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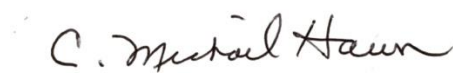
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RECONCILE YOUR PEOPLE— 화해의 통일을 이루게 하소서:  
AN ANALYSIS AND REVISIONING OF THE KOREAN NATIONAL MUSIC THEORY  
OF LEE GEON YONG WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR CHURCH MUSIC  
AND THE REUNIFICATION OF SOUTH AND NORTH KOREA

Approved by:



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C. Michael Hawn  
University Distinguished Professor *Emeritus* of Church Music  
Director, Doctor of Pastoral Music Program



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Christopher S. Anderson  
Associate Professor of Sacred Music

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A Thesis presented to the Faculty of  
Perkins School of Theology  
Southern Methodist University  
in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the degree of  
Doctor of Pastoral Music  
by  
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May 14, 2021

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Hyun Min Lee (이현민)

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Advisor: C. Michael Hawn

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## ABSTRACT

The political situation on the Korean Peninsula appears to be more hopeful now than for several decades, calling for a new strategy for reunification. Through music, people in the two Koreas can reclaim one ethnicity and the spirit of a unified nation. This thesis explores the possibility of achieving a unified ethnic identity through church music and poses a role for church music in overcoming the musical, cultural, and ecclesial divisions between South and North Korea. I examine the Korean National Music Theory (KNMT) of composer and church musician Lee Geon Yong as a musical and philosophical construct for analyzing the history, social culture, theology, and the implications of establishing a unified ethnic identity for South and North Korea. After comparing the political identities, artistic cultures, and musical characteristics of the two Koreas, I provide a brief history of the two Korean churches since their division. This research provides directions for a Koreanized church music to overcome musical heterogeneity of two Koreas. Based on this, I suggest the potential musical and theological characteristics of reunification hymnal and offer implications of Lee Geon Yong's work for the reunification of church music for the North and South Korea.

**KEY WORDS:** Korean National Music Theory, Reunification, Koreanized Church Music, Reunification Hymnal.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	iv
ABSTRACT .....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	vi
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Methodology .....</b>	<b>1</b>
A. Research purpose .....	1
B. Research method .....	3
C. Research process .....	4
D. Self-Identification .....	6
E. Definitions .....	8
<b>CHAPTER 2: LEE GEON YONG’S “KOREAN NATIONAL MUSICAL THEORY” .....</b>	<b>10</b>
A. Biography of Lee Geon Yong .....	10
B. Definition of Korean National Musical Theory (KNMT) .....	15
C. Theological Implications of the Korean National Musical Theory .....	20
D. Identity in Korean National Musical Theory Based on Ethnicity .....	26
<b>CHAPTER 3: AN OVERVIEW OF THE DIVERGENT POLITICAL CULTURES AND MUSICAL STYLES OF THE TWO KOREAS AND THE HISTORY OF THEIR CHURCHES .....</b>	<b>36</b>
A. The Musical and Political Cultures of North and South Korea .....	36
1. North Korea .....	37
2. South Korea .....	42

B. The Characteristics of North and South Korean Music .....	45
1. North Korea .....	45
2. South Korea .....	62
C. A Brief History of the Church in North and South Korea .....	64
1. A Brief History of the North Korean Church .....	65
2. A Brief History of the South Korean Church .....	73
<b>CHAPTER 4: REUNIFICATION HYMNALS .....</b>	<b>81</b>
A. The History of Hymnals in North and South Korean Churches .....	81
1. Protestant Hymnals Before the Political Division .....	82
2. A History of the North Korean Hymnals .....	92
3. A History of the South Korean Hymnals .....	94
B. Overcoming Linguistic Heterogeneity in North and South Korea .....	100
C. Overcoming Musical Heterogeneity in North and South Korea .....	102
D. Creating Hymns Through a Process of “Koreanization” .....	104
1. The Meaning of “Koreanization” in Hymns .....	105
2. The Present State of Hymns by Korean Composers .....	108
3. The Possibility of Koreanizing Hymns .....	110
E. Proposing a Direction for a Reunification Hymnal .....	114
1. A Musical Direction .....	115
2. A Theological Direction .....	121
3. Reunification Themes in “Ososo [오소서] / Come Now, O Prince of Peace” by Lee Geon Yong: A Musical and Theological Analysis .....	126



F. The implications of Lee Geon Yong's Korean National Music Theory (KNMT) for Koreanized Reunification Hymns.....	134
<b>CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION</b> .....	137
A. Summary.....	137
B. A Critique of Lee Geon Yong's Korean National Music Theory (KNMT).....	142
C. Suggestions for Further Study .....	146
D. Conclusion .....	148
<b>APPENDIX:</b> .....	151
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	155

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### Methodology

#### A. Research purpose

On June 30, 2019, sixty-six years after the armistice between South Korea and North Korea in 1953, the leaders of these two nations, and the United States met for the first time at Panmunjom, the village that, more than any other location, has come to symbolize the divided Korea. Though a rare example of a divided country today, the potential for a peaceful reunification on the Korean peninsula is more possible than ever before. South Korea and North Korea entered the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics as a unified team. On that occasion, the *minyo* (민요) “Arirang” replaced the national anthems of the two Koreas.<sup>1</sup> Through “Arirang,” the representative *minyo* of the people, Koreans were able to confirm again their national unity. The common ethnicity that North and South Korea feel through “Arirang” is an undeniable cultural heritage. Through music, Korean people shared the deepest sentiments of one ethnicity and felt the spirit of a unified nation. This study begins with these questions: What role can

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<sup>1</sup> Rather than folk song or folk music, the Korean term “minyo” (민요) will be used. See the definition on page 8.

church music play to bridge the musical, cultural, and ecclesial divisions between South and North Korea as we look toward the possibility of political reunification? What musical, theological, and ecclesial preparations should take place in the South Korean church in order to overcome the division of two Koreas?

Reunification is a very important task for the South and North Korean people. In a situation where disparities exist in political, economic, societal, and cultural arenas, Koreans should equally strive to restore harmony and equality by mobilizing the potential of all these sectors. Reunification is the process of creating a new order. Korean Christians continue to seek God's plans for the Korean Peninsula although the path of the Gospel seems impeded by political division. Despite the desire of many people for reunification, no concrete pathways have been prepared for practical progress. Attempts to narrow the inequality and heterogeneity between cultures of the two Koreas after reunification are very insufficient. Especially after reunification, Korean church music holds the potential to play a significant role in establishing cultural homogeneity and communication. Now is the time to have conversations and lay plans for bringing the churches in North and South Korea together through a common church music.

Since the political division of the peninsula in 1948, South Korean church music has taken many leaps forward in terms of openness, change, and development. Rather than through

national initiative, this progress is due to the efforts of educational and arts institutions as well as the ability and interests of individuals. In contrast, North Korea has developed a comprehensive nationalistic project in which Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Il, and Kim Jong Un directly govern and direct all artistic endeavors. Therefore, much research will be needed on how to coordinate and harmonize church music in North Korea. Given the isolation of the country, the exact reality of the musical culture that has been shaped by the North Korean regime is difficult to grasp. The purpose of this study is to propose an approach for the musical reunification of Christian congregations in South and North Korea, establishing a common ethnic identity through church music becoming a unified body of Christ.

## **B. Research method**

The primary research methodology for this thesis focuses on the collection of historical, sociological, musical, and theological documents, both domestic and foreign. In particular, this thesis will consider previous studies that measure and analyze the distinctive social phenomena that result from the division between the North and South. Central to this analysis is the work of Korean composer Lee Geon Yong (b. 1947) and his Korean National Music Theory (KNMT). Using Lee's hymn as a model, I will propose a common congregational repertoire that South and

North Korean churches may eventually sing together based on the musical and theological implications of Lee's KNMT.

Reunification should alleviate the oppression of North Koreans and ensure freedom, while allowing the people of South and North Korea to access the Gospel without any restrictions, leading to an open religious life. Therefore, articulating the mission of the Korean Christian church is imperative. Reunification requires an integration of the church in the South with those in the North who have lived for half a century deprived of freedom in all spheres of life under the socialist system. This study will proceed from a Christian belief that God's providence that can clarify the path toward a vision of a reunified Korean society. How should Korean people anticipate the possibility of reunification? What are the principle issues that need to be resolved for this to take place? What are the differences between the practice of music in South and North Korean churches and what musical strategies can we employ for the sake of integrating two societies?

### **C. Research process**

I hope that this study may be helpful in setting the direction for music in a unified Korean church. The reunification of South Korea and North Korea begins with an attempt to understand

their different histories, and then propose ways to bridge them. Therefore, this introductory chapter provides a brief explanation of the purpose, research methods, and procedures of this study. Chapter 2 examines the life of Lee Geon Yong, providing a definition of Korean National Music Theory, an analysis of KNMT in the context of history, social context, cultural perspective, and theology, and implications for establishing a unified ethnic identity for South and North Korea based on KNMT. Chapter 3 compares the political systems, musical cultures, and musical characteristics of the two Koreas, and provides a brief history of the two Korean churches since their division. Chapter 4 proposes a rationale for a common congregational song in a unified Korea, outlining the history of hymns in the North and South Korean church, overcoming hymnic heterogeneity of two Koreas, and giving reasons for creating a “Koreanized” hymnody. Based on this, I will suggest the potential musical and theological characteristics of reunification hymns. In order to overcome this division and anticipate for the era of reunification, I will offer implications of Lee Geon Yong’s work for the reunification of church music in North and South Korean congregations and provide a musical and theological analysis of his hymn. Chapter 5 summarizes this research and offers a critique of Lee Geon Yong’s KNMT. The chapter concludes by proposing areas for further study of this research.

#### **D. Self-Identification**

Prior to the study, it is necessary to verify the self-identify the perspective of the researcher. I am a pastor who ordained in the Presbyterian Church of South Korea and a musician who majored in church music. The goal of this thesis is to imagine the possibility of a peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula and propose a role and direction for church music in the reunification process. This does not assume a political consensus or territorial reunification at the government level.

A South Korean researcher who majored in church music with South Korean nationality encounters many difficulties in collecting resources about church and church music of North Korea. North Korean society is thoroughly controlled society by the regime. Due to differences in political positions and limitations of the political system, travel and on-site investigations are impossible. It is also difficult to find books and materials published by the North Korean church. Therefore, data related to North Korea depends on information released by both South and North Korean governments. Due to these limitations, the thesis focusing mainly on literary materials. This is not only an existential limitation of the researcher, but also of all researchers conducting research on North Korea in the South Korea. If there is an opportunity to travel to North Korea in

the near future, I hope to have an opportunity to critically verify the reality and validity of this study on North Korean churches and North Korean church music.

In addition, the researcher is a pastor belonging to the Korean Presbyterian Church in South Korea. The Presbyterian Church in South Korea is a conservative denomination that strives for solemnity in worship and prefers only hymns for music used in worship accompanied on the organ. The Presbyterian Church in South Korea has divided into several smaller denominations over the course of its history. One of the causes of this division was the use of hymnals. Therefore, in preparation for the reunification of South Korea and North Korea, I will reflect on the situation of the South Korean church and insist on the implementation of a Koreanized church music as an accommodation by the South Korean church. I will also propose the publication of a reunification hymnal to expand the ethnic and musical homogeneity of inter-Korean churches and encourage exchanges between musicians and mutual cooperation. This study proposed to restore the homogeneity and harmony of the unified ethnic culture of North and South Korea, establish a Korean identity for the Korean church, and the propose a path toward peace on the Korean Peninsula.



## **E. Definitions**

Arts Exchanges. Arts Exchanges are pathways of communication between South and North Korea. The two cultures that have the same historical roots but have developed in different social and political environments for three quarters of a century. Arts Exchanges lay the foundation for cooperation through cultural and artistic exchanges.

Folk Music/Folk Songs. Rather than use folk song or folk music, I will use the Korean term “minyo” [Korean Characters]. Minyo is Korean traditional song that has been transmitted through a process of oral rather than written means. Minyo is a music that has been evolved from rudimentary beginnings by Korean community and has subsequently been absorbed into the unwritten living tradition of Korean community.

Korean National Music Theory (KNMT). KNMT is a theory that Lee Geon Yong developed to overcome the divided musical cultures between South and North Korea since the mid-twentieth century. Lee’s Theory suggests strategies for the future of a unified Korean music.

Nationality/National/Nationalism. Nationality refers to ethnicity or as an identifier of cultural and family-based self-determination, rather than on relations with a state or current government among the South Korean people. In the South Korean context, nationality is defined by bloodline, language, cultural identity, history, and ethnicity. However, in North Korea, nationality is incorporated as part of the nationalism or a nationalistic patriotism. Nationalism teaches that the North Korean people are the masters of North Korea’s revolution. North Koreans generally equate nationality with patriotism and their state, so that ethno-nationalism and state loyalty are mutually enforcing.

National Music. National Music is music that reflects the life and the unique emotional characteristics of the people in the social and cultural context of music. In this way this is ethnic music. In this study, Lee Geon Yong’s National Music provides common musical roots between the two Koreas that overcome their cultural divisions, restore musical ethnicity and equality, and prepare for reunification.

Popular Music. Popular music refers to music with wide appeal including a wide variety of styles such as dance, rock, Latin, Jazz, and new age. This music is typically distributed to large audiences through the music industry.

Reunification. Before South and North Korea were divided by the Korean War, Korea was a unified nation for about 1,300 years. Thus, reunification is a vision for a politically, culturally, and ecclesiologically integrated South and North Korea.

Third-World Music. Lee Geon Yong recognizes Korea as a “third world” in music because the Korean Peninsula is not part of European or American first-world musical traditions. Third World Music is an autochthonous music based on Korean traditional music.

Third Generation. This is a group of culturally conscious composers, including Lee Geon Yong, who offer a critical appraisal of the first and second generations of Korean musicians who insist only on Western (First-World) music. Third Generation composers argue that Koreans should cultivate a distinct Korean musical culture that reflects the heritage and identity of the Korean people.

Traditional Music. Traditional Music refers to a national music from the Korean peninsula ranging from prehistoric times to the division of Korea into South and North in 1945.

Western Music. Western Music signifies religious and secular art music produced or rooted in the traditions of First-World cultures such as the Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Modernist eras.

## CHAPTER 2: LEE GEON YONG'S "KOREAN NATIONAL MUSICAL THEORY"

### A. Biography of Lee Geon Yong

Lee Geon Yong was born on September 30, 1947, in Dae-dong, South Pyongan, Icheon-ri (currently in North Korea). His family traveled to South Korea in December 1950, following the division of Korea at the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel on August 17, 1945. He inherited his musical talent from his father, Lee Jae Myeon, a pastor and amateur musician who led Handels' *Messiah* when he was a seminary professor at Pyongyang.<sup>2</sup> His mother, Kim Man Sil, had an extroverted personality and encouraged hymn singing as a part of daily family worship as a child; thus, Lee was naturally drawn to music. At his father's instruction, the family sang hymns in four parts, providing Lee basic training in sight-singing, musical dictation, and harmony. His brothers played the violin, and his father was so passionate about music that he sold his house to buy a piano. As a result of musical life in his home, Lee started writing songs in the fifth grade.

Lee Geon Yong graduated from Seoul Arts High School (1965) and Seoul National University (undergraduate 1974, and graduate school 1976), and majored in composition at

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<sup>2</sup> Lee Mi Kyung, *Challenge or Permeating; Interview with composer Lee Geon Yong* (Seoul: Yejong Publications, 2007), 11.

Frankfurt University (1976–79). He then worked as a professor at Daegu Hyosung Women’s University (1979–1983), Seoul National University (1983–92), and Korea National University of Arts (1993–2013). Lee was the president of Korea National University of Arts (2002–06). As a college student, he wrote a short story “The Stone Age” (1967) and was the winner in the novel category for the *New Year’s Literature Review* of the *Gyung-Hayng Newspaper* in Seoul. He was attracted to theater and worked in a university playgroup.

During his first teaching post, he founded The Third Generation (1981), a composer’s group that promoted music from the Third World (non-Western) during the 1990s. The Third Generation responded to a Korean understanding of the role of Western music in Korean culture. The First Generation was preoccupied with the idea of importing the First World’s musical culture. The Second Generation was determined to make the First World’s modern culture the dominant influence in Korea because they thought the Korean society was too focused on indigenous expressions. However, the Third Generation was interested in the Third World music culture and focused attention on Korean music through an interest in its own ethnicity.

Lee established the Korean National Music Research Society (1989) and has continued making and distributing music for Korean people. Beginning in 2019, he directed the choir “Village with Music.” He also directed music at the Anglican Cathedral in Seoul and edited a

Korean hymnal for the Korean Anglican Church (2015). His significant awards include the following:

Music Award at the Korean Dance Festival (1980)

Composition Award by Korea Space (공간문화대상) monthly magazine Culture Award (1982) (“Space” is the name of Korean longest-running monthly art magazine)

Culture Award (1982)

Seoul Criticism Award (1987)

Music Award at the Seoul Dance Festival (1993)

KBS (Korean Broadcasting System) Traditional Music Award (1995)

Kim Soo Keun Culture Award (1996)

Kumho Music Prize (1998).

Lee Geon Yong also received the Order of the Blue Merit (2013) and Order of Cultural Merit (2007). He was president of Min-Um-Yeon (1989–99), a society for the study of Korean music, Director of Korean National Musicians Association (2012), General Director of Western Music at Sejong Center for the Performing Arts, and a member of the editorial committee of the magazine *Romantic Music*. Lee has performed various activities as an educator, critic, theorist, and composer, and he has expressed his musical theory in various books.

The “shaking of his heart,” that led Lee to the musician’s path was Schubert’s song cycle *Winterreise*, Op.89 (1827).<sup>3</sup> In his middle school years, Lee Geon Yong was so impressed by *Winterreise* that he decided to compose songs, thus beginning his life as a composer. He was deeply fascinated by the poetry of the early Chinese novel *The Three Kingdoms* (220–280 BCE), especially *Chock Sang*, poems that depict the life of Zhuge Liang, the prime minister of Kingdom of Shu. He is crucial in *The Three Kingdoms* as a figure who made significant technological advances during his era. Other literary works that influenced his desire to become a composer were the novels of Dostoevsky, the plays of Eugene O’Neil, and the Bible.<sup>4</sup>

In 1963, in the second year of high school, Lee Geon Yong composed his first song, “The Song of the Silver Wedding” (은혼에 부치는 노래) based on a poem written by his father in honor of his parents’ silver wedding anniversary. Lee began composing music in earnest in the 1980s following his university education and his studies in Germany. His musical creativity

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<sup>3</sup> A phrase used by Lee Geon Yong when he came across Schubert’s music for the first time, South Korea was rebuilding after the Korean War. At that time, he could only access music through broadcast radio. Listening to Schubert’s *Winterreise* on the radio, he understood solitude and despair and wanted to write music that reflected the era of solitude and despair in South Korea. See Lee Young Ran, “Composer, Lee Geon Yong,” *Christian Thought* (November 2007):

[http://www.gisang.net/bbs/board.php?bo\\_table=gisang\\_cover&wr\\_id=75&main\\_visual\\_page=gisang](http://www.gisang.net/bbs/board.php?bo_table=gisang_cover&wr_id=75&main_visual_page=gisang) (accessed January 20, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> Lee Geon Yong, *The Face Watching My Music* (Seoul: National Music Research Association, 2005), 14.

continues, making him one of the most famous Korean composers of our time with more than 200 vocal and instrumental compositions.

In a non-ideological and non-polemical way, Lee Geon Yong describes the difference in the nature of communication and practice between Korean traditional music, Western art music, and pop music. He defines Korean music as “music of Korean color for the future.”<sup>5</sup> Forming the Third Generation was the beginning of a commitment to the ideal that the direction of Korean music in the future should be oriented toward and reflective of the people born, raised, and living on the land.<sup>6</sup> Thus, his compositions integrate the characteristics of Korean traditional music with musical techniques from the West. Lee states that Korean music should not turn away from the Korean public but maintains that music is a form of life and contains life.<sup>7</sup> He is a musician who values communication with the Korean public in his compositions.

Lee believes that the divisiveness of the political systems creates heterogeneous cultures between the South and the North, contributing to the loss of the core of Korean culture.<sup>8</sup> He believes that musical encounters on the peninsula can help to restore a more unified musical

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<sup>5</sup> Lee, *The Face Watching My Music*, 14–17.

<sup>6</sup> Lee Geon Yong, *The Logic and Ethics of Korean Music* (Seoul: Sekwang Music Publishing, 1987), 107–146.

<sup>7</sup> Lee, *The Face Watching My Music*, 125.

<sup>8</sup> Lee Geon Yong, “My Visit to Pyongyang—98 Participation in the 1<sup>st</sup> Yoon Yi Sang Reunification Concert,” *Understanding of Ethnic Music 7* (1998): 184–185.

culture and contribute to reunification, leading to the development of Lee's Korean National Music Theory.

### **B. Definition of Korean National Musical Theory (KNMT)**

After returning from study abroad, Lee Geon Yong began in the 1980s to concentrate on expressing social reality in his music beginning. Lee wanted to integrate Christian content with realistic perception, relying on choral music based on the compositional techniques of Korean traditional music to indicate the dark political reality of a divided Korea. He searched for a variety of contemporary ways to adapt the Korean language to the sounds of Korean traditional scales. Through Third Generation activities, he strove to create compositions based on indigenous Korean music. In the 1990s, Lee Geon Yong began to cultivate the expression of Korean emotion in his music by taking a step back from the previous realistic “participative music”; “participation” in this context means musical activism through which many musicians in Korea during the military dictatorship expressed their political dissent through music, advocating, or resisting the military regime. By doing this, he hoped to communicate a more intimate connection between Korean people and the music derived from Korean culture.



Lee Geon Yong fostered a Korean National Music beginning in the 1970s with the development of a Korean National Musical Theory. KNMT attempted to articulate Korean music's direction as a social phenomenon beyond music and not as an autonomous issue of music itself; it sought to view the general public as the subject of music activities. Thus, Lee Geon Yong suggested a rationale for musical creativity that fostered Korean music composition loved by Korean people, encouraging them to advocate for Korean music. He further developed KNMT, thinking not just of composers, but all musicians, musical audiences, and all people related to music who desired to make a holistic musical culture through life and practice. He felt that this could be achieved through "reflection and practice."<sup>9</sup> He examined and reflected on the direction of three types of music in South Korea—popular musical styles, Western art music, and indigenous music. Furthermore, he considered whether the suppliers and consumers of music were motivated by specific ideologies, captivated by Western practices, or were biased toward popular trends or economic profit. Based on his findings, Lee was seeking practical directions to move forward.

