Chapter 14

THE EXCHANGE OF MUSICAL INFLUENCES BETWEEN KOREA AND CENTRAL ASIA IN ANCIENT TIMES

Song Bang-Song

Introduction:
The Influence and Acceptance of Foreign Music

Korea has enjoyed a continual exchange of cultural influences with her neighbors throughout history, particularly in the realm of music. Present day Korean music originated in the Three Kingdoms period of Koguryo (37 B.C.-A.D. 668), Paekche (18 B.C.-A.D. 660), and Silla (57 B.C.-A.D. 935). Korean music was closely related to the musical culture of her immediate neighbor, China, as well as to that of Central Asia. It is the author’s understanding that the major theme of the current UNESCO-sponsored international seminar on "Korean Culture and the Silk Road" is designed to explore, academically, various fields of Korean culture, each from its own angle.

The terms “influence” and “acceptance” are two academic terms of significant importance which are invariably used in any discussion on the mutual relationship in cultural exchanges with neighboring countries. Consequently, the two terms have to be clearly defined and differentiated, according to how the relationship with the foreign culture is
viewed. We will use the term "influence" to describe the reception of one culture by that of another.

The influence and acceptance of foreign culture take place repeatedly in history. A particular cultural aspect of a nation may dominate another, or a culture of one nation may accept that of another of its own volition, while the two may interact with each other on equal terms. The issues of influence from and acceptance of foreign culture are so complex and diverse that they are quite difficult to grasp. However, the author will attempt to explore how music from Central Asia was accepted in the ancient history of Korean music, from the Three Kingdoms period until the Unified Silla period. We will cover four subjects in terms of acceptance of music from Central Asia: Buddhist chant (pomp'ae) of Unified Silla; Ch'oe Ch'i-won's Hyangak chabyong osu; Five recited poems of hyangak; the traverse flute (boengjok) and five-stringed lute (ahyon pip'a) of Koguryo; and modal terms (wolcho, pansopcho, hwanjongo) of Tang music in the three bamboo instruments (samjuk) of Silla. On the basis of research in progress, an overview will be conducted in the following three sections.

Pomp'ae of Unified Silla and Ch'oe Ch'i-Won's Hyangak Chabyong Osu

Buddhist chant (pomp'ae) is an important musical genre which developed in close relation with Buddhist rites. Though it is said that the root of pomp'ae may be traced back to Brahmanism based upon Indian Vedic thought, the ancient pomp'ae is known to have been derived directly from the Chinese fanbai initiated by Cao Zhi (Cho Sik in Sino-Korean: 192-232) of the Wei Dynasty in the third century. If Chinese fanbai was rooted in the Buddhism of India, then it may be reasonable to assert that Korean pomp'ae might have been historically related to the musical culture of Central Asia.

Buddhism was introduced into Koguryo in 372 (second year in the reign of King Sosurim), then into Paekche in 384 (first year in the reign of King Ch'inmyu), and then to Silla in 535 (twenty-second year in the reign of King Pophung). Thus pomp'ae seems to have been introduced into the Three Kingdoms along with the introduction of Buddhism, because religious rituals must have been indispensable in spreading Buddhism along with the three Buddhist treasures (priest, scripture, and statues). There is, however, no bibliographical data extant today to prove this except for two historical materials containing the record on Silla pomp'ae during the South-North Dynasties period in China: the monumental inscription for the Zen monk, Chin'gam, and Ennin's (Won In in Sino-Korean: 793-864) Diary of Pilgrimage to Tang in Search for the
Law (Nitto gubo junrei gyoki). Pompiæ, as practiced in Unified Silla, may be summarized as follows.\(^3\)

Zen monk Chi'ngam, a high Silla monk, (Hyeso: 774–850) went to Tang in 804 (fifteenth year in the reign of King Aejang), returned home in 830 (fifth year in the reign of King Hungdok), and taught pompiæ at a famous Buddhist temple now known as Ssanggyesa. He introduced pompiæ of the Tang style to Silla society in the early ninth century. At about the same time, a Japanese high monk, Ennin, toured Tang from 838 to 847, and recorded in his travelogue that three styles of pompiæ were practiced at a Silla temple (Choksanwon) located in the Shantung peninsula of China. They comprised the first Silla style in practice in Silla society, the second Tang style then popular in Tang society, and the third Japanese style then in vogue in Japanese society.

