist mission. Mun wrote about his experience of a revival meeting in Songdo (a port city near Seoul) in this piece:

A revival meeting was held in Byeong Church in north Songdo...From eleven to twelve thirty, we did street mission, and from seven to nine in the evening, there was a prayer meeting that made each of us make various confessions (kanjung ŭl hage hayŏt nunde). With each day passing, the number of attendants soared so much that we could not find enough space in the church. The Holy Spirit descended upon us, touching each of the brothers and sisters (hyŏnge chamae) who gathered at the church, just like it touched the hundred and twenty people during the original Pentecost... One day I saw the congregation cry with sorrow while praying, and another day, I saw them crying while making confessions, causing the entire congregation to bend their head and eat tears.

Moon’s testimony raises a number of points that are worthwhile to consider. It begs the question of the enforced, submissive nature of the confessions (“a prayer meeting that made each of us make various confessions”), thus challenging the mission’s representations that tend to portray

confessions as spontaneous and inwardly derived. Also, Moon’s account seems to place more emphasis on the role of the confessions in bringing together “brothers and sisters”—in other words, fostering "communitas”—and thus suggests the extent to which mission-directed activities served as sites of unofficial nationalism.140

**Conclusion: Confessions, Hymn-singing, and the Birth of a Musical Bourgeoisie**

The meanings and sensibilities of the confessions add layers to our understanding of Korean commoners’ hymn singing and point to a quite-other genealogy of Korean Protestant hymn singing. The participants in the revivals most likely inserted the emotional contents and interests of the confessions into their hymn singing. Hymn singing was an important component in these mass revival meetings, sometimes planned in advance by music committees composed of musically inclined missionaries and, increasingly, Koreans who demonstrated musical talent. According to records, hymns were taught in separate gatherings and sung throughout the confession sessions, functioning as an affective tool through which to establish a self-reflexive environment that would then lead to the eruption of “mad” confessions. Hymns were also sung during other improvisatory revival activities that re-confirmed and re-constituted the relationship between the participants through Christian ideals. These included, for example, the street missions that concluded the revivals, during which the participants testified their personal faith to fellow Koreans, and the early morning prayer meeting (*saemyŏk kido*), a practice marked by the mutually audible, improvisatory utterances of the participants, which has since become a regular feature of many Korean Christian churches and is still observed today.141 It is difficult to know which particular hymns were widely sung during these activities, but a few sources indicate the

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popularity of Yesu na rŭl sarang, a translation of “Jesus Loves Me (Jesus Loves Me This I Know),” which features a pentatonic melodic profile (see Fig. 1.6). Understood in the context of confessional sensibilities, hymns like Yesu na rŭl sarang, I argue, enabled the participants to enact forms of nationalist ritual and bourgeois sociality, particularly notions of private property and the legal equality of the social classes.

Figure 1.6: Hymn No. 21, “Jesus Loves Me,” Horace Underwood’s Ch’anyangga, 1894

It was from among this class of commoner Koreans that some of the first Korean composers and performers of Western music arose. Commoner-class Koreans became the main audience of the North American mission as Seoul’s elites—the initial “clients” of the mission—

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142 Kyŏng-ch’an Min’s “Han’guk kŭndaehwa yangaksa,” 21. Yasuda Hiroshi, one of the contributors to the trilingual (Korean, Japanese, and Chinese) publication Tong asia wa sŏyang ûmak ûi suyong [East Asia and the Embrace of Western Music], notes that “Jesus Loves Me” was a particularly beloved hymn also in Japan since the mid-1870s. See Hiroshi, “Ilbon kŭndaehwa yangaksa kaeron,” [Introduction to Modern Western Music in Japan] in Kyŏng-ch’an Min et al., Tong Asia wa sŏyang ûmak ûi suyong (Seoul: Ùmak segye, 2008), 157.
were either disbanded by the Japanese imperial government or forced into collaboration after 1905.\textsuperscript{143} The missionaries’ migration from Seoul to northern Korea, an area already thriving with churches, helped to transform P’yŏngyang into the site of a Christian, bourgeois, and unofficially nationalist music scene.\textsuperscript{144} This emerging musical milieu broadly replicated the earlier elite music culture in Seoul but was more accessible to Koreans outside the traditional ruling class; merchants and the children of merchants, who had the most to gain from Korea’s transition from Neo-Confucian to a capitalist order, were a noteworthy addition. From 1905 onwards, the music scene in P’yŏngyang thrived as the religious-secular music programs at the churches offered cultural diversions to its residents—including distractions from the gloomy political reality of Japanese occupation—as well as the opportunities to experience unofficial bourgeois nationalism through collective singing and attendance at vocal and instrumental concerts given by fellow Koreans.\textsuperscript{145} In the course of the colonial period, the musical culture in P’yŏngyang began to attract men from throughout Korea who wanted to become professional practitioners of Western music; studying with the missionaries was indeed the only opportunity for the study of Western music that was available to many of these men. This group of P’yŏngyang-trained male musicians became the founders of South Korea’s official musical culture upon national independence in 1945. I turn to this first musical bourgeoisie of South Korea in the next chapter.

\textsuperscript{143} Wells, \textit{New God, New Nation}, 68-69.

\textsuperscript{144} James Gale wrote in 1909 about the transformation of P’yŏngyang: “This city of Ping Yang used to be considered the most hopeless part of Korea. It had been a veritable cage of evil birds from all time. Among spirit-worshiping, idolatrous Koreans Ping yang was the vilest of the vile; and yet now everywhere praying was heard, weeping, singing. The world has gone mad over a religion that the fathers had never heard of. High up on the heights of the city a church bell marked, “Ring till Jesus comes,” was calling attention to the business of the hour, which was to repent, get right with God, restore, live straight.” Gale, \textit{Korea in Transition}, 211.

\textsuperscript{145} Consider, for example, the following record from 1915: “whenever there is a concert announced, it is not difficult to get a respectably good sized audience. We have had three concerts in Pyeng Yang during the last year and it was almost impossible to carry out the program creditably because of the great numbers of people. We have had a men’s chorus organized here since last fall and will give the second concert to-morrow in connection with the College Commencement exercises. We have decided to give the program twice, once for women in the afternoon and for men in the evening, and those that have charge have really been bombarded all day for tickets of admission.” See Kerr, “Music in Men’s and Women’s Bible Classes,” 107-108. Also interesting in this respect is the outline of a Christmas concert in P’yŏngyang by Mattie Wilcox Noble in 1907: Hymn, by congregation, Joy to the World; Singing: 4 young men (taught by Mrs. Becker, with parts); Singing: about 14 little girls (taught by Mrs. Rufus); A blind girl’s reading English in raised letters (Taught, Miss Ha); Singing by 4 young men (taught by Kim Yuksu). Noble, JMWN, 25 Dec. 1907.
In retrospect, the conflicts between the great powers of the Northern Hemisphere after 1945 distracted attention from the period’s perhaps more significant long-term development: the emergence of the world’s nonwhite majority...into national independence.

-Thomas Borstelmann, 2001

What most Americans know about Korea has been told from the point of view of a U.S. military member or a missionary.

-Elaine H. Kim, 1982

Tu-wan Kim’s choral work “Sullyeja ŭi norae” (A Pilgrim’s Song) portrays the suffering and the eventual redemption of a religious supplicant. Composed in South Korea shortly after the Korean War (1950-1953), this choral piece relies on conventions of Western common practice music to convey the narrative components of an idealized pilgrimage: the pilgrim’s dispossession, crisis, suffering, and redemption. In the beginning of the piece, a subdued choral texture in a minor key evokes the pilgrim’s lonely journey; a chromatic contrapuntal passage in the middle depicts a “violent storm” inflicted upon the despondent subject; and finally, a declamatory style in a major key proclaims the divine intervention that delivers the subject from distress. “Sullyeja ŭi norae” was a noteworthy addition to a mid-century South Korean Protestant choral repertory preoccupied with pilgrimage and the related themes of religious exile, persecution, and martyrdom. Many of these pieces, which predominantly emerged around the period of the Korean War, were written by composers who were themselves exiles of a kind in South Korea. They were new settlers who left the northern part of Korea (formally referred to as North Korea after 1948) sometime between 1945 and 1953 to avoid or flee persecution of Christians and landowners by communist officials. By dramatizing the suffering and the subsequent redemption of a displaced
person, this 1950s Protestant choral repertory directed the imagination of the congregations in the southern part of the Korean peninsula toward the violence inflicted on legions of religious-political refugees who had recently crossed the North-South border. The mid-century clergy in the South, who would deliver their sermons alongside performances of pieces like “Sullyeja ŭi norae,” reinforced this imagination as they communicated their admiration for the exiles and advertised their grievances from the pulpit. Christians’ suffering in North Korea, they argued, was an exemplar of authentic Christian faith.146

Through theological liturgy and staged performances of choral pieces like “Sullyeja ŭi norae,” Protestant churches established themselves as some of the most compelling Cold War institutions in South Korea during the 1950s and 1960s. Critical studies of Cold War South Korea have glossed over the role of mid-century Protestant music practice, including staged vocal music practice, in enabling the state’s cultural politics. Yet, a closer examination demonstrates intimate connections between this religious music practice and the state’s two-pronged cultural agenda of West-centrism and anticommunism. Christian exiled composers, as both victims of Cold War tragedy and trained practitioners of Western music, facilitated these connections more effectively than any other cultural figures. Christian exiled composers were front-line casualties of the Manichean Cold War drama that began to consume all aspects of life in Korea in the months after Korea’s independence from Japan (August 1945). Beginning in the winter of 1945, it was becoming clear to Christians in the northern part of Korea that Christianity would not be tolerated by the rising communist regime in the North: People’s Committees soon began to harass Christians locally, and Workers’ Party officials initiated large-scale persecutions, including the Soviet-aided siege of 5,000 Christian youths in Sin’ăiju in November 1945.147 Alarmed by these


147 Timothy Sanghoon Lee, Born Again in Korea: Evangelicalism in Korea (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2010), 129.
incidents, Christian Koreans began to leave P’yŏngyang, a city that had been touted as “the Jerusalem of Asia” during the Japanese colonial period (1910-1945) by U.S. missionaries in Korea, and other areas in what is now North Korea.\footnote{P’yŏngyang became the national capital of North Korea in 1948 when the two separate states of Korea were established.} Estimates of the number of southbound (wŏllam) refugees vary considerably, ranging from between 200,000 and 300,000 on the low end to as many as 600,000 to 2 million people.\footnote{The estimates tend to vary according to the ideological leaning of each study. Christian literature suggests higher numbers than secular literature. The higher of these two estimates is from Timothy Sanghoon Lee’s monograph (p. 128) and the lower one from In-ch’ŏl Kang’s monograph (p. 409).} Galvanized by direct and indirect experiences of the communists’ hostilities, wŏllam Christians helped the emerging political elites in the South to precipitate the “hot” events of the Cold War after settling in the South between 1945 and 1953. These events include the southern elites’ aggressive alignment with the U.S. upon Korea’s liberation from Japanese occupation (1945); their early push for the establishment of separate governments in 1948 (an action disapproved by centrists across Korea at the time); the disappearance of centrists through ideological re-education or assassination;\footnote{As Jodi Kim notes in her critical review of Cold War literature, the disappearance of centrists during this time was a common development across the Third World as national elites throughout this region sought to align with either the Cold War West or the Cold War East. See Jodi Kim, \textit{Ends of Empire: Asian American Critique and the Cold War} (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 14.} the persecution of socialists and dissidents, which led to their deaths or northbound exile between 1945 and 1953; militarization of society before and during the Korean War; and the reinforcement of an anticommunist public culture during the post-Korean War decades (see Appendix 1 for a more detailed account of key Cold War events in Korea).\footnote{Bruce Cumings, \textit{Korea’s Place in the Sun: A Modern History}, updated ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005), 185-298.}

In this chapter, I examine the politics and works of Christian exiled composers in South Korea during the high Cold War years (1945-1960s), tracing their alignment with the emerging coalition of South Korean political elites and the U.S. military government in Korea. I argue that the exiled composers were strategically positioned to construct secular and sacred music practices
that reinforced the official cultural policy of this nascent coalition. This exilic cultural work involved not just reconciling anticommunist nationalism with Western music idioms but also a related project of discouraging alternative conceptions of national (and nationally important) music. I first investigate how Christian exiles became the poetic voice of Cold War official culture through their elevated status in this culture’s institutions and narratives. Secondly, I consider the politics of this official culture, examining the music styles, genres, and compositions that were promoted or repressed.

A number of music scholars in South Korea have begun to recognize the role of Korean Protestant émigré composers in establishing the foundation of South Korea’s secular music culture in the wake of the Cold War. Yet, to date, there have been no critical studies, either in Korean- or English-language scholarship, that situate these composers as a group with shared experiences, views, and politics in the context of the mid-century cultural terrain of Korea. Such studies nevertheless are more necessary now than ever before, because they provide important insights into the version of musical cosmopolitanism that the official culture reinforced—a cosmopolitanism that has far outlived the immediate purview of the high Cold War years and that has intimately shaped the musical life of post-liberation South Korea. For example, official institutions (e.g., universities, national music associations, and state-sponsored media) have taught a music history curriculum that is based upon the “masters” of Western classical music and granted prestige to Western classical music styles and music studies in the West, resulting in one of the most severe cases of “amnesia” of indigenous music ever witnessed in the post-1945 non-West. The terminologies used in the official discourse track the universalist aspirations of the Cold War cosmopolitanism: the unmarked term “music” (ûmak) has signified Western music, and

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152 These include, for example, Chŏng-yŏn Chŏng, “Haebang konggan úl chudo haettŏn úmak ka,” [The Leading Musician of the Liberation Period] Minjok úmak 1 (1990). Also see Kyŏng-ch’ŏn Min, Han’guk úmaksa [History of Music in Korea] (Seoul: Turi midia, 2006).

153 Min, Han’guk úmaksa, 262.

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a host of ambiguous terms—“folk music” (minsok ūmak), “Korean music” (han’guk ūmak), “traditional music” (chŏnt’ong ūmak), “indigenous music” (hyangt’o ūmak), “our music” (uri ūmak), “national music” (kugak), and “past music” (yet ūmak)—emerged to denote the displaced and/or increasingly fetishized sounds of the Korean performance practices.154 Music historians in and outside South Korea have begun to point out that discussions of such cultural developments have all too often assumed a de-politicized, non-historicized perspective—for example, explaining these trends as a source of national pride and an “index” of South Korea’s progress in the “race to modernization” – and that a long-overdue critical reckoning is needed to acknowledge “cosmopolitanism” as a specifically Cold War form of cosmopolitanism that served to dislocate South Korea’s postcolonial agency and reinforce an elitist, top-down cultural politics.155

A critical examination of the exiled Christian composers is needed in order to highlight the political conditions that shaped this West-centric cultural orientation at the moment of its formation, exposing its instrumentality in (re)aligning Third World elites with the First World.156 This chapter therefore emphasizes the neo-colonial nature of mid-century music production in South Korea without losing sight of the humanity of the composers whose poetic compositions were shaped by their lived experiences of Cold War tragedies. As I will show, Cold War music

154 See Chapter 3.

155 I do not intend to suggest a binary framework of Korean music versus Western music. Rather I am concerned with how this binary was constructed through the relationship between music, class, and modernization. It is possible to find hybrid popular music styles (a mixture of Korean, Japanese, and Western music styles) that were enjoyed by lower socio-economic groups in post-1945 South Korea even though it became more difficult to find musical practices rooted in pre-colonial Korean cultures in lived settings. For instance, older adults and the working class enjoyed a hybrid popular genre called t’ŏrorŭ until about the 1970s, but this has been largely overlooked in scholarly discourse because the participants of this culture were perceived to be inversely linked with modernization and urban life. See Min-Jung Son, “Regulating and Negotiating in T’ŏrorŭ: A Korean Popular Song Style,” Asian Music 37, no. 1 (2006): 51-74.

156 A number of works have critically reflected on Cold War universalism in South Korea, both inside and outside of South Korea. These views have tended to be part of the mingjung movement (known conventionally as a democratization movement). Best-known works in English-language scholarship that represent this historiographical shift are Bruce Cumings’s so-called “revisionist” works. His monographs highlight the collaboration between South Korea’s political elites and the U.S. military government in promoting the state’s military dictatorship in the post-liberation period (1945), challenging the official histories that have tended to identify Soviet Union-North Korean expansionism as the cause of the Korean War and a rationale for anticommunist policies in the South. See Bruce Cumings, Korea’s Place in the Sun: A Modern History, updated ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005).
culture in South Korea was shaped by a confluence of mid-century international and intra-national politics, and Christian exiled composers were situated at the convergence of these mid-century concerns.157

**Cold War Institutions and Narratives**

A number of recent works on South Korea’s Cold War culture, including the so-called “revisionist” works, have shed new light on the cultural agenda of the pro-U.S. political faction that emerged as a ruling group in Seoul a few weeks after Korea’s national independence from Japan in September 1945. In particular, they have shown that this set of cultural objectives was implemented to articulate a pro-West/U.S. stance against the backdrop of intensifying ideological conflicts between pro-capitalist, U.S.-aligned groups and pro-communist, Soviet-aligned factions. The pronounced role of Korean Christians, and increasingly, exiled Christians, in this cultural reinvention is rarely recognized in these recent studies, yet their prominence is not surprising when we consider the trajectory of Syngman Rhee (1875-1965), under whose leadership such a reinvention took place. The U.S.-appointed head of the Korean government in 1945, Rhee exemplified the strand of elite Christian nationalism that had looked to the West as the cultural and political “savior” of Korea (see Chapter 1). Indeed, no other Korean national touted more political and religious connections to the U.S. than Rhee at the time when the United States Army Military Government in Korea (1945-1948; USAMGIK) was actively searching for a leader of an allied Korean government in 1945; and crucially, Rhee had been able to build these connections via transnational Protestant networks that extended back to the late 19th century. Rhee had been a prominent member of the Independence Club, a turn-of-the-century anti-Japan, pro-U.S. organization that a number of U.S. Christian missionaries helped found in Seoul; he was a

157 For an interesting critical work that considers comparable cultural politics from the U.S. Cold-War perspective, see Danielle Fosier-Lussier, *Music in America’s Cold War Cultural Diplomacy* (forthcoming). I thank Danielle Fosier-Lussier for sharing her manuscript with me.
graduate of a missionary-established school in Seoul (Pai Chai School, 1895); he worked as an active translator for U.S. missionaries stationed in Seoul; he was the first Korean national to obtain a doctoral degree from Princeton University (1910); and he served as the missionary-appointed Korean representative to the World Methodist Council held in the U.S. in 1912.\footnote{Cumings, Korea's Place, 209-217.} For most of Korea’s colonial period (1910-1945), he lived in the U.S., devoted to the cause of uniting the U.S. and colonial Korea against Japanese imperialism. To further this aim, he founded a “West/U.S. Committee” (Kumi wiwŏnhoe) in Washington D.C. in 1919, through which he lobbied the State Department for Korea’s independence from Japan.

The targeted U.S. politicians did not always welcome such efforts, but this work brought Rhee to the State Department’s attention and identified him as the best candidate to act as the figurehead of a U.S.-Korea alliance in 1945: a U.S. missionary-vetted Korean national who had proved himself to be passionately pro-U.S.\footnote{Rhee continued his lobbying vis-à-vis the U.S. after he became the first president of South Korea in 1948. He became quite adept at “working Uncle Sam” (in Bruce Cumings’s expression) for grants and aid in the 1950s, using the geopolitical leverage that the Cold War granted to South Korea. Rhee’s twelve-year presidency ended in 1960 due to a series of student protests. The end of Rhee’s term was followed by another anticommunist, authoritarian regime led by Park Chung Hee, who rose to power through a military coup in 1961 and remained in power until 1979. Cumings, 306.} To top it off, Rhee was known to harbor staunchly anticommmunist sentiments; for example, he had worked tirelessly to jettison communist elements from the Korean nationalist movement in the Korean diasporic community that was emerging in San Francisco (1910s-1920s).\footnote{Cumings, Korea's Place, 209-217.} And his personal history of anti-Japanese endeavors would have been perceived as an advantage as well: one of the first lessons that the U.S. military government learned in Seoul in the winter of 1945 was that Korean elites who had formerly collaborated with the Japanese colonial government were unpopular with the masses.\footnote{Cumings, Korea's Place, 310-315.} This did not stop the U.S. authorities from reinstating a large number of colonial-period collaborators in power, but it seems that they knew better than to place one as the state’s figurehead.
The kinds of music projects that were implemented under the joint leadership of Syngman Rhee and the U.S. military government demonstrate a desire to fill the cultural vacuum created by the end of colonial rule with a depoliticized Western-centric music. Christian Koreans were able to capitalize upon this vulnerable cultural environment not only because Rhee and the U.S. military government were favorably disposed to Christians, but also because most of the Korean musicians who were experienced in Western music in 1945 were Christians. Generally speaking, church music activities during the colonial period (1910-1945) were not limited to faith-oriented music such as hymns and choral singing, but also involved advanced music lessons in keyboard performance, conducting, and music theory. In fact, churches and church-affiliated organizations, especially those located in P'yŏngyang and Seoul, were the centers of Western music. As recent studies of colonial-period Korean Christianity show, the appeal of the American Protestant missionization (1880s-1930s) for many Korean converts was in its role in transmitting components of Western culture, including music, English language education, Western medicine, and technology (see Chapter 1). In this context, many female missionaries and male missionaries’ wives provided keyboard lessons in the churches, and missionary-led youth associations held concerts of Western classical music. Typically, Korean church musicians studied keyboard playing with missionaries’ wives as children, listened to performances of pieces like Haydn’s Creation and Handel’s Messiah as teenagers, and had their first public experiences of conducting and performing as they reached adulthood. Sometimes they also used the network of churches, Christian schools, and missionary associations as a springboard towards music studies outside Korea. They consulted missionaries for advice on this subject, and a few managed

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162 Min, Han’guk ŭmaksak, 26-48.


164 Kyu-hyŏn Kim, Kyohoe ŭmak chakgokka ǔi segye [The World of Korean Church Music Composers] (Seoul: Yesol, 2006), 35, 54, 94.
to obtain sponsorship from American Protestant groups for music studies in the U.S. Reflecting this history, most Koreans who attained bachelor’s or master’s degree in Western music in Japan or the U.S. (or in rare cases, Germany) before 1945 were first trained within a network of Protestant institutions either in P’yŏngyang or Seoul.\textsuperscript{165}

Thus, in 1945, the U.S. military government and Koreans associated with it called upon distinguished Christian musicians to establish the official Korean music culture, in addition to maintaining the musical life of Protestant churches. Before the north-to-south exile began in earnest during the winter of 1945, Christian musicians in Seoul were placed in charge of the regime’s music projects. An examination of the two most important of these early projects centered in the South (Seoul) illustrates this regime’s cultural orientation. First, the Koryŏ Symphonic Orchestra Association was founded in 1945, with Che-myŏng Hyŏn (1902-1960) appointed as its director. A Seoul-based Christian and the first Korean to study theology and music in Chicago, Hyŏn was an ideal candidate for an organization that accepted only those musicians who avowed right-of-center positions or claimed no political interest.\textsuperscript{166} Indeed, ideological affiliation was precisely how Hyŏn was able to enlist the regime’s support despite his lack of popularity with many Koreans. His infamously prominent roles within colonial music organizations during the Japanese occupation (e.g., his leadership role in the Chosŏn Music Association, 1941-1944) subjected him to public recrimination in the wake of independence, yet he was able to associate himself with the emerging U.S.-South regime by exploiting his pro-U.S. credentials—credentials that the U.S. military government recognized and welcomed over all others—and by leading campaigns for the temporary U.S. occupation of Korea.\textsuperscript{167} The second

\textsuperscript{165} Min, Han’guk ŭmaksu, 63-69.

\textsuperscript{166} Min, Han’guk ŭmaksu, 193-199.

\textsuperscript{167} Hyŏn’s colonial-period activities also included spearheading the kaech’ang movement, which attempted to teach pro-Japanese military anthems to Korean colonial subjects. Chŏng, “Haebang konggan,” 162-168; Min, Han’guk ŭmaksu, 173, 179, 195.
project of the U.S. military government involved the publication of music textbooks. This work was entrusted to another Seoul-based Christian composer-conductor, Un-yŏng La (1922-1993), who was a much less controversial figure than Hyŏn (La’s colonial-period affiliation was largely unknown). The book that he compiled, and which the coalition approved over other submissions, presented the musical language to be adopted by elementary and secondary students at the national level. It featured popular songs from the West, usually children’s songs or folk songs, and songs by Korean composers in similar styles.\textsuperscript{168}

Exiled composers, conductors, and musicians began to share key institutional positions with Seoul-based Christians and, to some degree, replace these early partners of the U.S. military government and Syngman Rhee as they gradually descended to the South after 1945 (this replacement would continue into Syngman Rhee’s presidency, 1948-1960).\textsuperscript{169} In part, the émigré composers were able to emerge as dominant players in the secular and religious music scenes because they were some of the most skilled Korean musicians of Western music in Korea. P’yeongyang had been the capital of Korean Christian conductors and composers during the colonial period. Christian men went to P’yeongyang’s theology schools beginning in the 1910s if they wished to study Western music seriously, as these were the only places that offered in-depth Western music classes for male students. Missionary teachers had established a college-level music department in Seoul in 1925, but this was part of a women’s school that did not accept male students and that focused on keyboard lessons, following the typically gendered conventions of Western music practice. In P’yeongyang, young Christian men could study with American teachers who specialized in this music, and with members of a small group of Koreans who began returning

\textsuperscript{168} Min, \textit{Han’guk ūmaksa}, 200-205.

\textsuperscript{169} Appendix 2 is based on Kyu-hyŏn Kim’s 2006 anthology of major South Korean Protestant composers. Kyu-hyŏn Kim, \textit{Kyohoe ūmak chakgokka ūi segye [The World of Korean Church Music Composers]} (Seoul: Yesol, 2006).
from music studies in the U.S. in the 1930s. Thus, P’yŏngyang-educated male musicians, due to their strong training in Western music, limited records of their colonial-period affiliations, and their prior social ties to U.S. nationals, were perceived as ideal candidates to populate the official music culture in the South.

Reflecting this transfer of power, the leadership of the Koryŏ Symphonic Association was transferred from Che-myŏng Hyŏn to Yu-sŏn Yi (1911-2005), an exile, when it was refashioned into the Korea Music Association in 1952; the governance of this secular music association remained squarely in the hands of émigré composers in the ensuing years (see Appendix 2). The exiled composers also established new music associations to advance their shared interests, mirroring a widespread trend among the broader exiled community during this time of displacement and resettlement. These included the Han’guk kyohoe ŭmak hyŏphoe (Korea Church Music Association, 1952), which quickly became the backbone of the official music culture, along with the Han’guk kyohoe ŭmak hyŏphoe (Korea Music Association, 1949).

In addition to having the requisite musical skills and social connections, the émigré composers shared a hostile disposition towards communism, an attitude that characterized the Christian exiles at large. As discussed briefly in the introduction, the exiles’ firsthand experience of the communists’ hostilities made them ideal candidates for enforcing the administration’s anticommmunist cultural politics. Indeed, anticommmunism was a point of convergence for South Korea’s political elites and Christian exiles throughout the post-1945 period. As the Christian theologian and sociologist In-ch’ŏl Kang shows in a comprehensive study of Protestant political activism in Cold War Korea, the exiles breathed life into the elites’ official doctrine of anticommmunism because they were considered “living proof” of communist violence. In exchange, exiles were able to secure important positions in and outside the churches, alleviating their.

\[170\] Min, Han’guk ŭmaks, 63-65.
personal displacement.\textsuperscript{171} Often, the exiles’ political activism in the South involved leadership roles in military and paramilitary organizations that terrorized socialists and other dissidents of the administration. One such organization in which Christian exiles constituted an overrepresented group was the West-North Alliance (\textit{Sŏbuk yŏnmaeng}), a rightist group notorious for attacking socialist groups in the South in 1947.\textsuperscript{172} A more subtle form of exile-centric political activism involved the reproduction of a discourse of victimization that was based upon narratives of communist persecution and testimonies of Christian martyrdom. As Kang documents in his 600-page monograph, such narratives shaped and inspired music, sermons, radio shows, plays, and commemorative Christian services for an ever-increasing canon of Christian martyrs in the North that was avowed and constructed by the exiles. This politico-religious discourse of victimization, one that came to be identified as the “authentic Korean Protestant experience,” was promoted in national secular media as well as churches, enacting a messy interpenetration of nationalism, anticommunism, and religion.\textsuperscript{173} Narratives of Christians’ suffering fueled the idea that it was communist aggression that “forced” the establishment of South Korea. Conversely, civil conflicts were interpreted as religious events. In particular, the Korean War (1950-1953) was likened to a “stigmata through which God assigned a special calling to the Korean people,” and the exiles were idealized as “individuals with a special calling.”\textsuperscript{174}

\textsuperscript{171} Kang, \textit{Han’guk ŭi kidokkyo}, 68-70, 141-180.

\textsuperscript{172} Such radical developments helped to shape the South into a Manichean society. Indeed, centrists in the South found themselves increasingly under pressure after 1947 as a result of politically motivated attacks. In particular, the assassination of Un-hyŏng Yŏ (1947), a Christian, a passionate advocate for conjoining the left and the right, as well as an adamant opponent of the division of Korea, sounded the death knell of middle-of-the-road politics in the South. The situation was just as radical in the North. Already in 1946, the Socialist Democratic Party (initially, the Christian Socialist Democratic Party) had been violently suppressed by Kim Il Sung’s Korean People’s Army. Also see Namhee Lee, \textit{The Making of Minjung: Democracy and the Politics of Representation in South Korea} (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009), 80-82, 130.

\textsuperscript{173} Kang, \textit{Han’guk ŭi kidokkyo}, 177.

\textsuperscript{174} Kang, \textit{Han’guk ŭi kidokkyo}, 177.
popular figures in the secular and sacred cultures, with political and religious organizations competing to recruit (to “claim,” in In-chŏl Kang’s expression) exiled clergymen and musicians.

Indeed, reading sources on the émigré composers is a fraught exercise because the composers are often represented through the hagiographic terms that constitute and are constituted by Cold War narratives. This difficulty is particularly true of exiles’ biographies in Christian literature, much of which continues to privilege these narratives. Kyu-hyŏn Kim’s *Kyohoe ŭmak chakgokka ŭi segye* (*The World of Korean Church Music Composers*), an anthology published in Seoul in 2006 based on extensive interviews of seventeen male Christian composers in South Korea, demonstrates the protracted afterlife of the Cold War exilic discourse. The selection of composers itself indexes and re-inscribes the exile-centricity of South Korean Protestant culture, i.e., the tendency to consider Christian exiles from the North and their experiences as the authentic voices and experiences of this culture: of the seventeen composers, twelve are self-identified exiles from the North. Reflecting this selection, the text of the anthology is suffused with portrayals of exile experiences, including life in P'yŏngyang and other parts of North Korea before 1945, personal encounters with North Korean communists’ hostilities towards Christians, and dramatic arrivals in the South. Indeed, chapters on exiled composers follow a general narrative structure that commences with a poignant account of their pre-exile experiences of victimization and ends with a congratulatory description of their successful careers in various domains of sacred and secular music in South Korea.