Lee Geon Yong argued that Korean national music could be defined as "the music that should be in this land [Korea], and the music that shapes Korean life." Thus composers can

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<sup>9</sup> Lee Geon Yong and Noh Dong Eun, *Korean National Music Theory* (Seoul: Hangilsa, 1991), 135–138.

compose Korean national music through reflection on and practice of Korean music within its surrounding cultural milieu.<sup>10</sup> He emphasized that those who make and distribute today's music should reflect on Korean society and that music more closely allied with Korean culture is needed to restore the desirable relationship between music and society and make society healthy.<sup>11</sup> Third-Generation composers defy the Korean music industry by composing music based on the country's unique culture. They reject the superior presuppositions of Western music as the one world music and its bias that Korean traditional music is, therefore, inferior. Thus, an inherent conflict exists between Western music and the received traditional culture and how to respond to changes in music. The Third-Generation musical forum suggests that Korean musical culture, which cannot return to traditional music and cannot keep up with Western music, has no choice but to set an alternative path for the future. Lee seeks the most suitable Korean music between Western and traditional music, leading to a "musical mother tongue" for the twenty-first century. Therefore, the Third Generation has an ideological context similar to developing a KNMT.

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<sup>10</sup> Lee, *The Logic and Ethics of Korean Music*, 146.

<sup>11</sup> Lee, *The Logic and Ethics of Korean Music*, 146.

Developing the direction for the Third Generation is a lifelong task for Lee. In addition to seeking a Korean musical mother tongue, Lee goes one step further. He is attempting to compose a native Korean musical genre that is known and loved worldwide, similar to American jazz or Argentinian tango. Thus, he seeks a Korean music anchored in native traditions, reaching back five thousand years to the origins of Korean music. One hundred years ago, the only traditional music that Korean people could listen to and enjoy were *minyos* such as “San-Jo” (산조), instrumental solo music belonging to traditional Korean music; “Pan-Sori” (판소리), a vocal solo of a long epic story to a traditional Korean drumbeat; and “Jeong-Ak” (정악), music played in the upper classes of the private sector, including part of Korean court music. Therefore, Lee hopes that he will be able to create new Korean music by combining the characteristics of Korean traditional music “Jang-Dan” (장단) (beat), “Nong-Hyun” (농현) (vibrato), and “Shin-Myung” (신명) (being enhanced) with Western musical techniques.

Lee Geon Yong is also interested in popular music. Dividing music into popular music, elite music, art, and entertainment, he wishes to create a genre of music that is profoundly artistic, yet loved by the people. Seeking to compose music that is both Korean and, at the same time, popular with the public, he has avoided using the idioms of popular modern music that did not express the pain and unique history of the Korean people, and the language of Western art

music, a music that could only be understood by those already familiar with Western cultures, particularly intellectual and wealthy people. He composed music that all Koreans could understand and sympathize with, regardless of their social or economic status.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, he emphasizes the importance of communication with the audience, portraying the spirit of the times in his music and maintaining an open attitude toward life and music with the hope of forming a consensus with people. He believes in composing music that communicates with the audience by understanding the issues that touch their lives. In this age obsessed with the individual, he wants to inspire people and create a consensus. In Lee's music, people may gain a sense of "us" as a space where "I" live with others in community.

Manifesting the philosophy of KNMT, Lee Geon Yong notes that music reflects the political division on the peninsula because South Korea has primarily been influenced by Western music.<sup>13</sup> In contrast, North Korea has a distinct musical culture. Therefore, this division requires a vision of establishing a shared musical culture for a reunified Korean peninsula.<sup>14</sup> Since South and North Korea have a long history as a single politically unified nation, they strongly desire a reunified country and a reunified culture. Lee Geon Yong believes that

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<sup>12</sup> Lee, *The Face Watching My Music*, 214.

<sup>13</sup> Lee and Noh, *Korean National Music Theory*, 3–4.

<sup>14</sup> Lee and Noh, *Korean National Music Theory*, 40–41.

understanding the division between North and South Korean music provides a basis for recovering a sense of national music.

### **C. Theological Implications of the Korean National Musical Theory**

Lee Geon Yong's philosophical logic is based on a deep-rooted Christian faith and ethical values affecting his understanding of KNMT. After studying in Germany, he worked as a choir conductor and served on the choral reorganization committee at the Anglican Cathedral in Seoul, Korea. Thus, many of his choral works cite scripture. Lee does not confine his compositions explicitly to Christian music but sees Christianity as a means of realizing a world of peace through an incarnational interpretation of the biblical message. Though he bases his music on Christian sentiments, Lee is open to the broader world rather than a limited geographical space. While many musicians have been performing church music based on secular music, he has an opposing view. He sees secular music coming from church music. This perspective has the advantage that church music and secular music may live in a healthy relationship based on the church's ethical values, breaking down the materialistic veil that divides the church and secular music. Church music should not be created to generate revenue

similar to secular music where the goal is to generate financial profit. If the goal of church music becomes the generation of profit like secular music, church music would be subject to limitations in musical subjects and musical styles. He states the following;

When people think that music is only for the wealthy and that music's attributes follow their desires, the music of the poor is impossible. However, when people believe that they already have aesthetic values, they hope that they can achieve their goals someday.<sup>15</sup>

He roots this assertion in the time after Japanese colonial rule and the Korean War when Koreans suffered overwhelming poverty. If music represents the lives of the public, it should represent not only the majesty and beauty of life, but also its darkness. Music is based on diversity in the audience and subject, which includes a wide variety of people, not a particular class, yet, Korean music has alienated the poor.

In his music, Lee Geon Yong has attempted to embody the painful lives of the Korean people and the stories of ordinary people, embodying the heart and gospel of Jesus Christ. The good news of Jesus Christ is for the poor, and Jesus Christ himself fulfilled the mission of God's salvation by living in poverty. The incarnation of Jesus Christ embodies peace and the equality of all human beings before God. Music can identify with the hopeless who live with injustice, pain, and anxiety, and offer restoration.

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<sup>15</sup> Lee Geon Yong, *The Horizon of Korean Music* (Seoul: Han Gil-sa, 1986), 126.

Lee seeks in his music to embody the spirit of Christ, who comes to the low place. Christian relationships should not be limited only to “God and me.” He believes that an authentic Christian spirit is restored when people expand their relationships to include “you and me” and “we and us,”<sup>16</sup> Lee Geon Yong does not recognize Christian ethics as the only logical philosophical system relevant to Christianity. Instead, he sees Christian ethics as a subject that integrates all life and everything in the world. For example, the cantata “Bunno-ui Si” (분노의 시) (Poetry of Rage) is a composition of religious choral music. However, this cantata a religious musical expression of Lee’s Christian ideology in the context of reality in the Republic of Korea during the 1980s.

All musical works emphasize various musical characteristics according to differences in the genre, compositional technique, and performance style. However, since all music comprises melody, rhythm, harmony, tone, and form, musical components alone cannot distinguish between church and secular music. There is no rhythm, melody, harmony, tone, or form used only in church music. Regardless of the complexity of the rhythm, the distinctive style of the melody, the harmonic dissonance, or the varieties of musical form, musical elements alone do not determine the nature of unified church music. Understanding and evaluating music only

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<sup>16</sup> Lee, *Challenge or Permeating; Interview with composer Lee Geon Yong*, 141.

by its musical content is a problem. Church music has cultural elements, and culture is directly related to the lifestyle of the human group.

Unlike Western musical practice, church musicians in Korea have traditionally characterized the Christian community as a collective musical culture separate from the world. However, church music should be always changing with history in the coexistence of diversity. All musical soundscapes have value and may be employed in the service of God. Lee seeks to compose a church music culture that is compatible with the Christian doctrine and responsive to the needs of people so that the church community can express its faith communally and share its belief beyond itself.

Korea is struggling with differing political, economic, and leadership priorities between the South and North. Korean churches and theological seminaries have formed a public theology that includes understanding public issues and developing theological strategies for addressing social concerns. Church music can contribute to the process of expanding God's realm of peace and justice. When looking at the Psalms or the Canticles in the Bible, people sang for happiness and love, and they also sang in times of lament, distress, and petitions for mercy. Historically, songs for God's justice have been found in various communities and cultures seeking God's righteousness in the face of oppression. In these situations, the role of music



becomes a significant way to amplify the theological message. We can discover music that has emerged to pursue changes in society and recover God's righteousness in the community as stated in Psalm 72 and Psalm 103. African American spirituality drew upon the Exodus, resulting in musical genres that depicted Israel's victory over captivity and freedom from slavery. The lamentation and pleas of the enslaved peoples were sustained by hope because God comforted them.

Moreover, enslaved peoples were able to express their hope for freedom more powerfully because they were gathered in a community. The hope and praise of these songs expressed theologically and communally the relationship between the suffering of Jesus for oppressed people and the united body of Christ. In the history of Korea, church music also played an important role. During the thirty-six years of Japanese colonial rule, many fighters for independence were Christians. They sang hymns in worship services to express their aspirations for God's kingdom on earth and future independence. Many churches and leaders used hymns and worship songs in public gatherings to maintain hope and encourage people who faced social and political difficulties during the Korean War or oppression under the military dictatorship. These songs of this resistance are rooted in the moral and religious tradition of the Christian faith.

At the time Lee Geon Yong developed his KNMT, “minjung theology” was forming in South Korean churches. Minjung theology emerged in the 1970s from the experience of Korean Christians in the struggle for the restoration of the rights of minjung.<sup>17</sup> Ahn Byeng Mu regarded minjung as the people who are scorned and oppressed by the powerful military dictator and dictatorship. On the basis of minjung theology, Ahn urged that minjung should initiate the practice for reconciliation. The realization of social justice in South Korea should first overcome the division of South and North Korea and to accomplish the reunification. He also thought that a unified Korea is an essential component of Korean national identity.<sup>18</sup> Minjung theology was deeply interested in reunification, reflecting the reality of national division between the North and South. Therefore, Lee’s KNMT and Ahn’s minjung theology emphasize the common ethnic community on the Korean peninsula. For them, reunification means national reunification rather than territorial or political reunification. They understand North and South Korea as communities with ethnic homogeneity that must coexist as a unified entity to pursue God’s will.

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<sup>17</sup> The Compilation Committee of the Christian Encyclopedia, *The Christian Encyclopedia*, vol. 10 (Seoul: Christian Literature Press, 1994), 1209.

<sup>18</sup> Ahn Byeng Mu, *The Korean Minjung Theology and the Reunification* (Seoul: Korea Theological Study Institute, 2001), 207–208.

#### **D. Identity in Korean National Musical Theory Based on Ethnicity**

Since world history is, in part, a history of conflicts between cultures, maintaining ethnic culture is necessary in the development of human identity.<sup>19</sup> The political division between the South and North on the Korean Peninsula has led to two heterogeneous cultures, contributing to the loss of a unified of Korean culture. In seeking reunification, Lee Geon Yong seeks to overcome the cultural heterogeneity through inter-Korean music exchanges. This interchange would require that South Korea acknowledge and celebrate its indigenous musical traditions. South Korean musical culture has deeply assimilated into Western culture and imitated Western music, neglecting Korean traditional music. North Korean music has closed to outside cultural influences, developing a unique musical culture. Music exchanges encourage North and South Korea to learn each other's music, rediscover their common heritage and identity, and open an era of understanding that leads-potentially to a shared musical culture in preparation for reunification in the future.<sup>20</sup>

During musical and cultural exchanges between the South and North in the 1990s, Lee Geon Yong became conscious of the meaning of "nation." In anticipation of reunification, Lee

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<sup>19</sup> Lee Min Ho, *History of Cultural Exchanges and Conflicts between East and West* (Seoul: Korean Academic Information Co., Ltd., 2009), 8.

<sup>20</sup> Lee, "My Visit to Pyongyang—98 Participation in the 1<sup>st</sup> Yoon Yi Sang Reunification Concert," 184–185.

suggests reflection through dialogue, discussing how Korean musical culture should be defined and understood. Understanding the “music of the nation” is the result-of reflection, dialogue, and shared identity.<sup>21</sup> Developing a national music will play a vital role in music exchanges and in promoting harmony. The notion of nationhood used by Lee Geon Yong is not nationalism, a term identified with ethnocentricity or unilateralism such as experienced in Nazi Germany or the national imperialism Japanese, but the identity of the people who live in a country. Nurturing a Korean national music, therefore, encourages an authentic Korean identity.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, a Korean national music that reflects a universal sensibility of Koreans inspires compositions sensitive to Korean nature, culture, history, and customs—those cultural characteristics that distinguish Korea from other ethnic groups and countries. In the case of hymnody, a Korean national music consists of developing a repertoire of songs closely related to the lives of Korean people.<sup>23</sup>

Lee Geon Yong’s KNMT reflects his belief that this is an age of seeking a national music. In the interest of promoting a common musical culture, he conceived the idea of national music after reflecting on each genre of music.<sup>24</sup> For Lee, reflection is a fundamental ethical

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<sup>21</sup> Lee Geon Yong, “Thinking about Music and Nation,” *Music and Nation* 20 (2000): 12.

<sup>22</sup> Lee, *The Logic and Ethics of Korean Music*, 26.

<sup>23</sup> Lee, *The Horizon of Korean Music*, 96.

<sup>24</sup> Lee and Noh, *Korean National Music Theory*, 12.

consciousness of free human beings not imposed outside political influences. Based on this, he concludes that free humans reflect and apply the perspective of reflection to all music. The diversity of musical cultures promoted by differing political systems and geographic isolation from one another conflicts with the need for a unified humanity on the peninsula and, thus, must undergo a corrective process. According to Lee, those with an ethical sensibility are aware of the problems caused by Western music dominance in Korea and have a vision for the unity a national music might offer.<sup>25</sup> An ethical person is a leader that reflects on the needs of the current situation and promotes strategies and actions for a desirable future situation. The more Korean people reflect on today's situation, the more they will desire to prepare for the future.<sup>26</sup>

Lee's reflective approach is not limited to music but includes structural reflection on the non-musical elements of society. He wants to integrate his work with the aesthetics of music as practiced by musicians who understand Korean social reality and are willing to engage in the existential pain experienced by the people. A true reflection on art should articulate the need for a holistic experience of the human mind, integrating life experiences through sensory awareness and intellectual knowledge. In this methodology, Lee finds clues for how a musician with an

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<sup>25</sup> Lee and Noh, *Korean National Music Theory*, 60.

<sup>26</sup> Lee and Noh, *Korean National Music Theory*, 135.

understanding of the social reality should make national music by first exploring the structural aspects of Korean music. In South Korea, the starting point for achieving national music and overcoming musical division requires an understanding of musical preferences according to age, gender, education, and social status.<sup>27</sup> National music points to musical experiences that provide a structural social connection for solutions to problems beyond the music itself. To this end, Lee argues that, along with the question of how to restore traditional music that is at risk of being lost today, the new national music should be directed toward overcoming Korea's cultural division.<sup>28</sup> Artists are members of a society who express their strong commitment to fulfilling their social responsibilities. Since Korea's political division comes from its historical pain, Korean people should participate in reunification practices that overcome Korea's history of political and cultural division. Therefore, Lee suggests that musicians should become more active in fostering historical awareness to transform the musical culture throughout the Korean Peninsula.

Lee's Third World music seeks to restore earlier Korean styles based on geographical location as a response to the current political and cultural situation in Korea.<sup>29</sup> A study of the music listened to by Koreans can lead to the promotion of music that fosters national unity and

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<sup>27</sup> Lee and Noh, *Korean National Music Theory*, 12.

<sup>28</sup> Lee and Noh, *Korean National Music Theory*, 16.

<sup>29</sup> Lee, *Challenge or Permeating; Interview with composer Lee Geon Yong*, 110.

clarifying national identity. This study can facilitate the transition from confrontation and conflict to exchanges and harmony in the preparing music for reunification.<sup>30</sup>

The next step is to examine common musical elements between the North and South.

First, they share traditional music styles. Traditional music embodies the musical and emotional roots of a unified nation contributing to emotional ties between South and North Korea.

Reunification concerts from October 18–23, 1990, was the beginning of North and South Korean music exchanges. These programs featured traditional music, demonstrating how well traditional music can contribute to interchange and cultural harmony.<sup>31</sup> It is often said that North Korea has developed traditional music and made it into new music. The focus is not on the authenticity of traditional musical performance. Lee Geon Yong wants to foster mutual understanding rather than competition. North Korea has developed traditional music separately from South Korea's understanding of traditional music. In South Korea composers also attempt to compose new compositions in traditional forms. These efforts include *minyo* arrangements, combinations of traditional and Western music, combinations of traditional and popular music, and recently, the appearance of the fusion boom with avant-garde arts and jazz. Differing musical cultures does

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<sup>30</sup> Lee Geon Yong, "South Korean and North Korean Musical Exchanges: What is necessary for the music of two Koreas to live," In *Journal of Korean Culture and Arts Committee* (August 2000): [http://www.arko.or.kr/zine/artspaper2000\\_08/6.htm](http://www.arko.or.kr/zine/artspaper2000_08/6.htm) (accessed January 21, 2021).

<sup>31</sup> Lee, "South Korean and North Korean Musical Exchanges."

not preclude the North and South from understanding each other's music. People in the South understand more recently developed forms of North Korean traditional music. For example, Koreans in the South appreciate North Korea's symphonic "Arirang" (아리랑), a Korean *minyo*, which is called "Arirang Fantasy," an orchestral piece created and arranged under the theme of Arirang by Choe Sung Hwan, a North Korean composer. Through "Chunhyang-jeon" (춘향전), people in South Korea can understand North Korea's "Ga-Gek" (가극), a North Korean traditional opera. Conversely, people in North can understand South Korea's "Chang-Gek" (창극), South Korean traditional opera, and music from the National Center for Korean Traditional Performing Arts.

Lee Geon Yong also argues that South and North Koreans should interact with each other through reflection on representative works of art. To appreciate each other, the North and South must be familiar with each other's core repertoire and appreciate the other's aesthetic values.<sup>32</sup> Unless the North and South acknowledge their differences, they cannot deepen their relationship. Unless the relationship is deepened, harmony and unification are less likely. Therefore, the best way to understand how the musical cultures of South and North Korea differ is to experience the most famous music from both cultures. Drawing upon popular works from

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<sup>32</sup> Lee, "South Korean and North Korean Musical Exchanges."



the North and the South encourages a mutual interest in artistic spirit and a compositional craftsmanship foundational to this music's performance. Music also appeals to emotions, persuading opponents more easily than appealing solely to logic and reason.

Regarding emotional engagement across cultural differences, Masterpieces of the current day from the repertoires of popular forms like American jazz, British musicals, and Italian operas engage audiences beyond their respective cultures of origin with immediacy. Lee Geon Yong says that North Korea's most representative musical creation is considered a theatrical performance. Though the above-mentioned traditional opera "Chunhyang-jeon" is a good example, considering that it has a traditional aspect, Lee thinks that this revolutionary Ga-Gek would also foster cultural unity. When Lee visited the North in 1998, he was taken to a performance of a revolutionary drama, "The Flower Girl" (꽃 파는 처녀). His evaluation was that the musical and cultural codes of the music were somewhat clichéd. However, the performance quality, especially the orchestral arrangements and stage art, reflected sophistication and perfection. Also, the musical transmission of the lyrics was perfect, even in choral music, and the special effects and staging were given the utmost attention. Pyongyang citizens who watched it responded with outward emotion, crying sometimes cheering and applauding. Lee

noted that the performance demonstrated a complete presentation of a work polished by repeated performances over the decades.<sup>33</sup>

Lee Geon Yong's evaluation of South Korea's most representative musical creations is more ambiguous.<sup>34</sup> Since North Korea is a society where a central government controls everything, it is easy to produce large-scale representative works made under a single unified plan. However, because South Korea is a society cultivating the voluntary will of musicians, the production of such works is impossible without commercial success. Musical content reflects the spirit of the artist rather than being a work representative of an era. Despite this difference in the composition and production of music in South Korea, he insists that it is possible to select representative works. These works should include popular musical styles. He states:

the Korean peninsula has been divided into South and North and lost its cultural center. South Korea has inevitably moved closer to Japanese and American cultures, and North Korea became closer to Chinese and Russian cultures. Therefore, it is essential to restore the cultural center point and the purpose of cultural exchanges between South and North Korea are to restore this point.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Lee, "South Korean and North Korean Musical Exchanges."

<sup>34</sup> Lee, "South Korean and North Korean Musical Exchanges."

<sup>35</sup> Lee, "South Korean and North Korean Musical Exchanges."

Whether in South Korea or North Korea, a unified Korean music is needed for a common musical and cultural life that can be shared.

North Korea understands ethnicity as a historically formed social life unit and unified people based on the commonality of lineage, language, territory, and culture. These commonalities form an essential and fundamental element of social life and an essential basis for shaping national identity. North Korea has not encountered the musical styles of other nations. Thus, North Korea's efforts to adhere to nationalistic music are based on the principle that music should support the political goals of the current regime. In contrast, Lee believes that national music must be based on a people's traditions and priceless heritage and developed according to modern aesthetics and the needs of the times to be recognized authentic and efficacious.<sup>36</sup> The implementation of a nationalistic music in North Korea is the result of music emerging from the history of independence. The history of music in North Korea may be interpreted as a historical attempt to establish a nationalistic music—a process of history in which the recipients, the party, and the people tried to promote a self-reliant ideology as a socialist reality and establish a nationalistic musical style using modern and hybrid forms based on traditional music.

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<sup>36</sup> Lee and Noh, *Korean National Music Theory*, 432.

North Korea interprets tradition from the perspective of the current social reality, distorting an understanding historical facts and tradition. The understanding of modern social reality through historical principles has always been a potential issue. Understanding historical facts objectively is desirable, but difficult. Likewise, South Korea has preserved a tradition of national music without a sense of music reflecting social reality. The North and South can make contributions to a common national music and allow South Korea to accept the achievements that North Korea has made throughout history.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Lee and Noh, *Korean National Music Theory*, 444–446.

### **CHAPTER 3:**

## **AN OVERVIEW OF THE DIVERGENT POLITICAL CULTURES AND MUSICAL STYLES OF THE TWO KOREAS AND THE HISTORY OF THEIR CHURCHES**

### **A. The Musical and Political Cultures of North and South Korea**

While attempts to engage with North Korean churches are difficult, scholars, theologians, and musicians should conduct research in the music of congregations in the North and South to prepare for reunification. Music has the potential to unite people beyond differences in politics, society, and language. The musical traditions between South and North Korea reflect different musical languages. These differences indicate the varied functions of music, ways the music is created and distributed, music styles, and themes of the lyrics. As a way to bridge the deepening differences, South Korean churches should explore partnerships with North Korean congregations to create music that may be understood and sung together throughout the peninsula as a part of active exchanges between the two countries.

This chapter will compare the political contexts, musical cultures, and musical characteristics of the two Koreas, and provide a brief history of Korean churches since their division.