As the Zen monk, Chi'ngam, taught pompiæ he had learnt in Tang, China; it must have been the Tang-style fanhui of the early ninth century as referred to in Ennin's travelogue. It may also be safely assumed that pompiæ of either the Silla or Japanese style must have been played respectively in Silla or Japanese society prior to the ninth century. One of them must have been what the Silla accepted and developed into a more enriched Silla form.

The five poems of hyangak (Hyangak chabyong osu) in Chinese characters by Ch'oe Chi'i-won (born in 857) are important documents which depict an aspect of the performing arts in Silla society towards the end of the ninth century. Ch'oe Chi'i-won went to Tang in 869 (ninth year in the reign of King Kyongmun) at the age of twelve, passed the state civil service examination, served in a government post, and then returned home in 885 (fifth year in the reign of King Hon'gang). The five poems of hyangak category may be found in the court ballet performance of the hyangak and the tangak in his Koryo (History of Koryo).\(^3\) It may be construed that Ch'oe Chi'i-won labeled the five performing arts of Central Asia as hyangak (native music), because the masked dance plays had already been accepted in Silla society towards the end of the ninth century. The five mask plays, Kambhuan, Wolchon, Taemyon, Soktok, and Sanye, are said to be typical of Silla music hyangak, but in the field of Korean studies, evidence suggests that they were in fact derived from the performing arts of Central Asia.

Kambhuan was assumed to have been related to a play called tung-wanxi, a kind of ball game from Central Asia, while Wolchon was thought to have been a sort of masked dance play handed down in the Hetian region of Yutian, now Hotan in Central Asia. Taemyon was described as having been related to Ta-mien-hsi (lit. "big mask play") of Tang—deriving from the barbarian dance of Kuei-tsu, a kind of Shamanistic dance play from Central Asia.\(^4\) Soktok was interpreted as a
sort of dance play originating from Soghd, now the Tashkent and Samarkand regions of Central Asia. *Sanje* is thought to have derived from a lion's mask play belonging to the Gniizi tradition of Central Asia that is believed to have been related to the Chinese *Xiliang ji*.

**The Transverse Flute and the Five-Stringed Lute of Koguryo**

Koguryo, bordering on the Asian continent proper, was the first nation among the Three Kingdoms to develop Korea's ethnic musical culture in its continual cultural exchange with the continent, and thereby spread its prestige abroad. A number of research articles on the musical history of Koguryo and Central Asia have already been published in the field of Korean historical musicology.

The musical culture of Koguryo has been recorded as *Koryak* (*Gaeoli yue* in Chinese) or *Koryogi* (*Gaoli ji*) in the authentic histories of China, and as *Komangaku* in Japanese historical documents. Although the musical culture of Koguryo in the Three Kingdoms period has been highlighted in various ways by historical documents on music, its relationship with Central Asia will be surveyed in terms of two musical instruments in use at the time; that is to say, the transverse flute (*boengjak*) and the five-stringed lute (*ohyon pipi*), since those instruments were closely related to the *hyanguk* instruments of Unified Silla (668-935).

The Koguryo flute, played in a horizontal position like the present-day bamboo flute, was recorded in three ways in authenticated Chinese histories: *boengchuii* (*hengchui* in Chinese), *chok* (*di*), and *boenjok* (*hengdi*); and *yokobue* in the Japanese historical documents. According to these literary documents, the transverse flute is assumed to have been played in Koguryo society up to the sixth century. The relevant archaeological source is a mural painting on Tomb No. 17 at Chiban (Qian), Manchuria, which is thought to have been built in the sixth and seventh centuries. A mural painting of a musical performance on Tomb 1 at Changcho’on (Changchun), Manchuria, would suggest that the historical origin of the Koguryo flute can be traced to the following literary sources.

In view of the fact that the transverse flute was played not only in *Koryogi* (*Gaoli ji*), but also in *Kanggukki* (*Gangkuo ji*), *An'gukki* (*Ankuo ji*), *Sorukki* (*Shuchi ji*), and *Kuijagi* (*Guiji ji*) from among seven performing groups called *Chilbog* (*Quhu ji*) during the Ta-yeh period (605-616); the origin of the Koguryo flute and the Chinese transverse flute may both be traced to Central Asia. Such regions as Suchi (now Kashgar), Kangguo (Samarkand), Anguo (Bukhara), and Quizi (Kucha) had been historically linked to the caravan route between China and Central Asia, namely the Silk Road.
The five-stringed lute of Koguryo, related to musical instruments of
Central Asia, was recorded as ohyon (우신안) or ohyon pип’a (우신안 피
파) in the authenticated Chinese histories, but recorded as hyang-pип’a
(lit. "native lute") in the Samguk sagi or History of the Three Kingdoms.8
Ohyon pип’a was the name given to the lute because it had five strings.
Since the lute had a straight neck, however, it was also called chikkKyong
pип’a ("lute with a straight neck"). The five-stringed lute with a straight
neck (ohyon pип’a) differs structurally from sahyon pип’a or the four-
stringed lute which was also known as kokkyong pип’a ("lute with a curved
neck") or tang pип’a ("Chinese lute").