The paths of the émigré composers leading up to their settlement in the South are usually narrated as formative, distressing, and religious experiences, unfolding either as a detailed documentation of dreadful historical incidents or a more nebulous, tender recollection. At the one end of the spectrum are composers like Kuk-jin Kim (1930–), who recounts his run-in with the

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175 Kyu-hyŏn Kim, *Kyohoe ŭmak chakgokka ŭi segye* [*The World of Korean Church Music Composers*] (Seoul: Yesol, 2006). This anthology was prepared by Kim, a theologian and Christian music historian in South Korea, based on extensive interviews of seventeen composers, and in the case of deceased composers, research into their biographical materials.
communist officials in P’yŏngyang in striking detail. Based on the interview with this composer, Kyu-hyŏn Kim writes:

As soon as Kim received his diploma from the soon-to-be-disbanded Sŏnghwa Theology School [in P’yŏngyang] in January 1950, he fled to the Kungnyŏng Mountain, which was close to his family’s house. He shut himself up in the depth of the mountain, and composed there... This hiding had to end soon: Kim’s father wanted him to come home. His father ordered Kim to take refuge in an underground tunnel that he dug beneath the cowshed. Kim was nineteen at this time. Inside the tunnel, he spent every day composing Christmas cantatas and hymns. One day, feeling stifled by the stale air, he ventured outside and tried composing on his desk, only to find [the Workers’ Party] officials raiding his house. Kim was sure that he was going to die, but one of them saw that he was a composer. The official invited him to join the People’s Committee, saying that the People’s Republic needs people like Kim. As soon as the officials left, Kim ran to the Kungnyŏng Mountain. Everyone who was taken into the officials’ custody was killed, but because he composed, he was able to survive. He still believes that it was God who protected and saved him.176

Most of the other narrations of persecution in the anthology are less vivid than Kuk-jin Kim’s, but they communicate a similar traumatic ethos and Christian interpretations of personally experienced political events. For example, the chapter on Chae-hun Pak (1922-) states that Pak fled P’yŏngyang “during the Easter week of 1946 because conditions proved to be impossible.”177 Another composer, Tu-hoe Ku (1921-) decided not to return to P’yŏngyang while visiting his family in Seoul in 1945 because his brother “entreated him not to go, in tears;” and at the end of a long journey involving a series of southbound migrations, he “received the good fortune of a scholarship given by the Crusade Foundation of the U.S. Methodist Church.”178

Another emotional cornerstone of the exilic narrative is the experience of deprivation caused by the Cold War tragedies. For T’ae-hyŏn Paek (1927-), a pastor’s son who left behind an active conducting career in P’yŏngyang in 1946, the civil conflicts resulted in the loss of contact with his father. Kyu-hyŏn Kim recounts that when the Korean War broke out soon after his family’s arrival in the South, “T’ae-hyŏn Paek was not able to find his father, who was kidnapped

176 Kim, Kyohoe ŭmak, 28.
177 Kim, Kyohoe ŭmak, 87.
178 Kim, Kyohoe ŭmak, 14-15.
by the North Korean communists.” In the lives of most exiled composers, however, the experience of loss involved the loss of the Christian North, especially music life in Christian North, which is conveyed through recollections of musical encounters in churches in P’yŏngyang or other northern areas. For example, the chapter on Chung-hwa Yi (1940–) opens with the portrayal of a happy, Christian, and affluent family in Hwanghae-do, a northwestern province, and Yi’s childhood experience of learning music in churches by “listening to his sister’s performance on the organ” and “listening to children’s songs and art songs through the gramophone.” Similarly, the chapter on Tu-hoe Ku begins with an exposition of his musical encounter in Namsanhyŏn Church, a church that has long been remembered as one of the spiritual centers of P’yŏngyang. This chapter’s first sentence states, “Tu-hoe Ku confessed to me that he could not fall asleep the day he listened to F. J. Haydn’s The Creation, conducted by Yu-sun Yi [another soon-to-be exiled composer] and performed in Namsanhyŏn Church, for he was moved and shocked uncontrollably.” Such poignant commemoration projects a sense of loss onto the once-thriving (but now-forsaken) Christian music life in the North and casts the act of leaving this scene as a haunting experience.

With such exilic narratives densely written into its text, Kyohoe ūmak chakgokka ūi segye (The World of Korean Church Music Composers) and similar literature are both a testament of and a tribute to personally experienced Cold War tragedies. In other words, if read critically, the anthology unveils not only Korean Cold War history but the emotional fabric of Cold War-period Protestantism in South Korea, which has informed the way many South Koreans have understood their place in the world. Acknowledging the distinction between exile experience and exile-centricity allows us to see the émigré composers as both victims of the Cold War and enablers of

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179 Kim, Kyohoe ūmak, 123.
180 Kim, Kyohoe ūmak, 160.
181 Kim, Kyohoe ūmak, 12.
the South’s post-1945 cultural politics. It is outside the scope of this chapter to explore how their status as exiles helped to link all of the twelve émigré composers featured in Kim’s anthology with the official institutions of the Cold War South. But a brief look at the similarities between their post-exile career trajectories—qualities that are not shared with non-exile composers in the anthology—illustrates the dynamics of the convergences between these composers and the official culture, as well as the orientation of this culture.\footnote{There were some differences among the composers, most importantly between older composers who came of age in colonial P’yŏngyang during its Christian heyday and younger ones who came of age during the Cold War. Generally speaking, older composers were able to spend some time in the U.S. or Japan during the colonial period to study music (i.e., before 1945); younger composers, especially those born after 1925, did not have this experience (for more information, refer to Appendix 2). Yet, despite some differences, most of them coalesced around similar institutions in the South, which did not shape the non-exiled composers as much or in the same way.}

To begin, almost all émigré composers came to be involved in the music organizations that formed at the intersection of transnational Protestantism and Cold War militarization either as choir conductors or advanced music students. Such organizations included military bands, Christian choirs associated with the U.S.-South Korea armed forces, and orphaned children’s choirs that performed “appreciation concerts” for U.S. military servicemen.\footnote{For a critical examination of the U.S.’s humanitarian projects in Korea during the Korean War, see Jodi Kim, \textit{Ends of Empire}, 183-192.} All of these organizations emerged as the South armed itself in the immediate pre-war years and as it waged the Korean War, and they were the only places in the South where South Korean men could learn Western music from 1948 to 1953.\footnote{Min, \textit{Han’guk ūmaksa}, 215-218; Kim, \textit{Kyohoe ūmak}, 186-321.} Some émigré composers also became conductors of prestigious churches that were aligned with such military-musical organizations. One example was the multi-branch Yŏng’nak Church, which became a leading religious organization in the South and the (South) Korean diaspora due to the popularity of its clergyman, Kyŏng-jik Han (1902-2000), who had experienced violent persecution at the hands of the Workers’ Party officials in P’yŏngyang and reached the South against extraordinary odds. Churches like Yŏng’nak Church often served as the contact points of exiled Christian musicians, U.S.-South Korea military
personnel, U.S. relief-medical workers, and U.S. missionaries who were returning to Korea after a brief residence on the eastern side of the Pacific during the Second World War.\textsuperscript{185} For an account of the dramatic yet seamless convergence of the exiled composers and these institutions, we can turn again to Kuk-jin Kim’s experience:

Kim moved to the South with the guidance of Reverend Chae-gyŏng Kim during the January Fourth Retreat [1951]. Although he was suffering from tuberculosis, he was recruited into the army. Thankfully, this unit was part of the U.S. armed forces, and so he was able to recover his health. Life after this service was a turning point: he met his composition teacher Malsberry, an American of German ancestry... This happened during the period when he was conducting the choir of Onch’ŏnjang Church in Pusan [a southern city in Korea] and living with the director of the Public Relief Hospital. Kim had his church choir perform his own Christmas cantata during the church’s Christmas service, and his work impressed the reverend. The reverend took Kim’s cantata to Malsberry, who was working in Pusan as a missionary. This initiated a teacher-student relationship. Malsberry was previously a music professor at P’yŏngyang’s Sungsil School, but he returned to the U.S. when the Pacific War broke out. In his home country, he studied theology and came back to Pusan [after the war] as a missionary.\textsuperscript{186}

As this passage suggests, Kuk-jin Kim’s position as an exiled Protestant placed him on a path that led to the U.S. armed forces, healthcare, conductorship in a church, and eventually, an American composition teacher. Similar stories throughout the anthology show that militarized Protestant music institutions were the very routes through which the exiled composers “arrived” in the South. For example, Chae-hun Pak (1922-) was able to meet his artistic collaborators and improve his composition skills through his simultaneous involvement in the Yŏng’nak Church choir, the Marine choir, and the Korea Church Music Association.\textsuperscript{187} For a younger exiled composer like Sun-se Kim (1931-), serving as a French horn player in the Republic of Korea Symphonic Band (which later became the National Symphonic Band) during the Korean War gave him the opportunity to play music in six countries in Southeast Asia and to “experience musical

\textsuperscript{185} Several of the exiled composers were at one point or other associated with Young’nak Church, which continues to invoke the affective themes of the Korean War, Korean-War orphans, and the “U.S. rescue efforts” from its multiple locations, including Seoul, Pusan, and Los Angeles (see Appendix 2).

\textsuperscript{186} Kim, \textit{Kyohoe ūmak}, 28.

\textsuperscript{187} Kim, \textit{Kyohoe ūmak}, 86.
professionalism and mysterious music cultures... that laid down the foundation of his career as a composer.”

Based on the networks that developed in these military-religious music organizations, the exiled composers followed a similar career path that included obtaining an advanced degree in music and/or theology in South Korea or the U.S., becoming music professors in secular or Christian universities in major South Korean cities, conducting choirs of prestigious churches, and composing secular and Protestant music. Several of them (e.g., Yu-sŏn Yi and Tu-hoe Ku) also received national accolades from the government for secular symphonic and vocal compositions. Temporary or permanent migration to Los Angeles beginning around the 1970s is another path shared by the exiled composers (6 out of the 12). Tu-hoe Ku and Tu-wan Kim’s studied music and theology in Christian seminaries in schools in the Los Angeles area, such as Linda Vista Seminary, Yuin University, and Bethesda University, all of which have been popular destinations for Protestant students of Korean nationalities (see Appendix 2). Yu-sŏn Yi, Sun-se Kim, Kyŏng-hwan Paek, and Chae-hun Pak chose to live in Los Angeles in addition to pursuing advanced studies at such schools. This common path demonstrates the specific U.S.-centric orientation common to the exiles and locates Los Angeles itself as part of South Korea’s Cold War culture. Already during the colonial period, migration to the U.S. West Coast had intrigued the Korean Protestant imaginary as American missionaries sponsored the immigrations of Koreans to this area in the broader context of the rising U.S. hegemony in the Pacific. In particular, the in-exile community of anti-Japanese Korean Christians in Los Angeles and San Francisco (1920s-1930s) had somewhat of a legendary reputation among colonial-period Christians in P’yŏngyang, who had close contacts with American missionaries. The Cold War relationship of dependence between the U.S. and

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188 Kim, Kyohoe ŭmak, 46.

189 Indeed, Los Angeles-bound migration was so common among the broader Christian exile community that it has caught the attention of a number of historians. For an example, see Ilsoo Kim, New Urban Immigrants: the Korean Community in New York (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), 188-191.
South Korea further heightened the colonial-period Christian idealization of the U.S. West Coast, and the U.S. in general. A study of U.S. aid to South Korea is truly revealing in this regard: the U.S. spent $600 for every Korean per year from 1945 to 1976, all because South Korea sat at the fault line of the Cold War (also see Chapter 4). The perceived stature of the U.S. during the 1950s and 1960s fueled the already prominent notion of the U.S. as a place of peace and prosperity (also see Chapter 4).

The U.S.-centrism that underwrote many exiles’ migration to Los Angeles seems to reflect the émigré composers’ shared tendency to idealize Western music as the only legitimate musical “language” of South Korea. Indeed, this was the key quality that distinguished them from the non-exile Christian composers. As the chapters on the non-exiled Christian composers in Kim’s anthology make evident, non-exile Christian composers were more open to assimilating elements of Korean music into the Western framework of secular and religious compositions, and if they left South Korea to study music in the West after 1945, it was to explore what is musically “Korean” and to mediate it within this framework (comparable to other 20th-century composers from the non-West who used their studies in Europe, especially Western or Central Europe, to create a “national style”). In contrast, when the exiled composers went to the West, most commonly Los Angeles but also to other American cities, it was to learn about what is musically “Western.” As I will show in the next section, this version of cosmopolitanism, one that privileged Western classical music style in its “pure” manifestation, had far-reaching consequences for the musical life of post-1945 South Korea.

**Music Styles and Narrations of Nation**

Broadly speaking, Protestant-affiliated, exile-centric music culture promoted a Western classical music idiom, especially common-practice music, as the official musical “language” of

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190 Cumings, *Korea’s Place*, 307.
Cold War South Korea. Records and archives of this official culture (e.g., program notes of concerts, enrollment records of university music departments, music textbooks, etc.) trace the ascendancy of this “language,” and recent studies based on these records confirm this. For example, one such study based on the Korean Music Association documents lists Beethoven, Schubert, Strauss, and Tchaikovsky as the Association’s canonical composers; another study analyzing university records states that more than 100 university departments of Western music were established in Korea from 1950 to 1970 (compare this with fewer than a dozen bachelor-level programs teaching traditional Korean music during the same time).191

Yet, to consider only what exists in the records is to miss the other half of the story. Christian exiled composers were welcomed by U.S.-aligned elites because they could be positioned strategically and structurally to eclipse other candidates seeking to contribute to the musical life of the newly independent nation. This structural replacement was quite literal in some cases: for example, many of the exiles’ Western-style secular songs were added to the second edition of the nationally distributed secondary school music textbook (1948) at the expense of national liberation anthems composed by leftist composers that were featured in the first edition (1946). Other replacements, and the stakes of such replacements, are more elusive precisely because the promotion of the exiled composers’ works served to mask those of alternative groups. When, however, official sources are read against the grain of elite narratives and when new bodies of historical sources are consulted, marginalized musicians begin to come into view. In what follows, I will discuss two music practices that were masked and two others that became normative. This discussion will show that the economy of replacement aimed at controlling the musical representation of the South Korean nation and the official discourse concerning the relationship between the nation and musical style.

191 Min, Han’guk ūmaksa, 230.
First, sources made available to the South Korean public in 1988 uncover 46 socialist composers and/or musicians who thrived in post-liberation Seoul (1945-6) but were terrorized beginning in late 1947 by paramilitary rightist groups and consequently fled to the North, between 1947 and 1953.\textsuperscript{192} Many of these self-identified socialists came to the post-liberation music scene with a strong background in Western music, reflecting their privileged status during the colonial period: they tended to belong to elite and/or Christian families in Seoul.\textsuperscript{193} The formerly classified documents indicate that although they were not opposed to the continuation of Western music or cultural dialogues with the West, they campaigned for a de-colonialized national culture as a condition for music making. By writing cultural manifestoes and hybrid compositions, they demanded that Koreans take ownership of their music, reflect on the musical legacies of colonialism, and plan for balanced ways of importing foreign music.\textsuperscript{194}

This set of goals was generally uncontroversial, but these socialist composers’ national liberation anthems posed a clear threat to the political elites in the South.\textsuperscript{195} Short, celebratory

\textsuperscript{192} Examining what was un-funded and persecuted within the Cold War cultural terrain has become more feasible in South Korea partly due to legislation in the late 1980s that forced the release of records previously classified for “national security” reasons. In a study based on this body of sources, the South Korean music historian Dong-ŭn No documents 46 socialist musicians who were active in Seoul in the immediate aftermath of the liberation. They formed the Chosŏn Proletarian Musicians Coalition in Seoul in 1945. After the Korean War, the South Korean government attempted to erase these composers from cultural discourse by banning public performances and discussions of their works. Composers were ordered to identify any works that involved prior collaboration with any of the 46 northbound exiled composers and to alter the aspects of the music that represented the socialist artists’ contributions. See Dong-ŭn No, \textit{Kim sun nam kŭ i úi samgwa yesul} [Sun-nam Kim, His Life and Work] (Seoul: Nangman ŭnaksa, 1992), 24-30. Also, see Min, \textit{Han’guk ŭnaksa}, 182, 193-200.

\textsuperscript{193} Some of these musicians studied in Tokyo in the 1930s and the early 1940s. Tokyo proved to be a hub for Korean elites who did not identify with the Protestant cultural work. No, \textit{Kim sun nam}, 30.

\textsuperscript{194} The stated goals in a manifesto published by the Chosŏn Proletarian Musicians Coalition in 1946 include: “to inherit the ethnic legacy in music justly while critically taking in foreign music” and “to denounce extreme nationalism (kuksu chuŭi) in music.” This proposition, however, seems to have remained mostly at the level of rhetoric rather than practice, perhaps because the socialist musicians were well steeped in Western music traditions by 1945; in fact, some of them played Western chamber music with Christian and/or right-wing composers in informal and formal settings and sustained friendship with them in 1945 and 1946, only terminating these relationships in 1947 when such associations became subject to disciplinary measures. No, \textit{Kim sun nam}, 25-70.

\textsuperscript{195} Observations made by Ely Heimowitz, a key American musician who was involved in the South’s music scene, show that throughout 1946, pro-establishment composers began to publically disassociate themselves from the Chosŏn Proletarian Music Coalition’s composers, with whom they had worked through private meetings or church-related venues. A pianist in charge of advising the U.S. military government’s Ministry of Culture and Education and strengthening the Koryŏ Symphonic Orchestra Association, Heimowitz wrote the following in one of Seoul’s arts
songs based upon Korean folk music and Western military anthems, national liberation anthems were taught and sung in mass rallies that were assembled spontaneously from late 1945 to 1947—the two-year window before the formal division of Korea in 1948—to celebrate Korea’s independence from Japanese colonial rule.\textsuperscript{196} If the socialists’ compositions in prestigious Western music genres were de-colonial in aspiration, their national liberation songs were anti-colonial and sounded the composers’ affiliation with the Korean masses. Their texts featured terms like “blood of the people,” “the enemy,” and “imperialists,” narrating a nation that began with the liberation of the people from an exploitative empire. Although the precise number of these songs is unknown, one study states that in 1946 alone at least 75 liberation songs were presented to the public at music events termed “New Liberation Songs Presentation” (Haebang kayo sinjak palp’yohoe).\textsuperscript{197} “Haebang ŭi norae” (Liberation Song, 1945-6?), written by a leading socialist composer of the time, Sun-nam Kim, is an early example that influenced this short-lived genre (fig. 2.1).\textsuperscript{198}

Figure 2.1: Sun-nam Kim, “Haebang ŭi norae” (Liberation Song)

1. Listen, people of Korea
To the loud sound of the liberation day reaching our ears
The sound of the horses’ hooves made by the protesters
The roar of the crowd demanding the future

\begin{quote}
조선의 대중들아 들어보아라
우밍차게 들려오는 해방의날을
시위자가 올리는 맥굽소리와
미래를 구하는 아우성소리
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{196} This repertory indicated the socialists’ desire to identify with common Koreans despite the gap in education and family backgrounds. This well-documented identification extended back to the colonial period.

\textsuperscript{197} Chŏng, “Haebang konggan,” 171.

\textsuperscript{198} Reprinted in Chŏng, “Haebang konggan,” 172.
2. Laborers and farmers, do your best
To reclaim the territories and factories
From the enemies, with your just hands
Their power is insignificant

It is not difficult to see why this conception of the nation would have alarmed the elites and the U.S. military government; and indeed it did, as indicated by the deletion of some of these anthems from the national music textbooks. As Bruce Cumings describes in detail in *Korea’s Place in the Sun*, many of Seoul’s elites, who had histories of collaboration with the Japanese colonial government, feared the anti-colonialist sentiments pervading the mass liberation rallies because these assemblies tended to include public denunciations of colonial-period collaborators. Similarly, the anticolonial ethos of the rallies worried the U.S. military government and their Korean allies because it tended to converge with socialism, as the second verse of Sun-nam Kim’s “Haebang ūi norae” demonstrates. In evoking class conflict and condemning Koreans who worked for the benefit of the colonial ruling class (the Japanese colonialists), the rallies seemed to echo the rhetoric of the People’s Committees, which, according to the so-called revisionist historians, were spreading throughout the southern part of Korea from 1945 to 1950 much more rapidly than...
the official Cold War narratives have suggested.\textsuperscript{199} Fear of the mutually reinforcing relationship between populism, anticolonialism, and socialism precipitated the alliance between the exiled Christians, South-based elites, and the U.S. military government, giving them a reason to transcend their internal differences. One notable difference involved colonial-period loyalty between Seoul-based composers and exiled composers from the North: the former tended to face tremendous pressure to collaborate with the colonial government in Seoul as a condition for participating in colonial-period Western music organizations, and for the most part, the latter did not face the same dilemma due to their residence away from the colonial capital.\textsuperscript{200}

Another musical practice that became stigmatized in the Cold War South concerns indigenous music-cultural practices. In a recent discussion on the South-to-North exile of musicians, Kyông-ch’ an Min used the term “folk music specialists” (\textit{minsogak chŏnmunga}) to designate a group other than the high-profile socialist musicians who emigrated to the North between 1945 and 1950.\textsuperscript{201} Min left the identity of the “folk music specialists” unelaborated, but when past and current sources are consulted, these “specialists” seem to match a cast of subalterns who appear at the margins of official historical narratives: \textit{kisaeng} (female courtesan entertainer), actors, percussionists, acrobats, clowns, and shamans.\textsuperscript{202} These artists’ practices ranged across a constellation of specialized shamanist and shamanist-influenced performances, such as itinerant theater, rural festivals, and shaman’s rituals, which were central to the life of the lower classes in the late Chosôn period (1392-1910). The question of to what extent these practices really disappeared during the Cold War decades is a contested topic; yet their status in the Cold

\textsuperscript{199} Cumings, \textit{Korea’s Place}, 217-224.

\textsuperscript{200} Kang, \textit{Han’guk úi kidokkyo}, 149-151, 178.

\textsuperscript{201} Min, \textit{Han’guk úmaksxa}, 199.

War South can be gauged by their near invisibility in Cold War official records and literature.\footnote{Interestingly, composers who were studying music in South Korea during the high Cold War years have commented on this invisibility. For example, a few non-exile Christian composers in Kim’s anthology who came of age in the late 1950s stated that they found little material on folk music during their training period and that they would have created Korean-style Protestant music if only they had been able to discover such sources. One non-exile Christian composer, Un Yong La, recounted conducting music collection projects in rural villages in the mid-1960s, reflecting the invisibility of indigenous practices in the cities as well as the preservationist urgency that this prompted in some musicians, Christian or otherwise. See Kim, Kyohoe umak, 66, 176. On the other hand, it is also important to note that there have been several ethnographic studies that show the continuing dynamism of shamanic practices in the lives of some South Koreans, regardless of their relative invisibility in the official discourse. For an example, see Laurel Kendall, Shamans, Nostalgia, and the IMF: South Korean Popular Religion in Motion (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i, 2009).}

Furthermore, it seems indisputable that already by 1945 they were significantly marginalized due to decades of Christian missionary intervention that started in the late 19th century. One of the first projects of the American Protestant missionization in Korea (1884-1930s) involved associating shamanist practices with magic and superstition.\footnote{As Laurel Kendall explains, the missionaries’ initial responses regarding shamanist rituals (kut) included radical interpretations such as “devil possession” but gradually settled on the category of “superstition.” See Kendall, Shamans, Nostalgia, 5-6. The pre-colonial court music of Korea had a different reception. Some American missionaries defended court music against shamanic music. For example, a missionary by the name of J. D. Van Buskirk observed in 1915 that although he despised street performances in Seoul, he found the melodies played by court musicians (“the old orchestra of the palace”) “hauntingly beautiful and always so elusive that I could never even think it.” See J. D. Van Buskirk, “Old Korean Music,” The Korea Mission Field 11, no.4 (1915), 101. This reception echoes the elite discourse constructed by the pre-colonial court of Korea, the Japanese colonial government, and the South Korean state.}
The missionaries’ Korean allies, some of whom would become influential composers during the Cold War decades, sided with this view, conducting a “modernity campaign” against shamanist “superstitions” with a zeal greater than the missionaries’.\footnote{This Korean elite Christian orientation is well documented in journals like The Independent (1896-1899), published by first-generation Korean Protestant converts in the context of increasing Japanese encroachment. Also see Chapter 1 of this dissertation.}

An official music culture quickly replaced the vacuum created by the foreclosure of socialist musicians’ compositions and indigenous performing practices, especially in the cities that were growing at an exponential rate since the 1950s. Kagok (歌曲), which remains understudied in Korean-language scholarship, stands out as a secular genre of official nationalism beloved by the exiled Christian composers.\footnote{Kagok literally means “a music piece for singing.” This is not to be confused with the traditional Korean lyric song genre that also takes the same name. Exiled composers born before 1930 wrote approximately 20 kagok songs each, with the earliest composers (T’aechun Pak and Yu-sŏn Yi) writing more than fifty each.}

Modeled on the characteristics of the Germanic Lied, kagok
had its roots in the Christian-affiliated music culture of colonial P'yŏngyang, and to a lesser extent, colonial Seoul. During the colonial period, this art song genre served as an important pedagogic medium through which the first-generation Korean students of Western music practiced the art of setting a melody to a diatonic progression. In addition to continuing this function, the Cold War kagok served as a site of exilic imagination. Kagok songs “enacted” the South Korean nation by remembering North Korea as a “lost” but beautiful land in the context of the mass-scale southward exile, the Korean War, and the ensuing national division. Representative kagok compositions spoke sadly and romantically about the natural landscapes that symbolized the northern part of Korea, for example, Mount Paektu and Mount Kŭmgang. This way, the genre of kagok enabled the singers to personify a suffering subject longing for a “forsaken” home and thus resonated with anticommunist imageries of loss that tended to vacillate between sentimental self-defeat and retribution.\footnote{The aesthetics of nostalgia may be viewed as a legacy of colonial-period kagok. A typical colonial-period kagok song expressed sorrow and nostalgia upon experiencing the natural landscapes that served as metaphors for colonized Korea, which allowed the singer to indulge in the abject experiences of a colonial subject. Many of these songs portrayed specific mountains, rivers, flowers, and birds as well as more general natural phenomena like the moon and the winds, which were cast as beautiful yet tragic objects. This practice reflected the larger colonial cultural production in Seoul and P'yŏngyang (especially, mid-1930 to 1945). Min, Han'guk ŭmaksya, 106-111, 241-246. Also see Podûre Kim, Yŏnae ûi sidae: 1920 ch'ŏban ûi munhua wa yuhaeng [The Time of Romance: Culture and Fashion in Early-1920s Korea], (Seoul: Hyŏnsil munhwawŏn'gu, 2006), 123-148.} As historical subjects who could “claim” nostalgia for the North based on their own lived experience, the émigré composers endowed the ethos of longing upon the broader composition scene in the South via exemplary compositions. In turn, their kagok inspired hundreds of new kagok pieces throughout the 1950s and the 1960s that either sang of specific landscapes in the North or articulated a vague but profound feeling of longing. The titles of some of the most popular Cold War kagok songs illustrate this orientation: “Thinking of Home,” “Longing and Longing,” “The Crater Lake of Mount Paektu,” and “Longing for Mount Kŭmgang.”

For an example of a particularly charged kagok song, we can take a brief look at “Kŭriun kŭmgangsan” (Longing for Mount Kŭmgang, 1961), written by the Seoul-born composer Yŏng-sŏp
Choe (1928-). Like Sun-nam Kim’s “Haebang ū norae” quoted above, this song articulates an “enemy”—consider the use of the word “tainted” to describe the now-forsaken mountain in the North and the ending phrase “Mount Kŭmgang is calling me” (see Fig. 2.2). Yet this exilic song uses a very different expressive framework to create an emotional urgency. Instead of the military ethos of the liberation anthems, “Kŭriun kŭmgangsan” fuses anticommunism with the theatrics of suffering, encoded by the juxtaposition of drawn out notes (half or dotted half notes) with agitated gestures conveyed by mordents and descending sixteenth-note figures, the dramatic arpeggiation of the piano accompaniment, the slow tempo, and the explicit direction in the score to “sing with a deep-rooted nostalgia.” This set of techniques, shared widely across kagok songs, enabled the singing subjects to wallow in the real or imagined experience of victimization and nostalgia and to convey a sense of galvanization in the process of singing.

Figure 2.2: Yŏng-sŏp Choe, “Kŭriun kŭmgangsan” (Longing for Mount Kŭmgang)

Who presides over it, the pure and beautiful Mountain?
The twelve thousand peaks that I long for stand silently,
But finally, the free people, struck with reverence,
Will call that name again, Mount Kŭmgang.
For more than ten thousand years
It had a beautiful shape
For some years, it has been tainted.
Is today a good day to seek it?
Mount Kŭmgang is calling me.

누구의 주제런가 맑고 고운산
그리운 만이천봉 맑은없이도
이제야 자유만민 옷깃여미며
그 이름 다시부를 우리 금강산
수수만년 아름다운 상
더럽힌지 몇해
오늘에야 찾을날 왔나
금강산은 부른다.

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208 The portion of this kagok quoted in Figure 2.2 is reprinted in Han’guk kagok 200 koksŏn, [200 Selected Korean Lyric Songs], vol. 1 (Seoul: Segwang, 1982), 56.

209 This problematic language is noted also by Kyŏng-ch’an Min. See Min, Han’guk ŭmaksa, 246-247.

210 Kagok quickly became part and parcel of the South Korean vocal chamber music canon beginning in the 1950s through university music department concerts as well as secular music concerts in churches. It also rose as an emblem of South Korea’s national culture when Syngman Rhee’s government conferred “The Order of Merit for National Foundation,” a nationally announced award first conferred in 1949, on a number of exiled composers who were known for their work in this genre (e.g., T’ae-jun Pak and Yu-Sŏn Yi; see Appendix 2). In some cases, official Cold War institutions requested explicitly anticommunist kagok from composers. “Kŭriun kŭmgangsan,” for example, resulted from a pro-establishment television studio’s commission that directed the composer to write songs on the “themes of anticommunism and national fortification.” Min, Han’guk ŭmaksa, 246.
Moderato Cantabile

그리움에 사무쳐서

누 구 의 주 재련 가

고 운 산

그 리음

만 이 천 봉 말 은 없 어도

이제 야
Another effective site of the South’s official culture was staged Protestant vocal music emerging in the late 1940s. *Kagok* songs and Protestant vocal compositions (solo and choral) can be understood as overlapping compositional practices although this continuity has been almost entirely overlooked in Korean-language scholarship: literature on secular music has tended to gloss over the intersection of the secular and sacred compositions, and literature on Christian music has located the significance of mid-century sacred vocal pieces in its status as the first Protestant compositions authored by Korean nationals. 211 Yet, both of these genres were dominated by Christian exiled composers and staged the poetics of exilic suffering using the Western framework of choral and solo vocal music. Indeed, mid-century Protestant vocal pieces were marked by a singular concern with the themes of dispossession, suffering, and persecution—a concern that would be replaced by a diversity of themes beginning in the mid-1960s. Some of these pieces unfolded as dramatic third-person narratives that sometimes employed biblical stories and occasionally made more direct references to the forsaken Christian life in the North. Pieces in this group include “Ch’udo ū norae” (Memorial Song, Yu-sŏn Yi, 1950), “Sunanga” (Song of Suffering, Tu-hoe Ku, 1953), “Yob ū siryŏn,” (The Suffering of Job, Tu-wan Kim, late 1950s), “Yŏhosiwa ū siryŏn” (Joshua’s Ordeal, Tu-wan Kim, late 1950s), “Sullyeja ū norae” (Pilgrim’s Song, Tu-wan Kim, late 1950s), and “Sullyeja” (The Martyr, Tu-wan Kim, early 1960s). Other pieces unfolded as a personal avowal of helplessness and an appeal to the divine for guidance; a popular technique involved setting excerpts from the Book of Psalms. Pieces in this group include “Yŏhowanun naūi mokchasini” (The Lord is My Shepherd, Chae-hun Pak, 1944), “Yŏhowanun naūi mokchasini” (The Lord is My Shepherd, Un-yŏng La, 1952), “P’iinanch’o itsūni” (For There is Shelter, Un-yŏng La, 1952), “Yŏhowayŏ nuga chu ūi changmage mŏmurŭmyŏ” (Lord, Who May Dwell in Your Sacred Tent, Un-yŏng La, 1953), “Yŏhowayŏ nuga chu ūi changmage mŏmurŭmyŏ,” (Lord, Who May Dwell in Your Sacred Tent, T’ae-jun Pak, 1957), and “Chuyŏ narul kŏnjisosŏ”

211 See, for example, Chŏng-su Hong, *Han’guk kyohoe ūmak sasang sa* [The History of Ideology of Korean Church Music] (Seoul: Changnohoe sinhaktaehakkyo chu’lp’anbu, 2000).
(God, Have Mercy on Me, Chae-hun Pak, 1958). This body of choral and solo compositions began to be staged throughout South Korea’s churches beginning in the late 1940s, joining a sacred vocal repertory that, up until this point, had been composed of European and American choral compositions that were translated and edited for use in Korean-language Protestant services.  

Arguably, mid-century Protestant vocal music was even more effective than kagok songs in administering Cold War nationalism for a number of reasons. First, while kagok’s subject enacted a sentimental suffering, the suffering subject in this religious genre demanded absolute redemption from dispossession in an environment in which religious redemption was easily conflated with political redemption. Second, mid-century Protestant vocal music reached a much larger audience than kagok. While kagok had associations with the elite concert-going audience, Protestant vocal music was staged for a rapidly increasing number of Koreans of all social classes who filled the pews of churches in the aftermath of the Korean War. Indeed, the number of South Koreans who would have seen and listened to the performances of these vocal compositions may be quite significant: the number of Protestant converts grew at an exceptionally high rate in South Korea during the high Cold War decades, with some studies conservatively estimating them at 25% to 30% of the entire population. The Cold War church choirs, then, may even be reconsidered as a thriving music pedagogic site for the emerging middle class. These choirs were the only musical bodies in which non-elite Koreans could obtain amateur training in a musical language that was becoming remarkably prestigious—compare this with the burgeoning community choirs in Japan, which were created around this period to satisfy the Japanese middle class’s fascination with Western classical music.  

A third point to consider is that mid-century Protestant vocal music dovetailed with the musical ideals of the official culture because it was

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212 Hong, Han’guk kyohoe ŭmak, 24-30. Also, see Chapter 3.
213 Illsoo Kim, New Urban Immigrants, 190; Cumings, Korea’s Place, 393.
214 Min, Han’guk ŭmaksa, 97.
deeply invested in jettisoning Korean music styles from the pool of legitimate music styles (also see Chapter 3). The statements of a number of émigré composers who were active in the Cold War years illustrate the anxiety about musical indigenization and stylistic hybridity that troubled the project of Protestant composition during the Cold War years. For example, Kyu-hyôn Kim’s interview with Tu-hoe Ku (1921–), a prominent exiled composer, communicates this cultural orientation. Commenting on the issue of “indigenization” (t’och’akhwa), Ku stated, “When there are so many good rhythms in church music, it is ludicrous to consider rhythmic cycles like kutkŏri and semach’i [rhythms used across shamanist-influenced music] to make a comment on Koreanness... It is a very dangerous idea to consider materials for evil spirits [chapsin] for church music.”