## 1. North Korea

Each of the leaders of the Kim dynasty—Kim Il Sung (1912–1994), Kim Jong Il (1941–2011), Kim Jong Un (b. 1984)—in North Korea has shaped the country’s philosophy and use of music to reinforce its socialist policies. North Korea’s traditional music policy, beginning with the liberation from Japan in 1945 through the 1950s, fostered the construction of a unified nationalistic music. Under Kim Il Sung’s revolutionary plan, the government decided to build a new musical culture that inspired a new society and a new way of life, while being critical of and rejecting Western music. Kim first removed the remnants of Japan’s imperialistic history that had fostered a feudalistic society. Second, he inherited the strong sentiments against the Japanese revolution and its colonial musical heritage and used these reactions against Japanese culture to develop a nationalistic music of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Third, Kim issued guidelines stating that music should reflect the lifestyle and revolutionary passion of the North Korean people. Fourth, he defined the role of musicians as soldiers protecting culture, requiring them to eliminate the remnants of the thirty-five years of Japanese colonial rule, defeat reactionaries, develop a new style of nationalistic music, educate the North Korean people in a patriotic spirit, and faithfully serve the revolution.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kim Sang Hun, *Kayojip* (Pyongyang: Moonye Publications, 1983), 217.

During the Korean War between June 1950 and July 1953, North Korean policy focused on the development of music and art, and all musical policies were geared toward supporting the war effort. From July 1953 to September 1961, the stated musical policy had the goal of establishing post-war socialist priorities.<sup>2</sup> North Korea required all governmental entities to reflect socialist values. Music was no exception. All music policies of this period focused on eliminating musicians who opposed the North Korean regime, establishing post-war rehabilitation, and constructing a socialist music art.<sup>3</sup>

During the first half of the 1960s, North Korean musical policy focused on the construction of socialist music and arts, creating works that served to educate the North Korean masses in a socialist manner, rejecting reactionary bourgeois art, and strengthening military music. In November 1964, Kim Il Sung called on artists to create more revolutionary cultural art and more *minyos*. During his visit to the Pyongyang University of Music in July 1966, he also revealed policies and methods for building the socialist ideology into music. Kim Il Sung said

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<sup>2</sup> I understand socialism as a step in the process of communism. Socialism denies the liberal democratic system, and all means of production must be owned by the state. Communism is a stage in which all means of production are co-owned by the public beyond the socialism. Communism seeks to negate the gap between the rich and the poor by creating common profits through joint production. Usually, South Korea does not separate the North Korean regime from communism and socialism but sees them as the same. I do not think a communist society has been fully realized anywhere in the world, including North Korea. Thus, I classify socialism as an ideological point of view, and communism as an economic point of view. On this basis, I will describe the North Korean regime as socialist in this thesis. This is because the socialist system is a triple party-state monopoly of political power, economic ownership, and ideology.

<sup>3</sup> Rhee Hee Rim, *Music of North Chosun after Liberation* (Pyongyang: Moonye Publications, 1979), 62–72.

that it was essential for self-reliance that North Korean music conform to the people's feelings and draw upon their traditions. He explained that the essential policy for achieving self-reliance required the removal of Western influences and a focus on the subject of music to enable the development of a nationalistic music according to the sentiments of the socialist people. He required that nationalistic music should be based on traditional music, develop vocal styles suitable for expressing the nationalistic sentiment, and employ traditional instruments.<sup>4</sup>

The music policy of the late 1960s proceeded in line with the establishment of a socialist regime in North Korea, which revolutionized the whole of society, transforming musical art so that it reflected a classless society. Since then, North Korean music has supported these policies, with songs about revolution and Kim Il Sung's greatness, wisdom, and virtue. Kim Il Sung ordered all in the field of music to make the subjects and nationalistic characteristics more distinctive, embodying the revolutionary spirit, socialist ideology, political and economic independence, and military self-defense. He wanted the aesthetic essence of nationalistic music to be elegant, gentle, soft, and light. As a result, embodying nationalistic characteristics in music has become a fundamental element of self-reliance as well as one of the principal demands of the

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<sup>4</sup> Kim, *Kayojip*, 223.



North Korean socialist Party's literary and artistic policies. However, the purpose of the revolution in North Korea is perceived to have strengthened Kim Il Sung's one-man regime.<sup>5</sup>

In the 1970s, North Korean musical policy transcended the early ideology of revolution and self-reliance to become a revolutionary socialist and socialist musical art. It also focused on clearly distinguishing between revolutionary music and counter-revolutionary music, labor class music and bourgeois music, and North Korean music and Western music. Kim Il Sung and the North Korean government were changing and classifying society by instilling socialist ideas to workers through music in the 1970s; the North's music in this period focused on creating many musical works to express socialist values. In December 1972, the regime stipulated the characteristics and practice of music with socialist content in law. As a result, North Korea's musical policy carried legal weight, rather than guidelines.<sup>6</sup>

In the 1980s, North Korea developed a higher education system in which all social classes were educated while working to embody the self-reliant ideology. In particular, by improving education in the arts, students were equipped with literary knowledge and revolutionary sentiment and were raised as ardent socialists. In this way, North Korea prepared

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<sup>5</sup> Rhee Hee Rim, *Music of North Chosun after Liberation*, 367.

<sup>6</sup> Republic of Korea, Seoul, Ministry of Unification, *Understanding North Korea 2017* (Seoul: Institute for Unification Education, 2016), 205–206.

to improve the quality of musical education and to reorganize overall music policies, such as by reforming musical institutions. Kim Jong Il, Kim Il Sung's son, established an early education system for music in the late 1970s, laying a significant foundation for training instrumentalists and vocalists to enhance the quality of professional music education. By reorganizing the curriculum of Pyongyang University of Music and Dance to cultivate artistic talents, the music education system began to foster outstanding musicians. Thus, North Korea developed measures to overhaul its music policy and improve the quality of music education, including the reorganization of the school system.<sup>7</sup>

The North Korean policy of curating traditional music from the 1990s to recent times should reflect the context of the political and economic situation in North Korea. First, in the political field, the military-first policy is based on Kim Jong Il's military-centered idea that the army is the pillar of the revolution and that the army embodies the public and nation.<sup>8</sup> Second, in the economic field, North Korea emphasizes the spirit of the forced march by declaring 1998 as the "Year of Socialism Enforcement" when it faced economic difficulties due to a series of massive floods. This spirit is part of the leading message in the economic propaganda presented

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<sup>7</sup> Seo Woo Suk et al., "A Study on North Korean Music since 1945," *Social Science and Policy Research* 11, no. 3 (1990): 189, 195–196.

<sup>8</sup> Republic of Korea, Seoul, Ministry of Unification, *Understanding North Korea 2017*, 209.

by Kim Jong Il after the death of Kim Il Sung in 1994. The twentieth century ended with a “triumph over suffering,” and the government launched an economic revival movement to take the country beyond 2000.<sup>9</sup> In support of the North Korean political and economic sectors, a primary emphasis key of the North’s traditional music policy was the emergence of the military-first art theory to support the military-first politics. This military-first art theory re-emphasized traditional themes.<sup>10</sup>

## **2. South Korea**

Colonial rule under the Japanese subverted the traditional music culture. In this period, the indiscriminate acceptance of Western music led people in the upper classes to shun traditional music, even after the liberation from Japan, and to focus on Western musicians and music education. As a result, Western music became deeply rooted in the sentiments of South Koreans, and traditional music remained in the background, making it hard for people to recognize its value. Even after independence in 1945, the reconstruction of traditional music was

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<sup>9</sup> Despite such emphasis from the Kim Jong Il’s era, economic policies of the Kim Jong Un’s era are considered to have failed. Lia Eustachewich, “Kim Jong Un admits five-year economic plan failed ‘tremendously’,” *New York Post*, January 6, 2021, <https://nypost.com/2021/01/06/kim-jong-un-says-5-year-economic-plan-failed-tremendously> (accessed January 20, 2021).

<sup>10</sup> Republic of Korea, Seoul, Ministry of Unification, *Understanding North Korea 2020* (Seoul: Institute for Unification Education, 2019), 262–263.

difficult due to the development and expansion of Western music. The government neither properly establish a South Korean music education curriculum nor trained few teachers systematically to teach music during this period, and there were no music textbooks. Further, music teachers only had received training in Western music and, consequently, there was no teaching of traditional music.<sup>11</sup> Japanese colonial models provided the foundation for music education in this period. The music itself included songs about the joy of liberation, as well as foreign songs.<sup>12</sup>

Systematic efforts to preserve and develop traditional music began in 1951 with the formation of the National Institute of Traditional Music. With the founding of the National Traditional Music High School (1955) and the Department of Traditional Music at Seoul National University's School of Music (1959), the study of Korean music was taking root in educational institutions.

In South Korea, a few scholars began theorizing about traditional music in the 1960s, and, on October 2, 1961, the Cultural Heritage Administration was set up to preserve and manage cultural property after a change in the law. It was newly established to manage cultural

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<sup>11</sup> Republic of Korea, Seoul, Korean Ministry of Education, *Explanation of Middle School Music and Curriculum* (Seoul: Korean Ministry of Education, 1989), 23.

<sup>12</sup> Yoo Duk Hee, *Music Teaching Method* (Seoul: Jumumsa, 1981), 25.

properties across South Korea. There were three departments: General Affairs, Cultural Heritage, and Management with the Royal Cemetery Management Office as a sub-organization. This development shows the regime's strong commitment to protecting traditional culture. The intent and purpose of the cultural heritage protection policy were to provide a systematic approach to the preservation and development of traditional music in South Korea.

In the 1970s, the South Korean government revised the *Cultural Heritage Protection Act* to protect intangible culture, including traditional music, designating significant cultural properties, and recognizing the holders of the relevant skills. This change in law meant that preserving peoples' skills had a central status in the protection of traditional culture, a change that made clear the government's intention to use legal means to preserve original forms of intangible culture, such as traditional music. Critical policies established in the 1970s in South Korea were foundational for improvements in musical instruments, which are indispensable for supporting vocal music, including *minyos*. The National Institute of Traditional Music led this initiative with the support of the government at the time.

This period saw the introduction of a system for preserving traditional culture and the introduction of policies regarding intangible culture, including the maintenance of the associated skills. The government was involved directly and actively in the protection of intangible

traditional culture and set up a system to avoid a loss of critical skills. The foundational policy framework for traditional culture, completed at this time, is still being maintained.

Democracy began to take effect in the late 1980s when the military dictatorship ended, and the civilian government started regulatory reform of government policy in 1992. The aim was to reduce government intervention, strengthening the status of those who held skills related to traditional culture. However, this policy reform seems to have been insufficient to establish a new paradigm for traditional cultural heritage in the twenty-first century. Because of limitations in the reforming policies related to traditional culture, increases in the number of people with skills in traditional music are insufficient, and their work requires subsidies. Thus, ensuring continued progress in preserving traditional culture has not been successful.

## **B. The Characteristics of North and South Korean Music**

### **1. North Korea**

The concept of *minyo* in North Korea embraces not only songs that have been transmitted orally among the public over time but also songs created more recently. In North

Korea, *minyos* are regarded as a significant field of literary research because *minyos* reflect the soul of people and their lives, ideas, feelings, and habits.<sup>13</sup>

The *minyo* in North Korea is a collective concept for vocal music and includes revolutionary songs, crowd songs, and party policy songs. There are two main intentions behind creative activities based on the improvement of *minyos* and musical instruments. The first is political; since its beginnings, the North Korean regime has focused all of its policies on establishing the historical tradition of the socialist regime. The self-reliant ideology of the North Korean regime emerged in the field of literary and artistic theory, culture and art, and music.<sup>14</sup> Kim Il Sung's preference for *minyos* over Western music was a second factor. Only under the dictatorship in North Korea could a music genre be decided and maintained according to the tastes of a single individual. In other words, the North Korean *minyo* has developed to suit the tastes of North Koreans, based on political purposes and Kim Il Sung's personal preferences. North Korea uses music as a primary means to imprint the self-reliant ideology on the people, to deify the absolute power of the three generations of Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Il, and Kim Jong Un, and to maintain their regime.

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<sup>13</sup> Lee Hyun Joo, *North Korean Music and Self-Reliance Philosophy* (Seoul: Minsokwon Publishing Company, 2006), 10–12.

<sup>14</sup> Republic of Korea, Seoul, Ministry of Unification, *Understanding North Korea 2020*, 260–263.

## 1) The History of North Korean Music

### Kim Il Sung's Era

The music of North Korea does not organize music history around established Western musical eras. North Korea distinguishes predominant eras according to each regime's realization of social and human transformation. Thus, an essential aspect of North Korea's musical history is understanding the process by which the people become the center of music. In other words, the most crucial feature of the North's musical history is that each regime describes all nationalistic music as an expression of the people's ideology of self-reliance. Therefore, North Korean musical history, including modern history, is the history of establishing nationalistic music.<sup>15</sup> This period, which reflects the "anti-Japanese armed struggle" to fight against Japanese imperialism and build socialism, is an "advanced period of revolutionary song." Due to the formation of the "Down-With-Imperialism Union" by Kim Il Sung in 1926, songs during this period have historical value and have since become the standard expression of North Korean musical style.<sup>16</sup> While Western music gained prominence in South Korea through the influence of the United States, the Soviet Union (now Russia) affected North Korean music.

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<sup>15</sup> Kim Moon Hwan, *Art of North Korea: North Korea's perception* (Seoul: Eulyoo Cultural Publishing, 1990), 140–144.

<sup>16</sup> Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Pyongyang, Institute of History of Academy of Sciences, *Chosŏn chŏn*, vol.16 (Pyongyang: Science and Encyclopedia Publishers, 1981), 276.



Since 1946, North Korea has focused mostly on music with other arts, and the authority of the regime over cultural projects has become absolute. The government ordered musicians to play a role in promoting a socialist music culture. North Korea organized a “Soviet Music Subcommittee” in 1947 and applied the aesthetics and theory of Soviet music to North Korean music.<sup>17</sup>

The combination of North Korean music and art enhanced its militant function and ethnic consciousness. In November 1952, the North Korean regime replaced the primary musician’s organization inherited from South Korea during the Korean War and reorganized the musicians’ community of North Korea, forming the North Korean Musicians Alliance. It also reorganized the National Music College as Pyongyang University of Music and actively engaged a broader range of arts. In December 1952, the North declared that Kim Il Sung was the state, thus strengthening the regime’s ideological authority based on victory in the war and establishing its self-reliance and a firm anti-United States policy. At the same time, North Korea continued to develop an ethnic cultural heritage in music based on a Marxist and Leninist perspective and put forward a policy of developing a socialist nationalistic cultural art. In practice, however, the

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<sup>17</sup> Kim, *Art of North Korea: North Korea’s perception*, 146–148.

Marxist and Leninist approach to socialist music and arts took precedence over the development of a North Korean nationalistic cultural heritage.<sup>18</sup>

After the end of the Korean War, the regime proclaimed the principles of the self-reliant ideology throughout the entire North Korea society, and a clear set of guidelines were established in all fields based on the revolution, embodying the principles of self-reliance, independence, and self-defense. This ideology provided the opportunity for establishing self-reliant musical and literary thought to confirm the principles of nationalistic music as a subject. This period emphasized the need for the creation of revolutionary music and art, along with the modernization of nationalistic music. Realizing a nationalistic music included composing music, improving musical instruments, establishing a musical theory, developing a music education curriculum with textbooks, and performance programs in vocal and instrumental music. When it came to musical timbre, North Korea preferred clear, bright, and gentle tones, reflecting an understanding that the public's hopes and sentiments should be clear and bright, and not cloudy, dark, and violent. This policy led to the restoration of some 150 traditional musical instruments and the creation of new national musical instruments.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Kim, *Art of North Korea: North Korea's perception*, 148–151.

<sup>19</sup> Kim, *Art of North Korea: North Korea's perception*, 154–159.

Following the banishment of bourgeois ideology and the establishment of North Korea's self-reliant ideology, the late 1960s to the early 1970s became an era of musical arts. The elimination of anti-regime and anti-revolutionary forces was followed by a focus on the working class. This policy led to the formalization of a North Korean nationalistic music, and all music in the North aspired to be based on tradition and reflect the feelings of the North Korean people.<sup>20</sup> In music education, the dictates of Kim Il Sung's regime required the restructuring of all textbooks published by North Korean writers. The major turning point in the history of music in North Korea was the emergence of theatrical drama in 1971, with great emphasis on the delivery of political ideas in the revolutionary era of musical arts.<sup>21</sup> Changes in policies affecting class, revolution, and ideology of the society also applied to musical theater. In general, the scale of performance became monumental, with crowds appearing on large stages. Repetition of musical themes and incorporation of dance intensifies the theatrical drama.<sup>22</sup> North Korean vocal style reflects a traditional vocalization approach and pedagogical method distinctive to the

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<sup>20</sup> North Korea's nationalistic music is derived from Korean traditional music. As regimes have changed, the nationalistic music has been modernized by improving traditional instruments or combining traditional and Western instruments. Republic of Korea, Sejong, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, National Gugak Center, *The Theory of National Music in North Korea* (Seoul: National Gugak Center, 2020), Preface.

<sup>21</sup> Republic of Korea, Seoul, Ministry of Unification, *Understanding North Korea 2017*, 216–217.

<sup>22</sup> North Korean revolutionary opera, "Dang-ui Chamdoin Ddal (당의 참된 딸) (A True Daughter of the Party)" (video of a live performance, 1971). Posted June 9, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EqJD4xhzBmY> (accessed January 21, 2021).

country. Instrumental music, centered on traditional instrumental artists, also includes Western instrumentalists. In addition to solo vocal music, North Korea performances include solo, quartet, ensemble, orchestral works, concerto, symphony, and other genres composed in the style of “Julga” (절가) (a variation of *contrafactum*), a compositional technique that employs repeated melodies with different lyrics (i.e., verses 1, 2, 3, etc.).<sup>23</sup>

From the 1980s to the early 1990s, the music of this period is divided into two approaches as the accumulated national music implementation becomes more evident with systematic theorization.<sup>24</sup> During the first half of this period, artistic troupes from the South and North exchanged visits to Seoul and Pyongyang in 1985, confirming the status of Korean national music on the Korean Peninsula. From the beginning, university music departments implemented a program of nationalistic music education, distinguishing traditional music from Western music and developing orchestral compositions using mainly traditional musical instruments. The publication of the *Self-reliance Music Books* beginning in 1987 influenced the ideas embodied in music. The contents of the first volume of these series presented the characteristics and compositional principles of self-reliant or nationalistic music, as well as

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<sup>23</sup> Jeong Bong Suk, “Shining Achievements made by our Regime with the Creation of a Music Formalism based on the Style of Julga,” *Chosun Art* 7 (July 1985): 52–54.

<sup>24</sup> Kim, *Art of North Korea: North Korea's perception*, 172.

performance practice.<sup>25</sup> A nationalistic music philosophy established the interrelationship between traditional music and Western music, combining the philosophy of the traditional music with the theoretical constructs of Western music. Extensive research on *minyos* and traditional music, begun in the late 1980s, led to the theoretical work on *minyos* and instrumental music. The regime established statistical norms for including traditional music elements, such as the concept of *minyos*, musical genres, rhythms, principles of harmony, composition, orchestration, instrumentation, and the performance practice of *minyos* during this time.<sup>26</sup>

#### Kim Jong Il's Era

North and South Korea have scheduled various cultural and art exchanges since 2000 following the death of Kim Il Sung in 1994. During this time, many artists performed in and out of the South and North. The result of these cultural exchanges confirmed a single ethnic identity between the two Koreas. Kim Jong Il expressed his willingness to pursue national affairs and tried to stabilize the system with military-first politics. According to the regime's priorities, the purpose of musical composition and performance was to advocate the "North Korean National First-ism" as outlined by Kim Jong Il in his "Music and Art Theory."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Jeong Bong Suk, "National music," *Chosun Arts* 7 (July 1987): 6.

<sup>26</sup> Kim, *Art of North Korea: North Korea's perception*, 172–176.

<sup>27</sup> Bae In Kyo, "The Changing Aspects of North Korean Ethnic Music in the 21st Century," *Korean Art Research* 22 (December 2018): 29–50.

The songs of this period included lyrics to promote North Korea's industrial base and new industrial methods, while other songs included praise for Kim Jong Il and propaganda for military-first politics. Therefore, the topics of *minyos* in Kim Jong Il's book *Chosun Art* in the first decade of the twenty-first century reflect the themes of Kim Jong Il's benevolent leadership, the unity of the people and soldiers, the stability of people's livelihoods, the construction of a strong nation, and the reunification.<sup>28</sup> Propaganda demanded by the military-first era was applied to the songs. In particular, concerning public welfare, "Gamja Jarang" (감자 자랑) (Potato Pride), and "Haengbok-ui Gamjagot" (행복의 감자 꽃) (Happiness Potato Flower) reflect the intention to address people's anxiety by promoting potato farming due to the drastic decline in agricultural production in North Korea during the period of hardship. Also, "Yongbyon-ui Bidan Chunyeo" (영변의 비단 처녀) (Yongbyon's Silk Virgin) is a song made to disguise Yongbyon's nuclear facilities.<sup>29, 30, 31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Kim Jong Il was often given the colloquial title of "Dear Leader" to distinguish him from his father Kim Il Sung ("Great Leader"). Oh Hyun Chul, *The Ideology of the Military-First and the Destiny of the People* (Pyongyang: Pyongyang Publishing Press, 2007), 139.

<sup>29</sup> North Korean folk song, "Gamja Jarang (감자 자랑) (Potato Pride)" (music video). Posted December 23, 2008, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UbjOjJO-FEs> (accessed January 21, 2021).

<sup>30</sup> North Korean folk song, "Yongbyon-ui Bidan Chunyeo (영변의 비단 처녀) (Yongbyon's Silk Virgin)" (music recording). Posted February 21, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZRBIE-0sXpU> (accessed January 21, 2021).

<sup>31</sup> Bae, "The Changing Aspects of North Korean Ethnic Music in the 21st Century," 34.