According to the seven or nine performing groups (Qibu ji or Qiubu
ji) and the ten performing groups (Shibu ji) of Tang China,9 the five-
stringed lute was also played in Koryogi (고려지) and in such perform-
ing groups as Angyo ji (Bukhara), Shuchji ji (Kashgar), Xiliang ji (Hexi
region upstreams on the Yellow River), Guizi ji (the Kucha center on the
northern route along the Tienshan Mountains), and Tienzhu ji (India).
Thus, the origin of the five-stringed lute may lie in Central Asia. Chinese
historical documents and archaeological evidence have revealed that the
five-stringed lute of Koguryo was played in the sixth century. The mural
painting on Tomb No. 1 at Changchun, Manchuria, however, sug-
gested that the five-stringed lute was played in Koguryo society as early
as the fifth century.10

As the transverse flute and five-stringed lute were used for Guizi ji
and Xiliang ji music, which came to light after the conquest of Central
Asia by Lu Guang in 382 (eighteenth year of Qianyuan), the two instru-
m ents must have been introduced into China towards the latter half of
the fourth century. It may be safely assumed that the two natural instru-
m ents might have been available in Koguryo in the fifth century. In
addition to the mural painting on Tomb No. 1 at Changchun, evidence
to suggest that the transverse flute and the five-stringed lute must have
been accepted in Koguryo society stems from the fact that Koguryo
started active cultural exchanges with the earlier Qin State from around
the end of the fourth century. Buddhism was introduced into Koguryo
in 372 by the monk, Sundo (Sundao), from the earlier Qin State.

Wolcho, Pansopcho, and Hwangjongjo in the Three
Bamboo Flutes (Samhyon) of Silla

The musical culture of Unified Silla (668-935) in the North-South
Dynasties period of China can be viewed from two angles. Internally, the
music of Unified Silla accepted the musical culture of Paekche and
Koguryo, and developed them anew. Externally, Unified Silla accepted
the mature musical culture of Tang China, thereby lending the musical culture of Silla a new dimension. After achieving unification of the Three Kingdoms, Silla accepted the transverse flute called chok of Paekche and the flute called hoengjok of Koguryo, and proceeded to develop the flutes into the three-bamboo flutes (samjuk) of Silla hyangak, while the twelve-stringed zither (kayagum) of Kaya State, the six-stringed zither (komungeo or hyonggum) and the five-stringed lute of Koguryo Kingdom were also accepted as the three-string instruments of Unified Silla hyangak in the North-South Dynasties period of China. The musical culture of Unified Silla was able to pursue further development in terms of native Korean music known as hyangak.

Cultural exchange with Tang was quite active in the North-South Dynasties period of China, and musical exchange between Unified Silla and Tang was no exception. The Buddhist chant (pompače) of Zen monk, Ch'ingam, and the Tang-style pompače as referred to by the Japanese monk, Ennin, can serve as examples of musical exchange at the time. Another example is the musical features of the three modal systems of Tang music, hawangjongjo (huangzhong), pansopcho (pan-she-t'iao), and wolcho (yueh-t'iao), as referred to in the Samguk sagi. These systems of Tang music were derived from the twenty-eight modal terms used in the secular music (tu-yueh) of Tang. Musical features of the three modal systems follow.