Similarly, the career of Tu-wan Kim (1926–2008), another exiled composer, is described as follows: “in his early career, Kim studied national music [kugak] in order to write Korean church music and even composed a few pieces in this style, but he realized that this was not the right form [chŏnghyŏng] of church music. Since then, he has combined the Western tonal style with church modes.”

For a prototype of Cold War Protestant choral music, we can return to Tu-wan Kim’s “Sullyeja ŭi norae” (A Pilgrim’s Song, mid-to-late 1950s), a piece that, according to Kyu-hyôn Kim, “searched for the root of Korean Christian music.” Indeed, it articulates an ethos of suffering that came to be known as “(South) Korean” by using a compelling diatonic language directed at amateur choristers. “Sullyeja ŭi norae” is built on four discrete, repeating sections that make up the narrative parts of a pilgrim’s experiences: desolation, crisis, suffering, and redemption. The piece starts in a hushed D minor setting in order to narrate the despondent beginning of a pilgrimage. A sense of dejection is conveyed by the juxtaposition of the bare bass and alto

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215 Kim, Kyohoe ŭmak, 17.
216 Kim, Kyohoe ŭmak, 37.
217 Kim, Kyohoe ŭmak, 42.
melodies with subdued choral responses and the harrowing endings of the two-measure phrases.\textsuperscript{218}

Figure 2.3: Tu-wan Kim, “Sullyeja ūi norae” (A Pilgrim’s Song), mm. 7-14

“A pilgrim walks the path of a drifter and stays in the harsh field of life for a night”

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\textsuperscript{218} Reprinted in Chŏng-p’yo Hong, ed., Chujebyŏl sŏngga hapch’ang [Choral Pieces According to Topics], vol. 2 (Seoul: Saenorae, 1994), 334-339.
The second section uses a chromatically inflected counterpoint to dramatize “the ordeal of the rough storm.” The voices’ staggered entrances and their contrapuntal engagement serve as the musical codes of the storm depicted in the lyrics.

Figure 2.4: Tu-wan Kim, “Sullyeja ŭi norae” (A Pilgrim’s Song), mm. 19-27

“Although the ordeal of the violent storm is harsh”

The third section uses a combination of contrapuntal and homophonic textures to stage a collective declamation of suffering. The soprano singers’ dramatic phrases are answered by an
impassioned sub-choir of alto, tenor, and bass parts, all of which navigate dynamic melodic contours while also moving together in a homophonic fashion.

Figure 2.5: Tu-wan Kim, “Sullyeja ŭi norae” (A Pilgrim’s Song), mm. 36-43

“Passing through this world, one suffers greatly”

The fourth section depicts divine deliverance from the crisis. Fittingly, it begins with an unexpected cadence onto a D major triad on the word “life.” The use of the key of D major, not heard until this point, evokes an imagery of triumph. This section’s middle phrase, “the angels
cloaked in white garb sing praises,” is set to a rising sequence that culminates in an authentic cadence on the phrase “the pilgrim will wear the honorable crown.”

Figure 2.6: Tu-wan Kim, “Sullyeja úi norae” (A Pilgrim’s Song), mm. 60-71

“When lilies bloom in the bright river of life and angels cloaked in white garbs sing praises, [the pilgrim] will wear the honorable crown”
The piece then returns to the very first section, leaving the audience with the haunting imagery of a forlorn pilgrim who, as the final words have it, “is headed to the original land.”

In my own experience as the piano accompanist of diasporic Korean church choirs spanning ten years (1993-2000, 2008-2010), I encountered the remarkable popularity of “Sullyeja ŭi norae” among the conductors and choristers, most of whom were first-generation immigrants who came of age in South Korea during the high Cold War years. Whenever the conductors announced this piece as the upcoming assignment, they did so in the manner of giving a tribute to the composer and with an introductory description of the piece as “a symbolic Korean Protestant piece” or “a uniquely Korean piece.” The choristers demonstrated a unanimous enthusiasm during each and every rehearsal of this piece—a response rarely given to other pieces in the repertory. Importantly, I have noticed an intimate relationship between such a reception and the piece’s pedagogic instrumentality. Not only is “Sullyeja ŭi norae” an effective lesson in diatonic harmony in general but it also expands the singers’ experience of Western choral music by introducing them to contrapuntal part writing, which is relatively absent in the wider South Korean Protestant choral repertory. During each rehearsal of this piece, the choristers (especially basses and tenors) practiced with an unusual rigor to learn their parts and to understand how their respective parts related to the rest of the choir. It seemed that the level of challenge entailed in the piece is what kept them engaged: the polyphony in “Sullyeja ŭi norae” tracks the harmonic progression closely, and thus, if the choristers put in the effort, it is possible for them to make sense of the part writing in the context of their accumulated knowledge of diatonic music. These moments of musical revelation seemed to reinforce the inner experience of suffering enabled by the piece. The choristers carried such compelling experiences into the Sunday services: each time they performed this piece, they “possessed” the music and were possessed by it, and the congregation’s positive feedback (e.g., nods, applause, enunciations of “amen” immediately after the piece, and
personal acknowledgement to the singers after the service) reaffirmed the authenticity of performance.

**Conclusion: The Politics and Poetics of the Cold War**

Rather than marveling at the ways in which pieces like “Sullyeja ŭi norae” have mediated the Korean Cold War experience in a compelling fashion, I conclude by invoking the politics of Cold War poetics. Upon turning the focus from aesthetics to politics, I emphasize what Jodi Kim termed “the fraught hermeneutics” in her study of Cold War-period Asian and Asian American fiction. She argues that to critically read and analyze Cold War cultural productions in Korea, East Asia, and Asian America is to highlight these productions’ necessarily ambivalent conditions of possibility, rather than opting for simple narratives of transcendence or resistance that reproduce the very Manichean analytics enabled by the Cold War. Pieces like “Sullyeja ŭi norae” then, are valuable to music historians not just because they allow us to listen to some of the most compelling representations of the Korean Cold War experiences, but also because they draw our attention to the complex relationship between Cold War violence and poetics.

It is with this view of the fraught nature of Cold War musical culture in South Korea that I return to the discussion of South Korean musical cosmopolitanism and consider its meanings for the notion of postcolonial agency. As I have suggested throughout this chapter, it is important to re-consider what has been celebrated as musical cosmopolitanism in South Korea as a post-1945 sleight-of-hand cultural development that hijacked the conversations about postcolonial music culture and cultural legacies of colonialism in the name of the Cold War, especially the project of integrating South Korea with the Cold War West. Indeed, symptomatic of this unfinished project, tensions over the issue of what really constitutes as “Korean” (and more broadly, “Asian” or “Asian

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219 See Jodi Kim, *Ends of Empire*, 1-20. The formation of Asian America is an illustrative example in this regard. Cold War (especially the Korean War and the Vietnam War, which enabled massive immigration to the U.S.) and the Cold War epistemology were the conditions of possibility for the constitution of various Asian American communities. Also see Chapter 4 of this dissertation.
American”) have cropped up in cultural representations as a haunting problematic, beginning as early as the late 1960s—tensions that will be examined in the next chapter. Further studies on modern cultural production in South Korea, and more broadly, U.S.-aligned countries in Asia, should grapple with this problem of national identity and postcolonial agency, which have fundamentally shaped modern cultural production there.

220 This cultural tension has manifested in the form of a dissonant analytical framework even in mainstream South Korea Protestant discourse. For example, this tension is evident in Kyu-hyon Kim’s anthology. Kim brings up the issue of indigenization of Protestant music in all of the 17 chapters, regardless of the given composer’s orientation on this issue. He praises the majority of composers who are against musical indigenization as “orthodox Christians” (chŏngt’ŏng chuŭi) on the one hand and praises a few who are for indigenization as “authentic Korean” composers on the other hand. This tension will be more fully explored in Chapter 3.
Chapter 3

Sounds of Suffering:
Korean Christian Syncretism in an Age

Occidentalism is the visible face in the building of the modern world, whereas subaltern knowledges are its darker side, the colonial side of modernity.

-Walter D. Mignolo, 2000

A video recording of the Korea Men’s Choir’s annual concert in Seoul for the year 2012 opens with the familiar sight and sound of a female pianist playing an introductory passage. Just before the choir begins to sing the piece “Pŏpkwe rŭl megoganŭn norae” (Carrying the Covenant on the Shoulder), the camera pans sideways to capture rows of male choral singers garbed in identical black-and-white tuxedos. The singers in the choir look confident and comfortable, and for good reason: the Korea Men’s Choir is a professional choir that has enlisted competitive singers and renowned conductors throughout the course of its 50-year history. Like many other independent Christian choirs of comparable prestige in South Korea, it performs a repertory of both secular and religious choral pieces at well-attended annual concerts.

Nothing seems unusual in this particular video until the repetitive pulse of percussion instruments becomes more pronounced against the piano’s introduction. The percussion instruments accentuate the off-beats of a short repeating motive, engaging the piano in a playful rhythmic counterpoint. About a minute into the video, some unlikely musical collaborators appear: two female performers of traditional percussion instruments, seated next to the choir. One is striking a puk (a barrel drum) with her hands, and the other is playing a changgo (a hourglass-shaped drum) with a thin wooden stick. Both are wearing white-colored traditional Korean

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dresses, providing a visual contrast to the singers’ tuxedos and the piano accompanist’s Western-
style recital dress in burgundy. Together, the singers, the piano accompanist, and the percussion
players stage musical narratives that seem quite different from those typically practiced in
contemporary Christian choral singing in South Korea. Where “experienced” ears would expect
half-step descents, there are whole-tone moves; phrases are not “concluded” but repeated. As the
choir singers and percussionist alternate between a sonorous unison and a playful call and
response, the texture of the piece is filled with syncopated rhythmic motives rarely heard in the
larger repertory. The short solo passages that return at the end of these rapid, dynamic sections
are also extraordinary. The solo tenor sings “halleluya” twice ad-libitum in a very high register,
outlining a slow pentatonic descent. This gesture looks and sounds like a performance of
vulnerability: seemingly performing at the limits of his vocal range, the tenor appears as though
he is delivering an impassioned lament rather than singing a conventional melody. The
breathtaking five minutes of “Pŏpkwe rŭl megonun norae” conclude with a collective
exclamation on the phrase “Praise the Lord!” (Yŏhowa rŭl ch’anyang hara!) Applause fills the
concert hall.

“Pŏpkwe rŭl megonun norae” belongs to a body of South Korean Christian choral pieces
that draws on aspects of traditional Korean music. Beginning in the early 1990s, the emergence of
this style of choral music was a prominent development within the larger scene of Protestant
choral music composition in South Korea. This group of pieces, which make up what I call a
“neotraditional style,” did not replace existing styles in the wider repertory and came to be a
peripheral practice at best; nevertheless, pieces in this style constitute meaningful attempts to
forge a specifically “Korean” form of musical worship based on new modes of self-representations
that were constructed in the context of secular revivals of traditional Korean music. These revivals,
in turn, were attempts to reconstitute Korean traditions that had come to signify “colonial
difference that colonial translation attempted to erase” in dealing with the larger question of what it is to be Korean in an age that ruthlessly idealized Western-centric modernity and “progress.”

The emergence of neotraditional Christian choral music is a noteworthy phenomenon especially because Christian choral music came to be understood as a key symbol of modernity and progress in (South) Korea in the context of the North American Protestant mission, Japanese colonialism, and the Cold War. The sounds and sights that the medium of choral music proffered Sunday after Sunday have been “taken for” those of modernity and progress, thus further validating the configuration of indigenous traditions as “barbaric,” “superstitious,” “backward,” and “heathen” (in short, as manifestations of colonial difference). Due to this colonial-modern genealogy, the medium of Christian choral music had set out to accomplish the self-imposed task of remaining well within the borders of cultural acceptability: broadly speaking, this entailed mimicry of the Christian choral music styles of Europe and the U.S. and a foreclosure of syncretic musical conceptions, especially those drawing on shamanism, which was Christianity’s avowed opponent in Korea from the earliest days of the mission. I consider the hegemonic construction and repetition of this kind of binary more fully later, but for now we will turn to a 2003 study titled *Shamanism in Korean Christianity* for an example of this view. The author of this study, Nam Hyuck Jang, outlines the following objective: “[to] delineate reliable criteria by which to evaluate given Christian phenomena, as to whether they are truly authentic forms of Christianity or syncretistic adaptations of shamanism. Observation and analysis according to these will, it is hoped, lead to prevention of further emergence of syncretistic forms of Christianity.” The purist, monogenealogical view that underwrites Jang’s statement has largely ruled out the entry of local

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cultural influences into the domain of Christian vocal music in Korea—influences that are believed to threaten the “universality” and, by extension, “authenticity” of Christianity (this kind of argument is, unsurprisingly, met by the countervailing notion that Christianity is always and ineluctably syncretic224).

Against the universalizing function and universalist aspirations of Christian choral music in Korea (and elsewhere), neotraditional choral music brings into sharp relief the universal-particular dilemma, a dilemma central to postcolonial discussions of Christianity. Western Christian missions have often been partners and co-authors of early modern and modern colonial projects; as such, they have facilitated the incorporation of “others” into a “global” history imagined by the West, in the process configuring what counts as “global” or “universal” and what does not.225 Walter D. Mignolo summarizes this historical development succinctly in *Local Histories / Global Designs*: “Christianity became…the first global design of the modern/colonial system and, consequently, the anchor of Occidentalism and the coloniality of power drawing the external borders as the colonial difference...”226 Here Mignolo is speaking primarily about early modern Christian missions in Latin America, which he argues laid the groundwork for later imperialist claims of universality (in the 18th and 19th centuries), yet his perspective on the universalizing function of Christianity is surprisingly applicable to the Korean context: Christian missions and churches have played an important role in mediating the ideals of Western modernity in Korea—much more so than in most other parts of Asia, with the possible exception of the Philippines—due to the unique historical circumstance of the trans-Pacific rivalry between


the U.S. and Japan beginning in the late 19th century (see Chapter 1). In this context, South Korean Christian choral practice—a milieu steeped in U.S.- and European-style choral music—may be seen as a key church activity that has manifested the universalizing Christian imaginary effectively and affectively.

This chapter reads neotraditional Christian choral music as an attempt to complicate the assumed universalism of Christian choral music. Although this body of choral works was met with ambivalence at best by many South Korean Christian choral singers, it raises certain questions that had come to be buried under the weight of hegemonic Christian thought. Among these questions: how does musical worship play a role in synthesizing Christian religion with local history? Given the long history of universalism, can the Christian choral medium embody “border thinking,” a mode of thinking that, as Walter D. Mignolo formulated it, cracks “the imaginary of the modern world system”? 227 I explore neotraditional Christian choral music from the perspective of these questions, pushing beyond the tendency of Korean-language studies to engage it only at the level of abstract musical style; such studies thus avoid situating this music within the larger cultural contexts of recuperation and the revival of “tradition.” 228

This chapter proceeds in three parts. I first examine alternative frameworks of self-representation enabled by post-Korean War cultural projects that revolved around the objective of recuperating Korean “tradition.” The goal of this section is to highlight new symbols of Korean subjectivity that were constructed in the context of divergent yet intersecting revival movements, rather than advancing romantic or linear notions of Korean tradition. I then demonstrate how

227 Mignolo, Local Histories / Global Designs, 23.

228 Neotraditional Christian choral music is largely neglected in religious musicological scholarship in South Korea, which has tended to be dominated by master’s theses and Ph.D. dissertations on the choral music of European classical composers, including Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Mendelssohn. The minority of studies that focus on neotraditional choral music typically do not go beyond matching neotraditional musical topics with tropes found in traditional Korean music. For studies of this type, see Chae-min Só, “Chakkokka Pak Chaehun úi kyohoe hapch’ang’gosesó nat’ananún úmak ónó e kwanhan yón’gu,” [A Study of Musical Language in Church Choral Works by Chae-hun Pak] (PhD diss., Paaeksŏk University, 2013). Similarly, Chŏng-su Hong, the author of the most comprehensive Korean-language monograph on South Korean Christian choral music to date, also takes a style-centered approach. See Chŏng-su Hong, Han’guk kyohoe úmak sasang sa [The History of Ideology of Korean Church Music] (Seoul: Changnohoe sinhak taehakkyo chu’lp’anbu, 2000), 305.
new modes of self-representation were adopted within the medium of Christian choral music. I conclude the chapter with thoughts on the limits of the neotraditional choral project. I discuss perceived and real difficulties of contesting the hegemonic choral framework as well as the neoliberal absorption of “traditional music” in the secular cultural terrain.

**Traditional Korean Music: Cultures of Revival**

Traditional Korean music in post-Korean War South Korea is a complex and broad topic that cannot be discussed in detail in the scope of this chapter. This section offers an overview that characterizes the field of post-War traditional Korean music as one of revival, re-appropriation, and reconstitution, departing from an older narrative that has tended to portray it as a linear transmission of authentic traditions. The older narrative, which shaped dominant forms of knowledge about this music for most of the postwar decades, has tended to gloss over the political and ethical meanings folded into the practice of traditional music, particularly its tendency to reinforce various ideologies of national community and identity. My overview explores traditional music practice as a site of active, multidirectional negotiation of Korean identity and “Korean-ness” by focusing on two projects of revival that reconstituted nationalist imaginaries: one directed by the state and another by the *minjung* activist movement (see below for a definition). Both revival projects appropriated traditional Korean music practices as symbols around which to articulate their divergent visions of nation—the state’s top-down conception of the South Korean nation and the activists’ ideal of a bottom-up national community. As I examine new frameworks of self-representation enabled by these two disparate yet intersecting revival cultures,

229 These two “channels” of revival, although conventionally thought to be oppositional, reverberated with each other to a meaningful degree as they relied on more or less the same resources (e.g., performers, styles, and genres). Scholarship on traditional Korean music has tended to gloss over the overlaps and intersections between the state and non-state revival projects. Among the more recent works that present new critical approaches in this regard is Laurel Kendall’s work on Korean shamanism. Her work carefully traces the ways in which Korean shamans are incorporated into nationalist ideologies that are conventionally understood to be oppositional but that are, in practice, mutually reinforcing. See Laurel Kendall, *Shamans, Nostalgia, and the IMF: South Korean Popular Religion in Motion* (Honolulu: University of H’awaii Press, 2009).
I also foreground the tension between a tendency towards erecting an essentializing conception of “Korean-ness” and a desire to re-write particular traditions as “alternative centers of enunciation”\textsuperscript{230} through which to renegotiate the question of national agency and subjectivity.

Broadly speaking, practices of traditional music in post-Korean War\textsuperscript{231} South Korea—regardless of the players involved—were intimately informed by a contradictory perception of self and other, a perception underwritten by enforced modernity and modernization. On the one hand, postwar South Korean society (especially in Seoul) was marked by a compulsive idealization of all things Western, American, and “modern.” This idealization was fueled by the government’s slogan of “catching up” with Japan and the West and compounded by the memories of Japanese occupation and the presence of American culture, products, and military personnel in South Korea. Conversely, this Western-centric cultural orientation also brought about a psychology of nostalgia and “social cathexis on primordia” rooted in the real and perceived “loss” of Korean culture.\textsuperscript{232} This fraught cultural orientation shaped local performances in Korea as early as the late 19th century, as Andrew Killick demonstrates in a fascinating study of a form of Korean vocal theater called ch’anggŭk (literally, “singing drama”).\textsuperscript{233} The postwar identity crisis, however, was arguably more troubling due to the pressure of “compressed modernization,” a term that some scholars have used to describe the speedy, all-encompassing industrialization under Park Chung

\textsuperscript{230} Walter D. Mignolo, \textit{Local Histories / Global Designs}, 5.

\textsuperscript{231} Hereafter, simply “postwar.”

\textsuperscript{232} Laurel Kendall’s work is interesting in this regard. She argues that an overdetermined discourse of “loss” and nostalgia has shaped many South Koreans’ understanding of traditional music in colonial and postcolonial War South Korea. In her words: “A chorus of laments for vanishing Korean traditions has accompanied more than a century of Korean modernity.” Kendall, \textit{Shamans, Nostalgia}, xxiii.

\textsuperscript{233} Andrew Killick argues that the late-19th century construction of Korean opera (ch’anggŭk) was a response to the anxieties triggered by foreign cultural influences around this time. He also shows that ch’anggŭk was already a hybrid form, despite the practitioners’ linear, purist understanding of this art form. See Andrew Killick, \textit{In Search of Korean Traditional Opera: Discourses of Ch’anggŭk} (Honolulu: University of H’awaii Press, 2010).
Hee’s 18-year dictatorship (1961-1979). Park’s program of modernization promoted and brought about a massive population displacement from rural areas to a few major cities and in the process disrupted agrarian-based patterns of relationship and community. Urbanization and industrialization under Park’s rule exacerbated the tension arising from the real and perceived displacement of autochthonous cultures amidst the exigencies of modern, Western-affiliated nationhood—a tension that is not unique to South Korea but is found as well in similarly positioned countries (i.e., U.S.-aligned countries in Asia). This tension is an important context that conditioned the conscious and subconscious motivations for a search for an “authentic Korean essence” and framed the practice of traditional music as a site in which to define and “discover” such an essence.

The state’s negotiation of traditional music constituted an official response to this perceived identity crisis. The most important project in this regard is the establishment of the system of “Important Intangible Cultural Properties and Human Cultural Treasures,” adopted by Park Chung Hee’s government in 1962 through the Cultural Property Protection Act. This system offered a totalizing vision of Korean tradition within the high walls of Kungnip kugagwŏn (The National Center for Korean Traditional Performing Arts). In the course of Park’s 18-year rule, which spanned almost the entirety of the 1960s and 1970s, the selection committee of the “Properties and Treasures” system, chosen largely by pro-establishment researchers, proclaimed 62 traditions worthy of becoming “national traditions,” including high traditions such as Neo-Confucian court ritual music and previously controversial ones like kut (shamanic rituals). They

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236 Kungnip kugagwŏn itself was built in 1950 under the aegis of Syngman Rhee with the goal of “preserving and promoting traditional Korean music.” During the 1950s, the system of preservation extended primarily to court music.
also included professional genres like *p’ansori* (solo vocal theater) and humbler traditions tied to pre-colonial agrarian life such as *nongak* (farmers’ percussion music) and *nori* (literally, “playing”). Together, these practices came to constitute a pantheon of national performing arts and gave rise to a hagiographic literature surrounding traditional artists who were “appointed...to maintain and transmit these genres in what was considered their ‘authentic form’ (*wŏnhyŏng*).”

Park’s totalizing co-optation of traditional music under the category of “national music” (*kugak*) mirrored the larger official discourse of “authentic” Korean identity, which formed one of the major cultural rationales for Park’s draconian policies. As a number of scholars note, the discourse of Korean uniqueness promoted by Park’s regime served to naturalize oppressive policies such as anti-labor laws by presenting state-managed, export-oriented capitalism as a function of “Korean culture” (e.g., Confucian morality, familism, and work ethics).

The top-down nationalism of Park’s regime entailed an intense interest in reinforcing a conception of Korea as a unique and modern nation, and it is this two-pronged model that contributed to the “museumization” of traditional music. The Properties and Treasures system supported commemorative, didactic, and de-contextualized performances of “national music”

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238 Killick notes: “Park seems to have addressed this concern [his illicit rise to power] by representing his government as a patron and supporter of those symbols of Korean national identity, the traditional performing arts, in which he had never previously shown the slightest interest.” Killick, “Jockeying for Tradition,” 69.

239 This official nationalist logic is well summarized by the euphemistic term “Korean-style modernization” and its synonyms “Confucian-style modernization” and “East Asian-style modernization.” Used in a celebratory manner by pro-establishment scholars during Park’s rule and reproduced by curious scholars in the West fascinated with South Korea’s fast economic recovery following the Korean War, these terms justified state-managed, export-oriented capitalism as a uniquely South Korean phenomenon and served to draw attention away from the political dissent that the state attempted to silence. See Cha, “Myth and Reality,” 2003.
within the government-sponsored cultural space (*Kungnip kugagwŏn*), rather than re-embedding traditional music in the lived experiences of South Koreans. As Namhee Lee suggests in *The Making of Minjung*, the goal of Park’s policies regarding traditional music may never have been to re-assert it in a living context but rather to affirm Koreans as moderns by folding certain cultural practices into a temporal space called “the past.” She states: “the official designation of folk culture as national tradition formalized and displaced the lived experience of the past as an artifact and at the same time highlighted contemporary Korea’s transformation from the past.”

The state’s top-down revival projects contrasted with those initiated by the *minjung* movement, a grassroots pro-democracy campaign that voiced dissent vis-à-vis the state (*minjung* is conventionally translated as “the people” or “the masses”). The *minjung* movement represented an alliance between university students and labor that formed in the context of three consecutive dictatorships—Syngman Rhee (1948-60), Park Chung Hee (1961-1979), and Chun Doo Hwan (1980-1988). The movement solidified in the course of Park Chung Hee’s rule, especially during the highly oppressive decade of the 1970s following the Yushin Restoration of 1971; it reached a peak during Chun Doo Hwan’s rule (1980s). While the movement was primarily a political one that opposed the high-handed measures of the dictatorships (e.g., harsh labor laws, abuse of martial law, and imprisonment of dissidents), its cultural projects were just as important, particularly as projects through which to re-frame questions of national identity in the public imaginary.

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240 For a striking description of the distance between everyday Koreans and *Kungnip kugagwŏn* in contemporary South Korea, see Killick, *In Search of Korean Traditional Opera*, 2-3.


As Namhee Lee demonstrates in her examination of the *minjung* movement, the political activism of the movement was conceived in conjunction with a cultural critique: the movement’s leaders maintained that “Koreans were not the subjects of their history” and that “their failure stemmed from South Korea’s geopolitical location in the cold-war order governed by the United States.”243 This view was supported by the division of the country, the U.S. military occupation of South Korea (justified by the national division), and the South Korean state’s economic policies, which, as the movement’s participants argued, reinforced South Korea’s neocolonial status.244 In this context, the movement appropriated particular Korean traditional performances, especially those that were rooted in agrarian, shamanic genealogies, in order to symbolically reassert a national agency, dramatize an alternative vision of national community, and stage a Korean subjectivity that departed from the cultures of hegemonic modernity.245 In this sense, the movement’s revivalist use of traditional music formed the basis for articulating what Walter D. Mignolo calls the “subaltern perspective,” a perspective that privileged “knowledge conceived from the exterior borders of the modern/colonial world system,” in opposition to the state-directed visions of modernity and modernization.246

The movement’s revivalist activities began in the late 1960s and typically involved college students. Student activists began “student-initiated ethnographic projects, exhibition of masks, and open classes for *p’ansori* (solo vocal music theater), *nongak* (farmers’ percussion music), and mask-making.” 247 Overall, they were interested in cultivating easy-to-learn, easy-to-adapt

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247 As Lee discusses in her book, the participants in the *minjung* movement were in many ways the first beneficiaries of South Korea’s modernization. Many of them belonged to the emerging urban middle class and thus grew up away from the countryside, which was increasingly idealized as the “authentic repository of Korean national identity” in the urban imaginary. While university education was widely perceived as a pathway to elite positions in urban South Korea, it also provided the students with the time and resources to think critically about sociocultural issues, including
participatory practices such as madangŭk (mask dance theater) and p’ungmul (an adaptation of farmers’ percussion band music). In a typical scenario, a group of students would conduct a carnival-like spectacle in the middle of an open market or near a busy train station. This entailed performing sung and spoken political satires with masked characters, and this type of spectacle would subsequently unravel into a version of nori (an agrarian participatory play) that invited the spectators to dance to collectively improvised percussion music.\textsuperscript{248}

The symbolic reclamation of (imagined) pre-modernity through participatory practices enabled the students to stage a cultural critique of modernity. It allowed them to “re-appropriate and reinvent folk culture as a counter-narrative of Korean modernity and capitalist development,”\textsuperscript{249} providing a framework in which the participants could evoke the symbolically significant identity of pre-modern Korean farmers (an historically oppressed group) and thus represent themselves as “oppressed people with a long history of struggle.”\textsuperscript{250} Moreover, as Namhee Lee notes, for many college students in these revival music groups, the participatory character of “folk” performances signified the transformation of theatrical arts from “Aristotelian catharsis”—catharsis through identification with the characters on stage—into a participatory play, much like a Bahktinian carnival.\textsuperscript{251} It allowed the participants a space in which to engage in a relationship of self and other typically ascribed to folk ritual traditions, in addition to providing them with an opportunity to engage embodied, improvised knowledge, which contrasted with Western musical

\textsuperscript{248} Lee, The Making of Minjung, 209-212.

\textsuperscript{249} Lee, The Making of Minjung, 191. Also see Katherine In-Young Lee, “The Drumming of Dissent During South Korea’s Democratization Movement,” Ethnomusicology 56, no. 2 (2012), 190-192.


\textsuperscript{251} Lee, The Making of Minjung, 201.
knowledge that was traditionally marked by “aspirations toward disembodiment,” to borrow Elaine Scarry’s phrase.252 Walter D. Mignolo’s notion of “border thinking” also is applicable to the minjung participants’ project of recuperating the participatory, collective, and improvised performances rooted in shamanic, agrarian cultures: Mignolo defines “border thinking” as “new forms of knowledge in which what has been subalternized and considered interesting only as object of [Western anthropological] study becomes articulated as new loci of enunciation.”253

The minjung movement’s strategic use of folk practices reached a peak in the 1980s against the backdrop of mounting tensions between the movement and the state. As Katherine In-Young Lee demonstrates in “The Drumming of Dissent During South Korea’s Democratization Movement,” adopted folk practices, especially those that used percussion instruments, were inserted into the framework of street protests as sonic expressions of political dissent.254 The protest marchers used puk, changgo, ching, and other percussion instruments to guide and script crowd formation during the rallies. The deep, resonant sounds of the portable drums reverberated with the highly charged atmosphere of the protests of the 1980s, which were driven by the memory of the 144 protestors who were killed by the state’s troops during the Gwangju democratization movement in 1980. Based on interviews with Koreans who participated in some of these protests, Katherine In-Young Lee records that “the mere sounds of drums and gong would often signify that a protest was taking place in the vicinity. These sonic associations with dissent were understood not only by student activists, but also by ordinary citizens.”255 The politicized uses of traditional percussion instruments reconfigured participatory folk practices as expressions


253 Mignolo, Local Histories / Global Designs, 13.


of counter-narrative and counter-memory that exposed the underside of the state’s all-consuming pursuit of economic progress.\textsuperscript{256}

**Han: Between Counter-memory and Essentialism**

The dual, intersecting cultures of revival in Cold War-era South Korea played an important role in recuperating traditional Korean music from the category of colonial difference. The *minjung* movement’s active appropriation of folk-style music was at the forefront of this cultural shift, but the state’s role cannot be completely discounted, as official institutions like the Kungnip kugagwŏn informed the practices of the *minjung* participants via the influence of professional performers who were either supported by the state or vied for state sponsorship (this overlap between hegemonic and counterhegemonic scenes of traditional music is a fascinating yet understudied aspect of the postwar Korean traditional music scene). The revivalist cultural environment—an environment driven by modernization, as I mentioned earlier—encouraged many South Koreans to develop an interest in the notion of “Korean identity.” From this revivalist context emerged discourses of han, perhaps the most wide-ranging conception of “Korean-ness” in postwar South Korea. Han literally means “resentment” or “sorrow”\textsuperscript{257} and is understood variously as an ethos, affect, and/or trope communicating the subjectivity and perspective of a sufferer. Along with the participatory folk aesthetic appropriated by the *minjung* movement—an aesthetic sometimes summarized by the keyword hŭng—han became a major frame through which to re-consider what it is to be “Korean” in an age dominated by the discourse of progress. While hŭng signified an affirmative celebration by the subjected Korean folk, the discourse of han mythologized a uniquely “Korean” subjectivity of suffering, often locating its symbolic expressions

\textsuperscript{256} Also see Frank Hoffmann’s article on comparable expressions in *minjung* visual art during the 1980s and after. Frank Hoffmann, “Images of Dissent: Transformations in Korean Minjung Art,” *Asia Pacific Review* 1, no. 2 (1996): 44-49. This article, which contains images of a number of symbolic *minjung* artworks, may be accessed online: http://koreanstudies.com/minjungart/

\textsuperscript{257} The Korean word han is based on the Chinese ideogram 恨.
in traditional vocal music practices. In what follows, I consider the complex, multivalent discourses of *han* and subsequently explore how it came to inform a “Korean” style of singing in the vocal tradition of *p’ansori*.

As a number of scholars note, a discussion of *han* should first acknowledge its semantic elusiveness. This fluidity is demonstrated by the multiplicity of tropes, interpretations, and representations surrounding *han*. The difficulty of pinning down the semantics and genealogy of *han* has made it difficult for scholars of modern Korea (both Korean-language and Anglophone) to associate it with a single political position or with a clearly delineated set of affects or aesthetics.\(^{258}\) Scholars as well as South Koreans who use this term have privileged a range of disparate yet overlapping viewpoints—including linguistic, historical, ontological, and political viewpoints—in defining *han*.