Many *minyos* created in the 2000s during the military-first politics emphasized the greatness of socialist system, the dominance of self-reliance ideology, and the optimistic sentiments of the people living in the era which were represented in laughter and humor. These emotions combined and accentuated with sequentially progressive melodies and dynamic rhythms, thus having the effect of increasing optimism. However, composers chose *minyos* as a genre that could show optimism, following the regime's command to emphasize optimism for the future while neglecting socialist reality. Emphasizing optimism of North Korean regime can be understood as the regime trying to carry forward and realize its future-oriented optimism with upbeat *minyos*, along with the political slogan, "Let's laugh even though the road is rough," which ran through the 2000s.<sup>32</sup>

The *Music and Art Theory*, published in 1992 by Kim Jong Il, has established itself as an essential source for understanding North Korean music theory. One of the highlights of the book was the realization of "nationality (ethnicity)" in music. The realization of nationality in vocal music resulted in the creation of *minyos* during Kim Jong Il's reign. The realization of nationality in instrumental music resulted in the direction of orchestration which combines both

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<sup>32</sup> Bae In Kyo, "North Korea's Ethnical Sentiment in the times of Songun, Referring to the North's Military-First Ideology: In the 2000s, Focusing on Minyo (folksong) contained in the Journal of Chosun Art," *Korean Folk Song Society* 41 (August 2014): 112–113.

traditional and Western instruments. Chapter 2, Section 3 of Kim Jong Il's *Music and Art Theory*

on "composition" states:

The basis for organizing instruments is to combine national [traditional] and western instruments. Choosing the necessary musical instruments in music creation, mixing the musical instruments with different sounds to obtain new tones, and harmonizing them is a task for musical composition. Only when they are good at instrumental composition can they achieve results in music creation.<sup>33</sup>

The purpose of combining traditional and Western musical instruments was to enhance the role of traditional musical instruments further, to develop national music in a modern fashion, to make Western musical instruments subservient to the development of nationalistic music, and to find a completely new tone that suited the modern aesthetic sense.<sup>34</sup> This combination is divided into two types: partial orchestration is where a small number of Western instruments are arranged together with traditional instruments;<sup>35</sup> total combination orchestration is where the ratio of traditional to Western instruments is 1:1.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Kim Jong Il, *Music and Art Theory* (Pyongyang: Chosun Rodong Party Publishing, 1992), 84.

<sup>34</sup> Kim Jong Il, *Music and Art Theory*, 84–88.

<sup>35</sup> North Korean orchestra and choir, "Chungsanbul-e Poongneyon-i Wattne (청산벌에 풍년이 왔네) (There is a good harvest in the Chungsan-ri field)" (video of a live performance). Posted November 2, 2012, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3vZwhm5F\\_k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3vZwhm5F_k) (accessed January 21, 2021).

<sup>36</sup> North Korean orchestra, "Gne Dduinun Chunyeo (그네 뛰는 처녀) (The Girl on the Swing)": (video of a live performance). Posted March 14, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uEbPnclqQGE> (accessed January 21, 2021).



Just as North Korean instrumental music emphasized mixed orchestration, an approach that maintains traditional colors, the vocal music sector also emphasized the realization of traditional character. Vocal performance practices in North Korean consist of three types: Western, traditional, and popular music methods. Western music vocalization reflects the “Bel canto” method and is a way of singing Western European-style songs. When singing *minyos*, singers employ the traditional vocalization method, and when singing popular songs, performers use the popular music vocalization method.<sup>37</sup> These methods were known as the North Korean singing methods from the 1990s and through the early 2000s. With the strengthening of North Korean National First-ism and the emphasis on nationalism, the government sought for the traditional vocalization method to be applied to performers of Western musical styles, and in July and August 2003, it set out a policy encouraging Western-trained vocalists to sing *minyos*.<sup>38</sup>

We have looked at the trend of nationalistic music during the military-first era, which was led by Kim Jong Il in the 2000s. Kim Jong Il’s reign mandated North Korean identity and nationalism in the music and art fields.<sup>39</sup> The North Korean regime emphasized, according to

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<sup>37</sup> The traditional vocalization method pursues a bright tone, but mainly uses the resonance of the mouth and nasal cavity, so it is not possible to sing as wide a vocal range using head resonance. There are disadvantages in depth, tenderness, and flexibility of sound. North Korea’s popular music vocalization method prefers singing in falsetto, which is a strong mixture of nasal sounds.

<sup>38</sup> Kim Jong Il, *Music and Art Theory*, 144.

<sup>39</sup> Shin Hyo Kyung, “The Importance of Actively Reviving Identity and Nationality in the Music and Art Sectors of the Military-First Era,” *Chosun Art* 12 (December 2008): 18–19.

some, Korean National First-ism in order to prevent the fall of the country along with the fall of socialism in the late 1980s. The role of nationalistic music was to emphasize and encouraged patriotic pride and self-esteem.

### Kim Jong Un's Era

Compared to his father, Kim Jong Il, who focused on the revolutionary opera, Kim Jong Un is focusing his attention on singing and bands. North Korean music has become freer and less restricted under Kim Jong Un's rule. The "Moranbong" (모란봉) (Moran mountaintop) band drew keen attention with its unconventional performance in 2012.<sup>40</sup> Former leader Kim Jong Il, the father of current leader Kim Jong Un, died on December 17, 2011. Three days later, the North's official newspaper "Rodong" (로동) (Labor) printed an obituary of his death, widely expecting the mourning period would last for some time. However, the following year, after Kim Jong Un came into power, he created the Moranbong band. In July 2012, the band presented a brilliant performance featuring more than ten songs from popular Disney movies as well as the theme song of the Hollywood film *Rocky* (1976). This very unusual event showed the new leader's political strategy of using music and therefore attracted particular attention. The performers also showed off their Western hairstyles and thick makeup and were dressed for

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<sup>40</sup> Republic of Korea, Seoul, Ministry of Unification, *Understanding North Korea 2020*, 286.

exposure. In particular, the instruments they used were the Japanese-produced Roland digital piano and drums, along with a synthesizer by KORG and piano by YAMAHA.<sup>41</sup> Using Japanese brands would have been forbidden without the special instructions or approval of Kim Jong Un.<sup>42</sup>

Performers of the Moranbong band, wearing off-the-shoulder outfits and stylish accessories, skillfully played electronic musical instruments under laser illuminators. The extraordinary stage show was very different from previous performances. It was also amazing to see the concerts of North Korea's "Samjiyon" (삼지연) (Samjiyon City) orchestra in South Korea at the beginning of the opening ceremony of the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics. Accompanied by refined orchestral music, North Korean singers sang South Korean pop songs.<sup>43</sup> It is apparent that North Korean music is changing, promoting the message of Kim Jong Un's regime. Performances have become more spectacle oriented and closer to world music, shedding many traditional elements. A North Korean art troupe presented tap dancing during its show in

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<sup>41</sup> North Korean Moranbong Band, "Junsengjul Gyungchook (전승절 경축) (The Victory Celebration)" (video of a live performance, July, 2012). Posted August 17, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fDUmNUAq5cE> (accessed January 21, 2021).

<sup>42</sup> Jeong Chang Hyun, "An experimental performance by Moranbong Band reflecting the global trend: Dialogue message to the U.S.," *Minjok* 21 (August 2012): 18–27.

<sup>43</sup> North Korean Samjiyon orchestra, "Performing at the start of the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics in South Korea" (video of a live performance, February 9, 2018). Posted February 10, 2018, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PB-qBU7Z\\_7E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PB-qBU7Z_7E) (accessed January 21, 2021).

China, a stark contrast to earlier North Korean performances that had emphasized previously approved nationalistic traits. An innovation under Kim Jong Un's rule placed more focus on globalization, and art is the most effective vehicle to send that message to the people.<sup>44</sup> Through musical performances, North Korean people now realize that things are not what they used to be, a clear message being sent by Kim Jong Un to the North Korean people. Culture cannot be assessed based on political interpretations alone, and it seems that North Korean music is changing to convey the message of reform and openness.<sup>45</sup>

## 2) The Ideology of North Korean Music

North Korea employs music for specific purposes, including the development of society, real-life reform, and the maintenance of the regime. Therefore, North Korea reflects socialist principles in music and imposed three requirements: music must truly reflect reality and have social substance, conforming to the legality of socialist society; in dramatic works, the protagonist must not speak against socialism or criticize or undermine the socialist system; the music should reflect the task of educating the public with socialist ideology. These principles are essential for the efficient promotion and cultivation of socialist ideas and are a continuation of

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<sup>44</sup> Republic of Korea, Seoul, Ministry of Unification, "Musical Politics of Moranbong Band," by Chun Hyun Sik, *Research Society for North Korea* (December 2015): 519.

<sup>45</sup> Jeon Joo Won, "A Powerful Roar of Music that Throbbled 10 million Hearts: On the Achievements This Year in Music," *Chosun Art* 12 (December 2014): 30.

the artistic thought of Marx and Lenin. They relate not only to music but all aspects of art, including literature, painting, and film.<sup>46</sup>

North Korea seeks to realize socialism through music, developing music activities under a musical policy based on the ideology of self-reliance. According to Kim Jong Il's book, *Music and Art Theory*, self-reliant music has several principles. Self-reliant music should be revolutionary in content, and nationalistic music should employ traditional instruments in performance. Therefore, musical works should reflect contents that can revolutionize the people through the principles of the revolutionary culture of social class, and socialism, and patriotism. Also, popular audiences should appreciate music. In order to popularize art, the North Korean regime seeks to realize its policies by strengthening art education for future generations. Based on this principle of self-reliant music, music education promotes the soloist as a person with a strong political ideology, outstanding talent, and high skills.<sup>47</sup>

A characteristic of self-reliant music is that it comes from the belief that the new era requires new music, and this new music should relate intimately with the people. Therefore, new music should be easy, clear, and in a form that can be understood and enjoyed by all the public.

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<sup>46</sup> Bae, "The Changing Aspects of North Korean Ethnic Music in the 21st Century," 44.

<sup>47</sup> Kim Jong Il, *Music and Art Theory*, 3–49.

Such music should have the potential to illicit a distinctive North Korean character, even if it embraces some foreign aspects. Music should serve the people, faithfully carrying out the roles of its political and social facilitators.<sup>48</sup>

The military-first musical politics, launched early in the twenty-first century, had the goal of building North Korea as a powerful and prosperous nation and continued into the early days of the Kim Jong Un's era after the death of Kim Jong Il. Musical performance reflects the status of musical politics in North Korea with a preference for compositions that emotionally support the regime's military-first principles. Furthermore, military-first era music is exerting significant power to stir people's emotions for defending socialism as a forceful and dominant ideology. Such military-first-era music is full of emotion, such as heroism, sacrifice, and happiness, and based on the endless admiration and steadfast trust in Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il, as well as revolutionary pride in obedience to the orders of the regime. Thus, Kim Jong Un believes that he can effectively implement political demagoguery through music. At the same time, many *minyos* created during the military-first era reflect hope and optimism for the future, as well as a willingness to deny the painful reality.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Kim Young Bok, *The Series of Self-Reliance Music vol. 13: A Music Education of Self-Reliance* (Pyongyang: Moonye Publications, 1992), 28–177.

<sup>49</sup> Baek Oak Soon, "The music politics of our regime is a powerful weapon of revolution and construction," *Chosun Art* 11 (November 2010): 30.

In explaining North Korean nationalism, North Korea emphasizes the regime, self-reliant ideology, and the socialist system. While self-reliant ideology and socialism are the stated goals of the regime, speculation exists that their influence is diminishing in society. Therefore, unlike his father Kim Jong Il, Kim Jong Un does not emphasize nationalistic music to maintain his regime. Rather than mention the patriotic themes or emphasize nationalistic music, Kim Jong Un strives to connect with the North Korean people's sentiments and introduce global musical trends.<sup>50</sup>

## **2. South Korea**

Initial efforts in Western music education were first conducted in Korea in 1906 and solidified during the Japanese colonial period (1910–1945).<sup>51</sup> A Western-style military band was founded by the government around 1900, followed by the Chosun Vocalization Association in 1933. These organizations played a significant role in the musical and cultural aspects of society in general, including both music performances, and in the training younger students and creating

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<sup>50</sup> Jeon Young Sun and Han Seng Ho, *NK pop: North Korea's Electronic and Popular Music* (Seoul: Geulnurim Press, 2018), 26–31.

<sup>51</sup> Japan began to have an increasing influence on Korea following the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1876 and Korea became a protectorate of Japan in 1905.

musical works.<sup>52</sup> Public education began in South Korea during the Japanese occupation. Music education in this era became focused totally on Western music. Education in Korean traditional music was under the Japanese colonial policy entitled “Education of Oath as Subjects of the Imperial Nation.” Western music education was established mainly in schools founded by Western missionaries. The introduction of Western culture and Japan’s policy of exterminating Korean national culture jeopardized the development of Korean national music. Though Western music was available to those who had received a professional music education, traditional Korean music education was not available to the Korean people except in limited situations. South Korea’s popular music was influenced by the U.S. military who introduced various styles such as rock, trot, and jazz following the liberation from Japan beginning in 1945 through the 1960s. In the 1970s, *minyo* was at its peak, and in the 1980s, musical influences expanded to include rock and blues. In the 1990s, following the advent of hip-hop, popular music included modern rock, electronic music, and acid jazz or club jazz. South Korean music has adopted Western traditions and styles primarily because Western music flourished in a free democracy rather than being restricted by any specific political or ideological agenda.

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<sup>52</sup> Song Bang Song, *The History of South Korean Music* (Seoul: Minsikwon Publishing Company, 2010), 572.



### **C. A Brief History of the Church in North and South Korea**

Though Korea was liberated from Japanese colonial rule in 1945, it failed to form an independent nation, resulting in a divided Korean Peninsula based on different ideologies and systems. This duality following liberation applied not only to the political and social aspects of Korea but also to the Christian Council of Korea. During the Japanese colonial period, the Korean church experienced significant oppression because it supported the movement for independence and the anti-Japanese system. The Christian Church in North Korea sought religious freedom along with liberation, but the liberation of 1945, was followed by another era of persecution and oppression under the Soviet Union, which occupied the North. The Socialist Party, which was the new center of politics in North Korea, took the view that the Christian Church in the North not only weakened its revolutionary struggle but also fostered an anti-socialist philosophy that undermined the revolutionary will of the North Korean people.<sup>53</sup>

Though Korean Christians experienced the joy of independence and freedom from oppression during the 1945 liberation from Japanese colonial rule, this was also the beginning of a period of new oppression by socialism. The North Korean Christian community had expected freedom

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<sup>53</sup> Min Gyung Bae, *The History of the Korean Church* (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 2007), 614.

following liberation for missionary activities to resume, but the new socialist ideological agenda brought about another era of suffering.

## **1. A Brief History of the North Korean Church**

Since the liberation from Japan, Christianity in North Korea has undergone many changes with the advent of the socialist regime. The history of North Korean churches has been one of hardship. There were many martyrs during the Korean War. Following the war, churches in North Korea experienced the near demise of the practice of formal Christian worship. Furthermore, being identified as a Christian was considered to be an anti-government stance.<sup>54</sup> Kim Il Sung subscribed to the Marxist philosophy that “religion is the opium of the people,” a concept that became the basis of North Korea’s attitude toward religion.<sup>55</sup> North Korean regimes regarded Christianity as the most significant impediment to the consciousness of socialist construction and the forerunner of U.S. aggression. The regime considered missionaries to be spies.<sup>56</sup> During this time, South Korea formed a separate government, and North Korea

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<sup>54</sup> Min, *The History of the Korean Church*, 590.

<sup>55</sup> Republic of Korea, Seoul, Ministry of Unification, Database Center for North Korean Human Rights, *White Paper on Human Rights in North Korea*, by Do Kyung Ok et al., *The Reality of Civil and Political Rights: Right to Freedom of Ideology, Conscience and Religion* (Seoul: Korea Institute for National Unification, 2016), 181–195.

<sup>56</sup> Min, *The History of the Korean Church*, 592.

established the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, taking the first step as a socialist state.

The relationship between the church and the North Korean socialist regime merits further examination.

During this period, North Korea established a united front through cooperation with those who advocated socialism among religious people and fought against the pro-U.S. forces. The North Korean government arrested the forces opposed to North Korean socialism and confiscated their property. The next three years of the Korean War brought about many religious changes, and people of all religions became subject to strict control and sanctions. At this time, church membership in North Korea shrank by about forty percent.<sup>57</sup> As a result, the movement of anti-socialist congregations to South Korea strengthened the homogeneity of the Chosun Christian Federation in North Korea. In 1949, the Chosun Christian Federation consolidated Pyongyang Seminary (Presbyterian) and Sunghwa Seminary (Methodist) and established a united Christian seminary. Clergy who did not join the Chosun Christian Federation of Korea were dismissed. Before the Korean War, the government arrested or suppressed churches and monasteries that were perceived to have had anti-socialist tendencies.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Kim Heung Soo, and Ryu Dae Young, *A New Understanding of North Korean Religion* (Seoul: Dasan Geulbang, 2002), 84.

<sup>58</sup> North Korean Church Historical Records Committee, The Institute of the History of Christianity in Korea, *The History of the North Korean Church*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Seoul: Institute of History of Christianity in Korea, 2018), 415–416.

North Korea wanted to share its regime and socialist identity throughout the Korean Peninsula as a result of the Korean War. During the war, the Chosun Christian Federation met at Seomunbak Church in Pyongyang on August 5, 1950, condemned the crimes and sins of the American imperialists, and appealed to Christians to pray for the North Korean army to drive out the imperialists. They set August 18 as a day of victory over the invading American imperialists and the regime of South Korea and held a dawn prayer meeting at Shinyangri Church in Pyongyang.<sup>59</sup> The Korean War deeply impressed a negative attitude among North Koreans that while all religions are anti-socialist groups, Christianity especially was the forerunner of the U.S. imperialists. A sense of religious nihilism spread as those who had been evacuated to church buildings to avoid bombings during the war were actually killed in the bombings. The spread of religious nihilism in North Korean society, along with the suppression of religion by the North Korean government after the armistice, led North Koreans to turn their backs on religion.<sup>60</sup>

After the war, rumors spread among North Koreans that American missionaries who fought as soldiers during the Korean War and Korean pastors who moved from North Korea to South Korea were involved in various massacres. An anti-Christian trend prevailed in North

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<sup>59</sup> North Korean Church Historical Records Committee of The Institute of the History of Christianity in Korea, *The History of the North Korean Church*, 420–422.

<sup>60</sup> North Korean Church Historical Records Committee of The Institute of the History of Christianity in Korea, *The History of the North Korean Church*, 432–433.

Korean society, and Christians in the North were forced to leave the church. Also, anti-religious propaganda by the North Korean regime was prominent during this period, and the church in North Korea declined sharply. Anti-religious propaganda was also carried out as part of the post-war movement to establish a mindset among the people to support the socialist regime in North Korea.<sup>61</sup> As a result, Christian and religious forces shrank rapidly. In the end, this social environment was the reason why religious life continued in homes rather than through the reconstruction of the North Korean church during the post-war restoration process. These post-war social experiences of the North Korean church later led it to take an anti-imperialist political form for its survival.

The North Korean church marked a turning point with the revision of the socialist constitution in 1972. The socialist constitution states that “people have freedom of religion and freedom of anti-religious propaganda.”<sup>62</sup> Since then, North Korea has been balancing religious policies between the anti-religious movements and the religious movements for reunification. The Chosun Christian Federation reopened the Pyongyang theological seminary in 1972 and began training ministers. The reopening of the seminary was an opportunity for Christianity in

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<sup>61</sup> Kim Doh Il, “A Search for Unification Education through Comparison and Analysis of Ethics Curriculum of the South and North Korea,” *Korea Presbyterian Journal of Theology* 45:1 (March 2013): 221.

<sup>62</sup> North Korean Church Historical Records Committee of The Institute of the History of Christianity in Korea, *The History of the North Korean Church*, 441.

North Korea to show vitality again; it started producing its first graduates in 1974.<sup>63</sup> In 1983, the Chosun Christian Federation published a Bible and hymns for use in churches.<sup>64</sup> This series of events was meaningful in revitalizing the roots of the North Korean church, which had weakened over time.

The North Korean church took the bold step of initiating exchanges with other churches outside the country at this time. Although this decision had a political dimension, this stance of the North Korean church indicated a very different posture from that of the past. In 1974, the North Korean Church also delivered a letter to the World Council of Churches (WCC) describing the political situation in North Korea.<sup>65</sup> The North Korean church attended the first Asian Christian Peace Conference (ACPC) held in Kottayam, India (1975) and, the World Christian Peace Conference (WCPC) held in Brno, Czech Republic (1976). At the WCPC, the North Korean Church highlighted human rights abuses in South Korea and proposed a resolution calling for the withdrawal of U.S. troops stationed in South Korea. Since then, meetings between the South and North Korean churches have also been held in Vienna, Austria (1981), Helsinki,

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<sup>63</sup> North Korean Church Historical Records Committee of The Institute of the History of Christianity in Korea, *The History of the North Korean Church*, 444–447.

<sup>64</sup> Ha Jong Phil, *North Korea's Religious Culture* (Seoul: Sunin Publishing Company, 2003), 233.

<sup>65</sup> Ha, *North Korea's Religious Culture*, 234–241.

Finland (1982), and Vienna (1984). In 1984, an international affairs committee affiliated with the WCC gathered in Gotemba, Japan, when the reunification issue between South and North Korea emerged as a significant issue.<sup>66</sup>

A landmark event during this period was the construction of a North Korean church (1988) as an official place of worship in North Korea. It was the first time since the Korean War since a North Korean regime permitted the building of a church for worship.<sup>67</sup> North Korea built Bongsu Church in October 1988, Chilgol Church in 1989, and Pyongyang First Presbyterian Church in 2005. Despite the construction of North Korean church buildings, controversy persisted over the veracity and theological legitimacy of these churches. Currently, there are two types of churches in North Korea. The first are those churches recognized by the North Korean government following the change of religious policy, such as Bongsu Church and Chilgol Church. A second group, underground churches, conduct their religious life and activities in secret in defiance of the North Korean authorities.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Moon Jang Soon, *Understanding of North Korean Religion in the Age of Reunification* (Seoul: Daemyung Publishing Company, 2007), 161.

<sup>67</sup> Moon, *Understanding of North Korean Religion*, 162.

<sup>68</sup> Republic of Korea, Seoul, Ministry of Unification, *Realities of North Korean Religion and Prospect of Religious Exchanges between South and North Korea*, by Oh Il Hwan (Seoul: Institute for Unification Education, 2006), 35–36.