Pansopcho is also known as taejukyujinju or taeju, another modal term used in the form of Chinese yayue, which means s-mode (yuetao) in the taeju (tai-t'su) key. The modal term wolcho in taeju identical with hawangjonggoyunjiujo or hawangjonghang in the Chinese yayue form, i.e., sang mode (shangt'iao) in the hawangjong (huangzhong) key. Hwangjongjo (Huangzhongt'iao), also called hawangjonggoyunjiujo or hawangjongu in the Chinese yayue form turned out to be a mode (yuet'iao) in the hawangjong key. Such modal terms in the fashion of Chinese yayue as taeju (pansopcho), hawangjongang (wolcho), and hawangjongu (hawangjong) are to be interpreted not in terms of wujiaot'shetieh (wetiaot'sheh) but of chijiosik (zhitiaohe).13

Pansopcho turned out to be related to pandam (bandan) from among seven modal systems of So Chi-p'a (Suizhpo), and the Chinese term bandan (pantam in Sino-Korean) was a Chinese transliteration of the original Sanskrit term, pancama. Wolcho yuetiaot'she, otherwise called irwolcho (yuetietao) derived from the iwolcho (yuetietao) was used in the ancient music of Paoquo, now Burma, under the influence of Indian music at that time.

In the sum, since the three modal systems of Tang music for the three-bamboo flutes turned out to have been part of the twenty-eight modal systems of Tang secular music, which had been accepted in Silla society during the eighth century, it can be safely assumed that, from the
standpoint of the overall context of Asian musical history, some Central Asian music was produced in Tang in the eighth century, and was reaccepted as musical culture for the three-bamboo flutes in the latter Silla period (780-935). In other words, the three modal systems of Tang music for the three-bamboo flutes constitute a clear proof that Silla society accepted Tang music as something new in its own musical culture. It may be assumed that the three modal systems were an outcome of cultural exchange undertaken through the Silk Road between Tang and Central Asia, and that outcome was accepted by Silla society in the ninth century.

Concluding Remarks:
The Ancient History of Korean Music and the Silk Road

In the historical development of Korean music, the Three Kingdoms and the Unified Silla periods were ages when the active acceptance of foreign music was pursued most vigorously. The transverse flute (hoenggak) and the five-stringed lute (ohyon pip’i) of Koguryo played an important role in developing the musical culture in the Three Kingdoms period towards a new direction. The Silla pompyae, five poems of hyangak, and the three modal systems of Tang music were actual examples of the acceptance of foreign culture and their development into outstanding performing arts in the Unified Silla.

Although part of the musical culture achieved in Koguryo and Silla societies was accepted by neighboring China, we have seen that the transverse flute and the five-stringed lute of Koguryo, pompyae, masked dance plays, and the modal systems of Tang music in Silla were closely related to the musical culture of Central Asia which China had accepted via the Silk Road. One can observe that ancient Korea, rather than having been predominantly influenced one-sidedly by foreign culture, accepted foreign music and remodeled it as her own.

In the case of Koguryo, if they had failed to accept such foreign musical instruments from Central Asia as the transverse flute or the five-stringed lute, and failed in making of them their own instruments, they would not have been able to export their music, Koryouk (Kamagaku), to the ancient Japanese court. The fact that Silla and Paekche as well as Koguryo influenced the ancient music of Japan is well known in the field of Korean and Japanese historical musicology. That is why more weight should be given to the term "acceptance" rather than "influence" in an account of the ancient history of Korean music and its relationship with foreign music.
While some of the Central Asian performing arts, accepted in China via the Silk Road, were accepted by the Korean people, the pattern of acceptance resembled various small streams in the overall flow of the ancient history of Korean music. The independent-minded Korean people have amply displayed their potential in the wide gamut of worldwide culture, including that of music, throughout the Three Kingdoms and North-South Dynasties periods. In a general survey of ancient Korean music, the important role played by Korean musicians in influencing the development of ancient Japanese court music has to be cited as an effect of the independent-minded capacity of the Korean people to accept foreign culture. This can be substantiated by the Komagaku tradition in present-day Japanese court music known as Gagaku.

Notes

3. Koryu, juan 71.1b1 (Hosǒnda), 48b-6a9 (Sejōjōng), 6a1 88b (Ch'onggong), 8b9-12a2 (Pólye), 12a3-13a8 (Wŏnhwadae); Koryu, juan 71.3a3-31b6 (Mogyo), 31b7-32a8 (Tong tong), 32a9-33a1 (Muae), in which the court dance of Chinese origin (Tan'guk chonggak) and that of Korean origin (Hyanguk chonggak) were listed as tan'guk and jogaek.
5. Suihu, juan 81.2a10-2b1; Beishu, juan 94.8a5-6; Kajiruyen, juan 30.905; and juan 34.11a15-16 (Komagyi), juan 30.909 (Komagak), juan 30.909 (Kajiruyen, and Yokoibiswi).
8. Song Bang-Song. Han'guk umak i'ongga.
9. See Note 7.