Perspectives grounded in empirical research often stress the situated-ness of *han* in the everyday language of the lower socioeconomic groups in South Korea. For example, ethnomusicologist Heather Willoughby recalls encountering the active use of the term *han* among older Korean women with whom she lived in an impoverished farming village in 1986. Willoughby notes that these elderly women invoked *han* to convey an embodied sense of victimization, sensibilities “which were in some instances circumscribed by social status, gender, class, and age.”\(^{259}\) She observes: “*han* was seen [by the older women] as an emotion one felt from being wronged in some way, either by another person or by particular events and circumstances, such as institutional injustices.”\(^{260}\) In another ethnographic episode, Willoughby describes a male South

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\(^{258}\) In her dissertation on *p’ansori* and *han*, ethnomusicologist Heather Willoughby deals extensively with the difficulty of defining *han* by examining various discourses of *han* among the South Korean people and scholars. See Heather Willoughby, “The Sound of Han: *P’ansori*, Timbre, and a South Korean Discourse of Sorrow and Lament” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2002). Also see Lie, *Han Unbound*, 112.

\(^{259}\) Willoughby, “The Sound of Han,” 5.

\(^{260}\) Willoughby, “The Sound of Han,” 5.
Korean taxi driver—the prototype of the urban working class in modern South Korea—who referenced *han* to explain what it means to be Korean to his white American customer.\(^{261}\)

The class- and gender-associated linguistic consideration of *han* is often presented in conjunction with narratives that emphasize the broader historical structure of victimization, both by the South Korean users of this term as well as scholars. Such narratives of *han* regularly invoke external developments as sources of “Korean” suffering. The most commonly cited development in this regard is the Japanese occupation of Korea, which is sometimes supplemented by the “memory” of the Japanese invasions of Korea in the 16\(^{th}\) century. These Japanese incursions constitute well-remembered histories that are endorsed by both hegemonic and counterhegemonic nationalisms in South Korea. Alternately, *han* discourse may invoke a generalized historical suffering; for example, *han* may be described as cultural expressions rooted in “hardships endured during Korea’s five thousand year history”\(^{262}\) or “the accumulation of human tragedies.”\(^{263}\)

Some of the history-based narratives of *han* shift the focus to gender- and/or class-specific suffering rooted in national and/or transnational structures of inequality. For instance, film scholar Seung Hyun Park notes that many of the South Korean films censored in the 1980s ascribed *han* explicitly to South Korea’s working-class women, whose longstanding structural dispossession as women and as laborers was exacerbated under the conditions of compressed modernity (for example, many worked in factories for the sole purpose of subsidizing their male siblings’ college education). Park notes that in these films, “*han* connotes the futility of efforts to overcome suffering. This quality is especially ascribed to the women laborers, who must tolerate twofold suffering since, under the county’s Confucian social order, they are subordinate to men

\(^{261}\) Willoughby, “The Sound of Han,” 2.

\(^{262}\) Willoughby, “The Sound of Han,” 2.

\(^{263}\) Lie, *Han Unbound*, 114.
and must endure economic hardship.”

Similar filmic, literary, and historical projects in the 1980s attempted to re-inscribe the common people’s suffering in narrations of national division, capitalist modernity, and U.S. military involvement in South Korea. These han-invoking narratives served to “remember” structural conditions of dispossession and often used the metaphor of the body, especially a disabled or disfigured body, to confirm the incontestable reality of suffering. Such politicizing narratives of han, many of which were formulated by the minjung movement’s participants, demonstrate the political instrumentality of han as a kind of “mobilizing myth,” rather than as a national essence. Importantly, these narratives accrued additional meanings as the minjung movement incorporated the framework of public mourning into their protests during the 1970s and the 1980s. As I mentioned earlier, these large-scale public funeral services, which were mounted as solemn, sorrowful processions that traversed the streets of major cities, lamented the deaths of unarmed citizens who were killed at the hands of the state.

The powerful grasp of han on the public imaginary is, interestingly, evidenced by the appropriation of han among some South Korean Christians during these decades. Although these Korean Christians constituted a minority that had little influence on the larger domain of Protestant churches in Korea—which, as I have demonstrated, has tended to be among the most vocal supporters of dominant notions of modernity—they communicated a desire to interweave the direction of South Korean Christianity with the perspectives of han and the minjung

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266 Elaine Scarry’s The Body in Pain offers an intriguing framework for considering han tropes that enlist the body. Scarry reflects on the “incontestable reality” of the body by examining the meaning of the injured body in the contexts of torture and war. She argues that to locate pain in the body is to establish an incontestable reality as pain confirms a material “inside” of discourse. As she puts: “Physical pain is not only itself resistant to language but also actively destroys language, deconstructing it into the pre-language of cries and groans. To hear those cries is to witness the shattering of language.” See Scarry, The Body in Pain, 172.

267 Lie, Han Unbound, 138.

movement. These self-proclaimed minjung theologians and ministers called for a “theology of han,” which would privilege “the suffering of Korean workers and farmers” as the main perspective of South Korean Christianity, and critiqued mainstream South Korean Christian discourse for disseminating “doctrines and theories about sin which are heavily charged with the bias of the ruling class.”

It should be noted that the history-citing narratives of han have been supplemented by essentialist, non-historical, and ontological notions that view han as an “ethos,” “spirit,” or “national characteristic.” Consider, for example, Sang-jin Choi’s definition in his 2010 book *Psychology of the Korean People*:

Han is the most Korean and most archetypal characteristic of Korean people’s sentiment or nature. Most Korean people would regard it as the Koreans’ national sentiment. Not only scholars but also ordinary people believe that han is the archetypal nature of Korean people and that it represents the spirit of Korean culture. In other words, han is the collective symbol of Korean people.

Definitions like this, which are sometimes informed and fed by historical interpretations, point to a psychology of nostalgia and trace a profound desire for an opaque, unrepeatable, pure “essence” of Koreans, an essence that is perceived to be under the threat of displacement (also note that these definitions echo the fetishizing orientation of *Kungnip kugagwŏn*). A brief look at the film *Sŏpyŏnje* (1993), a very popular South Korean film that reinforced an essentialist notion of han in the national(ist) imaginary, demonstrates how han can collapse into a troubling essentialism. Set in mid-century South Korea, the film tells the story of a male itinerant p’ansori (solo vocal theater) artist who, motivated by a growing frustration at the replacement of indigenous performing arts, damages his adopted daughter’s eyesight, thereby inculcating han in her: he believes that this bodily disfigurement will permanently bind her to “tradition” and develop her as an authentic

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instrument of han, which she would channel as a p'ansori singer. The subjection of the female body to inescapable, unending suffering as portrayed in this film is traceable to a patriarchal desire to confirm a “Korean difference” (or, to borrow Spivak’s phrase, “nostalgia for lost origins”), in which the suffering female native body is configured as an anti-colonial, patriarchal national symbol.271 This imagination of han embodied-ness serves as an example study of the gendered, embodied transfixions that have fed similar desires across colonial and postcolonial Asia.

**Han, P’ansori, and a “Korean” Way of Singing**

The subjectivity of the sufferer that underpins various notions of han came to be linked with traditional Korean vocal practices in postwar South Korea. This connection was particularly notable in the case of p’ansori, an oral genre in which a single vocalist employs song, dialogue, and gesture to narrate an epic story, assisted by a drummer who plays a set of rhythmic cycles to accompany the vocalist. P’ansori was formed at the intersection of folk performance traditions such as shamanic ritual music and professional entrainment traditions (for example, underclass performers’ entertainment for the upper class) in 18th-century Korea. Reflecting this multigenealogy, p’ansori is an intertextual art form in which the singer references and interweaves various stories, character types (e.g., “yangban,” “courtesan,” etc.) and folksong melodies.272

P’ansori practice and the discourse of han came to reinforce each other in postwar South Korea: the notion of han inflected the practice of singing in p’ansori, and p’ansori came to serve...

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as “evidence” of han, satisfying many South Koreans’ growing interest in Korean traditional culture, han, and notions of Korean identity. This mutual articulation supplied symbolic images and sounds of han to the intersecting nationalist imaginaries and made p’ansori one of the most revered traditional music genres. As ethnomusicologist Andrew Killick notes in his study of ch’anggūk, a multi-person setting of p’ansori, themes of suffering had long been components of professional vocal genres, but it was only in the 1970s that they were obsessively singled out, named, and privileged. Killick thus emphasizes the revivalist character of han: he notes that it was during this decade that the practitioners of ch’anggūk began to associate themes of suffering, self-sacrifice, and grief found in classical p’ansori texts with han, which they theorized as a “Korean affect [that] is different from that of other nationalities.”

Importantly, the pedagogic-interpretive literature formulated by major postwar p’ansori teachers demonstrates the convergence of han, “Korean identity,” and p’ansori performance and suggests the ways in which the notion of han shaped a “Korean” singing style. Overall, this literature elevates techniques that produce a sense of sorrow over other techniques that were regarded as more important in the past: for example, techniques for humorous, peaceful, and heroic singing. It also places an extraordinary emphasis on the process of cultivating the correct timbre for the purpose of voicing sorrow. Acceptable timbres include surisŏng (husky voice), aewŏnsŏng (sorrowful voice), and ch’ŏlsŏng (metallic voice); unacceptable timbres include

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273 See Killick, “Jockeying for Tradition.” Also see Kwon, Music in Korea, 114. The assimilation of the han discourse into p’ansori circuits reflects the broader tendency of postwar traditional musicians to absorb and repeat a mixture of official and unofficial nationalist discourses, due to their self-perception as the spokespeople of the Korean nation.


275 My intention in this section is not to provide a comprehensive examination of p’ansori but to convey a sense of how p’ansori performance is taught and discussed in post-1960s South Korea. For a comprehensive study of p’ansori, see Chan E. Park, Voices from the Straw Mat: Toward an Ethnography of Korean Story-Singing (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2003).

norangmok (techniques with no tension), hamsŏng (inhibited voice), yangsŏng (bright voice), and palbalsŏng (quivering voice). Timbre is conceptualized as a frame that contextualizes vocal articulations, which, in conjunction with timbre, produce affective utterances of “wailing” and “sobbing”—utterances that have become the synecdoche for p'ansori in postwar South Korea. These articulations entail specific ornamentations and descending microtonal inflections, which may be compared to descending glissandos, mordents, and melismas.

Vocal articulations are used throughout a p'ansori work in different tonal configurations, but an iconic wailing articulation worth examining here involves a specific descent in kyemyŏnjo, a pentatonic scale characterized by a “melancholic and soft sentiment...usually employed to express tragic scenes or the subtle movements of a female.” Kyemyŏnjo, a scale widely used in folk singing styles and the “western school” (sŏp’yŏnje) of p’ansori, is described in the pedagogic literature as the dominant scale of p’ansori, privileged over the majestic pentatonic scale of p’yŏngjo, which is associated with court styles and the “eastern school” (tongp’yŏnje) of p’ansori. Figures 3.1 and 3.2 are representations of these two pentatonic scales. As theorists of Korean music note, the sorrowful quality of kyemyŏnjo is due to the interval of a minor third between the central tone (kŭng) and the next higher scale degree (G and Bb in Fig. 3.1). Interestingly, the sorrowfulness of the minor-third interval was perceived to be a threat to the Neo-Confucian aesthetics of “moderation” and “concord,” and thus this interval was “erased” in the court’s use of kyemyŏnjo during the Chosŏn period (1392-1895).

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277 These epithets, which designate acceptable and unacceptable timbres, are communicated between the teacher and the student in practice. Um, “Professional Music,” 121; Kim, “Theory of Pansori,” 51.


279 Um, “Professional Music,” 112-120.


281 Hwang, “Melodic Patterns,” 847.
in *kyempyŏnjo* (and by extension, *p’ansori*) takes place between the scale degree above the central tone and the central tone; in Figure 3.1, this descent is performed between B♭ and A, which suspends the arrival onto G.

![Figure 3.1: Kyempyŏnjo, from Hwang, “Melodic Patterns in Korea”](image1)

Figure 3.2: *P’yŏngjo*, from Hwang, “Melodic Patterns in Korea”

![Figure 3.2: P’yŏngjo, from Hwang, “Melodic Patterns in Korea”](image2)

The emotionally charged nature of this descent is reinforced by a number of vocalization techniques that are associated with specific body parts. For example, harsh attacks require constricting the throat, long melismatic phrases may call for the head voice, and a special “jaw voice” is produced by “constricting the jaw and shaking the neck from side to side.”

These mutually reinforcing parameters of timbre, ornamentation, and vocalization techniques are summed up in the heuristic term *sigimsae*. The discussion of *sigimsae* often leads to discussions of *han* in the pedagogic literature. *P’ansori* specialists explain that *sigimsae* is responsible for producing the desired aesthetic categories of *gŭnŭl* (shadow) and *imyŏn* (hidden interiority; depth), and the specialists subsequently broaden this discussion into a sociocultural exegesis that invokes *han*. For example, *p’ansori* scholar Hae-kyung Um writes: “*Guneul* [gŭnŭl] is appreciated by *pansori* audiences because of its association with a husky and deep voice colour

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282 Um, “Professional Music,” 118.
and mastery of vocal techniques. This quality...is also related to the sorrowful han sentiment or pathos...”283 In other words, the integration of such husky, sorrowful timbres into recurring instances of descending vocal slides strikes the audience (and non-specialist audiences in particular) as producing iterations of absolute vulnerability, seemingly unfolding at the threshold of singing and speaking. Ethnomusicologist Heather Willoughby’s recollection of her first encounter with this singing style in her fascinating dissertation “The Sound of Han: P’ansori, Timbre, and a South Korean Discourse of Sorrow and Lament” demonstrates the compelling nature of this particular singing technique: “I had never before heard such heart-wrenching music. I did not immediately understand why it had that effect on me, but began to concentrate more fully on the sounds themselves, the apparent bitter cries of lamentation.”284

The siting of han within the genre of p’ansori exemplifies the dual capacities of traditional Korean music both to essentialize “Korean-ness” and to enable alternative self-representations. On the one hand, the fusion of p’ansori with han appears to traffic in a desire for Korean “difference” in an age of perceived and real Westernization. The pedagogic literature’s emphasis on “individuality and artistic creativity” in p’ansori singing seems to be symptomatic of this desire. Consider, for example, the term “photographic singing,” coined by renowned mid-century p’ansori specialist Myŏng-hwan Kim (1913-89) to promote this objective. Kim devised this term to discourage the act of directly copying one’s teacher (“worthless imitation of a teacher’s singing”) and to draw out the individual singers’ unique interior self.285 A term that makes reference to an object that was introduced to Korea in the late 19th century from the West, “photographic singing” raises the question of whether the concern for interiority in Kim’s theorization was an outcome of the encounter between Koreans and “Western” ideas—i.e., whether it is a kind of retreatment that

283 Um, “Professional Music,” 121.
“performed” a cultural distinction from avowedly Western practices of musical representation and reproduction enabled by notation and technology. While this interpretation draws on a minute detail, it echoes a line of critique regarding the modern musical construction of non-Western ontologies across Asia.286

The concern for Korean authenticity, interiority, and opacity in pedagogic literature on p’ansori is compounded by the association of many p’ansori singers with state-sponsored institutions of traditional music and the widespread perception of these singers as the “guardians” of Korean heritage.287 P’ansori singers themselves have tended to make the connection between han, Korean identity, and p’ansori, and to view themselves as voicing the Korean “spirit.” For example, consider the statement of a p’ansori teacher that Heather Willoughby quotes in a multi-authored, canonical publication on p’ansori (2008):

I think [Koreans developed an aesthetic for a husky voice in pansori] because people have experienced han. Han is also a personal, internal experience—an experience of difficulty from birth... This is the experience of life, one accumulates sorrow throughout life—everyone does, all throughout the world. But in Korea's case there is another aspect to han. The life and way of practicing for a pansori singer is extremely lonely and utterly exhausting... You are always striving for a higher artistic state. But you cannot climb to that high state without loneliness. And so you must live alone. That is the sound of han.288

This statement ascribes an all-encompassing quality to han: Koreans’ shared history of suffering is interiorized in the singer, and this sense of suffering is in turn exteriorized into the training space.

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286 See, for example, Amanda Weidman’s 2006 work on Karnatic music culture in colonial South India. Weidman makes the provocative argument that local Indian musicians began to fetishize the orality of Karnatic tradition as the source of authentic Indianness as they assimilated the colonial, binary framework for understanding the difference between Western and non-Western music (“written,” “technical,” “secular,” and “instrumental” on one side, and “oral,” “spiritual,” “devotional,” and “vocal” on the other). Amanda Weidman, Singing the Classical, Voicing the Modern: The Postcolonial Politics of Music in South India (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006). The quoted words are from p. 4.


Although the concern for authenticity tracks an essentialist orientation, it is possible to find instances in which sounds of Korean “difference” cultivated in *p’ansori* are re-situated as subaltern utterances, given the somewhat fluid boundary between the official (*Kungnip kugagwŏn*) and unofficial (*minjung*) revival projects (in this regard, it should be noted that governmental support played a significant role in sustaining this genre in the 1960s and 1970s\(^{289}\)). *P’ansori* singers, despite their perceived connection with state-directed institutions, found an enthusiastic audience in South Korea’s university campuses, the breeding grounds of the *minjung* movement. The singers were regularly invited by *minjung* participants to hold concerts and workshops and idealized as carriers of alternative musical knowledge, although the protestors typically did not appropriate *p’ansori* as a framework for cultural critique; as my discussion of *p’ansori* pedagogy suggests, *p’ansori* is not a straightforward folk music practice but a professional art form that requires years of training.

For a striking example of re-situated, politicized *p’ansori*, we may consider a fascinating episode recorded in Heather Willoughby’s work on *p’ansori*. Willoughby explains that her first experience of this art form was in the context of a *minjung* rally in 1986. She recounts that this particular performance, which took place in a filled-to-capacity concert hall on a university campus, featured a *p’ansori* artist singing “heartwrenching music...designed to arouse the emotions of the audience—an audience who would soon be out on the street demanding the immediate removal of all U.S. military personnel from Korea.”\(^{290}\) According to Willoughby, the *p’ansori* singer (who she later learned was the legendary singer Kim So-hŭi) delivered a performance that adapted the playful critique of upper-class society embedded in some *p’ansori* texts to mock Americans. Willoughby comments on the galvanizing effect of Kim So-hŭi’s performance: “Though the singer was an elderly woman, I am sure she was well aware of the

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\(^{290}\) Willoughby, “Sound of Han,” 27.
desires of the youth and purpose of the concert, and no doubt she knew her music was a potent voice for protest.”

Moreover, as *p’ansori* historian Kee Hyung Kim notes, a minority of amateur and professional *p’ansori* singers created new *p’ansori* works or adapted old ones according to the ideals of the *minjung* movement in the 1980s, taking the singing tradition outside the “organized system of preservation and transmission” instituted by the Intangible Culture Treasure Protection Law. These practitioners include Chin-t’aek Im, a *minjung* movement leader, *p’ansori* student, and graduate of Seoul National University, who recorded new *p’ansori* performances based on contemporary political satires; and Myŏng-gon Kim, a professional singer who re-worked satires in classical *p’ansori* texts to “illustrate the contemporaneous political reality in a direct manner.” As these recorded incidents suggests, *p’ansori* and other kinds of traditional Korean music may be re-articulated or re-framed as they are introduced into specific social scenarios, especially those beyond the *Kungnip kugagwŏn*.

The next section examines how the new frameworks of self-representation enabled by the revival projects entered South Korean Christian choral music, which had theretofore been among the musical forms that most emphatically promulgated the Western-centric, universalist cultural orientation in the larger cultural terrain of postwar South Korea.

**Neotraditional Choral Music and the South Korean Christian Choral Repertory**

The legitimation of traditional Korean music sparked by the *minjung* movement contributed to an extensive re-writing of cultural production and attitudes beginning in the late 1980s. This shift was also acknowledged in the sphere of South Korean Protestant choral music, as a number of South Korean composers appropriated symbolic elements of traditional Korean music.

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293 Kim, “History of Pansori,” 15
music and applied them to the Christian choral medium, which in many ways had embodied the opposite cultural orientation since its beginnings in colonial P’yŏngyang and Seoul in the 1930s.\textsuperscript{294}

The significance of tradition-based choral pieces—pieces that I call “neotraditional”—becomes more pronounced when we consider it in the context of Korean Christianity’s longstanding suspicion of indigenous performances. The church’s sensitivity to indigenous performances in the postwar period was a legacy of the universalist Christian metaphysics that guided the U.S. Protestant mission in Korea. As we saw in Chapter 1, this mission and its Korean associates constructed a number of binaries through which indigenous expressive cultures were placed into categories of colonial difference opposite Western tonal music practices: “barbaric” versus “civilized”; “backward” versus “modern”; and for shamanic rituals like kut, “evil” and “diabolical” versus “Godly.” These binaries were repeated and further internalized in the postcolonial period through the secular and religious politics of the Cold War, as well as an ubiquitous social emphasis on “progress,” with North Korea’s presence functioning as an additional rationale for aligning the notion of “progress” with the Cold-War First World (see Chapter 2). It was in this postwar context that occasional calls for the “indigenization” of Protestant vocal music were defeated. According to church music historian Chŏng-su Hong, the decades leading up to 1970s saw “some arguments for the indigenization of church music,” but “they regularly hit a wall because traditional music reminded the people of kisaeng [courtesans], kwangdae [itinerant entertainers], and mudang [shamans].”\textsuperscript{295}

The disavowal of indigenous music as a proper source of South Korean Christian vocal music not only prefigured a relative absence of stylistic diversity in the choral repertory but also reinforced the position of a conservative core of exiled Christian composers who sought to prevent

\textsuperscript{294} Chŏng-su Hong locates the beginning of a Korean-language choral culture in this milieu. He notes that the hymn performance culture cultivated a few decades earlier provided the conditions for the adoption of Western-style sacred choral music during this period. Hong, Han’guk kyohoe ūmak, 79-117.

\textsuperscript{295} Hong, Han’guk kyohoe ūmak, 243.
the potential incursions of indigenous expressive cultures into the music-stylistic landscape of South Korean Protestant vocal music, both congregational and choral (see Chapter 2 for profiles of Korean Christian composers who fled from the northern part of Korea to the southern part between 1945 and 1953). For instance, Tu-hoe Ku, an exiled composer and a leading figure in official Christian music institutions (e.g., the Korean Church Music Association and hymnal compilation boards), responded to some musicians’ efforts to re-text Korean folk songs as Protestant hymns in 1976 with an argument that appealed to the musical monogenealogy of Christianity. He wrote: “In Korea, there was music for the pursuit of pleasure but there was no music for religion. It is a sophistry to try to convert a tradition that is so fundamentally different [from Christianity]. It is like trying to make Christianity absurd.”

Tu-hoe Ku maintained this attitude even as some of the exiled composers revised their earlier theses against indigenization over the course of the postwar decades. Writing as late as 1999, Tu-hoe Ku cautioned the Hymn Society of Korea (Han’guk ch’ansongga konghoe) in a letter: “Because Korean culture has developed with roots in indigenous religion, one must never employ it indiscriminately for church music. The reason is that Korean cultural materials developed from a shamanist religion. In other words, these materials are ritual tools that serve evil spirits [chapsin]. The leaders of the Korean church should understand clearly that such cultural materials are all Caesar’s, not God’s.”

Tu-wan Kim, an exiled composer and the most beloved choral music composer in postwar South Korea, was not as vocal as Tu-hoe Ku, but he was also guided by notions of the “correct” music style for Christian musical worship in South Korea. Church music historian Kyu-hyŏn Kim describes Tu-wan Kim’s philosophy as expressed in an interview of the composer: “Kim studied national music (kugak) in order to write Korean church music and even composed a few pieces in

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296 Tu-hoe Ku, Kărisiuch’an sanmun [Christian Daily], June 5, 1976. Quoted in Hong, Han’guk kyohoe ümak, 303.

297 Quoted in Hong, Han’guk kyohoe ümak, 302.
this style, but he realized that this was not the correct form (jŏnghyŏng) of church music. Since then, he has combined Western tonal style with church modes."^298

The negative reception of two major syncretic musical projects before 1990 also indexes hegemonic Christian cultural attitudes toward traditional music. The first of these projects concerns Un-yŏng La, whose background stood out amidst the P'yŏngyang-educated, exiled Christian composers who dominated the Protestant composition scene in South Korea. A Seoul-born composer who grew up in a non-Christian family, La advocated the use of traditional music as source material for Christian vocal music and composed a range of choral pieces and hymns based on his philosophy of “indigenization first, modernization second” [sŏn to'ech'akjhwa hu hyŏndaehwa], which was in turn influenced by the music of Debussy and Stravinsky.\(^299\) La was “widely criticized and mocked by Korean churches” for these music projects.\(^300\) His reputation was also tarnished when his musical collaboration with Won Buddhist leaders in 1966 became an advertised scandal among Christian music circles. La’s biographer explains that this incident, which became “an Achilles heel” for La’s career as a composer of religious music, invited “all kinds of persecutions by South Korea’s hymnal board.”\(^301\) The board’s suspicion towards La’s project in part explains why none of the 1,300 folk song-based hymns that La composed in the course of 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s was included in South Korea’s official hymnals.\(^302\) Overall, La’s works—sacred as well as non-religious—have tended to be revered by secular critics in South Korea, who

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\(^{298}\) Kyu-hyŏn Kim, Kyohoe ūmak chakgokka ūi segye [The World of Korean Church Music Composers] (Seoul: Yesol, 2006), 83.


\(^{300}\) Kim, Kyohoe ūmak, 68.


\(^{302}\) Historian Chŏng-su Hong also identifies the congregation’s musical taste and values as an additional reason why La’s compositions were never adopted for choral and congregational singing: “La’s unique approach of ‘Korean-style harmony’ is considered unfamiliar among the congregation.” Hong, Han’guk kyohoe ūmak, 243, 302.
have grouped him with modernist Korean composers such as Isang Yun and Sun-nam Kim, both of whom were erased from South Korea’s cultural memory due to their associations with North Korea.303

Reverend Tae-ik Hwang’s Han’guk kugak sŏn’gyohoe (Korean Music Mission) was another controversial project. Hwang introduced an ensemble of kayagŭm (a zither used in traditional yangban-centered music) and Korean percussion instruments as an alternative to choral worship beginning in 1984. A recent interview with Hwang reveals that he was obliged constantly to reassure the public of the “proper” nature of his project. He stated: “At first we encountered fierce opposition from both Christians and traditional musicians... However, once people [Christians] saw that our project was actually conservative and saw that it was proper as Christian music, some people began to change their minds.”304 He also recalled the particularly hostile responses of Korean diasporic churches in the U.S., Germany, and Japan: “the pastors of these diasporic churches told me plainly not to come when I offered to perform at their churches.” The story of how Hwang’s project became more accepted among these pastors outlines one of the few pathways through which traditional music may gain legitimacy among the South Korean middle class (diasporic or otherwise): when the pastors in their respective diasporas discovered that Hwang had been invited to perform at prestigious institutions such as Stanford University and the University of Illinois, they changed their earlier positions and let Hwang perform at their churches. Evidently, it was “global” (read: First-World) recognition that helped to dispel their biases against traditional Korean music.

303 Hong, “Chakkokka La Un-yŏng,” 20. Isang Yun (1917-1995) was kidnapped in West Germany by the South Korean secret service in 1967 because he had visited North Korea in 1963 (Yun had lived in West Germany since 1959). Sun-nam Kim was a South-to-North exiled composer and a prominent member of the Seoul-based socialist party before the Korean War (see Chapter 2). Un Yong La’s life was also interwoven with Cold-War politics. He was invited to study with Olivier Messiaen in 1953 but was barred from leaving South Korea because his brother was among the Koreans in the south who were reportedly sequestered by the North Korean government during the Korean War.

An examination of the postwar choral repertory in terms of music style demonstrates the hegemonic musical values and tastes of the South Korean church choirs, as well as the congregations’ and choirs’ conditions of hearing as they were shaped by continuous exposure to this repertory. This repertory has circulated via choral compilations that travel widely across mainstream Protestant church choirs—choirs that cater to singers with minimal formal training in Western music—as well as independent Christian choirs composed of professional singers.\textsuperscript{305} The core of this repertory is rooted in mid-to-late 19\textsuperscript{th}-century English-American Protestant vocal traditions.\textsuperscript{306} Many choral pieces in this core style are extended settings of congregational hymns and gospel music made by American Protestant composers during the latter half of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, for example, Robert Lowry (1826-1899), Will Lamartine Thompson (1847-1909), Charles H. Gabriel (1856-1932), and Haldor Lilienas (1885-1959).\textsuperscript{307} Alternately, some are standalone compositions that adapt the structures and topics of 18\textsuperscript{th}- and 19\textsuperscript{th}-century European sacred choral traditions into short, simplified formats that take from four to ten minutes to perform. Situated between U.S. congregational music and common-practice European cantata traditions, these compositions elaborate on the clear diatonic progressions and balanced phrase structures characteristic of the former via the more complex devices found in the latter. For example, a number of pieces use modulation and tonicization, shifting choral textures, elaborate keyboard accompaniment, and contrasting sections—such as a short middle section that interleaves a virtuosic solo with choral singing—to elongate and dramatize the musical narratives of simpler congregational tunes. Figure 3.3 cites passages from a representative piece in this style. It is a

\textsuperscript{305} Compilations of this kind are assembled by experienced, authoritative editors (for example, music professors at Christian seminaries in South Korea) and facilitated by publishers who buy new copyrighted materials from publishers in the U.S. These compilations serve a pragmatic function rather than being formal anthologies: the featured pieces appear undated and typically do not contain any information other than authorship. They are easy-to-use manuals for choir directors working across mainline Protestant denominations in South Korea, which have conventionally included Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and Reformed churches, as well as Pentecostal varieties.

\textsuperscript{306} Hong, Han’guk kyohoe ūmak, 13.

\textsuperscript{307} Typically, these pieces are settings by the composers themselves or edited versions by arrangers in the U.S. and South Korea.
Korean-texted version of Will Thompson’s “The Lord’s Garden” (Chu ūi tongsan ūro), which has been one of the most beloved pieces among choir singers since its introduction to Korea in 1937.\(^{308}\)

Figure 3.3: Will Thompson, “The Lord’s Garden” / “Chu ūi tongsan ūro”

mm. 1-8: “How beautiful is the Lord’s Garden, let’s go there together. There is no suffering for all eternity”

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\(^{308}\) Hong, Han’guk kyohoe ūmak, 13. In my nine-year experience as a piano accompanist of two Korean-language Christian choirs (1993-2000; 2008-2010), I have rehearsed this piece with choirs more often than any other piece. This piece’s popularity is also reflected in the large number of recorded performances of this piece uploaded to various Korean church websites.
mm. 55-62: “That beautiful place, the Lord’s garden, a bright and splendid garden, an angel’s beautiful song is heard”

The postwar choral repertory also includes a sub-category of European “classics,” which commemorate the presumed musical lineage of the adopted canon. Handel’s “Hallelujah Chorus” from Messiah, for example, became part of the canon already in the 1930s. Among other beloved
pieces are short, arranged sections within extensive sacred vocal works by Handel, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, as well as a number of sacred songs by early 20th-century French composers, for instance, Jean Baptiste Faure’s “Les Rameaux” and César Franck’s “Panis Angelicus.” The repertory has also included secular classical music adapted for use in church choirs, harkening back to the pedagogic instrumentality of Protestant vocal music practice in colonial Korea.\(^3\) For example, a number of compilations contain an arrangement of the second movement of Mozart’s Clarinet Concerto (K. 622) bearing the title “Kŏrukhan irŭm yŏngwa ropdo da” (Holy Name of Glory), as well as a generic galant-style piece that has long been misattributed to Mozart, “Yŏngwa ropdo da” (The Glorious).\(^4\)

**Figure 3.4: “Yŏngwa ropdo da” (The Glorious), mm. 1-16**

“The name of our all mighty God is glorious, glorious, glorious, glorious”

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\(^3\) As I discussed in Chapter 1, the Protestant vocal repertory was an important pathway through which European classical music arrived in Korea. Christian vocal music was adapted for secular purposes, and secular European classical music was adapted for religious purposes. Interestingly, not just the editors of compilations but also the choral conductors have sometimes editorialized classical music for their choirs. For instance, the conductor of a Korean diasporic choir I worked with from 2008 to 2010 adapted *Herbstlied* from Mendelssohn’s 6 Duets, Op. 63 for a Christmas service.

\(^4\) Hong, *Han’guk kyohoe ümak*, 13.
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영 화음 도 다
영 화음 도

다
영 화음 도 다 그이름 영화음도 다 주의이름 영화음 도

다
주의이름 영화음 도 다 주의이름 영화음 도
The postwar choral repertory also remained permeable to post-WWII trends within U.S. Protestant choral practice. In the 1970s and later, a number of Korean-texted adaptations of contemporary U.S. sacred choral compositions entered the compilations. These pieces registered subtle influences of African American gospel songs as well as chordal (rather than homophonic) conceptions of U.S. popular music. Examples of this sort include compositions by Cold War-period composers like John W. Peterson (1921-2006) and Lani Smith (1934-), as well as those by more contemporary composers who synthesize elements of rock and jazz, film music, and “praise and worship” music (e.g., Don Besig, Allen Pote, David Clydesdale, and Joseph Martin). These pieces have featured more prominent syncopated rhythmic profiles and jazz-based chromaticism, prompting charges of secular influence by conservative critics and conductors on both sides of the Pacific; nevertheless, these works may be viewed as a stylistic expansion of the choral repertory rather than a departure, as they abide by the harmonic and phrasal structures of the older styles.311 I excerpt a representative piece in this style below (fig. 3.5).