The theological legitimacy of Bongsu Church and Chilgol Church is subject to conflicting claims in South Korea. The conservative camp argues that the regime established Bongsu Church to support the North Korean regime's foreign currency earnings as a tool of the regime's propaganda to show that religious freedom exists in the North. The congregation is said to consist of North Korean agents organized around graduates of the religion department of Kim Il Sung University. The North Korean government's Unification Propaganda Department run the churches. The pastor is a secret agent, and the members of the congregation were trained fake believers. Some argue that before and after worship, a purification ritual modeled on the socialist practice of self-criticism injects the idea of atheism into worship. The Bongsu Church provides bogus worship services to men and women in their 40s and 50s who are selected by the North Korean authorities to participate when foreigners attend the service. If foreign visitors visit the church without prior notice, the doors of the church are closed.<sup>69</sup>

South Korean church leaders foster contrasting opinions of the North Korean church. Some state that North Korea's official churches, albeit there are few of them, include authentic worshippers and claim that the work of the Holy Spirit is emerging, even amid services mobilized and staged by the North Korean government. Some people who have attended the

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<sup>69</sup> Jeong Hyun Baek, *Is there a church in North Korea?* (Seoul: Kukmin Ilbo, 1998), 26–29.



worship at Bongsu Church, however, have testified that they became Christians after hearing the sermon. Recently, some argue that the official church, including the Bongsu Church built by the North Korean government, should be regarded as a “church in socialism” with limited religious activities under the supervision and control of the North Korean government.<sup>70</sup>

However, the announcement that North Korea is the world’s number one country for Christian persecution makes it difficult to affirm that Christian practice sanctioned by North Korea is a viable socialist church. Unlike the Bongsu and Chilgol Churches established by the North Korean government, Pyongyang First Presbyterian Church began under the 2003 agreement between North Korea and South Korea; Funds from South Korean congregations reportedly built the church in November 2005. According to the report, the North Korean government forbids North Koreans from attending services in the church, and the facilities are available for other non-church purposes. Given the conflicting reports, it is not easy to grasp the reality of Christian worship practice in North Korean churches.<sup>71</sup> In contrast, underground house churches exist where people gather to worship but do not have public visibility. The North

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<sup>70</sup> Kim Byung Roh, *Reunification Concert of the Churches of South and North Korea* (Seoul: Kibooksun Publishing Company, 2006), 72–75.

<sup>71</sup> Republic of Korea, Seoul, Ministry of Unification, *Realities of North Korean Religion and Prospect of Religious Exchanges between South and North Korea*, 37.

Korean government estimates that there are about five hundred house churches in North Korea, and six-thousand believers conduct worship and religious activities in these churches.<sup>72</sup>

## **2. A Brief History of the South Korean Church**

Since the establishment of the South Korean government, many government leaders, including the first president Rhee Syng Man, have been Christians. Christianity shaped politics, and church leaders participated in politics. In the small window between the liberation from Japan and the Korean War (1945–1953), many Christians and Christian leaders in North Korea moved to South Korea to escape socialist persecution. North Korean persecuted many church pastors and believers in South Korea during the Korean War and burned many churches. The Korean War nurtured strong anti-socialist ideologies in South Korea. These ideologies had a profound effect on the Protestant church in South Korea, and conservative South Korean Christians articulated an anti-socialist ideology as part of the orthodox Christian faith. After the Korean War, churches in South Korea tended to be more conservative. Most South Protestant churches were politically conservative and anti-socialist. They believed that it was impossible to

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<sup>72</sup> Kim, *Reunification Concert of the churches of South and North Korea*, 162.

talk with socialists in North Korea. Negotiating with North Korea for reunification was seen as very dangerous because, as a result, South Korea could also become socialist. They also believed that it was better to live in a divided Korea rather than to risk becoming socialist after reunification. As a result, the reunification movement of the South Korean church adopted a reunification theory based on eradicating socialism.<sup>73</sup>

In the 1960s, Protestant churches in South Korea became estranged from the South Korean regime, and some churches became concerned about human rights, freedom, and the democratization of the state. On the occasion of the Japan-South Korea Treaty on Diplomatic Normalization (1965), the South Korean churches opposed establishing diplomatic relations with Japan. This incident led to a confrontation between Park Chung Hee, the president of the military dictatorship, and the church community in South Korea. As a result, the regime put pressure on Christian churches in South Korea through a religious registration law, clergy income tax, and disapproval of Bible courses in Christian schools. In this period, the theology of social participation was introduced, which emphasized a Christian theology that combined both the eschatological life and existential justice issues in the present life. As a result, the Protestant mission field included social issues such as economic inequality, social conflict, political

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<sup>73</sup> Lee Sam Yeol, *Christianity and Social Ideology* (Seoul: Korea Theological Study Institute, 1986), 214.

oppression, and injustice. From this time on, some progressive Christians became increasingly involved in mission efforts with the poor, peasant missions, and industrial missions.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, a movement initially centered on students and intellectuals gradually shifted to social movements and discussions on reunification that focused on human rights issues among workers, urban poor, and farmers.<sup>75</sup> During this period, most South Korean churches were passive in reunification discussions and followed the anti-socialist line.

In the 1970s, anti-socialist ideology was widespread in the South Korean church, though two points of view vied for recognition within the church. One focused on anti-socialism, and the other focused on democracy and social justice. Conservative evangelical churches took an anti-socialist position, and progressive churches led the democratization movement, which included freedom, human rights, and social justice. On July 4, 1972, South Korea and North Korea issued the first joint statement on unification, which led the Korean church to consider the issue of national unification. Christians in South Korea believed that the gospel of reconciliation was strengthened through the division of the Korean peninsula and made clear that the mission of the South Korean churches to North Korea was to encourage people to reconcile through

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<sup>74</sup> Kim Yong Bok, *40 Years of Korean Ethnic Division, Christianity and Korean Society Studies* (Seoul: Hangilsa, 1985), 124.

<sup>75</sup> Yoon Eun Joo, *Korean Church and Human Rights Movement for North Korea* (Seoul: Christian Literature Crusade, 2015), 86.

genuine freedom and democracy. Progressive churches in South Korea insisted that the church in South Korea should display a spirit of reconciliation, seek peaceful coexistence and reunification with North Korea, and establish a theology of reunification. In South Korea, however, the military dictatorship of President Park Chung Hee declared emergency martial law (October Restoration/October Yusin [유신]) in October 1972, and, almost simultaneously, the Sixth Supreme People's Assembly adopted the Socialist Constitution of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (Sahoigui [사회주의]) on December 27, 1972. Thus, the relationship between North Korea and South Korea rapidly cooled. During this period, the South Korean church's desire for reunification was frustrated. Unfulfilled aspirations for reunification manifested themselves in two phenomena in the South Korean church: reunification became the most popular prayer topic for most Christians, and church participation in democratization and human rights movements increased. The former expressed a desire for reunification from a religious perspective, while the latter was a missionary movement to foster democracy and social justice as a path for reunification. Progressive churches in South Korea understood the democratization movement of the 1970s as the first phase of reunification. In the process of democratization, the democratization movement and the reunification movement were the same.

Entering the 1980s, the South Korean church considered reunification a priority. The Korean church thought that the harsh reality of a divided peninsula limited human rights, freedom, and democratization. The churches in South Korea came to believe that real democracy could not be achieved without reunification and that reconciliation and reunification between South and North Korea should be implemented through human rights, freedom, and democratization. However, realizing this vision was very difficult because of the anti-socialist ideology and anti-North Korean feelings among some Christians in South Korea. Conservative South Korean churches addressed the issue of reunification from the perspective of North Korean missions and began organizing missionary groups. With the military dictatorship in control in South Korea, however, the reunification movement of the South Korean churches resorted to meeting abroad with North Korean church leaders, holding joint meetings with foreign churches.

Meanwhile, a theology of reunification within the progressive church of South Korea has taken hold. Shalom, unity, and encounter are its three elements of reunified theology. The theology of shalom has three aspects: reconciliation, freedom, and hope. Shalom does not merely aim for the end of the military regime, but social balance and justice. The theology of unity is not just about being unified, but that actual reunification means that dispersed people should be in

harmony. The theology of encounter includes individual and group meetings between North and South Korea.

Peace is the ultimate goal of reunification, achieved through freedom, equality, and justice; it is the theological foundation of division and reunification. National reunification remains both a specific and universal theme for South Korean churches and theology. The reunification theology of this period understood the division of Korea as evil and provided an ideological framework to overcome this division.

The end of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union in 1989 and the emergence of a new international order provoked many reforms, encouraging democratization in Eastern European countries and the Soviet Union. These changes had a significant impact on the Korean Peninsula and its neighboring powers; the South government ended the military dictatorship and adopted an open policy on the issue of reunification. The South Korean church was free to discuss the issue of reunification.

However, because the government was still under the influence of military forces, non-governmental organizations suppressed discussions on reunification. The opposing views between far-right and far-left forces within the Korean church made it very difficult to agree on the issue. In order to overcome these difficulties, the Korean Christian Council adopted the

Declaration of Reunification, which designated officially that the church in South Korea should be called the South Korean Church for National Reunification and Peace. It was a significant event that marked a milestone in the Korean Church's reunification movement with a declaration unanimously passed by the 37th General Assembly of the Korean Council of Churches on February 29, 1988. Conservative evangelical and progressive churches have begun to cooperate on the issue of reunification. They have participated in humanitarian relief work for North Korea. Conservative churches in South Korea developed plans to rebuild the church in North Korea and began to participate in government meetings related to reunification. Since 1988, the focus of the reunification movement has been on social justice in the South Korean church, centering on relief and humanitarian aid.<sup>76</sup>

In this chapter, I have compared the political contexts, musical cultures, and musical characteristics of South Korea and North Korea, and provided a brief history of Korean churches since their division.

I will consider the role that church music can play in overcoming the cultural, ecclesial, and musical divisions between South and North Korea with the understanding that anticipating for an era of reunification will be crucial in setting the direction of a unified Korean church

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<sup>76</sup> Cho Eun Sik, *Christian Mission and Reunification of Korea* (Seoul: Soongsil University Press, 2014), 119–120.



music. The next chapter will examine the history of hymns in North and South Korean churches and suggest a direction for composing reunification hymns, overcoming the hymn heterogeneity of two Koreas, and providing a rationale for the “Koreanization” of congregational song. Then I will provide a musical and theological analysis of Lee Geon Yong’s hymn, “Come Now, O Prince of Peace,” as a model of the Koreanized reunification hymn.

## **CHAPTER 4: REUNIFICATION HYMNALS**

### **A. The History of Hymnals in North and South Korean Churches**

Although music has the potential to unite people with divergent political, social, and linguistic differences that separate them, musical practices in South and North Korea are distinct musical languages with differing musical functions. These differences include the ways music is created and distributed, the diversity of musical styles, and themes of the lyrics. Before these differences become more entrenched in their current societal patterns, South Korean churches should initiate partnerships to create and cultivate music that can be understood and sung with North Korean churches. This music should also engage the broader society during active exchanges between the South and the North. Fortunately, it is very encouraging that 283 of the 400 hymns sung by the North Korean Church appear in the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Sae Chansogga*, the hymnal used by the South Korean Reformed Church.<sup>1</sup> This chapter will examine the history of the hymns in South and North Korean churches and propose a direction for the composition and use of hymns in a unified Korea.

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<sup>1</sup> Chosun Christian Federation, *Chansongga* (Pyongyang: Chosun Christian Federation, 2006).

## 1. Protestant Hymnals Before the Political Division

*Chanmika* [찬미가] (1892), the first Protestant hymnal of Korea, was published under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Mission of America. This hymnal was compiled by the American Methodist Episcopal Church missionaries Rev. George H. Jones [조원시] (1867–1919) and Miss Louise G. Rothweiler (1853–1921) and used in both Methodist and Presbyterian churches. It consisted of twenty-seven hymns then in use and published without music.<sup>2</sup> The second edition of *Chanmika* (1895), containing eighty-one hymns, was published under the auspices of the Korean Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Though *Chanmika* is a words only edition, each hymn lists the first lines in English, the tune name, meter, and even the hymn number in a related hymnal.<sup>3</sup> *Chanmika* is the title of a Methodist hymnal, which is meaningful because it is the first hymnal of the Korean Protestant Church and the first hymnal in the Korean language.

*Chanyangga* [찬양가] (1894), containing 117 hymns, the second hymnal used by Korea congregations and the first hymnal to include musical notation, was compiled and

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<sup>2</sup> G.H. Jones and L. C. Rothweiler, ed. *Chanmika: A Selection of Hymns for the Korean Church*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Kyungsung: The Korea Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1895), Preface.

<sup>3</sup> G.H. Jones and L. C. Rothweiler, ed. *Chanmika: A Selection of Hymns for the Korean Church*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Preface.

published by the Rev. Horace G. Underwood [원두우] (1859–1916). *Chanyangga* is crucial because it introduced printed Western music to Korea. Eighty-eight tunes were notated. These included sixty American tunes, nineteen English tunes, one French tune, and eight others.<sup>4</sup> This hymnal had been intended as a joint effort of the Presbyterian and Methodist churches. H.G. Underwood from the Presbyterian Mission and G.H. Jones from the Methodist Mission were appointed to prepare it. However, the enthusiastic Underwood could not wait for Jones (who had returned to America soon after his appointment) and proceeded by himself without the two Missions' prior consent.<sup>5</sup> The result was that both the Methodist churches, as well as the Presbyterian Church in the North around Pyongyang, refused to use it in their worship services. The acceptance or rejection of this hymnal caused a division between the Methodist and Presbyterian churches. There was also a majority opinion opposed to Underwood's refusal to use the Korean word for God: "Hananim" [하나님]. For the most part, Underwood had translated all the hymns using either "Father" or "Jehovah" to express God, rather than the indigenous term for deity, which he considered to smack of syncretism. The Methodist Church and some Presbyterian churches disagreed with Underwood's translation.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> H. G. Underwood, ed. *Chanyangga: Hymns of Praise* (Yokohama: The Yokohama Seishi Bunsha, 1894), Preface.

<sup>5</sup> Lillias H. Underwood, *Underwood of Korea* (New York, NY: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1918), 121–123.

<sup>6</sup> Underwood, *Underwood of Korea*, 122–123.

The Presbyterian Mission, North, which had not accepted Underwood's *Chanyangga*, published *Chansungsi* [찬성시] in 1895, a words-only edition of fifty-four hymns. The translations were principally those of Underwood, Jones, Miss Rothweiler, and Mrs. Annie L. A. Baird (안애리) (1864–1916). In the second edition of 1898, Alexander A. Pieters [피터스] (1871–1958), a Presbyterian missionary, premiered thirteen metrical psalms, set to American psalm tunes.<sup>7</sup> Psalm 95 was added to the *Chansungsi* (1905), and all these psalms were written in Korean by Pieters. The insertion of metrical psalms into the *Chansungsi* confirmed its position as the first official hymnal of the Presbyterian Church of Korea. In the revised edition (1898), the format indicated the source (hymnal and page number) of each hymn below the name of each hymn.<sup>8</sup>

These three hymnals—*Chanyangga* (1894), *Chanmika* (1895), and *Chansungsi* (1905)—all actively circulated among the early Protestant churches of Korea, were derived principally from American books by American missionaries and included a considerable number of English hymns. Thus, American and English hymns were translated and incorporated into Korean hymn books for use by Korean congregations.

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<sup>7</sup> L. George Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea* (Pyongyang: Union Christian College Press, 1920), 238–239.

<sup>8</sup> Committee of the Presbyterian Mission North, *Chansungsi* (Committee of the Presbyterian Mission North, 1898), Preface.

*Bogeum Chanmi* [복음찬미] (1899), the first hymnal of the Baptist Church of Korea, consisted of fourteen hymns and was compiled by the Rev. Malcolm C. Fenwick (1863–1936), an independent missionary from Canada who is viewed popularly in Korea as the founder of Baptist churches.<sup>9</sup> When Fenwick began to organize his ministry in a village, he realized that after the task of education came the process of translating hymns. Fenwick's concern over the translation and use of hymns in Korean congregations led to a second edition of *Bogeum Chanmi* in 1904, a words-only collection of twenty hymns.<sup>10</sup> The sixth edition of *Bogeum Chanmi* (1925) expanded to include 243 hymns, again, words only.<sup>11</sup> After these compilations, the edition of 1926 was enlarged to 252 hymns, mostly of an evangelical nature.<sup>12</sup>

The first hymnal of the Anglican Church of Korea was *Sunghoi Songga* [성회송가], *Sacred Songs of the Anglican Church* (1903). This collection consisted of 168 hymns, including hymns for Morning and Evening Prayers, and other hymns according to the liturgical year. This hymnal was compiled mostly of translated English hymns of the Anglican Church of England.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Malcolm Fenwick, *The Church of Christ in Corea* (New York, NY: Hodder & Stoughton, 1911), 20–26.

<sup>10</sup> Malcolm Fenwick, ed. *Bogeum Chanmi: Gospel Songs*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Wonsan: The Church of Christ in Korea, 1904).

<sup>11</sup> Malcolm Fenwick, ed. *Bogeum Chanmi: Gospel Songs*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Wonsan: The Church of Christ in East-Asia, 1925). The preface of the sixth edition states that the 1904 edition is the second edition, and the 1921 edition is the fifth edition. However, the original versions of the third and fourth editions are not available.

<sup>12</sup> Malcolm Fenwick, ed. *Bogeum Chanmi: Gospel Songs*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (Wonsan: The Church of Christ in East-Asia, 1926).

<sup>13</sup> The Anglican Church of Korea, *Sunghoi Songga: Sacred Songs of the Anglican Church* (Kyungsung: Anglican Church of Korea, 1903).

*Selections of Hymn-poems*, compiled by Bishop Alfred Cecil Cooper [구세실] (1882–1964), was published in 1937.<sup>14</sup> *Sungga* [성가] (2015) is the current hymnal of the Anglican Church. It consists of 662 hymns and is a revision and enlargement of the *Sungga* (from 1961, *Sunghoi Songg* was renamed *Sunnnga*) of the Anglican Church of 1961; the 1990 edition consists of 589 hymns. It is still used by the Korean Diocese today.<sup>15</sup>

The Holiness Church, one of three major Protestant denominations (alongside the Presbyterian and Methodist churches), originally began as the Oriental Missionary Society founded in 1907. Since the Holiness movement held revivals, evangelical hymns or gospel songs were sung in these meetings, expressing a need for spiritual warfare and employing martial language to sing victory over sin. This theology was the result of the education received by Korean pastors from Charles Elmer Cowman (1868–1924), and Ernest Albert Kilbourne (1865–1928), leaders of the Oriental Missionary Society of Japan and graduates of Moody Bible Institute of the United States.<sup>16</sup> The first hymnal of the Holiness Church was *Bogeumga* [복음가] (1907). This hymnal relied on Korean translations from the hymnal of the Holiness

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<sup>14</sup> Alfred Cecil Cooper, ed., *Sunghoi Songga: Sacred Songs of the Anglican Church* (Kyung Sung: Anglican Church of Korea, 1937).

<sup>15</sup> The Anglican Church of Korea, *Sungga* (Seoul: The Anglican Church of Korea Press, 2015), 4–17.

<sup>16</sup> Korea Evangelical Holiness Church Historical Research Center, *100 Years History of the Korea Evangelical Holiness Church* (Seoul: Korea Evangelical Holiness Church Press, 2008), 117.

Church of Japan by the Rev. Lee Jang Ha (1886–?). This hymnal contained one hundred hymns, including American gospel hymns dating mostly from the end of the nineteenth century with tunes such as BATTLE HYMN, GEORGIA MARCH, and WAITING FOR THE FIRE. In 1919, the Holiness Church published *Shinjung Bogeumga* [신증복음가] adding sixty-one hymns to the original *Bogeumga* (1907); an enlarged edition containing 211 hymns was published in 1924.<sup>17</sup> *Buheng Sungga*, [부흥성가] with thirty-one hymns, was published in 1930,<sup>18</sup> with another edition in 1937.<sup>19</sup>

The Presbyterian Churches in Seoul and the South used *Chanyangga* (1894), the Northern Presbyterians, *Chansungsi* (1895), and the Methodists, *Chanmika* (1895) respectively, until the publication of *Chansongga* [찬송가] (1908), the first united hymnal of the Presbyterian and Methodist churches. This book consisted of 262 hymns without music, 225 from the three major hymnals. Mrs. W.M. Baird [배위량 부인] (1864–1931) and F.S. Miller [민노아] (1866–1937) of the Presbyterian Church, and D.A. Bunker [방거] (1853–1932) of the Methodist

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<sup>17</sup> The Oriental Missionary Society, *Shinjung Bogeumga: New Gospel Songs*, (The Oriental Missionary Society Press, 1924).

<sup>18</sup> C. E. Cowman and E. A. Kilbourne, ed. *Buheng Sungga: Holy Revival Hymns*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (The Oriental Missionary Society Press, 1930), Preface.

<sup>19</sup> C. E. Cowman and E. A. Kilbourne, ed. *Buheng Sungga: Holy Revival Hymns* 10<sup>th</sup> ed. (The Oriental Missionary Society Press), Preface.



Church compiled this collection.<sup>20</sup> The second edition, with music, was published by Alexander A. Pieters in 1909.<sup>21</sup> The Presbyterian and Methodist churches were able to issue this united hymnal probably due both to the long-standing efforts of co-editing hymnals as well as the impending colonial occupation of Korea by Japan (1910–1945), resulting in a movement of unity transcending denominational ideology.<sup>22</sup>

In the meantime, the two denominations, recognizing the necessity for the revision of *Chansongga*, published a newly revised hymnal, *Shinjung Chansongga* [신정찬송가] in 1931. The Federal Council of the Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea, a joint hymnal committee, compiled this hymnal under the editorship of Henry D. Appenzeller [아편설라] (1858–1902), an American missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Mission.<sup>23</sup> However, after its publication, criticism surfaced because the Presbyterian and Methodist churches had not discussed its publication. Furthermore, members of the committee consisted of only musicians. Thus, the Presbyterian Church rejected the hymnal.<sup>24</sup> The Methodist Church recognized *Shinjung Chansongga* as a union hymnal but could not agree that another hymnal should be prepared. The

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<sup>20</sup> The General Council of Protestant Evangelical Mission in Korea, ed. *Chansongga* (The Korean Religious Book and Tract Society, 1908).

<sup>21</sup> F. S. Miller, “Early Korean Hymnology,” *The Korea Mission Field* 26, no. 9 (September 1930): 190.

<sup>22</sup> H. D. Appenzeller, “Report on the Union Hymnal,” *The Korea Mission Field* 25, no.12 (December 1929): 256.

<sup>23</sup> Henry D. Appenzeller, ed. *Shinjung Chansongga: The Hymnal of the Federal Council of the Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea* (Kyung Sung: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1931).

<sup>24</sup> Moon Ok Bae, *History of 100 years of Hymns in Korea* (Seoul: Yesol Publishing Company, 2002), 270.

Presbyterian Church continued to use *Chansongga* (1908) until they published *Shinpyun Chansongga* [신편찬송가], in 1935.<sup>25</sup> Thus, the efforts of Presbyterian and Methodist churches to unite hymnals failed once again.<sup>26</sup>

The invasion of Korea by Japan in 1910 had profound effects on the Korean church and the compilation of hymnals. Korea, now a subordinate country of the Japanese Empire, began consolidating their colonial rule in all areas of Korean life and culture. The Japanese deprived Koreans of freedom of assembly, association, the press, and speech. The colonial authorities substituted a Japanese school system as a tool for assimilating Korea to Japan, placing primary emphasis on teaching the Japanese language and Japanese history and excluding from the educational curriculum such subjects as the Korean language, Korean history, and Korean art. They also restricted Koreans from cultural activities.<sup>27</sup> The Japanese imperialists also instituted a policy to obliterate Korean culture, ostracizing Christianity in South Korea, and dismantling Korean churches and organizations deemed unfit for Japan's political ideology. Under such circumstances, the Overseas Missionary Department of the North American

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<sup>25</sup> The Ministry of Religion and Education of the Presbyterian Church of Chosun, ed. *Shinpyun Chansongga* (Kyungseong: The Ministry of Religion and Education of the Presbyterian Church of Chosun, 1935).