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311 According Chŏng-su Hong, conservative critics in South Korean churches have contested such new developments, citing the influence of popular music as a secular element that should not be allowed into the church. For the reception of pop music-influenced Christian choral styles in the U.S. context, see Anna E. Nekola, “Between This World and the Next: The Musical ‘Worship Wars’ and Evangelical Ideology in the United States, 1960-2005” (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2008).
Figure 3.5: Sŏng-nam Paek, “Sŏrosarang halsu innūn kŏn” (Why We Love One Another), mm. 22-29

“Oh, I will live by the Lord’s words only, I will live by the Lord’s words only, we will love each other and live by these words”

The three related styles discussed above constitute the dominant music styles against which neotraditional choral pieces were introduced to Korean churches beginning in the 1990s. The tables below provide a classification by style of individual choral pieces included in three representative compilations, published in 1994, 1995, and 2001, respectively.312 The data in the

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312 Jŏng-p’yo Hong, ed., Chujebyŏl sŏngga hapch’ang [Choral Pieces according to Topics], vol. 1 (Seoul: Saenorae, 1994); Jŏng-p’yo Hong, ed., Chujebyŏl sŏngga hapch’ang [Choral Pieces according to Topics], vol. 3 (Seoul:
Tables attest to the central status of U.S.- and Europe-based styles as well as the peripheral presence of neotraditional choral works. The tables also suggest a proportional increase of the latter style in the 1990s.

<table>
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<td>1 major</td>
<td>U.S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>spiritual (anonymous)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>57 major 6 minor</td>
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Table 1: *Chujebyol sŏngga hapch’ang* (Choral Pieces according to Topics) I, 1994

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<th>Style</th>
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<th>Key</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European classical music</td>
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<td>6 major 2 minor</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean neotraditional</td>
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<td>3 major 5 minor</td>
<td>Korea</td>
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<tr>
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Table 2: *Chujebyŏl sŏngga hapch’ang* (Choral Pieces according to Topics) III, 1995

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<th>Number of composers</th>
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<td>3 major</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6 minor</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>6 minor</td>
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Table 3: *Aech’ang sŏngga kogchip* (Beloved Sacred Choral Works) II, 2001

It should be noted that my construction of the stylistic category of “neotraditional” draws not only from certain shared musical topics and the commentaries of major South Korean church music historians who noted the visible emergence of Korean-style choral pieces in the last two decades[^313] but also the perceptions of the singers in a Korean diasporic church choir in Orange County, California, with whom I worked as a non-religious piano accompanist from 2008 to 2010. The choir members themselves distinguished the neotraditional choral pieces from the dominant styles during the rehearsals in direct and indirect ways (see Chapter 4 for details). Sometimes the conductors described these pieces as “Korean-style” in rehearsals and occasionally elaborated on what they considered to be “Korean” about the selected pieces, making references to han and/or hŭng.

Certain shared musical topics and techniques emerge during the examination of neotraditional pieces. The most obvious commonality lies in the domain of key. As can be observed in the tables above, neotraditional pieces are often in a minor key, departing from the

[^313]: See, for example, Hong, *Han’guk kyohoe ŭmak*, 305.
overwhelming number of pieces featured in the compilations that are in a diatonic major key. In the 2001 compilation analyzed above, for example, neotraditional pieces constitute the only minor-key pieces in the volume. Other shared attributes among neotraditional pieces include the use of pentatonic modes, especially those that highlight a sorrowful minor-third interval (recalling kyemyŏnjo), and a triple-grouped metrical conception, typically conveyed through a compound meter or a texture dominated by triplets or dotted figures. These commonalities are indicative of the prominence of particular musical constructions of Korean tradition—most importantly, those that convey collective ecstasy (hŭng) and the suffering subjectivity (han)—following the secular revival projects of the 1970s and the 1980s. It should be noted that I am not proposing a notion of a Korean “school” of sacred composition here or a conscious “movement” within the larger scene of Protestant vocal music composition in South Korea: these pieces are better described as separate, sporadic attempts to evoke musical “Koreanness” within the varied output of a number of relatively obscure South Korean religious composers who received training in Western music.

An Examination of the Neotraditional Style

In what follows, I explore how a number of compositions included in Korean choral music compilations incorporate hŭng and han into the received medium of Protestant choral music. My focus is on the construction of topics that convey the tropes of Korean tradition. Most of the pieces I discuss below are those that I have observed and performed at the keyboard in the context of choir rehearsals and choral performances during Sunday services; a few of the examples that I have not observed personally are anthologized pieces that are more popular among advanced choirs in South Korea and the Korean diaspora (i.e., either choirs of very large churches or professional Christian choirs). I annotate my music-stylistic discussion with a layer of empirical research featuring ethnographic observations of relevant rehearsals as well as analytical commentaries on recorded performances by well-known Christian choirs in order to convey a more dynamic sense
of how these pieces are perceived, received, and performed as a divergent choral style by the choral singers. A detailed discussion of the reception of the neotraditional style by a group of choristers can be found in Chapter 4.

The ethos of hŭng is conveyed in music primarily through the use of rhythmic patterns such as chajjinmori and chungmori, which became the aural shorthand for Korean folk music during the revivals discussed above. Chajjinmori is a rhythmic pattern associated with the rapturously fast sections within multi-sectional folk performances (e.g., farmers’ percussion band processions or a shaman’s ritual), all of which have a basis in shamanist practices. Besides the brisk tempo, the offbeat accent in the latter half of a chajjinmori rhythmic unit is associated with a dynamic rhythmicity, which in turn facilitates a collective ecstatic mode. Figure 3.6 shows how the chajjinmori pattern is typically abstracted for adaptation in Christian choral pieces.

While chajjinmori is usually abstracted in the form of repeating motives, chungmori is typically assimilated at the level of meter. This metric interpretation reflects how chungmori operates in traditional practices: used flexibly across folk, professional, and courtly genres, chungmori signifies a multifaceted temporal conception encompassing a rhythmic pattern (a pattern for syncopation and improvisation), a rhythmic cycle (a larger-scale organization of time, similar to the Western “meter”), and a moderate tempo. Note that the transcribed pattern in Figure 3.7 is just one of the many possible versions of chungmori.314

314 Figures 3.6 and 3.7 are adapted from Um, “Professional Music,” 113.
I discuss here two examples of hŭng-based Protestant choral pieces, one suited for amateur-level choirs and the other for more advanced choirs. First, Üi-jak Kim’s “Ｙŏhowakke Kamsahara” (Give Thanks to the Lord) sutures traditional rhythms to a choral setting that is suitable for amateur-level choral singers. This adaptation evidently entails synthesizing abstracted rhythmic motives with normative harmonic, melodic, and phrasal settings. Such efforts are most evident in the piece’s choral sections, which follow after short solo passages that use a more through-composed mode (see Fig. 3.8 for a choral section and Fig. 3.9 for a solo section). The choral section adapts chungmori: it features a moderately paced triple-pulse texture and a pattern
of accents characteristic of chungmori. In the rehearsals I witnessed, the choristers found it very difficult to learn this rhythmic pattern, especially because the distributed score did not include accent marks; I have marked the music example with the accent of chungmori as it was taught during the rehearsal.\textsuperscript{355} It seemed that the piece’s use of harmonic and phrasal conventions recognizable to the choristers—including its use of a major key, a “logical” harmonic progression, and clear antecedent-consequent phrases—made it possible for them to manage the challenges arising from its rhythmic ambiguity. The privileging of the subdominant rather than the dominant (m. 23 and m. 27) is interesting to note in this regard: in this piece and others similar to it, cadential moves through the subdominant are used to avoid leading-tone part-writing, which is an important tool for facilitating tonal dramatics in the dominant Protestant choral styles (consider Figures 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5). Subdominant-centered cadences thus establish an “otherworldly” sound that is nevertheless relatively easy for the choristers to grasp and perform. The sense of relative familiarity that “Yŏhowakke Kamsahara” fosters through such techniques indeed made it easier for the singers to concentrate on learning the rhythmic patterns during the rehearsal of this piece. Many of the singers came to enjoy the piece once they felt comfortable with the rhythms, swinging their heads and shoulders to the chungmori pattern of accents and snapping their fingers to punctuate the syncopations.

\footnotesize{
\textsuperscript{355} Rehearsed on November 23, 2008 for performance on November 30, 2008.
}
Figure 3.8: Úi-jak Kim, “Yóhowakke Kamsahara” (Give Thanks to the Lord), mm. 21-28

“From your palace, you are giving water to the mountain,
Your work for the land is abundant”
Nak-p’yo Chŏn’s “Pŏpkwe rŭl megoganŭn norae” (Singing, Carrying the Covenant) is at the other end of the spectrum in terms of complexity. This piece appears as an *a capella* piece for four voices in a number of early-1990s compilations, but the few known recorded performances of this piece use heavily elaborated versions. The two recorded performances I was able to find were by choirs staffed by highly skilled musicians. The first of these is by the Korea Men’s Choir, a non-profit Christian music organization based in Seoul; their version was scored to include two percussion instruments that symbolize Korean folk-shamanist culture, a *changgo* (hourglass-
shaped drum) and a puk (barrel drum). The second of these, performed by the choir of Yŏŏido Full Gospel Church, home to world’s largest Pentecostal congregation since the late 1970s (its membership has ranged from 1.5 to 4.5 million members), included a timpani and a large brass section, in addition to the piano. Figures 3.10 and 3.11 are my own transcription of the version performed at the Yŏŏido Full Gospel Church.

“Pŏpkwe rŭl megoganŭn norae” features a range of inventive techniques that assimilate the aesthetics of hŭng into the choral medium. Importantly, the piece’s lyrics blend biblical imageries with evocations of hŭng. The opening chungmori section (see Fig. 3.10), for example, invokes the imagery of working bodies through the repetitive use of the word ŏgiyŏngch’a, a nonsensical, onomatopoeic Korean vocable associated with collective physical labor. The use of this non-translatable, singular expression in conjunction with the kyemyŏnjo scale and chungmori rhythm evokes non-modern laboring bodies—for example, farmers in pre-modern Korea engaged in collective physical tasks such as village-wide rice harvests. The use of mordents in the unison melody, which mimics traditional vocal techniques, also reinforces the particularity of this imagery (mm. 9-10). Of further interest is the self-conscious theatricality prompted by this section’s lyrics. After the recurring statement of ŏgiyŏngch’a, the lyrics portray the choir as a collective body engaged in a Korean folk ritual: “we are proceeding victoriously, carrying the covenant on the shoulders, playing the horn and the gong.” This material recalls the ambulatory mode of performance in Korean folk rituals, in which the instrumentalists move and dance about the streets carrying instruments such as horns, gongs, and drums. These techniques identify the


choir as a group of specifically Korean bodies (i.e., bodies engaged in Korean rituals), departing from conventional choral practices that assume universalized religious subjection.

Figure 3.10: Nak-p'yo Chôn, “Pŏpkwe rŭl megoganŭn norae” (Singing, Carrying the Covenant), mm. 1-14

“ŏgiyŏngch’a, ŏgiyŏngch’a, ŏgiyŏngch’a, ŏgiyŏngch’a, blow the horn”
The moderate-tempo *chungmori* section is followed by a fast *chachinmori* section, mirroring the slow-to-fast multi-section format of shamanist-folk Korean rituals. In shamanist-folk contexts, *chajinmori* entails collectively experienced ecstasy: a *chajinmori* section features long episodes of rhythmic interplay between subgroups of performers (typically, percussionists) and concludes in an ecstatic mode as their performances gradually come to merge around a galloping rhythmic figure. Note how these aesthetics are represented through a call-and-response texture and the repetitive use of the *chajinmori* pattern in the following example.
“Amen, Halleluya... Amen, singing Halleluya, dancing ọguọngch’a. Halleluya be joyful, the great glory of God upon the Covenant. Halleluya Amen, Halleluya Amen. Give praise to the Lord!”
Hung-based choral pieces coexist with a body of slow pieces that are also perceived as “Korean” in style by choral singers, conductors, and the critics. These pieces recall tropes of han, especially as they are articulated in conjunction with traditional Korean singing practices such as p’ansori. Typically, these pieces feature descending motives that seem to imitate the melodic contour of the types of “wailing” encountered in such traditional practices. These han-inflected lament topics often exhibit a minor tonality, the pentatonic scale, and a slow harmonic rhythm, recalling the sorrowful kyemyŏnjo mode of folk vocal practices. Also notable is the frequent use of triplets. These topics thus communicate an emotional quality distinguishable from the conventional pathos-invoking methods in the wider choral repertory; the latter tend to rely on tonal-diatonic techniques based around the concepts of consonance and dissonance. It also should be noted that a minor-key setting, whether it supports a pentatonic mode or not, is an anomaly in the postwar Christian choral repertory, as indicated by the tables above. Given this fact, slow
neotraditional choral pieces stand out from the repertory; reflecting this, the choir singers I have accompanied have without fail perceived them as “different.”

In the following section, I consider a range of han lament topics found in a number of choral pieces. Consider, for example, the appoggiatura-like melodic phrase in “Hoegae wa ch’anyang” (Penitence and Praise), a choral setting of a psalm paraphrase that communicates an ardent penitential desire. Near the end of the first section, the sopranos’ melody features a descent marked by two closely placed grace notes on the word “shed tears” (nunmul hülline; m. 13). The grace note is first placed on E♭ and then on B♭.

Figure 3.12: Han-jun Kim, “Hoegae wa ch’anyang” (Penitence and Praise), mm. 8-15

“When my deep soul opens its door, my soul cries tears of joy and my mind becomes humble”
The whole-tone profile of the descent and the grace notes, a rarely used ornament in the larger choral repertory, vexed the sopranos during a rehearsal of this piece that I observed in 2009.\footnote{Rehearsed on May 24, 2009 for performance on May 31, 2009.}

The conductor made a direct reference to \textit{p'ansori} and \textit{han} in order to explain how to perform this descent to the sopranos, who felt frustrated by the demands of the gesture (see Chapter 4 for a more detailed account of the reception of this piece).

Sometimes the setting of a \textit{han} topic is rendered so as to be more conventional and therefore familiar to singers. Consider, for example, “Yŏhowa nŭn na ŭi mokchasini” (The Lord is My Shepherd) by Kyŏng-hwan Paek. This piece uses a pentatonic mode in F-minor as in the previous example, but the melodic descent is assimilated into a parallel phrase construction: E\textsubscript{b}-F-E\textsubscript{b}-C-C in mm. 23-24 and B\textsubscript{b}-A\textsubscript{b}-E\textsubscript{b}-F-F in mm. 27-28. The uncomplicated nature of this setting contributed to the choir’s relatively positive reception of this piece.\footnote{Rehearsed on November 30, 2009 for performance on December 7, 2009.}
Figure 3.13: Kyŏng-hwan Paek, “Yŏhowa nŭn na ŭi mokchasini” (The Lord is My Shepherd), mm. 13-28

“The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing”
In a number of settings, the emotional weight of the han lament topic is reinforced by registol choices. In these settings, situating the descent at the limits of the singers’ feasible range serves to provoke an expression of theatrical suffering in performance, whether or not the composer intended it. For an example, we can turn to the conclusion of “Pŏpkwae rŭl megoganŭn norae” (Singing, Carrying the Covenant), excerpted in Figure 3.14. After the chajinmori portion ends sotto voce (mm. 148-151), the solo tenor sings two descending phrases marked ad libitum (mm. 152-158). The first of these two phrases conveys a sense of futility; the second communicates a feeling of emotional abjection and urgency as the tenor reaches B4. In the recorded performances of this piece, the physical effort involved in reaching the B4 is visible in the tenor’s strained facial expression and upper body expansion.
The following example, “Kū kil” (This Path) contains a similar technique. Towards the end of the piece, the sopranos sustain G₄—the upper vocal limit of most amateur soprano singers—for the length of three quarter notes and subsequently perform a series of triplet descents in the G₄-to-B♭₃ range over the course of four measures (Fig. 3.15, mm. 20-25). As I observed during a rehearsal of this piece, the sopranos literally embodied the experience of suffering implied in the lyrics as they made efforts to sing at this high range. The conductor encouraged this embodied vocalization of suffering, reminding them that singing the right pitch is less important than conveying an emotional demeanor in attempting to reach this pitch.³²⁰

Figure 3.15: Sun-se Kim, “Kŭ kil” (This Path), mm. 20-29

“The path, the path, the path that the Lord had walked,
I will tread on each of the steps, following the cross”
I lastly consider two examples that synthesize han topics with musical references to collective ritual or chant—references that have been ascribed to a generalized “East Asian culture” in the colonial-modern imaginary. Strictly speaking, recitational or quasi-ritualistic vocal practice was not part of the postwar revival movements. It may potentially invoke Buddhist chant traditions in South Korea, yet these have been considered a strictly religious practice familiar only to practicing Buddhist Koreans, rather than as a component of an ethno-national tradition. Thus, recitational and ritualistic vocality seems to draw on one of the more prominent Orientalist musical stereotypes of Eastern Asian culture: a static, esoteric ritual that situates the practitioners in a past temporal space or a space outside of historical time.321

Consider, for example, “Yahwae pŏbŭl ttaraganŭn saram dŭl” (Those Who Observe the Lord’s Law), a piece included in the choral compilations but typically performed only by advanced choirs due to its complexity.322 In a demonstrative passage from this piece excerpted in Figure 3.16, a recitation or chant topic is constructed through the use of asymmetrical antecedent-consequent phrases and whole-tone parallel voice leading (mm. 20-21). This section is followed by a stunning imitative setting of the han lament topic, on the words “do not cast away this body” (imom āl pŏrĳi maop sosŏ; mm. 24-27).

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321 Western musical orientalism or exoticism is a broad topic that cannot be discussed at length in this dissertation. For an overview, see Part I of Timothy Taylor’s Beyond Exoticism. Taylor usefully “historicize[s] the many ways that otherness has been represented in music by Europeans and Americans” in colonial and later imperial Europe. Tim Taylor, Beyond Exoticism: Western Music and the World (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007). The quote is from p. 9. It is also worth consulting scholarship on fin-de-siècle French composers who developed musical quotations of the “Orient” that had a lasting influence in the 20th century not just in the West (Europe and the U.S.) but also outside of this location, including South Korea. For instance, Un Yong La, one of the few South Korean composers who wrote Korean-style Christian music before 1990, cited the influence of Debussy on his music. Certain Orientalist topics found in Debussy’s music (e.g., open 4th and 5th chords, slow harmonic rhythm, inverted chords, etc.) can be found in La’s Christian and secular compositions. On the topic of fin-de-siècle French musical orientalism, see, among others, Glenn Watkins, Pyramids at the Louvre: Music Culture, and Collage from Stravinsky to the Postmodernists (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 1-62.

Figure 3.16: Chae-hun Pak, “Yahwae pŏbŭl ttaraganŭn saram dŭl”  
(Those Who Observe the Lord’s Law), mm. 20-27

“I want to observe the Lord’s law, so do not cast away this body.  
Yahweh my Lord, Yahweh my Lord, do not cast away this body, my life, my savior”
“Elliya ŭi hananim” (Elijah’s God) will serve as a final example. This piece features a number of wailing gestures for a soprano solo, placed in dialogue with the choir’s declamatory statements. The passage below cites one instance of this texture. Interestingly, this soprano’s lament, as well as the inclusion of traditional Korean instruments, is an addition to an older piece that only included the declamatory four-part writing (this original piece, composed well before 1990, has been a beloved piece of South Korean church choir conductors but not necessarily the singers).\footnote{All of the three church choir conductors I worked with regarded this piece as a masterpiece although the choristers did not demonstrate any unusual enthusiasm. This admiration is also expressed in the blogs maintained by South Korean and diasporic conductors. See, for example, Chin-hoon Choe, “Kim Po-hun and Eliya ŭi hananim,” 
Figure 3.17: Po-hun Kim, “Elliya üi hananim” (Elijah’s God), arranged by Sŏn-yŏng Paek, mm. 68-74

“God of Elijah, God of Elijah, My God.”
Conclusion: The Limits of Neotraditional Sacred Music

As my discussion of neotraditional choral pieces indicates, composers of these pieces opened the medium of Protestant choral music to different musical interpretations of Christian worship and suggested a desire to align Christianity with alternative frameworks of self-representation typically ascribed to traditional Korean music. Nevertheless, church choirs did not adopt these pieces actively; rather, they came to be novelty works selected for a limited number of Sunday services (for example, South Korean national holidays and Sino-Korean folk holidays such as the Moon Festival) and otherwise were largely avoided. In this concluding section, I present some broad reflections on why neotraditional choral music failed to become a popular practice within the larger South Korean Christian choral culture.

First, the generally unfavorable reception of neotraditional choral music is symptomatic of the Protestant churches’ minimal engagement with the minjung movement. The political position of postwar Protestant Christianity at the leadership level was guided by conservative Christian networks that followed Christian exiles’ perspectives and agendas (see Chapter 2). Public demonstrations staged in the 1960s that appealed for the continuation of the U.S. military occupation of South Korea were one notable expression of this conservatism. More broadly, many individual Christians demonstrated indifference, if not hostility, toward the minjung movement and “tacitly supported the values of state-led development.” A number of progressive church historians have documented this broad political positioning of mainstream South Korean Christianity, often apologetically. For instance, church historian Tŏk-ju Yi notes the marked absence of Christian participation in the 4.19 Rebellion (1960), regarded as the formative event of the minjung movement. He states: “the Korean Methodist church would be even more

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324 Hong, Han’guk kyohoe ŭmak, 307.
325 Hong, Han’guk kyohoe ŭmak, 235.
326 Lie, Han Unbound, 141.
embarrassed than it is now if it were not for the 20 Christians who actually participated in the 4.19 Rebellion” and that “the Korean church had nothing to say to the 4.19 Rebellion but the victims of the 4.19 had a lot to say to the Korean church.”

Tŏk-ju Yi also notes that the Protestant presence in the minjung movement was eclipsed by the nonpolitical, mass-scale revival meetings influenced by the growing force of Pentecostalism in South Korea—in the words of a secular historian, the Pentecostal varieties of “all-too-worldly celebration.” Yi lists a series of depoliticized mass-scale revival meetings that were mounted with a lack of sensitivity to the concurrent street protests and police crackdowns that filled Seoul’s landscape: the “Thirty Million Koreans to Christ” movement (1969); the Spiritual Revolution Movement (1970); a revival led by Billy Graham (1973), which attracted 1.1 million Christians; the “Explore 1974” revival attended by 6.5 million Christians (1974); and the “Joint Prayer Meeting for the Nation” attended by 1 million (1975), among others.

These revival meetings echoed the state’s modernization program as they mediated the ideals of the so-called Gospel of Prosperity. As religious scholar Sung-Gun Kim argues, Pentecostal-oriented meetings in postwar South Korea tended to voice the “values of ascetic Protestantism, essential for social mobility in a capitalist economy” and demonstrated “a late modernity’s preoccupation with self-experience.”

To be sure, a minority of Christian ministers were revered figures of the minjung movement; they vocally criticized the dictatorship, spearheaded the urban industrial mission in

327 Tŏk-ju Yi, Han’guk kyohoe iyagi [The Story of the Korean Church] (Seoul: Sinang kwa chisŏngsa, 2009), 290.

328 Lie, Han Unbound, 142.

329 Yi elaborates: “In March and April, a few progressive pastors would be called in by the authorities and incarcerated; in July to August, massive meetings would be held in Yŏido Square [a symbolic convention center for Pentecostal churches]. The lack of communication between the two groups is lamentable.” Yi, Han’guk kyohoe iyagi, 332–3.


conjunction with labor reform campaigns, and developed *minjung* theology, through which they sought to re-write Christianity from the perspective of the suffering *minjung* (the “people”). However, due to the larger church’s structural position, *minjung* Christian activists were often perceived as “figures outside the church’s border” by Protestant authorities and potential trespassers by *minjung* authorities. Moreover, the *minjung* ministers were not interested in transforming the musical culture within the churches but instead in creating a pragmatic music practice that they could use outside the churches, especially in their urban industrial mission. This meant avoiding both Western choral and traditional Korean cultural practices altogether; instead they worked with a repertory of simple guitar-accompanied gospel songs with politically charged lyrics that spoke more effectively to the factory workers. Chŏng-su Hong explains that these *minjung* Christian songs, although widely performed outside the churches and even among some Christian youth meetings, were never considered “properties of the church” by mainstream Christians.

Secondly, the unfavorable reception of neotraditional compositions reflects a larger development in the secular field of traditional music. The meanings of counter-narrative and counter-memory ascribed to traditional music began to fade as neoliberal processes absorbed the practices of traditional music beginning in the 1980s, the very decade during which this music was legitimated. Increasingly, traditional music was packaged and consumed in concert and recorded formats that reinforced the individuals’ “experience,” “consumption,” and “discovery” of tradition,


333 Hong, *Han’guk kyohoe ŭmak*, 235.

334 Also see Lee, *The Making of Minjung*, 222-228.

335 Hong, *Han’guk kyohoe ŭmak*, 235.


337 Hong, *Han’guk kyohoe ŭmak*, 235.
rather than retaining its political instrumentality as a tool for grassroots community building or a metaphor for national dispossession. Samulnori, a genre that adapted farmers’ percussion music for a four-person ensemble well suited to the modern concert stage, is a case in point. Created by the veteran percussionist Tŏk-su Kim in 1978, samulnori (both a genre designation and the name of his group) offered a spectacle of folk rhythms and body movements presented as “Korean tradition” to a seated audience who viewed the concert via a tourist’s gaze. This performance thus conformed to the emerging modes of cultural consumption and commoditization, in which “tradition” is experienced through scripted modern concerts, “heritage” tourism, and “folk” merchandise. 338 Other important factors that contributed to the neoliberal inflections on samulnori and other more contemporary revival projects include the rise in international travel and exchanges beginning in the early 1990s, which introduced the U.S. notion of “global multiculturalism” and the concomitant concept of “world music” to the South Korean traditional music scene. 339 These globally constituted developments reinforced the emerging notion of “national branding” in South Korea, 340 which also owes its inspiration to South Korea’s hosting of the Olympic Games in 1988. 341


339 Timothy Taylor’s work discusses how globalization, cultural consumption, and the discourse of “identity” have become increasingly intertwined in the (post)industrial world, providing a capitalist framework for Western-centric musical representations of otherness. His discussion of the relationship between the discourse of “collaboration” and multiculturalism also offers insights on how non-western musicians may be incorporated into the world music scene in the West. See Taylor, Beyond Exoticism, 113-139. Also see Timothy Taylor, Global Pop: World Music, World Markets (New York: Routledge, 1997).

340 Indicative of these developments, samulnori successfully gained entry to the rank of “world music” in the U.S.: the group replicated their performance of “Korean tradition” in reputable venues like the Smithsonian National Museum, and collaborated with other groups configured as “world music”—for example, American jazz groups and percussion bands from other Asian countries. See Shingil Park, “Negotiating Identities in a Performance Genre: the Case of P’ungmul and Samulnori in Contemporary Seoul” (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2000).

341 See Margaret Walker Dilling’s 500-page monograph on the planning, execution, and reception of music performances during the Seoul Olympic Games of 1988. Dilling carefully documented the ways in which a diversity of old and new Korean traditional music genres, including percussion-oriented folk genres, court music (e.g., Yöngsan hoesang), and cross-cultural compositions by contemporary Korean composers, were selected to accompany an event that was explicitly understood as an occasion for staging Korea to the world. See Margaret Walker Dilling, Stories Inside Stories: Music in the Making of the Korean Olympic Ceremonies (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University
Church music historian Chŏng-su Hong’s trivializing description of “Korean-style choral music” in *Han’guk kyohoe úmak sasang sa* [The History of Ideology of Korean Church Music], the first monograph-length treatment of South Korean Christian vocal music, is symptomatic of the ways in which traditional Korean music came to be understood purely in stylistic terms—terms that advance the notion of a national style. He writes:

Sometimes, [Christian] Korean composers may not advocate Korean elements but occasionally write “Korean-style (han’gukchŏk) music.” These days, few composers argue for the total exclusion of Korean-style music. There is a tendency among church composers to want to be Korean-like in their music by using the pentatonic scale or triple subdivision.

Such comments raise the question of whether modes of consuming and representing tradition in the post-*minjung* movement period in South Korea can sustain the meanings of cultural critique that once resonated with a number of revival projects.

Finally, the rendering of neotraditional sacred choral music in modern Western notation raises the issue of commensurability and suitability. Although the composers of neotraditional pieces adopt a range of novel constructions in order to represent the ideals of Korean tradition, these constructions are necessarily shaped and limited by the entrenched precepts of modern choral music. For instance, conventions of modern notation, including phrasal, tonal, and cadential “habits,” raise the question of whether they can adequately, and ethically, translate the improvisational elements central to “traditional” Korean performances of suffering.

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342 On this point, it is interesting also to consider Olivia Bloechl’s discussion of subalternity and national frameworks: “As neither the familiarity of an interiority nor the delimited strangeness of an exteriority, belonging neither here nor elsewhere, the subaltern resists the fixity of geometric spatial relations and the knowledge they make possible. Subalternity is thus, in a sense, unplottable, and when subalterns are identified as belonging to here or there, according to a cultural or national geography, they are no longer subaltern but, as Spivak writes, are already “inserted into the long road to hegemony. Bloechl, *Native American Song*, 13-14.

343 Hong, *Han’guk kyohoe úmak*, 305.

344 In this regard, it is interesting to consider Amy Lynn Wlodarski’s critical work on Steve Reich’s artistic response to the Holocaust. She argues that ethical problems arise when trauma is represented in artistic works that aspire to notions of narrative cohesion. See Amy Lynn Wlodarski, “The Testimonial Aesthetics of *Different Trains*,”
the codes of performance associated with European-/U.S.-style sacred choral music pose certain limits for pieces that seek to appropriate folk participatory aesthetics (hŭng). Whether a given choral piece is performed by a church choir during a religious service or by a professional choir in concert, it entails relative physical immobility and a distance between the performers and audience (a distance that enables representation rather than ritual), the very aspects that hŭng-based performances seek to critique. This tension can be observed in the recorded performances of “Carrying the Covenant on the Shoulder,” for instance. In the performances of both the Korean Male Choir and the Yŏŏdo Full Gospel Church, there is a conspicuous lack of physical movement (save for the dashing arm movements of the conductors and a few singers who swing their bodies more visibly than others), in conflict with the rhythmic vitality of the music and the imageries of bodily gestures outlined by the lyrics.

A related issue involves the musical tastes and values of people who have identified with the medium of Christian choral music. As Chŏng-su Hong remarks, traditionalist approaches failed to replace hegemonic styles because the “taste of the people [Christian congregations] is not formed in accordance with our music [uri karak].” This unfamiliarity is, importantly, a matter of class. South Korean Christians, although drawn from all walks of life, were predominantly middle-class or harbored middle-class aspirations—in essence, South Korea's bourgeoisie. As a group that emerged against the backdrop of wartime and postwar poverty and the memory of Koreans’ helplessness during the colonial period, the South Korean middle class was remarkably attached to a class-defining cultural ideology that entailed, among other things, consuming and learning Western music, particularly Western classical music and Western tonality more generally

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345 Hong also adds that the views of the congregations do not conform to minjung theology. Hong, *Han'guk kyohoe ŭmak*, 239.
(See Chapters 2 and 4). I turn to this group’s historically engendered conditions of hearing and singing in the next chapter.

346 A widely noted manifestation of this fascination with Western music was the nationwide rise of affordable piano academies: they became the main extracurricular activity and a standard of middle-class femininity for many girls from South Korean families that benefitted from the burgeoning economy. See Mari Yoshihara, *Musicians from a Different Shore: Asians and Asian Americans in Classical Music* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007).
In October of 2008, I accompanied a church choir composed of diasporic South Koreans to an event entitled the “All Nations Heritage Multicultural Christian Music Event,” held in a Protestant church in Chino Valley, 35 miles east of downtown Los Angeles. The profile of this event conformed to a tried-and-true template of Southern California multiculturalism: a predominantly white American church invited a Spanish-language Christian band (presumably composed of first-generation Mexican Americans), an African American gospel choir, and a South Korean diasporic choir to celebrate different Christian musical “heritages” over the course of two hours. I felt that most of the event was awkward and drab: there was no dialogue between the “ethnic” singing bodies during the event or the pre-performance dinner, and the only visibly excited participants seemed to be “non-ethnic” leaders of the hosting church, who gloated about the significance of the event’s “biblical diversity” throughout. One exception to this otherwise formulaic environment, however, was the performance of a North Korean refugee, a special guest who was apparently added to the roster only days before the event. This singer, who identified herself as a former member of a prestigious performance troupe in North Korea, expressed a deep Christian conviction through her Korean-language song. Other than the South Korean diasporic choir, the participants in the “All Nations Heritage” event did not understand the lyrical content of this woman’s songs, but it was evident that they were completely captivated by her performance.

The North Korean refugee’s performance stood out because her performance staged musical attributes that were very different from those of the other groups. For example, hers was the only performance that featured solo singing, uniformly pentatonic melodies, and a pre-recorded soundtrack. She also used unique vocal techniques: she drew out the endings of her melodic phrases with microtonal inflections, giving the impression that she was wailing from an
inability to contain her emotions. The range of timbres she used also made her performance exceptional: each time she approached the ending of a phrase, she moved quickly and fluidly between timbres (e.g., tense, raspy, and breathy) as her voice glided into the final note of the phrase. I was present at this festival as the piano accompanist of the South Korean diasporic choir, and I found the North Korean singer’s techniques enthralling. Her singing teased the edges of my memory: I vaguely remembered that I had heard something like this in a popular music genre called *t’ŭrorŭ*, which was ridiculed by the upwardly mobile residents of Seoul when I lived there from 1981 to 1993. I also felt captivated by the embodied theatricality of her performance. As she sang, she opened her arms upward, closed her eyes, and raised her head, performing a suffering subjectivity desiring a higher being.

Her story was as sensational as her performance. Before she sang, a male missionary (an ethnic Korean man with a U.S. passport) who claimed to be the manager of her three-member, all-refugee Christian performance group spoke for her while she stood next to him, dressed in a version of traditional Korean clothing. According to the man, who spoke in English for the audience, she had been a distinguished performer in North Korea and only recently had left her home country with the assistance of missionaries working near the North Korea-China border. His introduction rehearsed all the standard components of the North Korean exile narrative: state oppression, unbearable famine, perilous escape, and newly found happiness in South Korea and the U.S.—the “plentiful” nations that her music group now traverses on its tours. This narrative evoked symbologies of Christian conversion—a notable tendency of stories narrated by North Korean refugees who are aided by South Korean or South Korean American missionaries in their escapes (also recall the Korean War-period exilic narratives in Chapter 2).

The North Korean refugee’s performance prompted a kind of audience approval from the non-Koreans present at the event that the other performing groups’ music did not elicit, and some of the more agitated reactions made me wonder whether the audience members were responding
to the perceived authenticity of Christian faith in her singing body and whether they viewed the
cross-cultural workings of Christianity as evidence of the “truth” of their faith. But I noticed a
different set of reactions to my left, where the South Korean diasporic choir was seated; they had
performed their choral piece just before the North Korean woman took the stage. Most members
of this choir exhibited facial and bodily expressions of disapproval (e.g., scowls, frowns, and head
shakes). Some reacted more strongly, as if they were witnessing a horrifying spectacle. A soprano
who was sitting in my row, a woman in her mid sixties, commented in a quiet but firm voice: “That
is not the right way to praise God.” She stood up half way through the North Korean refugee’s
performance and left the church. I wondered: do the members of my choir feel self-conscious and
“exposed” as racial bodies, having staged their “unmarked” choral piece earlier—which featured
no pentatonicism, special timbres, or traditional attire—to a predominantly white audience?

This chapter examines the relationship between cultural acceptability and music styles for
the aforementioned South Korean diasporic choir, which belongs to a Korean-language church in
Southern California. At the core of this chapter are moments during this choir’s rehearsals in
which the members’ charged responses to matters of musical style (scale, timbre, phrasing, etc.) in
the music they were rehearsing indexed a perceived violation of cultural acceptability. In my
two-year ethnographic experience with this choir (2008-2010), the instantiation of such
responses was rare because most of the choral pieces that the choir rehearsed and performed
belonged to “correct,” U.S.-derived choral styles that did not elicit any self-conscious or hostile
reception. By the same token, because an environment of normative reception was firmly
established, non-normative feedback stood out when it transpired. Non-receptive, unsympathetic
responses emerged almost always while the choir rehearsed slow neotraditional pieces; these

347 I stress the context of rehearsals because these were the only occasions during which the singers could
signal some sort of response to a selected piece. Unlike the final performance, rehearsals constituted a space that left
some room for subtle contestation between singers and the director with respect to programming choices, even if it did
not lead to a change in the repertory.
pieces constitute a South Korean Christian choral sub-genre that foregrounds a characteristically “Korean” subjectivity of suffering and, if performed successfully, would resemble the North Korean refugee’s performance in terms of scale, melodic types, and timbral implications. I explore non-normative reception events during the rehearsals as tense moments that expose the border of Korean diasporic cultural acceptability, a border that configures sameness and difference vis-à-vis the dominant culture. I suggest that such reception is affective in nature: in my observation, the singers’ (and my) responses were not consciously articulated, “intellectual” objections but rather subtle, spontaneous, and embodied responses straddling the boundary between the mind and the body, between what Michael Hardt terms “actions and passions.”

This chapter unfolds in three sections. First, I discuss recent critical literature on the Korean diaspora in the U.S. and the Asian diaspora more broadly, which explores the historically contingent, transnationally mediated, and affective constitution of the diaspora. This discussion serves as a framework to facilitate an exploration of the cultural negotiation of sameness and difference in the Korean diasporic space—a negotiation that I argue is reproduced and reinforced in Korean diasporic church. This discussion is followed by an ethnographic account of a representative South Korean diasporic church and church choir. The choir I worked with is part of a Korean-language church of approximately 400 members who live in the Orange County area, most of whom migrated to the U.S. during the Cold War decades (the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s). I begin with a general description of the church and the choir and move into a detailed account of the rehearsal of the choral work “Hoegae wa ch’anyang” (Penitence and Praise) as a representative example that demonstrates the choir members’ reception of the neotraditional choral style.

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349 I do not claim that the diasporic conditions I outline here apply to all diasporic subjects equally. The interviews I quote later will in fact demonstrate variations in their views. I am only interested in discussing the cultural dynamics that underpin hegemonic diasporic formations.
The final section incorporates theoretical discussions and interviews to engage the singers’ musical values as revealed in the context of their choir rehearsals. This section revolves around the following question: what does it mean to adopt an ethnicized Protestant music for a generation of Korean diasporic subjects whose musical values have been shaped by the remembered and lived experiences of U.S. Protestant missionization, Japanese imperialism, and the U.S. military occupation of South Korea? My consideration of this question is informed by the contradictory nature of modernity, as discussed in Chapter 1. Recall that musical modernity in the Korean context entailed a mission-influenced, top-down distillation of Eurocentric musical values that was nevertheless mediated horizontally through local narratives and memories. Following this perspective, I explore the choir singers’ identification with “universal” styles and dis-identification with “Korean” ones as an assimilation of “Eurochronology” 350 (in brief: as a colonial legacy), while also emphasizing the ways in which such musical values are understood by practitioners in the context of their diasporic, transnational memories and experiences. I suggest that these musical values stem from a desire to perform a non-suffering “present” that enunciates a temporalized space of progress and to distance themselves from musical attempts to embody a “Korean” subjectivity “prior to” progress; a subjectivity imbued with specific connotations of ethnicity, race, class, and (to some practitioners) religious heterodoxy. The two-fold perspective I adopt in this final section also reflects the subject position from which I write this chapter. Writing

350 I am citing Arjun Appadurai’s term in Modernity at Large. Appadurai uses “Eurochronology” to convey the “hyperreal” and “hypercompetent” reproduction of American popular songs in the Philippines, as well as to critique the effect of this reproduction on Filipino national memory. His trenchant criticism is worth quoting here: “These Filipinos look back to a world they have never lost. This is one of the central ironies of the politics of global cultural flows, especially in the arena of entertainment and leisure. It plays havoc with the hegemony of Eurochnology. American nostalgia feeds on Filipino desire represented as a hypercompetent reproduction. Here, we have nostalgia without memory. The paradox, of course, has its explanations, and they are historical, unpacked, they lay bare the story of the American missionization and political rape of the Philippines, one result of which has been the creation of a nation of make-believe Americans, who tolerated for so long a leading lady who played the piano while the slums of Manila expanded and decayed.” Arjun Appadurai, Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 29-30.
as a diasporic subject, I am interested in exploring the Korean Christian diasporic space from within and without even as I acknowledge that these two “spaces” are mutually constitutive.\(^{351}\)

**Diasporic Conditions: The South Korean Diaspora**

Recent studies of Asian American cultural formations provide a framework for understanding diasporic processes of negotiating sameness and difference as historically contingent, transnationally engendered, and affectively mediated. The perspectives and priorities of these studies register a turn from the viewpoints of ethnic studies toward those of diaspora studies as well as increased dialogue between ethnic studies (Asian American Studies) and area studies (Asian Studies).\(^{352}\) Conventional narratives of Asian American formations have relied on the identity politics borne of the Civil Rights movement, which privileges minority political agency in the context of U.S. liberal democracy. Scholars such as Lisa Lowe have critiqued this earlier direction in part because it has had the effect of rendering the category of “Asian American” as a different-and-transparent identity (to use Spivak’s words, an “Other with an inside”), often unwittingly reinforcing the dominant U.S. discourse of multiculturalism.\(^{353}\) The turn to diaspora studies has encouraged scholars to explore “experiences of hybridity, difference, displacement, and transgression,” rather than imposing teleological, if well-intentioned, notions of political

\(^{351}\) I suggest that many diasporic subjects hold this double perspective as they negotiate their South Korean heritage with a “mainstream American” education or profession. For example, my interviewees were interested in articulating the ways in which aspects of their lives were “Korean” or “American,” usually understanding these two categories as mutually exclusive.


emancipation. An important component of this more recent scholarship is an acknowledgement that Asian migrants’ understanding of their place in the U.S. is informed by dominant representations of the U.S. in their “home” countries as well as by mainstream U.S. discourse about Asian Americans. As Nancy Abelmann and John Lie state in *Blue Dreams: Korean Americans and the Los Angeles Riots*, Korean immigrants in the U.S. “engage both the U.S ideological landscape and the South Korean memoryscape.”

The turn to diaspora studies has had a particularly strong effect on scholarship on “Korean America,” a community whose experiences did not overlap with the Asian American movement, which unfolded as part of the larger Civil Rights movement. Large-scale Korean American immigration only began in 1965 due to the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act, which lifted the ban on immigration of Koreans to the U.S. The smaller groups of ethnic Koreans in the U.S. before 1965 had little to do with the emergent Asian American activist movement, which was rooted in the experiences of victimized Japanese and Chinese Americans on the U.S. West Coast. Before 1950, the relatively small communities of ethnic Koreans in the U.S. included 7,000 indentured laborers in Hawai‘i (1900s) and a much smaller group of exiled participants in Korea’s national independence movement in San Francisco (1900s-1945); both of these trans-Pacific migration were facilitated by U.S. missionaries. Between 1950 and 1965, Korean migrants included the so-called “Korean war brides” married to American GIs, adopted children from

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356 This estimate is from Ronald Tataki’s 1998 work. Citing previous studies, Ronald Tataki states that only 10% of the 7,000 Koreans who moved to Hawai‘i between 1902 and 1905 were women. This gender breakdown is symptomatic of the labor-oriented nature of Korea-to-Hawai‘i immigration during this time. The same gender breakdown marked the movement of Pilipino men to Hawai‘i during the same period. See Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1998), 53-57. Also see Yen Le Espiritu, *Asian American Women and Men: Labor, laws, and Love* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008), 25.
Korea, and students with national or transnational funding. 357 “Korean war brides” accounted for approximately 40% of 15,000 ethnic Koreans who migrated to the U.S. between 1950 and 1965 (i.e., approximately 6,000 war brides). 358

The reconceptualization of “Korean America” as “Korean diaspora” has helped scholars to highlight transnational structures of inequality as the basis of Korean migration to the U.S. in the post-Korean War period (1953-) and to shed light on the influence of this inequality on the affective constitution of the diaspora. Critics such as Jodi Kim demonstrate the degree to which the U.S.-bound migration of many South Koreans was bound up with the structure of U.S. hegemony in the Pacific, reinforced through the U.S.’s involvement in the Cold War—most notably, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. 359 Similarly, Ji Yeon Yuh emphasizes the need to re-conceptualize the trajectory of most Korean migrants as “seeking refuge from the consequences of the Korean War,” whether they arrived in the U.S. as part of the small-scale diaspora between 1950 and 1965 or post-1965 large-scale immigration (recall that Korean Christians exiled from the communist northern parts of Korea constituted a prominent U.S.-bound migrant group; see Chapter 2). 360 These calls for re-evaluating the motivations for migration have challenged simpler narratives used in prior sociological studies, including the characterization of U.S.-bound Korean migration as middle-class emigration, as well as complicating discourses that use a person’s


358 See Espiritu, Asian American Women and Men, 65.

359 Jodi Kim, Ends of Empire: Asian American Critique and the Cold War (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010). Also see Nadia Y. Kim, Imperial Citizens: Koreans and Race from Seoul to LA (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008).

360 Ji Yeon Yuh, “Moved By War: Migration, Diaspora, and the Korean War,” Journal of Asian American Studies 8, no. 3 (2005), 278.
“generation”—i.e., whether they were born in the U.S. or not—as an over-determining, clear-cut explanatory factor in exploring Korean Americans’ “degree” of assimilation.

A consideration of the affective constitution of the Korean diaspora may begin with an examination of the U.S. presence in the South Korean landscape in the aftermath of the Korean War (1950s). In South Korea’s official imaginary, the U.S. emerged as a twofold liberator of Korea: first, as the liberator of Korea from Japanese rule in 1945, and as “a protector of democracy against the Soviet and North Korean threat” as the Korean peninsula became embroiled in the international Cold War via the Korean War. This generally positive perception is tied to many Koreans’ experience with the U.S. missionaries in the earlier decades of the 20th century; as I discussed in Chapter 1, the missionaries were perceived as potential crusaders for the Koreans’ cause of independence from Japan. In the aftermath of the Korean War, the relationship between the two countries became even more entangled: U.S. hegemony was “lived” through the experiences of the body, in addition to military occupation and cultural influence (e.g., inflow of Hollywood movies and American pop music). During the 1950s and 1960s, Americans in South Korea, especially the highly visible male American GIs, were not just perceived as political “protectors” but as a means of bodily survival in a society that was attempting to re-build itself from near-total destruction during the War—violence that, as critics stress, was perpetrated by the very GIs who were subsequently re-configured as liberators. As Abelmann and Lie note, the U.S. military’s control of the “alimentary channel” against the backdrop of South Koreans’ hunger

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363 On a personal note, I encountered positive and remorseful attitudes toward white American men in Seoul while doing research in Seoul in 2011—attitudes that I thought were outdated at that point. For instance, I was surprised to see that my uncle, who was a progressive labor activist in his younger days, took a visiting white American friend of mine to a U.S. military memorial site near Seoul and expressed how grateful he is to the U.S. In another episode, a Korean male friend of mine let a group of white American male GIs pick on him in a bar in Seoul, saying “they did it for this country [South Korea].”
informed popular memories from the 1950s that were transgenerationally transmitted in the forms of urban myths, literature, and songs.364 Scenes imprinted in many South Koreans’ memories include giveaways by American GIs of “candies, chocolate, and chewing gum” to displaced, dirty, and poverty-stricken Korean children, as well as “grain distributed under the P.L. 49 food aid program” (both of which I had heard about from my parents and their siblings while growing up).365 The phenomenon of “military soup,” a Korean-style soup purportedly made from discarded canned meat and hotdogs imported from the U.S. via military channels, also chronicles the stark inequality between the U.S. and South Korea.366 The U.S. military pumped other kinds of American food into South Korea via a black market throughout the 1960s and the 1970s, selling “Taster’s Choice coffee, Hershey’s Kisses, marshmallows, and Spam” to the South Koreans, who came to covet them.367

Food was one component of the “shock of material plenty”368 embodied by the American GIs. Other components were U.S. military equipment and government aid given to South Korea, whose conditions of poverty in the 1960s drove one GI to describe the country as a “bottomless pit.”369 The observation of Mark Clark, a U.S. general in South Korea, is suggestive. He wrote in 1954: “The ROK [Republic of Korea] saw the wonderful equipment our industry produces for our American Army. He saw mechanical hole diggers for telephone poles. He saw bulldozers. He saw helicopters carry supplies atop mountains that ROK bearer would take many hours to climb. He saw hot food and ice cream delivered in giant tins to Americans in the frontline bunkers. He soon

364 Abelmann and Lie, Blue Dreams, 62.


366 Also see, Nicholas Harkness, Songs of Seoul: An Ethnography of Voice and Voicing in Christian South Korea (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2013), 1.

367 Abelmann and Lie, Blue Dreams, 62.

368 Lie, Han Unbound, 41.

369 Lie, Han Unbound, 42.
wanted all these things.” This unequal power and access to material wealth also marked the distribution of sexual labor between U.S. GIs and “camptown women,” who engaged in sex and entertainment work for U.S. military personnel and thus obtained coveted access to items like the Sears, Roebuck catalog, “which became, almost literally, the most popular book in the country.” As historian Grace M. Cho explains in *Haunting the Korea Diaspora*, Korean women who engaged in sex and entertainment work for the U.S. military workers embodied the ambivalence marking South Korea’s “indebtedness” to the U.S.: the sex worker “simultaneously provokes her compatriots’ hatred because of her complicity with Korea’s subordination and inspires their envy because she is within arm’s reach of the American Dream…the dutiful daughter who works to support the very same family that shuns her.”

Several studies have attempted to articulate the affective dynamics that resulted from the transnational political economy of the Cold War, which encouraged U.S.-bound migration and shaped the diaspora’s emotional constitution. For example, Grace M. Cho performatively narrates her mother’s avowed lack of knowledge about her origins and a refusal to talk about her pre-migration experiences. Her mother was a Korean bride of an American GI, an example of the so-called “Korean War bride” figure who, as mentioned above, was considered “dubious” due to her association with sex work in U.S. military camps in South Korea, despite her role as a legal enabler of her families’ exodus to an idealized destination. Grace M. Cho uses the figure of the Korean War bride to reflect on the psychosocial dynamics of “erasure” within the Korean diaspora. She writes:

> If the historical condition of possibility for Korean diaspora is the Forgotten War [the Korean War], the psychic condition is that of enforced forgetting. The acknowledgement of a traumatic past is systematically disavowed by a matrix of silence, the major components of which include the institutions of U.S. global

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370 Lie, *Han Unbound*, 40–41.

371 Quoted in Lie, *Han Unbound*, 41.

hegemony and social scientific knowledge production... The result for the Korean diaspora in the U.S. is that one is often an unwitting participant in one's own erasure. By the same token, the act of disavowal often proliferates the very trauma that is being denied.373

Similarly, in an experimental article entitled “The Parched Tongue,” historian Hosu Kim examines the figure of the Korean War adoptees in the U.S. as a metaphor for the dynamics of erasure and shame within the diaspora.374 She narrates the ways in which the adoptees were perceived as “shameful” reminders of South Korea’s subjugation to the U.S. and thus “repressed” in the diasporic memory. Jodi Kim identifies similar structures of amnesia and repression in her study of Cold War-era Korean American fiction. She argues that this body of work demonstrates an “inability to narrate what really happened” during the Korean War, and she stresses the impossibility of Korean War narratives being anything other than a “Cold War knowledge project” (note that media representations of the Korean War are still subject to censorship in South Korea).375

373 Cho, Haunting the Korean Diaspora, 13.


375 Kim, Ends of Empire, 150. Also consider Olivia Bloechl’s discussion of the distinction between “minority histories” and “subaltern pasts” based on Chakrabarty’s work: “Crucially, minority history always involves processes of incorporation, where once-oppositional forms of memory are gradually accommodated as historical knowledge...On the contrary, “subaltern” relations to the past form the boundaries beyond which history cannot go and still retain its status as an authoritative and respectable branch of knowledge... Subaltern pasts “resist historicization.” Olivia Bloechl, Native American Song at the Frontiers of Early Modern Music (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 11.
Overall, the studies I have discussed so far highlight two mutually reinforcing dynamics that have shaped Korean diasporic formation: first, a dynamic of self-shame rooted in U.S.-South Korea relations, in which the former is ambivalently figured as “protector” and “aggressor”; second, a dynamic of self-comportment that has precipitated the diaspora’s alignment with hegemonic views of U.S. modernity and erasure of memories that do not fit these views. As these studies suggest, the dynamics of shame and comportment engendered a profound, wide-ranging cultural drive for material progress and modernity as a way of overcoming nationwide suffering and sublimating the inferiority complex derived from U.S. neo-colonial trauma and the memories of Japanese imperialism. For example, Abelmann and Lie explore the phrase “hŏngŭri chungsin,” which literally means “hungry mentality,” as a mixed-language South Korean expression that embodies this Cold War worldview. In their 1995 ethnography-based study, Abelmann and Lie document how some migrants invoked this phrase (in Lie’s words, “a wartime vestige”) in order to
explain the orientation of the Korean diaspora in Los Angeles.\textsuperscript{376} In the words of one interviewee (a wholesaler in Los Angeles) cited in their book: “We are a nation that has lived through many hungry periods. So we have learned to work hard. We like doing everything quick, quick, quick—eat quickly, succeed quickly, get rich quickly.”\textsuperscript{377}

Other scholars stress that the historically conditioned desire for progress has reinforced the reproduction of American hegemonic notions of social mobility, assimilation, and race relations within the Korean diaspora. For instance, in \textit{Imperial Subjects: Koreans and Race from Seoul to LA}, a study based on interviews of diasporic Koreans in Los Angeles, Nadia Y. Kim argues that such notions are formed before migration, as soon-to-be migrants come to understand the racial (black-white) dynamics of the U.S. through their observations of the U.S. military in South Korea and exposure to American media (for example, films).\textsuperscript{378} She states: “South Koreans therefore come to take American racial inequalities for granted... such as the “normativity” of White America and the “inferiority” of Black America. This naturalized order serves their own ends as well, such as the need to compensate for their own internalized inferiority at the hands of Japan and the White West.”\textsuperscript{379}

The diaspora’s internalization of hegemonic notions of social mobility and race shapes a noted paradox of the Korean diaspora—one that I call the “same but segregated” paradox. On the one hand, there has been a tendency to equate notions of ethnicity with class within this diaspora. As Rebecca Kim explains in her 2006 study of Korean American Christian groups on university campuses, “Ethnicity is viewed largely as a working-class phenomenon—something that immigrants and their descendants need and want to shed as they acculturate, obtain economic

\textsuperscript{376} Abelmann and Lie, \textit{Blue Dreams}, 21.

\textsuperscript{377} Abelmann and Lie, \textit{Blue Dreams}, 21.

\textsuperscript{378} Kim, \textit{Imperial Citizens}, 11.

\textsuperscript{379} Kim, \textit{Imperial Citizens}, 11.
mobility, and incorporate into the dominant society.” On the other hand, the Korean diaspora is constituted of tightly knit, ethnically segregated communities not only among the first-generation but also among the subsequent generation, which is more professionally incorporated into mainstream U.S. society than the first generation. In other words, generally speaking, the Korean diaspora has been an ethnically segregated community aspiring to be racially “unmarked” in the dominant U.S. cultural landscape.

The Korean diaspora’s drive for assimilation has also been reinforced by the hegemonic terms of assimilation imposed on Asian migrants in general. Previous studies have critiqued the myths of the model minority and “honorary whites” in discussing Asian American identity formation; more recent studies have enriched prior critical perspectives by considering the historically engendered ambivalence that structures the U.S. mainstream view of Asian Americans. For example, in *The National Abject: The Asian American Body Onstage*, Karen Shimakawa argues that dominant stereotypes of Asian bodies have swung back and forth between “model minority” and “yellow peril” both before and after the Civil Rights movement, and that such contradictory stereotypes stem from the U.S. nation-state’s ambivalent relationship with Asian migrants/citizens throughout the 20th century. As examples, she cites the inability of U.S. lawmakers to defeat many ethnic Asians’ appeal for legal citizenship before the 1960s; the military deployment of Japanese Americans in Europe during the WWII notwithstanding the internment of Japanese Americans; and the recurring justifications for the presence of Asians in the American West in the context of the U.S.’s Pacific expansion into territories such as Hawai’i, the Philippines,

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380 Rebecca Kim, *God’s New Whiz Kids? Korean American Evangelicals on Campus* (New York: New York University, 2006), 4. Also consider Nancy Abelmann’s comment on the idealistic attitude of Korean American college students toward notions of Western modernity, which they constantly measured themselves and their families against: “These associations of enlightenment and modernity with the West are old stories in the modern history of East Asia, and particularly so for postcolonial South Korea, asserting its place in the world in the aftermath of Japanese colonialism and in relation to the imperial presence of the U.S.” Nancy Abelmann, *The Intimate University: Korean American Students and the Problems of Segregation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 7-8.
and Guam. Shimakawa argues that the myth of the model minority served as an ideological battleground for the inclusion of Asian Americans into the national body in these contexts, over and against the polar opposite myth of Yellow Peril. She states:

Praised and valued for their ability (and inclination) to assimilate into the “mainstream” (with an eye toward eventually disappearing in/as it)—indeed to surpass even “normal” Americans (that is, whites) at being ideal manifestations of American success and self-determination at a particular historical moment (the early period of the civil rights movement), Asian Americans were singled out for their aptitude for confirming to dominant models of “proper” American citizenly values and practices (including subjection to the law, heteronormative and patriarchal “family values,” and especially the pursuit of higher education), over and against what were seen as other, less tractable, more antihegemonic racialized minorities.

As this passage suggests, the model minority discourse functions as a hegemonic rationalization of the presence of U.S. citizens and soon-to-be citizens of Asian descent. Shimakawa also notes that although this discourse is projected onto Asian bodies in the U.S. in general, its resonance is the strongest for Korean and Vietnamese Americans, whose entry to the U.S. was accompanied by narratives and memories of the Korean War and the Vietnam War, both of which triggered salient emotions in the mainstream U.S. imaginary (e.g., guilt, compassion, vengeance). Similarly, Jodi Kim asserts that the U.S.’s Cold War involvement in Asia (as she puts it, “the protracted Cold War imperialist relation between Asia and America”) raised the stakes of the contradictory configuration of Asian Americans; it served to ambivalently configure the Asian body as both a “putative liberal citizen-subject of the U.S. nation-state” and a “postimperial exile or refugee.”

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383 Shimakawa, National Abjection, 13.

384 Shimakawa, National Abjection, 14.

385 Kim, Ends of Empire, 6, 146.
As critics like Shimakawa and Jodi Kim argue, these racializing configurations constitute the terms of assimilation of many Asian Americans and also raises the stakes of assimilation.

The Same But Segregated Paradox and the South Korean Diasporic Church

Ethnically segregated churches have been some of the most effective sites of the hegemonic negotiation of sameness and difference in the Korean diaspora. The instrumentality of Protestant churches for Korean diasporic formation should come as no surprise given the pronounced role of Christianity in articulating the dominant ideals of modernity in Korea from the period of the North American mission to the Cold War decades (see Chapters 1 and 2). These ideals were not only administered in Korea but were also instantiated through trans-Pacific migration and travel: American missionaries sponsored the overseas activities of Korean elites before and during the Japanese occupation, oversaw the migration of working-class Koreans to Hawai‘i in the first decade of the 20th century, and facilitated the relocation of Korean War orphans into the U.S. during the Cold War decades. The mission’s role as legal sponsors of migration declined after the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, but the Christian orientation of Koreans’ trans-Pacific movement has translated into a Christian constitution of the diaspora. According to a study cited in Rebecca Kim’s book *God’s New Whiz Kids? Korean American Evangelicals on Campus*, an estimated 70% of ethnic Koreans in the U.S. self-identify as Christians. The high proportion of Christians within the diaspora explains the pronounced visibility of ethnic churches in the diasporic landscapes; for example, in Los Angeles’s Koreatown, one cannot walk two blocks without encountering an ethnic church. This aspect of diasporic life is most visible in Southern California (e.g., Los Angeles, Buena Park, Garden Grove, Anaheim), a region that holds the largest number of ethnic Koreans outside of Korea: over 600,000 self-identified ethnic Koreans in

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386 Kim, *God’s New Whiz Kids*, 12.
Other historically popular destinations of Korean migration—for example, middle-class, largely white American suburbs surrounding New York City, Dallas, Washington D.C., and Chicago—are also characterized by a heavily Christian makeup.\textsuperscript{388}

Significantly, the Christian constitution of the diaspora has been intergenerational, with churches playing a crucial role in shaping the subsequent generation’s self-positioning. Scholars such as Rebecca Kim and Nancy Abelmann have noted the comparably high number of Christians among Korean American college students, and observe that the on-campus Christian organizations for these students reproduce the same but segregated paradox.\textsuperscript{389} According to Rebecca Kim, 80\% of the members of all Evangelical Christian groups at the University of California, Berkeley and University of California, Los Angeles are English-speaking (and mostly U.S.-born) ethnic Koreans, who “have shed most of the practices and rituals of their ethnic community and embrace dominant, white Evangelical practices and rituals, yet maintain ethnic segregation.”\textsuperscript{390} She observes that this group is praised by leaders of campus Evangelical organizations as the “moral model minority,” who not only excel in academic studies but also in practicing faith.\textsuperscript{391} Similarly, in an ethnographic study of Korean American students at the University of Illinois, Nancy Abelmann notes the role of campus Christian ministries in mediating both ethnic segregation and “mainstreaming.” She writes: “At the U of I there is a Chicagoland Korean American mainstream typified by normative ideas of certain suburbs, specific life trajectories, and a particular practice of Christianity. For many Korean American students, a


\textsuperscript{388} Reflecting this constitution, major Korean-language diasporic newspapers feature a high number of advertisements for churches and editorials by pastors.

\textsuperscript{389} Typically, the second generation join English ministry of a Korean-language church or more recently established churches that offer English-language services for a predominantly Asian American congregation.

\textsuperscript{390} Kim, \textit{God’s New Whiz Kids}, 3.

\textsuperscript{391} Kim, \textit{God’s New Whiz Kids}, 3.
single largely ethnic Protestant church at the U of I stood most profoundly for both this mainstream and a troubling ethnic intimacy in college.”

Ethnomusicologist Paul Jong-Chul Yoon’s 2005 dissertation on the worship life of a Korean diasporic church in Brooklyn, New York also offers fascinating insights in this regard. In his study, Korean Americans who belonged to the English ministry of this church constantly differentiated the modalities of their worship from those of the Korean-language ministry in the same church, characterizing theirs with adjectives associated with ideals of American modernity, such as “rational” and “less emotional,” which they believed were lacking in the Korean ministry. Paul Yoon demonstrates that for many Koreans of the 1.5 generation (born in Korea, raised in the U.S.) and second generation (born in the U.S.), the identity of “Christian” took precedence over ethnically conceived categories even as they felt compelled to participate in ethnically segregated services. In what follows, I explore the same and segregated paradox as it is subtly expressed in the music practice of a particular church choir in the Korean diaspora in California.

**Ethnography of a South Korean Diasporic Church and Church Choir**

The church I worked with from 2008 to 2010 is located in the City of Westminster, California, a major commercial and cultural center for diasporic Koreans in Orange County since the 1980s. I refer to this church as KCR, taking letters from the full acronym of the church’s name. Since its foundation in 1978, KCR has catered to first-generation (born in Korea) diasporic

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392 Abelmann, *The Intimate University*, 5.


394 Many of the stores, groceries, and restaurants that line the streets of Westminster are owned and operated by ethnic Koreans. While Korean Americans have a visible presence in this area, Westminster is currently also one of the largest settlements of Vietnamese Americans in the United States.
Koreans whose first language is Korean. It is affiliated with the Independent Reformed Church, a denomination characterized by a conservative Protestant theology similar to Presbyterianism. During the time of my research, KCR had approximately 400 registered members, and the two main services that it offered on Sundays convened about 450 participants in total. About 350 attended the morning service, which featured the choir I worked with. The congregants of this service constituted the core members of the church. Another 100 attended the afternoon service, which featured a contemporary Christian music (CCM) band. This later service tended to attract younger members (in their 20s and 30s) who had come to the U.S. in the last ten years, as well as older members who chose not to participate in the social activities of the church, which took place after the morning service. Both services were conducted in Korean and led by the same pastor. The mean age of the members was approximately 50, and a majority of them had migrated to the U.S. in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. Unlike most other diasporic Korean churches of comparable size in Orange County, KCR did not have much success in cultivating a full-fledged English ministry, which is typically developed for the children of first-generation members. I often heard from the members of the church that their children attend other churches in Orange County, some of which I recognized as megachurches that are popular among 1.5- and second-generation Korean Americans.395

KCR was a classic Cold War-style diasporic church in many ways although it took some time for me to grasp this orientation (I formulated my dissertation research as I became aware of

395 Megachurches, or churches that have members numbering in the thousands, are an important yet under-studied component of postwar Korean / Korean diasporic Christianity. Megachurches are typically associated with Pentecostal churches such as the Yŏŏdo Full Gospel Church, home to the largest Christian congregation in the world since the late 1970s (membership has fluctuated between 1.5 to 4.5 million), but also include Presbyterian and Methodist churches. The importance of Korean megachurch as a model of religious organization outside Korea is well documented in ethnomusicologist Connie Oi-Yan Wong’s dissertation on Pentecostal-Charismatic musical worship across the Asian Pacific. Parts of her dissertation document the influence of the musical culture associated with South Korean megachurches (the so-called ‘Praise and Worship’ music) on contemporary Christian music ministry and industry in Taiwan and Hong Kong. See Connie Oi-Yan Wong, “Singing the Gospel Chinese Style: ‘Praise and Worship’ Music in the Asian Pacific” (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2006).
it). For instance, I came to recognize KCR’s strong identification with Korean War-period Christian exiles from the northern part of Korea: the founding pastor of the church, who retired in 2006, was a Korean War exile, and exiled Christians formed a strong constituency within the congregation in terms of the church’s theological direction although they no longer took on active leadership roles due to their advanced age. The younger non-exiled members (members in their late 40s and 50s), who formed the mainstay of the congregation, also talked about the church’s symbolic association with the exiles: they either revered the exiles as exemplars of Christian faith or complained about their role in encouraging a conservative theology in the church.