<sup>26</sup> Min Gyung Bae, *The History of the Korean Hymns* (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 2009), 122–127.

<sup>27</sup> Kim Young Wook, *Political Theory of Korea: Process of System Change from the Chosun Dynasty to the Republic of Korea* (Seoul: Oreum Publishing Company, 2004), 165–173.

Presbyterian Church decided to suspend Korea's educational activities in July 1936. Japan imposed colonial control and pressure by enforcing new laws to dictate the areas of religion and music.<sup>28</sup>

In 1939, Japan passed the Religious Organizations Act at the 74<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Japanese Empire and exercised control of Korean religions in earnest. To establish a church in Korea, pastors had to be approved by the Japanese Colonial Government of Korea. Japan even tried to corrupt Christianity. The Japanese government ordered Korean pastors and believers to visit the Shinto Shrine as a requirement for "establishing Japanese Christianity."<sup>29</sup> In May 1943, the Japanese government renamed the Presbyterian Church of Korea as the Chosun Presbyterian Church of Christianity in Japan. In August of the same year, the government renamed the Methodist Church of Korea as the Chosun Methodist Church of Christianity in Japan. As the representative denominations of Korean Christianity gradually accommodated to the expectations of the newer Japanese Christianity, Japanese control over hymns began to materialize. Both *Shinpyun Chansongga* (1935) used by Presbyterians and *Shinjung Chansongga*

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<sup>28</sup> Min, *The History of Korean Hymns*, 154.

<sup>29</sup> Kim Heung Soo and Seo Jung Min, *Exploring Korean Christian History* (Seoul: The Korean Literature Society of Korea, 2011), 77–85.

(1931) used by Methodists were banned, and a new policy required that the lyrics of the hymns be edited and republished.<sup>30</sup>

Japan established a guiding policy for Korean Christianity in 1940 which included censoring of hymns.<sup>31</sup> Each denomination reviewed the hymns and modified or deleted lyrics that violated this policy.<sup>32</sup> For example, “King of all kings” or “King of the king,” expressing God or Jesus, was changed to the Lord or God. This change is because it was against the divine nature of the Japanese emperor.<sup>33</sup> Also, among the lyrics, “soldiers of Cross” were changed to “the Lord’s worker,” and the lyrics “go fight” were changed to “run out” because of the word “soldier” or “fight” implied resistance to Japan. Furthermore, the hymn “God is Our Refuge Strong” (Tune: AMERICA) was deleted because it was the national anthem England, an enemy of Japan.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Moon, *History of 100 years of Hymns in Korea*, 361–370.

<sup>31</sup> Kim and Seo, *Exploring Korean Christian History*, 86–87.

<sup>32</sup> Kim Seung Tae, *Collection of Religious Policy History in Japanese Colonial Era* (Seoul: The Institute of the history of Christianity in Korea, 2003), 357.

<sup>33</sup> Editorial, “To the Revision of hymns,” *Chosun Methodist Bulletin* (April 1942).

<sup>34</sup> Editorial, “Urgent Notice: Modification Table of Korean Presbyterian hymnal, Shinpyun Chansongga,” *Korean Presbyterian Bulletin* (January 1942).

## 2. A History of the North Korean Hymnals<sup>35</sup>

In South Korea, following liberation from Japan in 1945, church denominations that had been forcibly integrated into or extinguished by the Japanese regime were restored to their original state. Congregations could sing hymns without any restrictions, and new hymnals were published. However, the atmosphere in North Korea was different from the South. Though the defeat of Japan liberated Christianity, the Socialist regime soon followed in North Korea, which reinstituted the persecution of Christians. After liberation, Christians who remained in North Korea had expected that Christians would suffer under the socialist regime. They actively struggled unsuccessfully against the regime to maintain religious freedom and human rights.<sup>36</sup> During the Korean War, many North Korean Christians and church leaders came to the South in large numbers. As the oppression of Christianity intensified, the church has disappeared in the North. Worship was forbidden, and the practices of reading the Bible and singing hymns were forbidden.<sup>37</sup>

Hymnals disappeared in the wake of the ban on all religious activities in North Korea but were revived as the North's religious policies changed. *Chansongga* [찬송가] was published

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<sup>35</sup> For a complete list of hymnals, see the Appendix.

<sup>36</sup> Kim Young Jae, *The History of Korean Church* (Seoul: Irae Books, 2004), 237.

<sup>37</sup> Kim Chang Il, *The Witness to North Korean Underground Church of Rev. Kim Chang Il* (Seoul: Keunsaem Publishing Company, 2005), 163–171.

in October 1983 by North Korea with the New Testament (the Old Testament the following year), a collection with 400 hymn texts but no musical notation. On April 10, 1990, North Korea issued the Bible and the *Chansongga* through the Central Committee of the Christian Federation of North Korea. The North printed 20,000 copies each of the Bible and hymnal and supplied them to the Bongsu Church and Chilgol Church in Pyongyang for worship. This hymnal, published in 1990, added musical notation to the hymnal published in 1983.<sup>38</sup> Following the 1990 revision, North Korea reedited *Chansongga* in 2006. This collection is the same as the 1990 version. The order and number of hymns are the same, but titles were changed to the first line of the texts.<sup>39</sup> The North Korean reedited hymnal in 2010, but it is not yet available in South Korea.<sup>40</sup>

The preface to the 1990 version of the North Korean hymnal records that it was edited based on the *Shinpyun Chansongga* (1935). There is confirmation that many hymns duplicate the South's Korean *Tongil Chansongga* (1983) [통일 찬송가], and some from the *Shinpyun Chansongga*. However, the compilers did not include indexes for authors and composers, titles

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<sup>38</sup> Yang Byung Hee, *Yesterday and Today of the North Korean Church* (Seoul: Genesis 21 Co., 2006), 192.

<sup>39</sup> The Central Committee of the Christian Federation of North Korea, *Chansongga* (Pyongyang: Pyongyang General Printing Factory, 2006), index.

<sup>40</sup> Korean Christian Federation, wikipedia, last modified December 15, 2020, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean\\_Christian\\_Federation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean_Christian_Federation) (accessed January 21, 2021).

of the hymns, and the meters, requiring reediting.<sup>41</sup> Hymnal development in North Korea remains stagnant. Also, unlike in South Korea, Christians in North Korea can only use hymnals and Bibles within designated churches and cannot own their own. As a result, hymns are not popular or well known in North Korea as in the South.

### 3. A History of the South Korean Hymnals<sup>42</sup>

When Korea finally gained its independence from Japan in 1945, Presbyterian congregations sang the hymns from *Shinpyun Chansongga* (1935). Methodists were singing the hymns from the *Shinjung Chansongga* (1931). The Holiness Church was singing hymns from the *Bogeumga* (1907). Beginning in 1919, this hymnal was renamed *Shinjung Bogeumga* (1919, 1924), and in 1930, renamed again as *Buheng Sungga* (1930, 1937). The three major Protestant denominations of Korea agreed to issue a new hymnal in commemoration of Korean Independence with the Baptist Church joining the committee later. As a result, the second united hymnal, *Hapdong Chansongga* [합동찬송가], was published in 1949. This hymnal was popular

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<sup>41</sup> The Central Committee of the Christian Federation of North Korea, *Chansongga* (Pyongyang: Pyongyang General Printing Factory, 1990).

<sup>42</sup> For a complete list of hymnals, see the Appendix.

until the publications of *Sae Chansongga* [새찬송가] in 1962 and *Gaepyun Chansongga* [개편찬송가] in 1967.

In 1948, the Presbyterian Church of Korea, the Korean Methodist Church, and Korea Evangelical Holiness Church decided to compile a hymnal organized by the Korean Christian Federation. On August 21, 1949, they published *Hapdong Chansongga*, which included 586 hymns and 38 biblical texts. This effort was the first united hymnal published after liberation from Japan. The committee representing the three major Protestant denominations agreed that *Hapdong Chansongga* would excerpt all the hymns from the three major hymnals: *Shinjung Chansongga*, *Shinpyun Chansongga*, and *Bogeumga*.<sup>43</sup> The texts of the common hymns in the three hymnals would be slightly revised. *Hapdong Chansongga* appeared in twenty editions before the publication of *Gaepyun Chansongga*. In 1950, *Hapdong Chansongga* included musical notation and, in 1954, a revised version was published.<sup>44</sup> The *Hapdong Chansongga* was bulky, and it proved difficult to theologically integrate the hymnals of the three denominations: *Shinjung Chansongga* (1931) of the Methodists, *Shinpyun Chansongga* (1935) of

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<sup>43</sup> The Joint Committee of Hymns, ed. *Hapdong Chansongga* (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1949), Preface.

<sup>44</sup> The Joint Committee of Hymns, ed. *Hapdong Chansongga* (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1950).



the Presbyterian Church, and *Buheng Sungga* (1930) of the Holiness Church. Though it was a book that needed editing, it was meaningful in that it brought the Korean Church back into the era of a united hymnal.<sup>45</sup>

Since liberation, opposition to the Shinto shrine led to a division between the Korean Church's denominations, which also affected the use of hymns in worship.<sup>46</sup> A shrine (jinja) is a sacred place where kami live, which manifests the kami's power and nature. It was mandatory for Koreans to worship to Shinto shrines during the Japanese colonial era. For Korean Christians, shrine worship meant denying their Christian faith in one God. In April 1951, former members of the Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea who were absent from the shrine visit declared a break in relations with the existing General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of South Korea. The Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea rejected the use of the newly published *Hapdong Chansongga* (1949), continuing to use the previous *Shinpyun Chansongga* (1935) until forming a hymnal committee in 1957 to publish their own hymnal.

Meanwhile, in 1959, The Denomination of Korean Presbyterian Churches were also divided into The General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Korea [예장합동] and The

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<sup>45</sup> Min, *The History of Korean Hymns*, 177.

<sup>46</sup> Kim, *The History of Korean Church*, 210–211.

Presbyterian Church of Korea [예장통합] due to the conflict over joining the World Council of Churches. The General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Korea rejected the ecumenical movement and *Hapdong Chansongga*. The Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea and The General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Korea were united, agreeing to create a hymnal to commemorate the unity of the two denominations. They quickly began to compile hymns, publishing *Sae Chansongga* in 1962. *Sae Chansongga*, based on *Shinpyun Chansongga* (1935), tried to translate hymns from foreign countries while remaining faithful to the original writers' intent.<sup>47</sup> They were proud that this *Sae Chansongga* would represent the faith of the conservatives. The conservatives embraced *Sae Chansongga* as their official hymnal until after the publication of *Tongil Chansongga* (1983).<sup>48</sup>

The denominations using *Hapdong Chansongga* (1949) felt the need to revise this hymnal. Thus, the Methodist Church of Korea, the Holiness Church of Korea, and the Presbyterian Church of Korea each dispatched five members to form a hymnal revision committee in 1957. Ten years of reorganization efforts resulted in *Gaepyun Chansongga*

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<sup>47</sup> Sae Chansongga Compilation Committee, ed. *Sae Chansongga* (Seoul: Life Books, 1961), Preface.

<sup>48</sup> Min, *The History of Korean Hymns*, 179.

(1967).<sup>49</sup> Later, the Holiness Church added twenty gospel hymns as an appendix.<sup>50</sup> A distinctive feature of this hymnal is that it included many Korean lyricists' songs, more than in any previous hymnal. *Gaepyun Chansongga* was used by all but the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea until the publication of the unified hymnal *Tongil Chansongga* [통일찬송가] in 1983.<sup>51</sup>

On February 3, 1977, buoyed by the public opinion of many denominations who wanted a unified hymnal, the Korean Hymnal Committee and the Korean Hymnal Joint Promotion Committee launched the Hymn Unification Committee. Based on this, the Hymnal Society of Korea was established in 1981. On November 20, 1983, *Tongil Chansongga* finally appeared as a unified hymnal for the Korean church. This hymnal consists of a total of 558 hymns and seventy-six texts from the Bible. More than eighty percent of the 558 hymns are translations from the U.S. and Great Britain, and seventeen songs by Korean composers.<sup>52</sup> This hymnal is very meaningful because it brings together the hymns of the Korean Protestant churches (except the Anglican Church) into one collection. No new Korean hymns were found in

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<sup>49</sup> The Korean Hymnal Committee, ed. *Gaepyun Chansongga* (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1967), Preface.

<sup>50</sup> Cho Sook Ja, *Hymnology* (Seoul: Presbyterian University and Theological Seminary Press, 2002), 231.

<sup>51</sup> Min, *The History of Korean Hymns*, 183.

<sup>52</sup> The Hymnal Society of Korea, ed. *Tongil Chansongga* (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1983).

the *Hapdong Chansongga* nor the *Sae Chansongga*, while the *Gaepyun Chansongga* contained twenty-seven Korean hymns. All twenty-seven Korean hymn tunes were newly composed, and twenty Korean hymn texts newly written. Four Korean texts were borrowed from *Shinjung Chansongga* (1931).

It is regretful, however, that the current *Tongil Chansongga*, published in 1983 in commemoration of the Korean mission's 100th anniversary, has only two new hymns by Koreans. Interestingly, three different hymn numbers for a single hymn were published simultaneously in one order of worship because of the use of three hymnals, *Hapdong Chansongga* (1949), *Sae Chansongga* (1962), and *Gaepyun Chansongga* (1967). *Tongil Chansongga* replaced them and is in use by all the Protestant churches of Korea except the Anglican Church of Korea.

*21<sup>st</sup> Century Sae Chansongghem* [21 세기 새찬송가] (2006) is a hymnal to make up for the deficiencies of *Tongil Chansongga* (1983). Following the formation of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century New Hymnal Development Committee in 1996, research continued for ten years, resulting in selecting 645 songs from 30,000 hymns. The *21<sup>st</sup> Century Sae Chansongga* incorporated 482 songs from *Tongil Chansongga* and included fifty-three new foreign hymns and 111 new Korean hymns. The 128 Korean hymns included 111 new Korean hymn tunes and 107 Korean new

hymn texts, and four hymn texts were from foreign lyrics. In recent years, increasing numbers of Korean compositions have entered worship services. Even ten years ago, congregations seemed to avoid using these unfamiliar hymns from their native musical systems, but today, they are growing in popularity throughout the Korean churches. The Korean Church has much potential for the inculturation in Korean hymnody. Their increased use results from an effort to incorporate songs that express Korean sentiments, not to relying only on translated foreign hymns.

## **B. Overcoming Linguistic Heterogeneity in North and South Korea**

A common language facilitates the homogeneity of the people. The integration of ideas and sentiments among peoples who speak the same language helps them understand each other and unite.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, the unification of languages is the primary priority. Since most North Korean hymn tunes came from South Korea's *Tongil Chansongga* (1983), the tunes of South and North Korean hymns are similar. However, the texts between the two Koreas differ considerably. Therefore, it is necessary to unify the languages of South and North Korea to overcome the linguistic heterogeneity of hymns between the South and the North.

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<sup>53</sup> Ha Jong Phil, *Religious Integration Plan for South and North Korea* (Seoul: Sunin Publishing Company, 2005), 231.

North Korean propaganda surrounding Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Il, and Kim Jong Un deified every possible aspect of the leaders' lives. People praised their many successes, whether actual or fabricated. As a result, North Korea uses deified language to describe Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Il, and Kim Jong Un. This deified language requires coordination between South and North Korea in order to integrate the hymn lyrics. Therefore, linguists in both North and South Korea should first unify Korean grammar and spelling. Biblical scholars in the South and North should collaborate to achieve a joint inter-Korean translation of the Bible. To overcome the heterogeneity of the hymns currently used by North and South Korea will require the help of inter-Korean linguists in coordination with those researching the hymns used by the two Koreas. A longer-term project would be to compile an integrated dictionary of shared Christian terms, modeled after the *Gyoremal Big Dictionary* [겨레말 큰사전], which contains vocabulary used in both South and North Korea.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> The Joint Board of South and North Korea for the Compilation of Gyeoremal-keunsajeon, *Gyoremal Big Dictionary*, <https://www.gyeoremal.or.kr> (accessed January 21, 2021).

### C. Overcoming Musical Heterogeneity in North and South Korea

To resolve the differences in congregational song between South and North Korea, the criteria for newly created hymns in the two musical cultures should focus on the common ground between them rather than the musical differences due to the political polarities on the Korean Peninsula. This search for common ground would suggest the use of Korean traditional music as an alternative.

In the early days of the Korean mission, the American missionary H.B. Hulbert (1863–1949) notated the songs commonly heard in Korea and the most popular songs sung by the Korean people. His efforts became the source of the first notation of the famous Korean *minyo* “Arirang” [아리랑]. Hulbert said Koreans sing an impromptu “Arirang.”<sup>55</sup> Arirang is a song loved by all Koreans, representing a collective Korean identity and embodying Korean people’s sorrow. It is essential to use a tune that can harmonize the sentiments of North and South Korea in order to overcome cultural and musical heterogeneity. The use of “Ariang” facilitates this because it is a *minyo* that is easily learned and sung. The most recently revamped hymnal, *21<sup>st</sup> Century Sae Chansongga* (2006), is unprecedented in the history of Korean hymnals because of increasing numbers of Korean compositions. Jones and Ross said in a preface to the 1928 edition

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<sup>55</sup> Park Min Il, *ARIRANG* (Chuncheon: Gangwon University Press, 1991), 315.

of *Chanmika* that this would be a pioneer hymnal in the development of original Korean hymns because it contains as many Korean hymns as translations of Western texts. This change in attitude would support Korean self-directed hymn-writing activities and speak to the difficulties facing Koreans in singing foreign translations.<sup>56</sup>

In South Korea, there is a growing interest in Korean traditional music in accordance with the nation's cultural policies. Church music is no exception. This interest in traditional music includes the long-standing attempt to include Korean hymn texts set to the tunes sung by the Korean church. While many hymns have yet to be commonly accepted, Korean congregations do not perceive Korean traditional music hymns as negatively as they once did. Amid this trend, it is encouraging that many hymns are employing Korean traditional music in the newly revised hymnals. The increased use of Korean music will play a significant role in achieving the goal of reunification.

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<sup>56</sup> G.H. Jones and L.C. Rothweiler, ed. *Chanmika: A Selection of Hymns for the Korean Church*, Preface.



#### **D. Creating Hymns Through a Process of “Koreanization”**

The argument for presenting Korean traditional music as an alternative for restoring the national identity of South and North Korea is that using a musical style that connects with a Korean cultural sensibility may provide richer materials for praising God. True harmony between the North and the South seeks a common bond in Korean human nature and ethnicity that expresses God’s revelation to the Korean people through worship. Humanity glorifies God through their ethnic and artistic diversity, including the lyrics and musical characteristics of Korean traditional music.

Biblical precedents exist for the use of music that expresses the ethnic identity of a group. In the Old Testament, the people of Israel captured their faith in the melody of traditional music most familiar to the national community. Some psalms indicate the use of specific instruments.<sup>57</sup> Israel confessed the hardships and pains they endured in poetry. When the temple was rebuilt after returning from Babylonian exile and Israel began to offer sacrifices again, collecting songs of the people’s souls and sorrows for many years. Jewish folksongs are based on specific

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<sup>57</sup> For example, Psalms 22, 45, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 69, 78, 88 (NIV). According to Abraham Zevi Idelsohn, the Psalter contains more than songs of praise. It also incorporates prayers of supplication and petition. This fact justifies the conclusion that prayers were sung in the Temple service in Jerusalem. He claims asserts that, at first, supplications in public were voiced only in times of need and distress. But gradually, these prayers developed into a set ritual, performed at certain times with stipulated texts in a prescribed order. These readings and songs were composed based on verses from the prophets (Haftarah), Psalms., and rabbinical writings. Abraham. Z. Idelsohn, *Jewish Music: In Its Historical Development* (New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, 1929), 72.

biblical texts or biblical themes, and for prayers, for religious poetry, for the elevation of the soul to its Creator. These songs may express joy in the moment in which the spirit becomes aware of the majesty and love of God as well as melodies that express the innumerable struggles and pains the Jewish people have suffered. Jewish folksong developed as expressions of a religious ethical character, interwoven with motives expressing national troubles and hopes.<sup>58</sup>

*Minyos* sung by a religious community for several generations can become the basis for the congregation's hymns. Using a common musical style allows people to sing and share the universal experience. The Korean people's traditional musical style, which contains the Korean people's sentiments, will enhance the Korean people's identity in church music, especially congregational hymns, and enrich the music in worship.

## **1. The Meaning of “Koreanization” in Hymns**

There have been continuous efforts to Koreanize church music in Korea since Christianity and church music came to the Korean Peninsula by Western missionaries 130 years ago. Understanding the Koreanization or indigenization of church music in the Korean context

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<sup>58</sup> Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, 358–360.

requires awareness of and reflection on the cultural, musical, and theological influences of mainstream Western music on Korean church music. According to Lee Geon Young, the Koreanization of church music reflects the aspiration for a reunified ethnicity, a reunified nationality, and a reunified culture of the two Koreas. Unifying traditional Korean music and Western music, the music of South and North Korea and various socially and economically divided classes demonstrate the essential role music can play to overcome the ethnic, cultural, and musical divisions and conflicts.<sup>59</sup> He also believes that the musical division between South and North Korea requires resolution. This is because the cultural schism produced by different political systems harms the people's cultural homogeneity and collective identity.<sup>60</sup>

The indigenization of church music is a process that shifts the emphasis from Western-dominated styles to music that employs Korean compositional techniques. This process happens in the art of composing—an act of creation. South Korean church music composers have made recent attempts to create Korean church music drawn upon historical, cultural practices.

Although Western music still dominates Korea's musical culture, church musicians should make more efforts to introduce Korean traditional music into the liturgy of the Korean church. Also,

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<sup>59</sup> Lee Geon Yong and Noh Dong Eun, *Korean National Music Theory* (Seoul: Hangilsa, 1991), 58–59.

<sup>60</sup> Lee and Noh, *Korean National Music Theory*, 39–41.

theoretical research on the Koreanization of church music should be an essential issue. Just as South and North Korea sang “Arirang” as a national anthem at the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics (2018), music may serve as the most natural way to integrate the cultural and affective bonds shared between people of North and South Korean. Music may play a similar role in the church. A partnership between musicians and leaders from South and North Korean churches could result in finding, creating, and disseminating hymns for worship with words and music accessible for anyone to sing and empathize regardless of age, status, education, income, locality, or gender. Worship is a gathering of the body of Christ. All of the body should be able to sing their faith.