I grew familiar with such aspects of the church as I came to know more church members during the one-dollar lunches that the church provided after the morning service in a cafeteria-style hall across from the chapel. Because people of my age group (under 35) were rare in the church, various church members offered to buy me lunch, invited me to sit at their table, and were eager to share their life stories. In this context, I conversed with about eight exiled Christians and many more non-exiles. I almost never imposed pre-mediated questions (initially because I did not know what to ask) but was interested in listening to their life experiences. Memories of the Korean War and South Korea’s poverty in the 1950s and 1960s were frequently mentioned during these lunchtime conversations. These narrations were casual and general given the setting of communal lunch. Typically, the church members recounted these experiences in summarized forms with phrases such as “back then Korea was so poor,” “there was nothing to eat during the war,” and “you would not know this because you are young but it was really hard to make money back then.” After this,

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396 My initial motivation for working as a piano accompanist for KCR was to do part-time work. I knew the Korean-language Protestant choral repertory well from my previous experience of accompanying a diasporic Korean church in Guatemala (1993-2000), a church quite different from KCR (ethnic Koreans moved to Guatemala beginning in the early 1990s and under different circumstances).

397 I could also see that many members fit the classic post-1965 immigration stories captured in conventional studies of Korean Americans. I met an unusually high number of female nurses, for instance. I also met many medical and dental technicians, small business owners (liquor stores, textiles, grocery markets), and real estate agents. A minority of the members had professions highly respected in the diasporic community: doctors, lawyers, and engineers.
they expressed gratitude for having been able to come to the U.S and usually ended their stories with accounts of their children’s accomplishments in “mainstream” U.S. society.

The pastor’s sermons also conveyed the Cold War-centric orientation of the church. He mentioned the Korean War quite regularly during his sermons, praising the American missionaries’ humanitarian work during the war years, and demonstrated an ongoing interest in North Korea, the North Korea Protestant mission, and contemporary North Korean Christian refugees. In addition to invoking these themes during the sermon, he invited the members of the North Korean performance group mentioned above to visit the church and to share testimonials of their life, escape, and conversion; these testimonials were very strongly inflected by memories of hunger and gratefulness for the abundance of food in South Korea and the U.S.398 Several Korean American missionaries who were working around the China-North Korea border were also invited to share stories about their work on separate occasions; the Korean American mission in this area is known to facilitate and coordinate the escape of North Koreans. These guest features were always well received by the audience, especially the older members who had actually lived in the northern region, but there was a cryptic quality to the missionaries’ testimonials given the technically illegal nature of their work. Another noteworthy event was a fundraiser concert of the Sŏnmyŏnghoe Children’s Choir, a high-profile, Seoul-based, internationally touring children’s choir that serves as a cultural-diplomatic body of the South Korean branch of the World Vision, a multi-national Christian humanitarian organization.399 This choir’s concert, which was staged in the main hall of KCR, began with a video presentation that narrated the choir’s origin in a Korean-War orphans’ choir, which used to perform for the U.S. missionaries who funded the choir in the 1950s. The presentation also highlighted the growth of this choir from an orphaned children’s group to a highly selective choir that currently recruits some of the most talented young singers in

398 November 9, 2008.
399 January 2, 2009.
South Korea (the conductor of my choir told me that many aspiring child singers in Seoul go through years of training just to get into this choir because, as he said sarcastically, it looks good on their resume).

While I met many members of the church during the two years I worked at KCR, my main interaction was with the church’s choir. The number of choir singers fluctuated from 20 to 30, and most of the singers were in their late 40s or 50s, slightly younger than the average age of the congregation. As this choir’s piano accompanist, my main tasks included participating in rehearsals before and after the Sunday service and accompanying the choir’s performances during the service. Additionally, I accompanied the choir to two outside festivals. The first of these, the “All Nations Heritage Festival” that I described above, exposed me to the inter-ethnic network in which KCR is situated.\textsuperscript{400} The second external event was the annual Sŏngga hapch’angje (Choral Festival) at the Crystal Cathedral, one of the architectural landmarks of Orange County.\textsuperscript{401} This festival featured the choirs of eight prominent Korean diasporic churches in Orange County and ended with all eight choirs singing the “Hallelujah Chorus” from Handel’s Messiah.

My socialization with the choir singers was not confined to the musical events but also unfolded in their homes, coffee shops, and restaurants throughout Orange County. Typically, my outings with the singers involved socializing with married couples, who made up about two-thirds of the choir. The conductor of the choir, a recent immigrant in his mid-30s, joined in many of these occasions. He and I became friends because we were close in age and the only two people in the choir who were single; we also started working for KCR on the same Sunday and, unlike everyone else in the choir, we commuted to the church from Los Angeles, often sharing rides.

The choir’s official function was to perform a piece of devotional choral music during the service. The members readied themselves for this function five minutes before the service began.

\textsuperscript{400} October 5, 2008.

\textsuperscript{401} October 4, 2008.
(9:25am) as they left the rehearsal room and walked in two lines toward the side entrance of KCR’s main chapel, an entrance which was reserved for the choir singers and the pastor. The chatty, bright atmosphere of the morning rehearsal (8am-9:25am) became subdued at this time. The singers then marched into the hall under the observant gazes of the congregation, and filled three rows of benches on a dais located next to the pastor’s podium. They were thus placed close to the pastor in the sanctuary, and just like him they faced the audience of about 300 to 350 people. Their attire also marked them as special members of the church: all of the singers were dressed in identical white robes with an engraving of a purple lyre on the front. The choir performed its rehearsed piece about fifteen minutes into the service. The piece’s final “amen” always prompted the congregation’s customary utterance of “amen.” The pastor nearly always followed this response with a brief, congratulatory message to the choir. Through this set of dynamics, the choir’s weekly performances constructed a sanctioned tradition of choral musical worship based around Korean-language choral compositions.

The mood of the rehearsals contrasted with the solemn, authoritative atmosphere that the choir helped to create during the service. What became very clear to me during my first months at KCR was that the choir was as much a space for socialization as it was a musical body. The members seemed to have grown close to one another through years of singing together. I could gauge the intimacy among them from the way they addressed one other. They often called each other by maiden and bachelor names—a form of address that is rarely used between married men and women in modern Korean language. I came to know a great deal about many of the choir singers (especially the sopranos, who were seated next to the keyboard) because they chatted constantly throughout the rehearsal despite the conductor’s frequent intervention to minimize background noise. These chats made reference to personal histories of illnesses, deaths in the

family, stories of their children, inside jokes, business fortunes, and similar topics. It was clear to me that they were familiar with one another’s lives and that one of the motivations for being a part of the choir was to engage in fellowship with similarly situated diasporic Koreans.

The friendly, lively atmosphere of rehearsals disappeared only under one circumstance: when the singers found the musical style of the selected choral piece questionable. This shift in the rehearsal environment was palpable because the choir singers ceased their habitual banter and chitchat and paid an unusual amount of attention to the music. Almost always, this change transpired when the choir was rehearsing neotraditional choral pieces, which were programmed only rarely. Of the 107 pieces that I accompanied over the course of two years, seven belonged to this style (6.5% of the total performed pieces). All other pieces were divided more or less evenly among the three dominant postwar styles I discussed in Chapter 3 (styles essentially based on mid-to-late 19th-century U.S. Protestant vocal music). Out of the seven neotraditional pieces, one was a moderately paced composition enacting folk-style excitement; this piece is “Yŏhowakke Kamsahara” (Give Thanks to the Lord), Figure 3.8 in Chapter 3. The singers (and I) were initially confused about the cross-rhythm (chungmori pattern) used in this piece, but once they adjusted their sense of rhythm, they came to enjoy the piece. The other six pieces that triggered unsympathetic, anxious responses all were slow pieces that seek to encode a “Korean” mode of suffering.

As I discussed in the previous chapter, the slow neotraditional pieces unfold as performances of grief or lamentation by recalling the expressions of han found in Korean vocal music traditions, for example, p’ansori, a solo vocal theater that became a symbolic South Korean national art in the postwar period.403 Neotraditional choral styles mimic the performance of han

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403 Another South Korean vocal genre that these pieces may recall in some diasporic Koreans’ minds is tūrorū, which has tended to find its largest audience among Koreans of lower socioeconomic classes. It is stylistically similar to the Japanese enka. Ethnomusicologist Min-Jung Son describes this under-studied genre as “a South Korean sentimental love song performed with an abundance of vocal inflection” that “remains popular among the older adults and working people.” See Min-Jung Son, “Regulating and Negotiating in Tūrorū: A Korean Popular Song Style,” Asian Music 37, no. 1 (2006): 51-74.
as found in these traditions through the use of slow tempo, slow harmonic rhythm, the pentatonic scale, and descending motives that imitate sobbing. The last of these is particularly important as it is understood to be a signature expression of han. Recall ethnomusicologist Heather Willoughby’s description of the vocal imitation of crying, which she considers to be the primary aesthetics in p’ansori: “When performing a song of lamentation...a performer will often elongate the sliding tone, thereby emphasizing the sounds imitating crying.”404 Musical representations of han situate these choral pieces as “Korean” expressions, departing from the “universal” mode of musical narration found in the larger choral repertory. Crucially, these representations, whether used in Protestant choral music or in traditional practices, not only enable a notion of Korean “essence” but also facilitate strategic essentialism by performatively voicing the subject position of “oppressed people with a long history of struggle”405—a position that evokes narratives which challenge hegemonic/elite representations of South Korean modernity.

Whenever the choir practiced slow neotraditional pieces, I observed the familiar atmosphere of fellowship being replaced by an environment of anxiety and discomfort. The singers became much more self-conscious when rehearsing the music although none of them made open objections to the conductor during the rehearsal. In what follows, I describe a rehearsal of the neotraditional choral work “Hoegae wa ch’anyang” (Penitence and Praise) as a representative example of an unsympathetic reception on the part of the choir (Fig. 4.1 in this chapter and Fig. 3.12 in Chapter 3).406

The rehearsal of “Hoegae wa ch’anyang” began with the usual routine of singers drifting into the rehearsal room in small groups following the post-service lunch and receiving the sheet music from Mr. Kim. Seated on the piano bench, I leafed through the piece to check if it was a

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405 Lie, Han Unbound, 137.

piece that I had played before—I was familiar with most of the choral pieces that KCR rehearsed from my earlier years of accompanying a Korean diasporic choir in Guatemala (1993-2000). Having realized that I had not played it previously, I quickly studied the piece’s surface-level attributes: tonic key of F minor and a piano accompaniment texture that suggests a slow tempo. We began by rehearsing the sopranos’ part: I doubled the sopranos’ melody on the piano and the conductor clapped the pulse. The sopranos entered in measure 12 at the second four-bar phrase of the piece as the first phrase does not include the soprano part (Fig. 4.1, mm. 8-12). The lyrics for this phrase read, “my soul cries tears of joy and my mind becomes humble.” The sopranos stopped as soon as they came across the second beat of their second measure (m. 13) because they were confused about the grace notes prefixed to the E♭ and B♭. It was evident that they did not know how to realize the grace notes because these are not regular features in the wider choral repertory. The whole-tone arrangement of the sopranos’ descending melody (F-E♭-C-B♭-A♭), matched to the words “cries tears,” was also out of the ordinary. Following the conductor’s request, I played measure 13 couple of times, although I also was uncertain how to situate the grace notes vis-à-vis E♭ and B♭.

When I was finished, I noticed that some of sopranos were wincing or frowning, as if something was wrong. I browsed through the piece quickly to determine whether this was one of the rare “Korean-style” pieces. I confirmed this hunch by examining the harmonic rhythm and cadence types (also noting that the E♭ in the first four-bar phrase (m. 10), which I was about to correct to a standard leading-tone E-natural on the assumption that the typesetter had mistakenly omitted the accidental, was truly meant to be an E♭). The sopranos tried measure 13 once again, following my example, but the conductor interrupted them as soon as they finished singing the measure. He said, “You have to sound sadder than you are sounding right now. Let’s do it again.” The sopranos tried again, but the conductor cut them at the same point, saying that they were not singing in the way that the phrase was meant to be sung. After some thinking, he used descriptive
language to explain the function of the grace notes: “You have to sound like you are lamenting. Sing as if you are crying. Don’t just sing.” The sopranos tried again, but it was clear that they were at a loss. The conductor intervened, “Try to feel like you are singing p’ansori.” The sopranos were becoming visibly distressed at this point, some raising their eyebrows or rolling their eyes. The conductor interrupted the sopranos’ third attempt and made a reference to han: “It is said that we are people of han. Like, we’ve had people invade our country. The Japanese. Our ancestors suffered a lot from the Japanese invasion. Now let’s think about han on a personal level. Imagine that you have been wronged, terribly wronged. You are at a point in life where you cannot even express your sorrow in words because you have been wronged.” He then sang measure 13 himself couple of times (although to me it was not clear how his demonstration was much different from the sopranos’ attempts). It was rather painful for me to see and listen to the sopranos grudgingly rehearse the rest of the piece, which included two additional descending motives similarly marked with grace notes.
Figure 4.1: Han-jun Kim, “Hoegae wa ch’anyang” (Penitence and Praise), mm. 8-15

“When my deep soul opens its door and repents, my soul cries tears of joy and my mind becomes humble”
As the sopranos’ sectional went on, the background chatter from the rest of the choir vanished gradually but noticeably. The basses and tenors, who were seated facing me, looked angry, disapproving, or anxious. Deacon Pak, who is endearingly known among the choristers as the “ill-behaving bass,” staged a thinly veiled, often contagious mockery of the proceedings. He began to laugh through his nose so that it was just audible to the choir; from my experience I knew that this was his way of expressing objections to the conductor’s choices. I remembered that the last time he did this was when the choir was rehearsing an African American gospel-style piece (he eventually came to like this piece, as evidenced by his enthusiastic body movement towards the end of that rehearsal). When the conductor switched to the men’s sectional, they demonstrated an unwillingness to participate by engaging with the music halfheartedly and sarcastically. I began to feel awkward as the sound of the piano rang in the room more loudly than usual. Notwithstanding the poor reception, I accentuated the E\textsubscript{b} in the bass and tenor lines so as to get the whole-tone profile in their ears: I remembered from the previous time the choir sang a neotraditional piece that the male singers had a tendency to automatically replace the prescribed flat seventh degree with a raised seventh. As the men’s sectional unfolded, I heard the sopranos, who were seated to my left, whispering among themselves: “What is wrong with him [the conductor]?, “What does he want?, “I don’t understand why he wants to do this song.”

During the donut break, Mrs. Yi, an alto who always gave me packaged home-cooked food at this point in the rehearsal, came up to me and asked what I thought about the piece we were rehearsing. As a piano accompanist, my main issue was a practical one—the more challenging the piece is for the singers, the harder my job becomes—but I couldn’t help but feel ambivalent about some aspects of the piano accompaniment. This was especially true of the right-hand figure in measure 15 (refer to Fig. 4.1), which concludes the second four-bar phrase. When I played this figure for the first time during rehearsal, it immediately called to mind 톡로우, a South Korean

\footnote{I use pseudonyms for the singers throughout this chapter.}
popular music genre considered the antithesis of Seoul’s urban sophistication, in my mind, and I felt almost involuntarily embarrassed. Nevertheless I did not give a strong indication of dislike to Mrs. Yi because I did not want to appear to challenge the authority of the conductor, who I knew was having some difficulties directing a group of Koreans older than himself in an age-conscious Korean-language environment. Mrs. Yi said: “I am not fond of this song. It’s too dark. I wish the conductor wouldn’t put us through songs like this. We don’t know how to do it.” Another one chimed in: “Yeah, I don’t know what he is trying to achieve.”

The rehearsals of all other han-infused neotraditional pieces were marked by a similar lack of enthusiasm and an uncomfortable self-consciousness. A particularly noteworthy piece was “Minjok ul wihan kido,” which may be translated as “A Prayer for the Korean People” (see Fig. 4.2). The conductor selected it for the Sunday closest to the national independence day of Korea (August 15th). Stylistically, this piece is relatively well integrated into the framework of dominant choral music styles; the only “aberrant” characteristics are a loosely pentatonic melodic profile and the use of a minor key. But it stood out among the wider performed repertory as the only piece that made the singers enunciate the word minjok, a word constructed in early-20th century Korea to envisage Koreans as an ethno-national community, similar to the English word

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408 During an earlier drafting stage of this chapter, I attempted to define t'urorû in words. The first thing that came to mind was a taxi driver: I remembered it as the music that taxi drivers play in their cars. Interestingly, I have found since that Anglophone anthropologists of urban Seoul mention the same image in describing t'urorû or other music-sound cultures associated with the lower socioeconomic class of South Korea. For example, see Heather Willoughby, “The Sound of Han: P'ansori, Timbre, and a South Korean Discourse of Sorrow and Lament” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2002), 2; Nicholas Harkness, “Culture and Interdiscursivity in Korean Fricative Voice Gestures,” Journal of Linguistic Anthropology 21, no. 1 (2011), 104.

409 On different occasions, I tried to get the conductor to talk about why he continued to select neotraditional pieces (albeit occasionally) given the evident discomfort of the singers. He told me that he wanted to be open-minded to a diversity of styles and that he thought it was a shame that Korean-style pieces are so rarely performed among church choirs in general. He added that he would never change his selection just because the members disliked the chosen piece because such a move would undermine his authority as the leader. It should also be noted that conductors in general tend to be more open-minded to multiple choral music styles because they are more artistically oriented.

410 Rehearsed on August 9, 2009 for performance on August 16.
“ethnicity.” This piece listed a number of qualities that are to be adopted by the Korean minjok with God’s help—for example, a “hopeful minjok,” “peaceful minjok,” and “awakened minjok.” As such, “Minjok ŭl wihan kido” situated the singers explicitly as Korean people rather than unfolding like most of the other choral pieces as a third-person narration of a universal subject. I remember the rehearsal of this piece as the most silent and disinclined rehearsal of all those I witnessed from 2008 to 2010.

Figure 4.2: Jŏng-u Son, “Minjok ŭl wihan kido” (A Prayer for the Korean People), mm.34-41

“Make us a hopeful people, make us a peaceful people”

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While han performance and the attendant meanings of ethnic particularism were the main elements that discomfited the choir, in one rehearsal I also observed some members’ anxiety over the possibility of advancing religious syncretism through a specific choral piece. This rehearsal involved the piece “Chunim ch’anyang harira” (I Will Praise the Lord) by Sŏng-gyun Kim, a fast piece in E-flat major with no traces of neotraditional topics (see Fig. 4.3). As the rehearsal unfolded, I noticed an audible stir among the sopranos regarding the potential Buddhist meaning of a repeated line in this piece, “even if we were to be born again, we would still praise the lord.” Mrs. Pak, a soprano, reiterated to her female colleagues that this line represented the Buddhist philosophy of reincarnation and that the piece therefore was not proper for use in a Christian choir. Her remark spread to other vocal groups, creating a background noise just loud enough to be heard by the conductor, who was trying his best to ignore the subtle disorder. The kind of concern demonstrated during this rehearsal also sometimes emerged during the choir’s breaks when the subject of the conversation turned to the issue of South Korean diasporic self-image in Los Angeles. For instance, the news that the Korean Cultural Center in Los Angeles was mounting

an exhibition on Korean shamanism, accompanied by concerts of farmers’ folk music, was the topic of passionate break-time conversations during the month of July 2009. The members described the project as “shameful”—typical comments included “how dare they do this” and “this is embarrassing”—conveying a strong dislike of projects that associate South Korea with “gods, spirits, and other supernatural beings.”

Figure 4.3: Sŏng-gyun Kim, “Chunim ch’anyang harira” (I Will Praise the Lord), mm. 26-33

“Even if we were to be born again, we would still praise the lord”

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In what follows, I interpret the KCR choir’s mode of reception described above through two mutually related perspectives on modernity.\textsuperscript{414} The first uses the concepts of hegemonic aurality and Euro-chronology to explore the choral singers’ conditions of hearing and singing as a colonial legacy. The second perspective, based on the interviews I conducted with choir members, highlights the personally lived and remembered contexts through which these hegemonic music values have been formed. This second approach thus highlights the choir’s non-normative and normative receptions as conditions of South Korean / Korean diasporic modernity and suggests that the singers’ identification and dis-identification with “universal” and “Korean” styles, respectively, stem from a naturalized desire to situate themselves in a temporal space post South Korean national suffering.

**Hegemonic Aurality and the Hegemony of Euro-Chronology**

The singers’ reluctance to sing han-invoking neotraditional choral pieces may be interpreted via the concept of hegemonic aurality, explored by scholars such as Jonathan Sterne,

\footnote{\textsuperscript{414} Also recall the two different perspectives of modernity and nationalism, between Benedict Anderson and Partha Chatterjee, in Chapter 1.}
Nina Eidsheim, and Ana Maria Ochoa Gautier.\textsuperscript{415} Hegemonic aurality can be understood as the historical and political conditions of hearing that ascribe sameness and difference in various modern-colonial contexts. As Jonathan Sterne states: “In most times and places, sonic culture is characterized by the tensions held within its configuration of difference and sameness.”\textsuperscript{416} Nina Eidsheim explores hegemonic aurality as it relates to the formation of the modern classical voice (this voice is the standard singing voice of the KCR choir) in her article “Race and the Aesthetics of Vocal Timbre.” She demonstrates that the modern classical voice came to be heard as “the ‘advanced,’ professionalized voice” that was “the result of progress” in 19\textsuperscript{th}-century Europe, rather than simply a consequence of lowering the larynx while singing.\textsuperscript{417} Building on McClintock’s and Foucault’s work on the colonial discourse of time, Eidsheim shows that the colonial conflation of geographical space and temporal zone—a conflation reinforced by the period’s recourse to scientific frames and racial taxonomies—was constitutive of hegemonic conditions of hearing; bodies “originating” from outside the West, as well as the vocal timbres coming out of these voices, were perceived to belong to a less advanced temporal space within a Eurocentric chronology.\textsuperscript{418} Eidsheim demonstrates how this discourse continues to shape voice teachers’ expectations of minority students’ vocal timbres, particularly in Southern California.


\textsuperscript{416} Sterne, “Sonic Imagination,” 1.

\textsuperscript{417} Nina Eidsheim, “Race and Aesthetics of Vocal Timbre,” in Rethinking Difference in Music Scholarship, ed. Olivia Bloechl, Melanie Lowe, and Jeffrey Kallberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming 2014). I thank Nina Eidsheim for sharing the final manuscript and Olivia Bloechl for bringing this source to my attention.

\textsuperscript{418} Eidsheim writes in “Race and Aesthetics of Vocal Timbre”: “While listeners do not necessarily imagine the voice of the non-Caucasian to be inferior, it is heard as a voice of difference wherein hegemonic aurality defines normality. As voix blanche represented the voice before scientific progress and voix sombrée represented the ‘advanced,’ professionalized voice—the result of progress—‘ethnic voices’ (Armenian, Latin, African-American and so on) are now the new voix blanche, while the ‘non-ethnic’ normative voice is the new voix sombrée.” On the topic of the colonial temporalization of space, also see Johannes Fabian, Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983). On European colonial and imperial conceptions of otherness and their
The framework of hegemonic aurality is directly applicable to the South Korean postcolonial and disporic contexts. In the European and U.S. colonial / hegemonic contexts, it involves “hearing” an a priori difference in the voices of racial minorities; in the U.S. in particular, it implies a top-down application of colonial, Eurocentric standards of hearing upon local categories of social differentiation. As scholars of postcolonial theory have demonstrated, the main axis of differentiation in postcolonial and diasporic locations is the people’s perceived closeness to modernity and “progress,” as signaled by their social and economic status as well as their physical location—city, countryside, East, West, etc. In the Christian Korean diaspora, an additional category entails the subjects’ perceived sameness and difference vis-à-vis a “normal” (white) U.S., as I outlined in the first section of this chapter.

The unwillingness of the choir members to be the vocal agents of han may then be read as the singers’ resistance to situate themselves—“hear” themselves—in a space “outside” of modernity. Han, as an utterance associated with the historically rooted sufferings of Koreans, “performs” one’s being in a time-space marked as the “past”—in other words, before the attainment of progress (I would suggest that the perception of han as a voice of the past is one that traditional vocal music pedagogy advances; see Chapter 3). The vocal utterances and inflections heard as han are similar to, and continuous with, other encultured timbres that are configured as the voices of non-modern bodies in the South Korean and Korean diasporic imaginary. For example, in “Culture and Interdiscursivity in Korean Fricative Voice Gestures,” Nicholas Harkness argues that a type of harsh audible gesture in Korean speech, which he calls “Fricative Voice Gesture” (FVG), operates as a mode of differentiation according to social and economic status: “[FVG] is a feature of various expressive registers of authorized intensity in

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419 See, for an example, Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*.
South Korea that members of younger generations, the educated upper classes, and a particular stratum of Protestant Christianity [Presbyterianism] increasingly characterize as a remnant of past—and passé—cultural forms.” According to Harkness, people in these groups, including members of a Protestant choir in Seoul who served as the main informants for his ethnographic study, readily identified FVG with “stereotypical persons (e.g. people working at a market),” “often distanced themselves from its use,” and sometimes caricatured the use of FVG. Interestingly, Harkness also shows how the two disparate discourses of suffering offered by South Korean churches are differently associated with FVG. He records the use of FVG in Pentecostal churches, which “[were] built upon a notion that the Holy Spirit would intervene in the lives and bodies of the suffering masses of postwar Korean.” In contrast, FVG is almost absent in urban Presbyterian churches, which advance the notion that “suffering and hardship are things of the past.” In characterizing a church from this latter group (a quite famous church I visited in 2005 and 2011), Harkness notes: “its sermonic style and vocal standards—from whispered prayer to European-style classical singing—are seen as instantiations of a wealthy, healthy, modern, peaceful Korean present.”

It should be noted that the modern/colonial cultural tendency to consider vocal production as an expression of an “unmediated essence,” an essence often configured in racial terms, explains the KCR choir conductor’s apparent belief that a certain ethno-psychological state would effect a specific timbre and vocality, as well as explaining the singers’ inability to follow the conductor’s request to perform *han*. As Nina Eidsheim notes, timbre is often taken to be a

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421 Harkness, “Culture and Interdiscursivity,” 105.
422 Harkness, “Culture and Interdiscursivity,” 115.
“product” that communicates “truths about a singer’s identity” rather than what it actually is—an action mediated through recurring physical training.\footnote{Nina Eidsheim, “Race and Aesthetics.”} The conductor of the KCR choir was himself aware of the importance of repetitive physical training for the attainment of particular timbres when it came to the dominant choral styles: the choir rehearsals always began with him demonstrating specific postures and movements of specific body parts (e.g., abdomen, shoulders, chest, jaw, eyebrows, chin) and encouraging the singers to mimic his gestures. He was in fact so adamant about the importance of the body during these sessions that some of the men in the choir avoided the first ten minutes of the rehearsals altogether after several months of halfhearted participation during these exercises.

The fact that the conductor did not extend his views on the bodily production of timbre to han speaks volumes about the extent to which notions of racial essence are bound up with the understanding of vocal timbre. The han performance that pieces like “Hoegae wa ch’anyang” (Penitence and Praise) encourages from the singers—in particular, the sopranos’ appoggiatura-like phrases—indeed requires specialized vocal training. Consider, for example, the techniques cultivated in p’ansori vocal pedagogy (also see Chapter 3). P’ansori students spend years practicing how to channel sounds through a tense larynx. As Kyung-hee Kim explains in an authoritative English-language study of p’ansori (2008): “The method of producing sound in p’ansori requires the singer to strongly yell out the sound with the vocal chord muscles strained and tense, resulting in a strong and rough texture of singing. From such an artificial and tense way of producing sound, we have a rough and tough tone color, which is characteristic of p’ansori.”\footnote{Kyung-hee Kim, “Theory of Pansori,” in Pansori, ed. Chul-Ho Kim (Seoul: The National Center for Korean Traditional Performing Arts, 2008), 52. Based on this basic vocal production, p’ansori singers are expected to develop suirisŏng (husky voice), aewŏnsŏng (sorrowful voice), and ch’ŏlsŏng (metallic voice), over years of training. Also see Hae-kyung Um, “Professional Music: Vocal,” in Music of Korea, ed. Byong Won Lee and Yong-Shik Lee (Seoul: The National Center for Korean Traditional Performing Arts, 2007), 121.}

We can also consider the concept of sigimsae, another important technique in postwar p’ansori pedagogy. This term denotes a combination of timbre, phrasing, and ornamentation that shapes
the *p’ansori* singer’s improvisation, emphasizing that each utterance is a unique, unrepeatable expression of the singer, and as such it indexes modern *p’ansori* pedagogy’s emphasis on orality and opacity. Such *p’ansori* ideals do not translate well into the medium of choral music, which is conventionally grounded in a measure of uniformity in terms of pitch frequency, tone quality, and, sometimes, the rate of vibrato among the singers.

**Interviews: Suffering and Entering Modernity**

In this final section, I present and discuss four representative interviews to demonstrate how the KCR choir singers themselves understand their musical and cultural values. My interview questions were formulated loosely around five themes: 1) stories relating to immigration, 2) thoughts on Korea and the Korean American community, 3) musical styles the choir member likes and dislikes, especially in the context of the pieces that he or she has sung as a choral singer, 4) thoughts on the North Korean refugee’s performance, which all of the interviewed members had seen at the time of the interview, and 5) whether the choir member listened to secular music, including Korean and/or American popular music and traditional Korean music. My approach as the interviewer was to hand the participants a set of questions a week prior to the meeting and to let the singers direct the conversation with minimal intervention from me. This led one male singer to avoid discussing music altogether; he told me that he did not feel qualified to talk about music to a Ph.D. student in Musicology and did not change his mind even when I assured him repeatedly that I was just interested in listening to his views (on the other hand, he kindly wrote down detailed, extensive notes on his immigration experiences in preparation for the interview, which lasted about four hours). The eight other singers who wanted to talk about music stated that they liked classical choral styles based on four-part hymns, and many of them remembered singing pieces in this genre in conjunction with the memories of suffering in Korea, which they narrated in historical and/or personal terms. It seemed that pieces in this style helped the singers
to manage and deal with difficulties they encountered in Korea. Except in one case, the singers were not interested discussing traditional music or neotraditional choral music even when I nudged the conversation in those directions. Nevertheless, all of the interviewees evinced a strong sense of which kinds of singing and culture belong to the church and which do not.

My interview with Mr. Ryu (b. 1954) was conducted in a small bible study room at the KCR church. Mr. Ryu studied theology and choral conducting in Seoul, Korea in the early 1970s. He conducted children’s choirs and worked in a Christian publishing house in the same city for about fifteen years before moving to Buena Park, California in 1989. In Buena Park, he was an assistant pastor before taking on landscape maintenance work. He described his job as “hard on the body but still more profitable than many office jobs in Korea... although not as profitable as the kinds of jobs that white people have.” When I asked him to discuss his favorite choral music, he answered, “pieces that are close to classical hymns.” He explained his preference in the context of his life story, which began with a narrative starting with the Korean composers who attended the colonial-period mission schools established in P’yŏngyang (even though he was born after Korea’s independence). Mr. Ryu knew a lot about which mission schools these composers attended and said that this first generation of Korea’s church composers was personally meaningful to him.

Subsequently, he dwelled on the Korean War. I quote at length:

I think God works during difficult times. That was my case too. I was young when the Korean War just ended, and there was nothing to eat. My mom mended uniforms thrown out by American GIs to clothe us. My father was a military serviceman, and I was born in Seoul. We moved a lot. That’s the life of a serviceman, never staying in a place. My mother... She suffered a lot [koseng i manūsyŏtt'a]. We didn’t starve because my dad was a serviceman and it was the time of military government. But anyways, when things got difficult and when there was nothing to eat, I would still see my father and mother praying and going to the church. And you know, it was really, really cold in Korea. Nowadays, it doesn’t get very cold because of global warming, but back then it used to get really cold. But they would still go to early morning prayer meetings [saebyo’k kido] in that weather and prayed. And when we were building the church, who had the money to contribute? We went to the mountain to find stones to lay down the foundation of the church. I think that’s why I like the hymns. Because each one has a personal history. We sang them during this

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427 Interview conducted on September 13, 2009.
time of difficulty. Some say that it's outdated, but I still prefer an old woman [halmŏni] just singing a simple hymn to anything else. That kind of passion is long gone in Korea these days... Things that happen in today’s megachurches are just a show these days.