Koreanized hymns are not about merely composing with notes, rhythms, and instruments in a Korean style, but creating accessible congregational songs that capture the spirituality and affective dimensions of Christians in the Korean cultural context. This creation process requires an understanding of Korean traditional music’s national elements as the basis of musical composition, distilling the practical techniques suitable for creating indigenous Koreanized church music while preserving elements of Western styles. Koreanization is a re-creation of Korean traditional music combined with an understanding of current Korean culture, ethnicity, and hybridity of Western influences.

## **2. The Present State of Hymns by Korean Composers**

In worship, congregations of South Korean church rarely sing hymns of Korean composition. One reason for this is the poor publishing and distribution system in the field of church music. If Korean composers want to publish originally composed songs, they must bear all the financial burdens of publication. When publishers make compositions available composed by Koreans, they select only a few popular songs and combine them with other translated songs. These difficulties may be why many disparage the quality of church music, and creative Korean composers are no longer willing to compose church music. The economic concerns of publishing companies do not recognize the publication of indigenous church music as profitable. Thus, introducing Korean hymns faces many limitations that prevent them from being widely distributed.

The reason Christianity in Korea has become Western-oriented culturally is also that the church resides within the broader Korean culture which has adopted many Western values and practices. Koreans could not compose indigenous hymns because they regarded Western missionaries and their opinions as superior. No one considered Korea's unique music to be of beauty and quality. Christian educational institutions established in Korea by Western missionaries taught only Western music while ignoring Korean traditional music. Moreover,

Japanese colonial rule of Korea, a period of hardship for the Korean people, further exacerbated this situation because of Japan's policy of suppressing Korean traditional music. Because of all these factors, Korean music lost its place in the church.<sup>61</sup>

Those who compiled Korean hymnals have largely ignored Korean traditional music. Some suggested using Korean traditional melodies during the compilation of *Shinjung Chansongga*. However, the preface revealed that this did not occur due to opposition from Korean committee members concerned about “negative cultural association[s],” referring to ancestral rites, shamanism.<sup>62</sup> Western missionaries did not oppose Korean traditional music; instead, it was the Koreans themselves. This perception continues today. Even in more recently composed hymns by Koreans are being ignored because their music editors rarely include original Korean materials in the official hymnbooks. Choral conductors hesitate to perform original Korean choral works based on Korean songs. Composers and musical performers ignore comparatively simple musical compositions, including short and less complicated hymns. Many more carefully crafted compositions fail to meet the church's expectations for less demanding and sentimental music rather than compositions with theological and musical rigor. Rather than

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<sup>61</sup> Moon Sung Mo, “For the Korean Traditional Melodic Hymns,” *Church Music* (Spring 1989): 19.

<sup>62</sup> The Institute of Historical Literature of the Korean Church, *Complete Collection of Korean Hymns 7: Shinjung Chansongga (1931)* (Seoul: The Institute of Historical Literature of the Korean Church, 1991), Preface.

defending and advocating for traditional culture, Korean churches have taken the lead in discouraging the incorporation of traditional culture in worship and music.

### **3. The Possibility of Koreanizing Hymns**

The first thing the South Korean church should cooperate on and pursue with the North Korean church is to publish a “reunification hymnal.” This work is worth starting now instead of waiting until reunification. Fortunately, South and North Korean churches have many songs in common. Of the *Chansongga* in North Korea, 283 songs (about seventy percent of the total) are included in the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Sae Chansogga* currently used by South Korean churches.<sup>63</sup> Generally, the hymns are easy to sing and comprised of texts in metrical stanza form, each sung to the same tune.<sup>64</sup> These characteristics are musically similar to North Korean songs and thus familiar to North Korean congregations.

The hymnic repertoire of South and North Korean churches should include many other congregational songs in addition to those currently shared between the two countries. Hymns from countries beyond the two Koreas are also needed though the newly compiled hymnal

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<sup>63</sup> Chosun Christian Federation, *Chansongga*.

<sup>64</sup> Jeong Bong Suk, “Shining Achievements made by our Regime with the Creation of a Music Formalism based on the Style of Julga,” *Chosun Art* 7 (July 1985): 52–54.

should contain a significant percentage of original Korean songs. Among the 283 songs included in the common hymns in North and South Korea, there are very few original Korean creations. In *21<sup>st</sup> Century Sae Chansogga*, the number of hymns written and composed by Koreans increased to 128, while the North Korean hymnal contains only eight.<sup>65</sup> One example is the Korean tune SAVE THE WIND [풍랑서 구하심] by Korean Methodist hymn composer Lee Dong Hoon (1922–1974) paired with the poem by prominent Korean Methodist women’s educator Helen Kim (1899–1970), “Dark Night” [깜깜한 밤].<sup>66</sup> Because North Korea emphasizes a music of self-reliance, most of the songs in music textbooks are by North Korean composers. About seventy percent of concerts consist of compositions by North Korean composers.<sup>67</sup> However, few original Korean hymns appear in the North Korean hymnals, and no original Korean hymns appear until 1935 when the *Shinpyun Chansongga* was published. Unlike *Shinpyun Chansongga*, songwriters and composers’ names are missing in the North Korean hymnals, which disguises this problem.<sup>68</sup> Therefore, the proposed reunification hymnal could increase the portion of original Korean songs from the recent *21<sup>st</sup> Century Sae Chansogga* in use by the South Korean church.

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<sup>65</sup> Chosun Christian Federation, *Chansongga*.

<sup>66</sup> Moon, *History of 100 years of Hymns in Korea*, 485.

<sup>67</sup> Noh Dong Eun, *The Third Music Box of Noh Dong Eun* (Paju: Korean Studies Information, 2010), 415.

<sup>68</sup> Chosun Christian Federation, *Chansongga*, Preface.



If the South Korean church proposes to include many original Korean hymns, this may encourage the North Korean church to adopt this practice also. However, North Korean Christians have not composed hymns. Some may suggest that songs praising Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il should be rewritten to use biblical themes and used as hymns. A potential methodology might be for the North Korean church to propose creating a new hymnal that would first be vetted by North Korean defectors in the South as well as some churches in the South. Their response could provide valuable insight for compiling a reunification hymnal. In North Korea, where patriotic nationalism receives musical emphasis, composers may incorporate the musical characteristics of this music in some of the hymns reflecting the majesty of God in the melody, scale, rhythm, and harmony of the songs. Traditional music from both the North and the South must influence the composition of hymns to overcome division and prepare for reunification. Expressing patriotism appropriately will be a consideration for the preparation of the reunification hymnal. A few hymns on this theme are available in the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Sae Chansogga* used by the South Korean church.

The reality in North Korea, where there is virtually no religious freedom and there are only ten thousand believers according to official statistics, is that the publication of the joint hymnal seems far-off and perhaps impossible to achieve before reunification. However, the

groundwork for this project can begin now. Before proposing the publication of a reunification hymnal to the North Korean Church, more exchanges between the South and the North Korean churches should take place, promoting deeper trust and cooperative relationships. South Korean hymnists and church musicians should also visit North Korean churches to worship and perform together and conduct collaborative research on church music. These exchanges must be mutual and in the spirit of partnership with North Korean churches, including inviting music leaders from North Korean churches to South Korea.

Korean hymnody's indigenization in the present era will require the combination of stylistic features drawn from both Korean traditional music and Western musical genres. The synthesis of musical styles should include traditional Korean compositional approaches that are familiar to the community and embed deep cultural sentiments through which Korean congregations may naturally confess their beliefs. Lee Geon Yong's Korean national music theory (KNMT) aims to unify Western music and traditional Korean music. For Lee, Korean national music is not about clinging to tradition, but reinterpreting and recreating it. Each country brings a strength to the process of fusing Western and traditional Korean music—the South can with its achievements in the development of Western music, and the North, with its

achievements in traditional music.<sup>69</sup> Lee has suggested through his work how the characteristics of traditional music may combine with Western music. His attempt to combine elements of the Korean tradition with modern styles also has significant implications for the field of Korean hymnody, which seeks an identity influenced by Koreanized church music. This synthesis is a prerequisite to overcoming division through the Koreanization of the hymn.

#### **E. Proposing a Direction for a Reunification Hymnal**

If one defines faith as personal knowledge of God, theology is a conscious reflection on that faith, and belief is the product of that faith expressed as Scripture, doctrine, and liturgy. Hymns convey theological insights in a way that allows people to express and nurture their faith. Singing in the assembly with those whom one has bonds of faith is an act of corporate worship.<sup>70</sup> When a congregation sings together, its song is an acted parable of community. In the act of singing, members both support one another and proclaim a witness by the community of faith. This witness reaches beyond the space in which the congregation sings. Thus, the corporate or communal inclusiveness of congregational song is ecclesial: it declares the aims and hopes of the

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<sup>69</sup> Lee and Noh, *Korean National Music Theory*, 58–61.

<sup>70</sup> Judith M. Kubiki, *The Song of the Singing Assembly: A Theology of Christian Hymnody* (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2017), 3.

church and reminds the singers of their common faith and hope.<sup>71</sup> Singing together has the potential to invite a worshipping assembly into deep conversation and, potentially, transformation. We can say that hymn singing potentially transforms us into “just” people or people who do justice. This transformation occurs not only when we sing about topics one might label “justice and peace.” Hymn singing also provides the possibility for our transformation into more faithful followers of the gospel of Jesus Christ.<sup>72</sup> The next section will consider the directions of a reunification hymnal as a means for spreading the gospel of unity, transforming the Korean Peninsula.

## **1. A Musical Direction**

The first musical exchange between South and North Korea took place with a Unification Concert in 1990. This concert showed how well the exchange of traditional music could contribute to harmony in the two countries.<sup>73</sup> Political division on the Korean Peninsula has sown cultural disunity and a loss of a common musical language. The South was closer to the

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<sup>71</sup> Kubiki, *The Song of the Singing Assembly*, 97.

<sup>72</sup> Kubiki, *The Song of the Singing Assembly*, 153.

<sup>73</sup> Arirang, the 2019 Peace Concert “Meeting of Arirang from North and South Korea: Celebrating the first anniversary of the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics,” Gangneung, February 8, 2019.

cultures of Japan and the United States, and the North closer to the cultures of China and Russia.

When a less dominant culture assimilates uniformly into a more influential culture, it loses its ethnic identity. Thus, it is essential that the North and South restore and retain its unique Korean traditional values through cultural exchanges between the two Korean political entities. This section will discuss ways to enhance a sense of unity through music, especially Korean traditional music in use before the division of the peninsula.

Within each person's God-given individuality, persons are formed in different natural, social, and historical environments. Understanding the people's consciousness, emotions, and musical characteristics is an essential step toward understanding the community of the Korean people.<sup>74</sup> The nature and character of Korean traditional music enhance the Korean people's sense of community and their unique identity. Cultural exchanges may foster an examination of Korean traditional music and encourage joint original creative activities, nurturing cooperation and building of trust on the peninsula. Music making together may prepare the way for the deeper cultural programs and ecclesial exchanges between the North and South.

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<sup>74</sup> Byun Mi Hye, et al., *A Study on the Guidelines for Educational Activities in Traditional Culture and Arts Education: Korean Traditional Music* (Seoul: Korea Arts & Culture Education, 2009), 20–21.

The most distinctive feature of the Korean *minyo* is its rhythmic diversity. Rhythms that constitute public songs are based on a question-and-answer dialogue. The structure of the *minyo* is related to the labor of the rural communities in Korea, incorporating the rhythm and tempo of communal work activity into the song's performance. This dialogue is also evident in simple communal two-part singing which occurs either antiphonally (two unison groups) or responsorially (a soloist followed by a chorus). This way of singing confirms and reinforces communal breathing that facilitates their everyday work.<sup>75</sup> This form also evident in the history of Western church music. Gregorian chant uses both antiphonal and responsorial structures.<sup>76</sup> This practice is similar to the development of the antiphon or refrain sung before and after the psalms. This dialogical structure common to Western church music and Korean *minyos* provides a dynamic musical form that fosters and strengthens a dynamic singing community.

The development of Korean traditional vocalization methods and traditional instruments that reflect the Korean national sentiment should be incorporated into the proposed creative compositions of worship music. The inclusion of traditional musical instruments and vocalization techniques in the soundscape of worship reveals both the characteristics of

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<sup>75</sup> Shin Dae Chul, *Korean music, Its Taste and Sound* (Seoul: Kyobo Books 1993), 22–25.

<sup>76</sup> Joo Sung Hee, *Church Music Literature by Musical Form* (Seoul: Chongshin University Press, 2009), 48–52.

traditional music and Korean cultural ethos. This practice extends to Western music that, if played using Korean traditional instruments, may be viewed as a kind of Korean music. Korean traditional music includes the categories of *pansori* (판소리) and *minyo*. *Pansori* is similar to Western opera or musical, and *minyo* (민요) is similar to Western folk songs. Therefore, when creating church music using Korean traditional forms, composing songs that may incorporate Korean vocalization techniques may be of as much value as Korean church music itself. *Pansori* is a performance art that combines a long story—songs with melody—and lines of dialogue or monologue) with *jangdan* (장단) (rhythm)—without melody. This genre expresses a biblical story presented in various scenes. Various dramatic expressions are enhanced through sound and rhythm, allowing audiences to participate. In Christian worship, especially preaching, close interaction between the preacher and the congregation is essential. In *pansori*, the interaction between the performer and the congregation also serves as a critical component that heightens the performance. If a well-skilled performer is fully acquainted with the biblical story and communicates with the assembly through performance, the performance itself may substitute for the sermon.

Creative musical activities that incorporate aspects of Korean traditional culture may also be beneficial. To achieve trust and unity between North and South Korea, a process that

leads toward the rediscovery of their own cultures, each of which has developed differently, is a priority. South and North Korea should reflect the unity of their respective cultures with the introduction of traditional music formed from the same roots and expand their application into the genre of hymns. Throughout the history of hymnody, music has evolved in many ways to grow in each country's national soil. Drawing from the South American experience of Argentinean composer Pablo Sosa, he expresses the relationship between political circumstances and hymns this way:

In a time of military dictatorship, the death, the disappearance, the injustice, the horror. . . How is it possible to have hope? Someone has to raise up our faith before everything is emptied out. . . To lift up hope with a song, even in Christ, and especially in Christ in those terrible times. Like Latin America, by using the tango to embody Christ's ministry and hope in a difficult time of persecution and oppression, we can deeply plant the incarnation gospel in our own soil.<sup>77</sup>

Western congregational song styles that embody the people's cultural originality include examples such as the chorale of Germany, the hymns of Wesley and Watts in England, and the black spirituals of African Americans. Many Western musicians have studied their country's cultural inheritance and emphasized traditional or folk music forms, including Béla Bartók in Europe. Therefore, developing an indigenized Korean church music must begin with the

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<sup>77</sup> Cited in C. Michael Hawn, *Gather into One: Praying and Singing Globally* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company 2003), 65.



foundation of ethnicity. The existing content will need to contain national materials that fit with modern musical forms and are appropriate for liturgical expression. Using *minyo* influences in church music composition draws upon the popularity of widely known *minyos* already in use. It is much easier to bear witness to the gospel to many people with music than to preach the gospel to North Korean society through non-popular original songs.

When creating Koreanized hymns based on Korean traditional music, using fusion music, combining genres of music already familiar, is an engaging way to approach the public. Using different genres of Western music already fused with Korean traditional music familiar to the South Korean congregations may help those that still regard traditional music as unfamiliar and inferior. The development of Korean church music through fusion with Western music is a way to combine traditional vocalization methods and musical instruments with Western vocal practices and instruments. Western instruments and Korean traditional instruments can coexist within a unified orchestration. Korean traditional instruments can play Western music and traditional music vocalizations can imitate Western music vocal production.

As commanded in Matthew 28:16–20, preaching the gospel is the mission of every Christian. Korean Christians, both on the Korean peninsula and in diaspora around the world, can encounter the Triune God through hymns composed in the manner of Korean traditional

music. The incorporation of indigenous Korean church music into worship is an issue of musical identity and theological significance.

## **2. A Theological Direction**

The 645 hymns the *21st Century Sae Chansogga* (2006) are divided into the following

theological themes:

Anthropology: 20

Christology: 102

The doctrine of God: 107

Ecclesiology: 96

Eschatology: 10

Pneumatology: 16

Soteriology: 285

Also, 225 hymns reflect a vertical theology (God and humanity) on the topics of the Doctrine of God, Christology, and Pneumatology, comprising 34.8 percent of the collection. Another 381 hymns (59.0 percent) contain a horizontal theological perspective (human to human), including the topics of soteriology and ecclesiology. Hymns that represent the theologies of soteriology and ecclesiology show an even greater distribution.<sup>78</sup> Rather than retaining the existing categories, the editors of future hymnals should ponder how biblical content and the existential

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<sup>78</sup> The Hymnal Society of Korea, ed. *21<sup>st</sup> Century Sae Chansongga*.

issues may embolden the theological content of hymns, determining what themes need further emphasis and what new categories should be created. Earlier Korean hymnals, *Chanyangga* (1894) and *Chansonga* (1908), both made use of songs from more recent American compilations.<sup>79</sup> Currently, however, *21<sup>st</sup> Century Sae Chansongga* (2006), the latest hymnal, is still considered outmoded by continuing to contain more than half of the hymns from *Tongil Chansongga* (1983).<sup>80</sup>

In the early days of the Western missionaries, Korean Protestant hymns were used as a witness to the gospel. The hymns then reflected the people's patriotism during the Japanese colonial period and, later, sought peace on the Korean Peninsula during the Korean War. Hymnals following the Korean War were influenced by the conflicts and competition between Korean Christian denominations and generating profits. As a result, they did not represent the faith of that time. For these reasons, hymnals have lost the theological balance of the songs that represent today's era. Korean Protestant hymns have contributed significantly to the revival of South Korean Protestant congregations and the expansion of world missionaries. However, many

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<sup>79</sup> Min, *The History of Korean Hymns*, 26–38.

<sup>80</sup> In South Korea, the Protestant Church includes Lutheran, Anglican, and Reformed churches. The Reformed churches include the Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and Holiness churches. The Reformed Churches, the Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and Holiness churches in South Korea use *21<sup>st</sup> Century Sae Chansongga* (2006), but the Anglican Church of Korea is now using the third edition of *Sungga* (2015) following *Sunghoi Songga* (1903).

problems have emerged in the development and evolution of indigenous Korean hymns.<sup>81</sup> As with all churches, Korean churches are affected by the current context. The contextualization presented by these periodic situations also affects the change and development of Korean Protestant hymnals. The 2015 edition of the Korean Anglican Church's *Sungga*, for which Lee Geon Yong served as the chief editor, reflects the context of the current period with five hymns in the category of creation and environmental theology and twenty hymns on the theology of justice and peace. This hymnal also includes songs composed in the manner of Korean traditional music, reflecting indigenization.<sup>82</sup> As indicated in Psalms 149 and 150, God commands the people to sing in a new song. So, we must continuously praise God with new songs.

Anticipating and achieving peaceful reunification of South and North Korea are issues that must be recognized in future hymnals, especially liberation for the religiously oppressed people of the North. Religious freedom includes the possibility of spreading the gospel and passing the faith on to the next generation. Thus, a compilation of congregational song in a reunification hymnal could be meaningful to North Korean people. New hymns need to address

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<sup>81</sup> Min, *The History of Korean Hymns*, 273–377.

<sup>82</sup> The Anglican Church of Korea, *Sungga*, 4–17.

freedom from the oppressive ruling ideologies of socialism, restoring freedom of faith, freedom to share the gospel, and freedom to worship.

Paul S. Jones argues that music is pastoral work because it provides the spiritual care and leadership similar to that provided by pastoral ministry.<sup>83</sup> In this way, a reunification hymnal would comfort, encourage, exhort, teach, proclaim the gospel, and penetrate the congregation's spirit. For North Korea, a reunification hymnal could become a primary means of shaping theology in worship, both for proclaiming Christian thought in the words of hymns and anthems and expressing the spirit of the unified Korean community and its ethical response. In this way, the hymnal can become a repository and essential means for expressing, communicating, and practicing Christian faith. For South Korea, a reunification hymnal should appropriate the heritage of God's acts in Korean history through human beings. This heritage is conveyed in the words that relate to God's mighty deeds and the verbal and musical art forms that have come down to us through the centuries. This witness should be a means of service and mission by South Korean congregations to North Korean communities and societies.

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<sup>83</sup> Paul S. Jones, *Singing and Making Music: Issues in Church Music Today* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2006), 282.

A reunification hymnal that includes indigenized Korean hymns should be initiated as a means for restoring the souls of those suffering from oppression and injustice for both North and South Korea and educating all of the Korean Peninsula in justice and peace. This hymnal must similarly adopt an attitude of service to be an effective witness to Jesus Christ. A hymnal accomplishes this through its inclusion of hymns to glorify God, identify with the sufferings of God's people, and point out injustice of God's world. A joint collection also empowers the musician to engender growth and renewed commitment to core Christian values. The work of a reunification hymnal can point to both Divine and human activity, to the possibility of grace and wholeness, and the reality of brokenness and need for rebirth on the Korean Peninsula.

A primary role of church music is to challenge the church to live up to its mission to be light and salt in the world. Therefore, the mission of a reunification hymnal is first, ministry to God; second, ministry to the North and South Korean people; and, third, ministry to the World beyond the Korean Peninsula. The role of church music and hymns should be to achieve God's realm in this world through a new song as ordered by God and to praise the mercy of God, who forgives and recovers this sinful world from oppression. If the proposed reunification hymnal of Koreanized hymns is to have a future, it must foster appropriate music within the church and speak to the proper function of Korean traditional music in society. The committee preparing this

hymnal must consider the many issues honestly and articulate these issues in biblical and theological terms. A reunification hymnal that includes hymns springing from the Korean people's history and culture should develop new ways of building connections between congregations in South and North Korean communities. Such a collection may play a role in the lives of individual believers, nonbelievers, cultural institutions, educational institutions, and local congregations in a unified Korea after the reunification. The people's theology breathes in the hymns of those who must live out that which theological textbooks attempt to explain.<sup>84</sup>

### **3. Reunification Themes in “Ososo [오소서] / Come Now, O Prince of Peace” by Lee Geon Yong: A Musical and Theological Analysis.**

Lee Geon Yong sought to modernize the techniques of traditional Korean music to suit this era and reinterpret musical composition accordingly. He focused on making Korean traditional music the national church music. Lee has continually tried to combine the

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<sup>84</sup> Michael J. Bauer, *Arts Ministry: Nurturing the Creative Life of God's People* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2013), 55.

characteristics of Korean traditional music with the techniques of Western music. His

representative song is the hymn “Come Now, O Prince of Peace.”<sup>85</sup>

Example 1: “Ososo / Come Now, O Prince of Peace” in Korean Transliteration and English Translation. Source: *Sing! A New Creation* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2002):

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

Ososo / Come Now, O Prince of Peace 209

**Korean**  
 1 O - so - so o - so - so, pyong-hwa eul im - gum  
 2 O - so - so o - so - so, sa - rang eul im - gum

**English**  
 1 Come now, O Prince of peace: make us one bod - y.  
 2 Come now, O God of love, make us one bod - y.

u - ri - ga han - mom i - ru - ge ha - so - so.  
 u - ri - ga han - mom i - ru - ge ha - so - so.  
 Come, O Lord Je - sus; re - con - cile your peo - ple.  
 Come, O Lord Je - sus; re - con - cile your peo - ple.