During the interview he mentioned and hummed his three favorite choral pieces, all of which were composed by the Cold War-period composer Tu-wan Kim, whose music I discussed in Chapter 2. He also mentioned that he enjoys singing kagok, a secular vocal genre stylistically linked to the dominant Protestant choral repertory and often composed by Christian composers (also see Chapter 2). He contrasted hymns and hymn-based choral music to “all other styles that feel staged and artificial” and included the North Korean woman’s performance that both of us had seen at the All Nations Heritage event in this category. He tried to imitate the refugee's vocal timbre for a few seconds and stated that it was “too emotional” and “almost unnatural.”

Mrs. Pak (b. 1948), a former sociology professor in Florida, also interweaved her thoughts on music with her memories of difficulties in Korea. During my interview with her, which was conducted in her house over dinner, her husband volunteered to participate as well, although he was not part of the KCR choir. Mr. Pak (b. 1943) was somewhat of a revered figure in the church: he is a Korean-War Christian exile who moved to Boston in 1964 and a distinguished professor of chemical engineering at a prestigious university in the Midwest (retired at the time of interview). The couple used to split their time between Orange County and Iowa City until a few years prior to the interview, attending the diasporic church in Orange County and a “mainstream” church in Iowa. They spent over two decades in the Midwest, where “the Korean population is so small as to be insignificant,” and this seemed to explain why they constantly positioned themselves as insiders and outsiders in both cultures during the interview (this was also the only bilingually conducted interview). When I asked Mrs. Pak about her preferred choral music styles, she said “anything that sounds like traditional hymns and kagok.” I cite a transcript of the relevant conversation below:

428 Interview conducted on December 6, 2009.
Mrs. Pak: We learned these songs [hymns, kagok, hymn-based choral music] when there were so many challenges [koeroūm]. I think that’s why churches were so popular back then. I got into these songs because I attended a church and joined the church choir ... It was a privilege to be part of the choir... My father also sang hymns all the time. He also prayed all the time although things were not easy for him. That is why I respected my parents. I had to stop playing records of hymns and kagok once I went to Florida [in the early 1980s] because it made me so nostalgic about Korea and got in the way of me adapting into the American society...

Mr. Pak: Yeah, life was hard back then. That’s why Koreans have early morning prayer meetings [saebiyŏk kido]. When Christianity first came to Korea during the Japanese colonial period, well, it actually came in the late 19th century, Koreans were oppressed. So people woke up early to get things going. That’s why I like Korean churches... These early morning prayer meetings. I was born in P’yŏng’ŏn’bukdo Sŏnch’ŏn [now North Korea], one of the first towns where Christianity was introduced. It got really loud in the churches on Sunday mornings, with all the prayers and hymns.

Mrs. and Mr. Pak were also the only people among the interviewed singers who demonstrated an ironic, humorous attitude toward the “Korean” singing style rather than dismissing or avoiding it:

Me: Did you listen to any Korean popular music or traditional music while growing up?

Mrs. Pak: Not while growing up. My parents banned popular music at home and no one was really interested in traditional music. My education was basically learning to read music in school and singing in the church choir. I also learned to play some piano at school. But actually we are learning some popular music now, some t’ūrorū [laughter]. My husband knew nothing about t’ūrorū because he left Korea so early, but then he learned them recently when we bought a karaoke machine. We even had parties with some Koreans a month ago. Now he even sings Christian songs like t’ūrorū. Like this. [demonstration]. I sing t’ūrorū like I’m singing Christian music and kagok [demonstration].

When I asked her about her thoughts on the North Korean refugee’s performance, she responded playfully, “well my vibrato is really strong so maybe I could sing like her too.” She gave it a try, laughing hard when she was done. It seemed to me that they had no qualms in caricaturing the “Korean” style of singing because they felt very distant from Korean culture. From their life stories, it seemed that they had only each other to speak Korean to for at least two decades; their children did not speak Korean (they chose not to teach them Korean) and were married into white American families.
Mrs. Sin (b. 1952), a soprano who studied vocal performance in Salzburg and Manhattan in the early 1980s, met with me in KCR’s kitchen on a Saturday afternoon; she had just finished preparing the broth for the lunch that would be served for the congregation the next day. When I asked about her favorite choral pieces, Mrs. Shin said “classical, classical, and only classical. I can’t help it.” She cited Handel’s Messiah as her all-time favorite sacred choral piece and sang several melodies from it (in Korean). Her comment on the North Korean refugee revealed that she had a strict view of what is acceptable and unacceptable as Christian vocal praise:

Don’t get me wrong, I liked the whole event [All Nations Heritage]. I get really touched when many ethnicities come together in one place to praise God and I love the feeling that God is praised by people of different languages. So I’m thankful. What was negative [about the event] was the North Korean refugee. When she sang, I just hoped she had not come. The performer may have been inspired by God, but the piece was not selected correctly. It was not appropriate for the event. With her, I thought, she does not fit in this place at all. I do classical vocal music, so I have the techniques for that. The technique that she was using was so childlike, and the text was inappropriate too. It’s just not the kind of text that praises God. It was really artificial. I feel that without that performance, the event would have been good.

Our conversation about the North Korean refugee led her to discuss what she considers to be Christian and not Christian. From her comments, it became evident that she drew a strict opposition between “Christianity” on the one hand and “superstition,” “idolatry,” and “ethnicity” on the other.

When I was living in Korea, my family was Christian but when I went to non-Christian families, I felt a lot of foreign elements. Idolatry and superstition. This attitude that x is good and y is how this should be done. It’s not a custom or tradition but is related to idolatry. But even now, Koreans are still like this. Thank God we don’t have those in this country. For example, when I was visiting Korea, I heard things like, “birthday parties should not take place after the actual birthday,” “anniversary of funeral should be on the day before the death,” or strange things like that. These are not necessary. What is really strange in Korea nowadays is that the city is filled with shamans, fortune readers, and Buddhist monks. They are as common as coffee shops. They confuse and mislead people. They existed when I was living in Korea too. But not my family. My family was isolated. Well, not isolated, but my family is Christian. Peaceful and clean. In other houses, I felt scared. There were some pictures and knives thrust into the walls. I felt like I was in Africa, as if in some other ethnic people’s house [tarŭn minjok]. That trend is rising again in

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429 Interview conducted on November 28, 2009.
Korea. I really hate that. I was always really happy that I was born into a Christian family. Life should be simple and comfortable.

She became visibly upset as she stated the above. I felt compelled to end the interview promptly.

I met Mrs. Chŏn (b. 1948), a small business owner who migrated to the U.S. in 1976, at a bakery near KCR after a choral rehearsal.\footnote{Interview conducted on September 20, 2009.} The interview began on a nervous note as she was very shy about talking about music; she told me that she did not feel qualified to talk about music to a Ph.D. student who studies music. When I assured her that I was only interested in her opinion, she mentioned that her most memorable experience as a choral singer was performing Handel's Messiah as a part of a choir in Seoul in the 1970s and quietly hummed the line “Come unto Him, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and He will give you rest” in Korean. She added, “This message helped me go through hard times in the past. You know, things were difficult back then.”

As the interview moved on and I asked her if there was anything about her “immigration” \[imín\] experiences that she found worth sharing, she became very uncomfortable:

Mrs. Chŏn: Well, you say immigration but I really don’t feel that dimension in my life. Hmm. You know how people talk about the so-called minority [sosu minjok]? Well, I don’t think that speaks to my experience. My husband and I always talk about how happy we are here and we are very active in our lives. So this idea of minority is not really necessary and I have not really thought about it. People talk about gaps and ethnicity and all of that but I really don’t feel like that has been my experience because I would be happy living anywhere, and life in the U.S. has been a blessing. I would recommend coming to the U.S. to anyone who is interested. It is the best country in the world.

Me: So you don’t think about things like minority?

Mrs. Chŏn: I am a very happy person. Maybe this question will be of interest to other people. My life has been really simple, with faith at the core of my life. Without faith, my life doesn’t really make sense. It is not important whether I am a minority or not. Inside my brain, the only question is how can I live as God had meant it for me today? That is the only thing I think from morning to night. Maybe other folks will have a lot to say, but I don’t feel distracted by other less important things.
After this, she said she has many other things that she would like to talk about that I had not mentioned in my interview questions, for example, the importance of obeying God and finding “a God-fearing spouse.” She seemed much happier during this final, improvised portion of the interview.

**Conclusion: The Politics of Sameness and Asian American (Ethno)musicology**

In this chapter, I explored the reception of Korean neotraditional Christian choral music by a South Korean diasporic church choir as a way of examining the borders of cultural acceptability—an acceptability expressed in terms of singers’ identification and dis-identification with particular musical styles. I attempted to go beyond a facile characterization of choir singers’ musical values and tastes by avoiding positivistic modes of inquiry. Instead, I sought to construct a poly-vocal, multi-disciplinary narrative to consider the cultural ideology of diasporic sameness in its affective, lived, and transnational dimensions.

I conclude this chapter by returning to what I called the same but segregated paradox, which I highlighted as a problematic aspect of South Korean Christianity in national and diasporic manifestations. I invoke this paradox to encourage scholars of (East) Asian / Asian American musical formations to go beyond celebratory narratives that fit the paradigm of contemporary U.S. multiculturalism. While some of these scholars’ desire to construct an oppositional Asian American musical space is admirable, (ethno)musicological narratives built on multiculturalist

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431 Consider, for instance, how South Korean church music historian Chŏng-su Hong explains why Korean-style church music has not replaced mainstream church music in South Korea: “The reason is simple. It is because the musical preference of the people...are not shaped according to our music or minjung theology.” Chŏng-su Hong, Han'guk kyohoe ēmak sasang sa [The History of Ideology of Korean Church Music] (Seoul: Changnohoe sinhaktaehakkyo chu'ilp'anbu, 2000), 239.

assumptions—narratives that would “match” Asian bodies with “Asian” music or musicality—betray the reality of contemporary musical practices across Asian diasporic communities. Searching for music cultures based on a multiculturalist paradigm is somewhat disingenuous, particularly in a diasporic context; it might be easier to do ethnographic studies of Asian American practitioners of European classical music if we count the number of practitioners as a rationale for constructing a study. In this regard, Paul Jong-Chul Yoon’s final commentary in his 2001 article on a taiko group based in New York, “‘She’s Really Become Japanese Now!’: Taiko Drumming and Asian American Identification” is fascinating to consider. Yoon states that by choosing to study a musical group that draws young, educated Asian Americans interested in learning taiko drumming, he has “virtually ignored the millions of Asians in America who refuse to position themselves as “Asian American.” As Yoon’s statement acknowledges suggestively, there is a tension between the reality of musical practices among many Asian Americans and what is entailed in “minority history.” It is in this context that we can reflect on Jodi Kim’s incisive remark in *Ends of Empire*: “Asian American culture...refuses to be a cooperative native informant.”

I submit that addressing the politics of sameness and assimilation within Asian American communities in music studies, rather than avoiding this topic, is a way of critically coming to terms with Asian and Asian diasporic cultural formations, as well as recognizing them for who they are—as agents in societies that have defined them in complex, contradictory ways. Olivia Bloechl, in *Native American Song at the Frontiers of Early Modern Music*, advocates for a “skeptical, transculturally literate, and interventionist approach to colonial sources.” This critique is directed primarily at historical musicologists, but I extend this critique and ask if we

433 For a critical article on this topic, see Eidsheim, “Synthesizing Race.”


can imagine a similar ethno/musicological approach for exploring (post)colonial legacies affecting the lived experiences of Asian Americans and, where appropriate, other minorities. This may take experimental paths like the one I attempted above; and to be sure, some Asian American ethnomusicologists have already provided sophisticated models for a critical Asian American ethno/musicology. Consider, for example, Deborah Wong’s exploration of particular personal memories and lived histories in examining Asian Americans’ self-positioning through music-making.

Additionally, I suggest that addressing the politics of assimilation in (East) Asia and the Asian diaspora may serve as a de-centering tool or an “unsettling hermeneutic” for musicology as it has been conventionally practiced on both sides of the Pacific. As Bloechl argues, the historicist, exegetical orientation entrenched in musicology has meant a “return [of] an undifferentiated subject of Europe” even in avowedly progressive studies and has “tended to ascribe historical agency exclusively to Europe and European (usually elite, Christian, and male) subjects.” In this regard, it is worth asking: is it possible to critically and obliquely write “Asia Pacific” into musicology, as a location, a subject, and a genealogy? Nuanced responses to this question, in my view, are urgently needed for intellectual reasons, as well as in recognition of the large number of students of Asian and Asian American backgrounds who study the performance of canonical works of European classical music in various conservatories and conservatory-style music departments in the U.S.—a phenomenon rarely reflected in musicological scholarship.


438 Kim, Ends of Empire, 5.

439 Bloechl, Native American Song, 22.

440 There are several exceptional recent studies that attempt to factor in this development into the musicological literature. I cite three: Mari Yoshihara, Musicians from a Different Shore: Asians and Asian Americans in Classical Music (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007); Mina Yang, “East Meets West in the Concert Hall: Asians and Classical Music in the Century of Imperialism, Post-colonialism, and Multiculturalism,” Asian Music 38, no. 1 (2007): 1-30; Robert Fink, “I Did This Exercise 100,000 Times: Zen, Minimalism, and the Suzuki Method,” in
There is no easy answer to the posed question, but I suggest that we look for opportunities to undertake critical and, where appropriate, creative historiographies, rather than supplying “neutral” narratives of Asian incorporation into “Western” musicality or, worse, denouncing this specific cultural milieu. These histories, beyond expanding our knowledge of musical pasts, would ideally be crafted so as to highlight the situatedness of historicist, Western-centered musicological discourses themselves.

Conclusion

Trans-Pacific Memories

Subaltern histories are therefore constructed within a particular kind of historicized memory, one that remembers history itself as an imperious code that accompanied the civilizing process that the European Enlightenment inaugurated in the eighteenth century as a world-historical task.

-Dipesh Chakrabarty, 2000

The present dissertation explored Korean-language Christian choral music and, more broadly, Christian vocal music as practices central to the making of modernity in South Korea and the Korean diaspora. I examined these practices using a framework that highlights both their colonial and modern dimensions, acknowledging coloniality as a constitutive condition of modernity while also exploring how this essentially trans-Pacific musical modernity was mediated through locally meaningful memories and personally lived histories in (South) Korea and the Korean diaspora. This conceptual framework was reflected in the overarching structure that I adopted. The dissertation began with an examination of the musical ventures of the U.S. North American mission, thus highlighting the ways in which the mission’s ideals and values framed the experience of modernity for many Koreans. Subsequently, it considered how these ideals and values were interpreted by locally experienced and remembered trans-Pacific conditions in the following decades. This dissertation thus aligns with two tendencies in recent Anglophone scholarship of non-Western cultural formations. First, it advocates for the necessity of examining colonial discourse as a condition for postcolonial cultural production. At the same time, it attempts to transcend oppositional thinking by critically examining local perspectives that
negotiate “global designs.” To quote cultural theorist Timothy Mitchell, this approach “tak[es] seriously the emergence of the modern outside the geography of the West.”

My emphasis on the irrevocably entangled relationship between modernity and coloniality in Korea and the Korean diaspora is a critical response to the oppositional cultural attitudes that I have encountered in the “field” (i.e., churches) as well as in the academic community. First, I interrogate discourses and attitudes that have led to facile acceptance of universalisms. This critique applies not only to the practice of Korean Christian music but also extends to particular South Korean cultural and scholarly discourses on Christian and secular music that have taken Western-centric universalism for granted. I seek to complicate this assumed universalism not because I want to grieve the “loss” of Korean musical culture per se, but rather because it is often accompanied by depoliticized narratives that erase the dynamics of social differentiation via cultural identifications (globally and nationally) and the energy that go into enforcing a monogenealogy in the West and beyond.

Throughout this dissertation I have argued that the naturalization of Western-centric universalism and the disavowal of other modes of expressive worshipping in Korean and Korean diasporic church musical practices are symptomatic of broader cultural attitudes in many Korean Christian churches. In particular, I critiqued the fusion of trans-Pacific universalism and Korean nationalism in mainstream Korean church history, which has given rise to histories that configure the U.S. mission (and sometimes the U.S. in the abstract) as the “savior” of Korea. Because of these histories, which are based on narrow, hegemonic readings of the missionary archive, many churches in South Korea and the diaspora have consistently missed opportunities to confront trans-Pacific conditions of inequality through a transformative, subversive theology; to “search for

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441 Timothy Mitchell, introduction to *Questions of Modernity*, ed. Timothy Mitchell (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), xi.
a rhythm that would match [their] living experience”; and to engage more actively with grassroots social movements. The hegemonic positioning of South Korean Christianity is, interestingly, well demonstrated by the hostile responses that sometimes greet scholarly attempts to position Korean Christianity as a counterhegemonic force. I have personally noticed some of these responses at a number of conferences where alternative readings of South Korean Christianity were criticized by scholars who refused to entertain the possibility that it may have been something other than a pro-establishment, pro-U.S. social force.

This refusal to imagine Korean Christianity in other ways prompts my second critique: it seems to me that perspectives that view trans-border processes as nothing more than colonialism risk belittling people outside the West as “colonialized” or “false” subjects. The implications of this essentially West-based critical perspective include missing the opportunity for framing locally manifesting hierarchies in the non-West as the objects of critical exploration and invoking an image of Korea that is the mirror opposite of the West. I sought to overcome the limits of West-focused critique in this dissertation by carefully traversing between the perspectives of ethnic studies, which offer some of the most incisive critiques of raced and gendered formations, and area studies, which tend to be rooted in detailed research of local conditions and inequalities outside the West. Thus this dissertation critically examined the dense layers of locally


\[443\] Also consider Olivia Bloechl’s critique of oppositional thinking (Western versus native) that she indicates has emerged in certain musicological studies of colonial formations in early modern European context: “The tacit appeal… to a native oppositional perspective pure of all colonial “taint” would counter a self-identical European subject of history with its mirror image: a postcolonial subject desired as authentic, articulate, and untainted by the colonial past and its legacy.” Olivia Bloechl, *Native American Song at the Frontiers of Early Modern Music* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 24.

\[444\] I would like to add a note about the specific ethical commitment of the researcher and the disciplinary choices this entails. While interdisciplinary rapprochements between Asian American Studies and Asian Studies have resulted in a fascinating sub-literature in recent years, I have also met several ethnic studies scholars who refuse to engage with Area Studies because they are concerned that this other kind of “knowing” may blunt the edge of the critique that they feel that they can voice only from the vantage point of U.S. minorities.
meaningful, personally experienced memories, encounters, and affectivities that both exacerbate and contest the universalist aspirations within Korean Christian musical practice.

Future work based on this dissertation might further integrate my second critique. This could mean engaging more extensively with localized, diachronic, or “creolized” sonic-musical manifestations of Korean Christianity. Such a project could involve, for example, an in-depth investigation of recent attempts by a number of Korean and Korean diasporic groups to use p’ansori as the basis for oratorio-length passions—performances that have not been studied to my knowledge. Such a study, done in conjunction with further research on han, would examine forged intersections of han tropes of suffering and the sufferings portrayed in the New Testament. One challenge that would have to be tackled is tracking musical events like p’ansori passions. Korean and Korean diasporic Christian musical projects that transgress the medium of choral music tend to take place sporadically; they are typically not part of an organized movement or programme but a one-time special production of well-staffed, large churches (for example, the Oriental Mission Church in Los Angeles’s Koreatown). An arguably more ambitious project may be a semi-fictional piece of writing that performatively re-writes Christian theology through a heteroglossic lens, potentially based on extensive research on the expressive structures of 20th-century Korean shamanism. If pursued, such a project could take inspiration from the relevant Caribbean or Afro-diasporic postcolonial writing, for example, the syncretic re-iteration of Christianity that Mae Gwendolyn Henderson crafted in her article, “Speaking in Tongues: Dialogics, Dialectics and the Black Woman Writer’s Literary Tradition.”

I turn in conclusion to a number of broad questions that this dissertation poses for music studies, especially for those that concern music cultures in Korea and similarly positioned countries in Asia and their diasporas (e.g., Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, Guam, and other U.S.-

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aligned Asia Pacific countries and territories). Can we re-conceive studies of music cultures in
these locations with a view toward the notion of trans-Pacific modernity? What are the historical
conditions and temporalities of the trans-Pacific? How do they transform our understanding of
musical cultures—cultivated, traditional, and popular? A move in this direction will entail
addressing regionally and transnationally structured encounters and movements (e.g., migrations,
exiles, missions, wars, and so on) that have constituted an intersubjective modernity in the area.
These include, but are not limited to, late 19th-century imperialist rivalry between the Japan and
the U.S.; U.S. religious, military, and humanitarian missions; the migration of “cooler” workers to
the western coast of the U.S., including Hawai’i and San Francisco; the U.S. bombing of
Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as intra-Asian developments during the Pacific War; events of the
Cold War, including the Vietnam War and the Korean War; 20th-century migration of Chinese,
Koreans, and Japanese to Latin America. Importantly, as I suggested in Chapter 4, some of these
developments have tended to resist historicization and memorization, and this resistance is itself
constitutive of trans-Pacific modernity. The repression of alternative memories and, by extension,
the imperative to “forget” are, to be sure, commonly found across divergent non-Western
formations; but I highlight that in the specifically trans-Pacific context, these dynamics are
enforced by the ambivalent positioning of this region vis-à-vis the rest of the world. This
repression keeps intact the massive “forward” energy toward “progress” and drives the region’s
claim to, and desire for, First-World status, which would be troubled otherwise. Put differently,
this resistance is rooted in what may be considered the political economy of the Second World—
one replete with mimicry, inferiority complex, split subjectivity, amnesia, trauma, and shame,

For a theoretical discussion, see Homi K. Bhabha, The Location of Culture (New York: Routledge, 2004),
145-174. There are many interesting works on and around this topic with regard to the African diaspora and
postcoloniality, some of which are now considered classics. Here I cite four: Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth,
(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Tavia Nyong’o, The Amalgamation Waltz: Race, Performance, and
the Ruses of Memory (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).
driven by an ambivalence about its postcoloniality. I propose that addressing some of these “psychic” dimensions could be one productive direction for ethno/musicological research that deals with locations in and around the Asia Pacific. Crucially, this would entail an integrative, interdisciplinary dialogue with scholarship that explores this region’s psychic-temporal dimensions based on critical transnational inquiries.

Lastly, I propose that ethno/musicological explorations of the question of trans-Pacific modernity necessarily involves unorthodox approaches that are acutely aware of what it means to write with and against the grain of disciplinary methods. Such approaches could take multiple directions, but particularly promising are those that are sensitive to analytics of memory, affect, desire, or materiality. Moving in these direction necessarily involves a rethinking of approaches in view of the boundaries of conventional methodologies, for example, the text-based, historicist orientation of humanistic methods (e.g., musicology) and the presentist orientation of empirical methods (e.g., ethnomusicology)—orientations that scholars such as Tim Taylor and Olivia Bloechl have critiqued from different vantage points as disciplinary limits in studying colonial and postcolonial music-cultural formations. Following scholars such as Rey Chow, Karen

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447 See, among others, Kuan-Hsing Chen, Asia as Method: Toward Deimperialization (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010). The dynamics of “forgetting” underlying this region, I add, is echoed in the university-level music curriculum in the U.S. It is difficult to conceive of a class on the musics of Asia and/or Asian America that would include the multiplicity of oppositional musical movements typically featured in classes on the musics of other non-Western or U.S. minority formations (e.g., African American, Afro-diasporic, Latin American, and Chicano/a). To be sure, this problem has been actively questioned from different vantage points (for example, by Oliver Wang, Kevin Fellezs, and Deborah Wong in the domain of Asian American music-making), and changes are reflected in teaching at the undergraduate level. But in more conventional settings, classes on the musics of Asia have tended to fall back on the “safer” canons of traditional musics, in tension with the complex realities in the region.

448 One interesting project worth noting in this regard is the journal positions east asia cultures critique, which, according to the journal’s editorial statement, “is the first journal to examine critically the histories and cultures of East Asia and Asian America.” In particular, see vol. 16, no. 1, a special issue on “War Capital Trauma.” The journal was founded in 1993.


Shimakawa, and Olivia Bloechl (as well as other scholars of postcolonial theory working across various disciplinary fields), I suggest further that critical conceptual pathway could possibly be forged through strategic, selective considerations of psychoanalytical theories. On this note, Rey Chow’s defense of psychoanalysis against (other) Western disciplinary perspectives is interesting to observe:

The tendency to disparage the relevance of psychoanalysis is disturbing especially at a time when we need to deepen, as well as broaden, our understanding of the non-West. Such a tendency, itself historical, means that contemporary cultural studies are predicated on an opposed set of imperatives: let the “First World” critic continue to deal in speculative abstractions; let the “subaltern” speak of positivistic realities...In discussing psychoanalytic matters such as desires, fantasies, or neuroses in the context of modern China, my aim is not to applaud the hegemony of psychoanalysis per se, but to show how "protests," "resistance," "struggles," and so on, which belong to master thought systems such as Marxism and anti-imperialism, must also be recognized in the mundane affectivities that structure modern China.

Moving ethno/musicological conversations about trans-Pacific modernity and, more broadly, other modernities in the directions I have proposed above will enable us to probe the performative dimensions of modernity-coloniality. Such formulations would transform our perspective on music cultures in (post)colonial centers and peripheries—from past events recorded in the archives to social formations that continue to re-constitute our emotions, memories, and knowledge.

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452 Chow, Woman and Chinese Modernity, xiv.
Coda

As I neared the end of this dissertation project, it dawned on me that my emphasis on “suffering” as a condition of Christian transculturation in (South) Korea may have been guided by my memories of my paternal grandmother—my halmoni. I have no clear recollection of her, as she died when I was three years old, but I have heard stories of halmoni from her daughters-in-law, including my mother, who recount their fond memories of their mother-in-law whenever they get together. From these stories, I came to know my halmoni as a kind, quiet woman who welcomed me into this world despite my grandfather’s deep disappointment that I was born a girl not a boy. She suffered throughout her life because she was a woman and because of certain historical circumstances: during
the Korean War, she gave birth in her home's kitchen because North Korean soldiers occupied the rest of the house; she walked to faraway street markets to sell corn in order to support her children during a time of widespread poverty; she had very little say in the affairs of her family despite her contributions and was physically abused by her husband. According to my mother and aunts, my *halmoni* died during an early morning prayer meeting in a small church in the farming village of Hong-ch’ŏn, a church that she regarded as a shelter from the harsh conditions of life. Perhaps this is why when I see and hear a congregation of gray-haired Christian Koreans singing a well-known hymn, I feel a pang of tenderness regardless of my own religious beliefs. This dissertation is written in loving memory of my *halmoni* and for women like her.
Appendix 1: Key Cold War events in Korea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Key events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August, 1945</td>
<td>Korea’s independence from Japan, following the surrender of the Japanese empire to the Allied powers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September, 1945</td>
<td>The establishment of the Soviet Army’s Soviet Civil Authority in the North and the Provisional People’s Committee for North Korea. The establishment of the United States Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>Increasing persecution of Christians, landowners, and centrists in the North and persecution of communists, socialists, and centrists in the South.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August, 1948</td>
<td>The establishment of two separate republics in Korea. A U.N.-supervised election in the South led to the foundation of the Republic of Korea (South Korea). The North rejected this U.N.-initiated proposition, forming its own government, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea). The formal withdrawal of the Soviet and the U.S. governing forces from North Korea and South Korea.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| August, 1948 – June, 1950 | Political and military alliance between the U.S. and South Korea and between the Soviet Union and North Korea. Leaders of South Korea and North Korea (Syngman Rhee and Kim Il-sŏng, respectively) voiced plans to reunify the country through military means.  
  
  Heightened persecution of unwanted groups on both sides.  
  
  Border fighting along the 38th parallel. |
| June, 1950- July, 1953 | The Korean War, which ended in a truce that re-established the pre-War border. |
| 1953-late 1980s       | South Korea’s heavy dependence on U.S. aid (1950s-1960s).  
  
  A series of anticommunist dictatorships in South Korea.  
  
  A single-party totalitarian dictatorship in North Korea. |
Appendix 2: Information on Christian exiled composers, based on Kyu-hyŏn Kim’s 2006 anthology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composer</th>
<th>Before 1945 (during the colonial period)</th>
<th>1945 – 1970s</th>
<th>1970s-</th>
<th>Secular music</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Pak, Tae-jun (1900-1986) | *1910s: studied music in P’yongyang’s Sungsil School and piano with the wife of a U.S. missionary  
*1917: founded a nationally-touring Christian choir  
*early 1930s: studied composition with D. Malsberry, a composer and missionary in P’yongyang  
*mid-1930s: studied music in Tusculum College and Westminster Choir College  
*late 1930s and early 1940s: taught music and English in P’yongyang’s Sungsil School | *1946: founded the Religious Music program in Yonsei University  
*1960-1973: president of Korea Church Music Association  
*1968-1972: president of Korea Music Association | *1970s -: conductor of church choirs and symphony orchestras in S. Korea  
* kagok  
*children’s songs  
*orchestral music with nationalistic themes |                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Yi, Yu-sŏn (1911-2005) | *Born in P’yongyang to the first Methodist pastor of Korean nationality  
*1910s-1920s: studied piano with Alice Williams, wife of a U.S. missionary  
*late 1930s: studied voice in American Conservatory of Music  
*1940: conducted L.A. Jefferson Korean Church choir  
*1941-5: taught music in John Moon Theology school | *1952-5: conductor of the U.S. Army United Church choir  
*1962-1963: president of Korea Music Association | *1974-7: president of Korea Church Music Association  
*1970s-90s: professor of music in S. Korea  
*1990s: retirement in Los Angeles  
* kagok  
*children’s songs |                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Ku, Tu-hoe (1921-) | *1930s: studied music and theology in P’yongyang’s Yohan School, established by John Moore.  
*early 1940s: taught music in elementary schools and conducted choirs of would-be legendary churches in P’yongyang  
*1943-4: studied composition in Imperial Music School in Tokyo | *late 1940s - early 1950s: conductor of the Eighth U.S. Army 17th Base Chapel choir  
*1957: received a U.S. Crusader scholarship to study music in Boston  
*1980-1: president of Korea Church Music Association  
*1980s-1990s: doctoral studies in music and in theology in LA  
*1990s-: professor of composition in S. Korea  
* kagok  
*children’s songs  
*orchestral and chamber music with nationalistic themes |                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Pak, Chae-hun (1922-) | *1930s: studied music and theology in P’yongyang’s Yohan School  
*1943-4: studied composition in Imperial Music School in Tokyo  
*1944-1946: taught music in elementary school in P’yongyang | *early 1950s: active in music organizations associated with the US-S.K. Marine  
*1950s-1970s: conductor of Yong’nak Church choir and the associated orphaned children’s choir  
*1980s-: pastor of a Korean church in Toronto  
* kagok |                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Kim, Tu-wan | *Born in P’yŏngan Province to a pastor’s family | *1950s: conductor of the Military Headquarters choir | *1970s: studied music in Linda Vista University’s |                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Han, Tae-gun (1928-) | *Born to a Christian nationalist family who fled to Yanbian due to Japanese persecution of Korean nationalists | *early 1950s: joined Military Music School in Seoul | *1970s-: conductor of church choirs in S. Korea | * kagok |
| Kim, Kuk-jin (1930-) | *Born in P’yŏngan Province to a Christian family *1940s: Studied music and theology in P’yongyang’s Sŏnghwa School | *1950s: joined the information branch of the U.S.-S.K. army *1950s: studied composition with D. Malsberry in Pusan | *1970s-: conductor of church choirs, professor of music in S. Korea | * kagok * chamber music, piano music, orchestral music |
| Kim, Sun-se (1931-) | *Born in Hwanghae Province to a Christian family *1940s: Learned to play the piano and to conduct choirs in churches and schools throughout North Korea | *1950s: studied music in Military Band Music School in Seoul *1960s-1970s: conductor of church choirs and composition teacher in Seoul | *1980s-: studied and taught theology and music in Yuin University and Bethesda University in LA; conductor of Korean church choirs in LA | *
| Yi, Chung-hwa (1940-) | *Born in North Korea to a Christian family | *Orphaned due to the Korean War *1950s-1960s: studied theology in Seoul | *1970s-: conductor of church choirs; active in the National Unification Advisory Council and other national security organizations | * kagok * national re-unification anthems |
| Paek, Kyong-hwan (1942-) | *Born in Hamgyŏng Province to a Christian family | *1950s: conductor of the Military Headquarters Church choir and Yong’nak Church choir *1960s: studied music in Seoul | *1970s-1980s: studied composition and conducting in Mannes School of Music and Peabody Conservatory *1990s: studied theology in Reformed Theological Seminary in LA; conductor of Korean church choirs in Los Angeles (including the L.A. Yong’nak Church) | * kagok |
| Kim, Jong-il (1943-) | *Born in Manchuria to a pastor’s family | *1960s: studied music in Seoul | *1980s: studied composition in Berlin *1990s-: church music activities in Los Angeles | * kagok |
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Sources before 1945


**Sources after 1945**


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