3 Ososo ososo,  
 chayi eul ingum,  
 uriga hanmom  
 iruge ha soso.

4 Ososo ososo  
 tongil eul ingum,  
 uriga hanmom  
 iruge hasoso.

3 Come now and set us free,  
 O God our Savior.  
 Come, O Lord Jesus;  
 reconcile all nations.

4 Come, Hope of unity;  
 make us one body.  
 Come, O Lord Jesus;  
 reconcile all nations.

Text and music: Geonyong Lee (b. 1947); para. Marion Pope (b. 1928)  
 © 1991, WGRG the Iona Community (Scotland); admin. GIA Publications, Inc.

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 0-80-00

<sup>85</sup> Presbyterian Church (USA), *Glory to God: Hymns, Psalms, and Spiritual Songs* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013), 103.



Source: *Sungga* (성가) (Seoul, 2015).

정미와 평화

# 오소서

# 367

1 오 소 서 오 소 서 평 화 의 임 금  
 2 오 소 서 오 소 서 사 랑 의 임 금  
 3 오 소 서 오 소 서 자 유 의 임 금  
 4 오 소 서 오 소 서 통 일 의 임 금

우 리 가 한 몸 이루 게 하 소 서 아 멘

가사: 오소서 (Come Now, O Prince of Peace) 이진용, 1987/2014  
 곡조: 오소서 (O-SO-SO) 이진용, 1987  
 쓰임: 기도용송으로도 불림

Unfortunately, this hymn is not in hymnbooks published in South Korea, even though hymnals in Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States include it often. Most recently, it appears in

*Glory to God* (2013), the official hymnal of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and in *Sungga* (성가) (Sacred Songs) (2015), the official songbook of the Anglican Church of Korea.<sup>86</sup>

The melody of “Come Now, O Prince of Peace” employs the musical style of the Korean tradition of “Gyemyeonjo” (계면조). Gyemyeonjo is based on shaman songs and local tori (peculiar sounds related to distinct regional *minyos*) of the southern provinces of South Korea. Many ornaments, such as low, trembling sounds, sudden appoggiaturas, and smooth, flowing sounds, invoke traditional Korean feelings. Grace notes—eighth notes in the melody of the first, third, fifth, and seventh measures of this song—are ornamental passing tones. These decorative tones express Korean sentiments and distribute rhythm equally.

The rhythmic structure of the song is a “Jungmori” (중모리), a medium-tempo jangdan (beat), the most frequently used rhythmic pattern in Korean *minyos*. The basic rhythmic pattern consists of twelve beats in a moderate tempo, which can be divided into two sub-beats, with the strongest accent occurring on the ninth beat. Jungmori is the most common and basic jangdan and is most often used to describe lyrical, sorrowful, or peaceful scenes and sentiments.

The song does not use a traditional Korean rhythm includes a triple meter that often employed in Korean traditional music. This rhythm expresses Korean emotion well and

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<sup>86</sup> The Anglican Church of Korea, *Sungga*, 367.

harmonizes with Western musical techniques. The traditional Korean melody used in “Ososo” receives a Western harmonization. In particular, the Gyemyeonjo uses the five-tone scale found in Korean traditional music to create a Korean atmosphere.

The intervals consist of leaps of a perfect 4<sup>th</sup>, a perfect 5<sup>th</sup>, and steps of a minor 2<sup>nd</sup>, major 3<sup>rd</sup>, and minor 3<sup>rd</sup>. The harmony consists of the uncomplicated chords in a hymn style influenced by Western compositional practice, often omitting, however, the third in tonic and dominant chords. The half cadence does not use the dominant chord, nor does the final cadence employ a standard common-practice period Western cadential progression associated with many hymns. The harmony incorporates non-harmonic intervals at several points. The song was composed so that it would be easy for congregations to sing. This accessibility indicates that Lee Geon Yong took into account the community’s unity in creating a Koreanized hymn that Korean congregations can sing easily.

Lee integrated Korean lyrics into the hymn’s musical structure, paying equal attention to the lyrics as well as the musical composition. An analysis of this song indicates that his compositional style combines traditional Korean and Western musical techniques and is a most suitable form for the sentiments of Korean congregations.

Lee Geon Yong's hymn "Come Now, O Prince of Peace" is a song about reconciliation and peace. This song celebrates the peace that appears as a result of the realization of God's justice on earth and the elimination of oppression. This relational peace is an amity in which reconciliation and communication are perfected between God and humanity, humans and other humans, and humanity and nature. Rebuilding peace on the divided Korean peninsula between South and North Korea has become an essential task for the church. To that end, South Korean churches have been made efforts to deliver the gospel to North Korea, alleviate poverty and oppression, restore relations, and protect human rights. These are prerequisite to the creation of peace. A reunification hymnal can proclaim in song the peace that both North and South Korean churches should confess. The word most representative of the meaning of "peace" in the Bible is the idea of Shalom (שָׁלוֹם) in the Old Testament, a peace given in a flawless and holistic state. In the New Testament, it is the Élene (Εἰρήνη), which means the state of tranquility from social and political conflict and struggle. Peace is the ethical value that the Bible claims, and be achieved through the coming of God's Son, our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

The proposed national unity can bear the fruits of the gospel in light of Christ's coming, even though this unity faces difficulties caused by different political, social, economic, and cultural differences between South and North Korea. Lee Geon Yong's hymn "Come Now,

O Prince of Peace” articulates the community’s praise and confession that understands the role of peace, love, freedom, and unity as the restoration of God’s gospel. Thus, when people living under the dark shadow of oppression find new hope and confess with praise for the reunification of South and North Korea, their confession becomes a tribute to their prayer and Christ may achieve the wholeness of peace.

This is a hymn for the divided North and South Korea to sing together because it reveals the identity of South and North Korea as one body in Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 12:27). The text of this hymn articulates the unity that must be achieved by South and North Korea and has various theological implications of Jesus Christ who came as king of peace as prophesied in Isaiah 11, Jesus Christ who came as the love of God (John 3:16), Jesus Christ who came as our Savior (Luke 2:11), and Jesus Christ who will come to achieve unity (John 17:20–23).

Above all, “Ososo” contains the eschatological hope for the coming of Jesus Christ. Singing Lee Geon Yong’s hymn, the South Korean Church should first confess to the Lord, who has come to be the king of peace and makes us one people as his children. Lim Sung-bin, a Christian ethicist, emphasizes the importance of national and cultural reunification rather than

political, economic, military and territorial reunification.<sup>87</sup> This hymn, which expresses a desire to overcome national division and realize dreams of reunification, may serve a central role in promoting a growing faith among Christians in a reunified Korea. And the South Korean church must decide to become a peace worker, resembling Jesus Christ, the King of Peace. Singing has the power to change one's thoughts, actions, and life, and the content in church music provides biblical and theological bases for God's kingdom. Therefore, through the hymn "Come Now, O Prince of Peace," based on Lee's KNMT, the South Korean church must firmly trust and confess God's plan to the South and North Korea beyond its political system and ideology, and territorial division.

Through the biblical, theological, and gospel message contained in Lee Geon Yong's hymn "Come Now, O Prince of Peace," all Christian communities in the North and South may pray for reunification and establish the church's identity as one body of Jesus Christ. This hymn recognizes a common ethnicity between the two Koreas, restores faith as a Christian, and acknowledges the presence of Jesus Christ everywhere in the world.

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<sup>87</sup> Im Sung Bin et al., *Integrated Reunification and the Task of Christians II* (Seoul: Jeyoung Communications, 2003), 146, 197.

## **F. The implications of Lee Geon Yong's Korean National Music Theory (KNMT) for Koreanized Reunification Hymns.**

I believe that the implications of Lee Geon Young's music are significant in overcoming the musical divisions facing the South and the North, divisions that have developed differently since the separation of the two Koreas. According to Lee, the church cannot keep up with rapid social change as society develops because it is concerned about the infiltration of secularism into the church. Secular music influences the church as the cultural axis changes from church to the wider society in modern times. The wave of change leads people by enormous force, and within the church, those familiar with the existing order refuse to change. However, with every generation, culture changes and so does music. Thus, he argues that changes in musical style should not be cut off from the previous generation but should develop and change the previous generation. This is because when the church is afraid of this change, it cannot communicate with society and culture.<sup>88</sup>

Creating new cultures within the church should be connected theologically, socially, and culturally with tradition. When reflecting on the past, confirming the present, and moving toward the future, generations develop a healthy culture of continuity. In advocating for

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<sup>88</sup> Lee Geon Yong, "Korean Christianity and Art: Korean Christianity and Music," *Korean Association of Christian Research* 4 (December 1986): 70–73.

Koreanized church music, Korean church musicians have been working to discover the roots of traditional Korean music—music ignored in their historical musical study. Lee Geon Yong's Koreanization of church music through KNMT stresses that musicians must rediscover the various musical styles and languages of traditional Korean music, reinterpret them in a modern way, and find ways to communicate with this era. Fortunately, as we saw earlier, a desire to restore lost traditional music in the South is growing and efforts to embrace Western music in the North are emerging. Koreanization is also in line with biblical and theological implications exhorting every nation to praise God in the music and language God has given the people to express their sentiments.

The Koreanization necessary for the reunification hymnal requires continuing research into texts and musical styles that embrace the cultural and theological demands of the present era while preserving the Korean people's united sentiments and national characteristics. Living in the heart of the Korean people, God is the object of worship in the Western world, but God also reveals himself to all the peoples who worship and praise him. In the grace of God's salvation, the faith and heart of the Korean people should be expressed more abundantly through the various musical styles and languages that appear in traditional Korean music.



Congregational hymns are a community confession of faith. There must be a national identity that constitutes the community. Thus, peoples worldwide have shared their unique identities through their hymns in different times, cultures, locations, societies, and faiths. For the Koreanization of congregational hymns to take place, the hymns must contain the confessional faith of the Korean people, musical styles associated with traditional Korean music, and language containing the singular sentiments of the Korean people. Traditional music embraces the unique identity of the unified Korean people. When traditional music and church music combine, a reunification hymnal can express aspirations of a unified Korean people.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

### A. Summary

This study has considered the role that church music can play in overcoming the musical, cultural, and ecclesial divisions between South and North Korea, looking toward the possibility of political reunification. I hope that this research may contribute to the discussion for establishing the direction for music in a unified Korean church. The reunification of South Korea and North Korea begins with an attempt to understand their different histories, and then finds ways to bridge them, creating a new vision. J. Nathan Corbitt and Vivian Nixon-Early refer to transforming the community through art. This transformation takes place through creative acts in the world by those who create a place where people, communities, and society are transformed and empowered—economically, socially, politically, and spiritually—in harmony with God, themselves, one another, and their environments until the journey of living faith is complete.<sup>1</sup> Though deep divisions have existed between the two Koreas for decades, hope persists that such a transformation will be made on the Korean Peninsula. North Korea, the world's most closed

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<sup>1</sup> J. Nathan Corbitt, and Nix-Early Vivian, *Taking It to the Streets: Using the Arts to Transform your Community* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003), 22–23.

society, is a third-generation hereditary regime. The North Korean regime has never accepted change. This is because security of a dictatorship is the foundation of North Korea's political system and hereditary succession.

With the launch of the new government in the South, however, there has been a major change in North Korean policy. The relationship between South and North Korea has shown rapid progress since the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics when the leaders of South and North Korea met for an inter-Korean summit. Moreover, South Korea has officially proposed holding the 2024 Winter Youth Olympic Games together with North Korea. Gangwon, the site of the 2018 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games, was chosen to stage the fourth edition of the event by the International Olympic Committee in January 2020. Gangwon's northern boundary is the Military Demarcation Line, separating it from North Korea's Kangwŏn Province. Before the division of Korea in 1945 Gangwon and Kangwŏn formed a single province. South Korea's Gangwon province has now revealed that it sent a letter to Pyongyang in August 2020 offering the opportunity to co-host the Games.

The political situation of the Korean Peninsula appears to be more positive now than for several decades. A new strategy for reunification is called for at a time when both South and North Korea are at the center of change. The continued vitality of cultural and sports exchanges

between the two Koreas is crucial in laying the groundwork for the possibility of reunification. Musical exchanges, a part of the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, are a positive sign for the future.

Such a path of cooperation is also evident in the religious sector. The National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCCK) is engaging international networks, including the World Council of Churches, to continue relations with the North's Korean Christian Federation. The NCCCK also stresses that South Korean churches should prepare for an era of peaceful coexistence and reunification between the two Koreas through their roles of mediating inter-Korean peace. Therefore, we live in eschatological hope that a Korean Peninsula, reunified by the gospel, will bear witness to the coming realm of God on earth.

The fourth chapter documented the history of North and South Korean hymnals, suggested a direction for composing reunification hymns to bridge the hymnic heterogeneity between the two Koreas, and provided a rationale for the Koreanization of congregational song. Based on this, I proposed musical attributes and theological characteristics of reunification hymns. Korean congregations quickly absorbed Western church music, including hymns, when missionaries introduced Koreans to the gospel. In contrast, missionaries considered traditional Korean music to be profane and, as a result, very few Korean church musicians have maintained interest and

skills in traditional instruments and styles. Because Western hymns and church music are already firmly rooted in the worship practice of the Korean church, a unified church music based solely on traditional Korean musical practice is not a viable option.

“Koreanization,” as defined in this thesis, recognizes both the Korean indigenous musical spirit and Western musical reality of Korean congregations today. Following the implications of Lee Geon Yong’s KNMT for Korean church music, Koreanization includes the use of traditional Korean music techniques and instruments in combination with current Western styles. Such music begins with the recognition of the two musical spirits inherent in Korean congregations. The spirit of Western music, which is so influential in Korean church compositions and the spirit of traditional Korean music coexist in the music of the Korean church of the present era. This approach follows the lead of current North Korean leader Kim Jong Un who, unlike his predecessors Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il, preserves traditional Korean music while manifesting an increasingly open attitude toward Western music. Responding to the two musical spirits at the heart of South and North Korean congregations may lead to singing and confessing their faith in more culturally accessible forms and offer an approach to church music that truly unifies churches of the Korean Peninsula.

South Korean churches, hoping for an era of reunification, approach the situation between North and South Korea as an ethnic division rather than territorial demarcation. Therefore, South Korean theological analysis focuses on ethnic identity and community. Measures to restore the schism between ethnic communities are being researched in various fields. Koreanized church music can play a central role in achieving the national unity between the two Koreas. Both South and North Korea can engage a common church music as a way to overcome their differences. In doing so, Koreanized church music can express a song of hope for the kingdom of God in North and South Korean society where God's peace seems to have disappeared and, especially, a song of God's salvation for the North Korean people who are marginalized from the gospel of Christianity and oppressed by the regime.

Lee Geon Yong's hymns and KNMT have many implications for the reunification of church music in North and South Korea. Using Lee's hymns as a model for Koreanized music, I provided a musical and theological analysis of his best-known congregational hymn. Church music compositions must be culturally unifying, aesthetically artful, and ethically prophetic. Generally, church music has only been understood in relation to worship. However congregational song modeled on Lee Geon Yong's KNMT has the potential to provide an aesthetic, affective, and cultural bridge between the congregations in North and South Korea.

## **B. A Critique of Lee Geon Yong's Korean National Music Theory (KNMT)**

The development of Lee Geon Yong's KNMT began in the late 1980s. His work coincided with broader curiosity in the recovery of the national music in South Korea and Lee's own interest in overcoming the political and artistic divisions between the North and South. Lee's interest led to conceiving a national music for the reunified Korean Peninsula. However, more than thirty years later, the Korean Peninsula is still divided, and no specific discussions about the reunification of the South and North Korean regimes are currently taking place. The lack of progress toward reunification requires a critical evaluation Lee Geon Yong's KNMT with recommendations for the direction of the KNMT in the 2020s.

First of all, Lee Geon Yong's KNMT did not stir much interest in the Korean music composition industry as a whole. KNMT raised the essential question of identity in the history of Korean music. Though the colonial experience and the dominance of Western culture after the Korean War led to active discussions about Koreanized music, the theory and its appeal to a few KNMT composers were gradually forgotten over time in musical composition and performance. The main factors were the dissolution of the Cold War system internationally and the

acceleration of globalization domestically. The spread of the Internet led to the development of transnational media in the 1990s. Globalization and multiculturalization weakened the influence of national music based on the nation-state. As time passed, however, the KNMT became obsessed with the traditional elements of music without considering popular interest and the need for music to express the unique cultural specificity of Korea. As a result, rather than overcoming the musical, cultural, and ethnic divisions between South and North Korea, the KNMT caused another kind of division between the promoters of traditional Korean music and Western classical musicians in the South Korean academy. Though Lee Geon Yong's KNMT has generated some public interest as a musical theory in South Korea, it has received little notice from the South Korean music industry, which prioritizes profitability. Thus, the theory and form of KNMT have not been fully developed and implemented.

When Lee Geon Yong initiated the KNMT, it was an attempt to integrate past Korean traditions with present Western modernity, focusing on popularity. Unlike Lee's efforts, however, KNMT musical advocates insisted on maintaining a rigid understanding of authenticity in traditional Korean music performance practice. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a revised theory of KNMT. Bela Bartok (1881–1945), studying modern theories of European folklore and the characteristics of Hungarian folksongs, applied the compositional characteristics to his works



and, in doing so, influenced a broader use of folksongs among other composers.<sup>2</sup> I think that the characteristics of a Korean national music should be reconstituted into a more explicit musical theory that includes more precise melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic characteristics, as well as dynamics, and tone color. The context of current musical developments requires sharing compositional techniques from both East and West. The process of creating music based on KNMT principles should not only use traditional Korean music but should also take a modern approach to expressing Korea's national musical character. Furthermore, scholars need to conduct research leading to a revision of KNMT philosophy that includes the technological possibilities used by Korean contemporary composers. In addition to synthesizer or computer-generated music that has gained popularity, music played by traditional instruments with traditional techniques can also be incorporated into contemporary popular music.

Finally, both South and North Korea use the concept of national music. Both countries respect the traditional music of the Korean Peninsula before the division. However, North Korean musical policies decided under the leadership of the Kim regimes did not distinguish between popular and national music. In contrast to South Korea, North Korea has achieved a

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<sup>2</sup> Benjamin Suchoff, ed., *The Hungarian Folk Song by Béla Bartók* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1981), 35–36, 307–384.

hybridization of Western and traditional Korean music through the modernization of national music and the modernization of traditional music. Modernization of North Korean nationalistic music continues from Kim Jong Il into Kim Jong Un's era. During the Kim Jong Il's era, North Korea modernized traditional instruments to play Western music. In Kim Jong Un's era, these modernizations were developed one step further and the Korean traditional musical instruments were electronically adapted to play modern electronic music. As for the modernization of North Korea's nationalistic music, Kim Jong Un stresses that "North Korea should actively accept music from other countries and apply it in a North Korean way so that North Korean music can achieve a world-class level."<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, instead of theoretically proposing a combination of Western and Korean music, Lee Geon Yong's KNMT should clearly analyze how the combination of traditional Korean and Western musical instruments affects singing and how traditional and Western elements collide or coexist in this process. The hybridization process will be important for understanding North Korea's national music and should be a direction of the church in the two Koreas music after reunification. Furthermore, the modernization of traditional Korean

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<sup>3</sup> In an article published in the *Rodong* Newspaper on July 9, 2012, the author notes, "My dear comrade Kim Jong Un watched a demonstration of the newly organized Moranbong Band."

instruments in North Korea, rarely attempted in the South, should be present in KNMT's methodology. Two examples follow: 1) Wood used for the traditional two-string *haegum* [해금] is now being replaced with a carbon-based material that allows for amplification using a digital filter while maintaining traditional methods of playing. This allows the *haegum* to compete dynamically with modern string instruments. 2) The popular twelve-string *gayageum* [가야금] is now commonly modernized with eighteen or twenty-one strings, increasing its range and making it more useful for collaborating with Western instruments.

In South Korea, when original traditional Korean musical instruments meet with Western instruments, the musical effect is one of conflict rather than coexistence. However, in North Korea, national music and Western music meet very naturally through the active modernization of traditional Korean instruments. The KNMT needs to articulate clearly the conditions for hybrid performances with traditional and Western orchestral instruments and vocal styles.

### **C. Suggestions for Further Study**

Twenty-first century Koreanized song strongly reflects both North and South Korea's determination to find a common identity. The KNMT has sought to form this identity through the

use of traditional Korean music in the composition of hymns. However, such hymns are rarely used in Korean church worship services. Therefore, a true Koreanization of church music must incorporate Korean-influenced techniques within worship services that congregations favor and will use. This Korean-influenced approach may take a form that combines the melody or tonal system of traditional Korean music and the harmony of Western music, or that merges the rhythms or instruments of traditional Korean music with the harmony of Western music. A practical Koreanization approach to church music is necessary for musical composition in the twenty-first century. This Koreanization of church music should continue to be studied based on the feasibility and applicability of Korean church music for worship and congregational use. The role of the church is also very important in achieving acceptance and implementation. Using Koreanized hymns and church music will require the unified leadership of ministers and church musicians and a revised pedagogical process for informing congregations.

I propose that the process of Koreanizing church music today can break down the boundaries between musical genres. Western music dominates church music in South Korea and, as a result, includes many genres. Given the proliferation of musical styles in the twenty-first century, the Koreanization of church music should recognize its coexistence with various styles of church music. Scholars and practitioners should conduct research on the feasibility of

hybridization among various styles of church music in the Koreanization process. This process will require cooperation between musicians in various South Korean denominations as well as communication with North Korean church musicians. Furthermore, this research should not be limited to traditional Korean music but should consider a unified Korean church music in anticipation of ecclesial and political reunification. This communication could lead to the Koreanization of church music in the future, producing new techniques and further exchanges between North and South Korean church musicians.

One limitation of this study is that no mechanisms exist currently for verifying the process of musical Koreanization in North Korean churches with North Korean church music scholars. It is my hope that the findings of this thesis are proleptic in nature, leading to further research that anticipates ecclesial unity and political reunification.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Music is a significant part of the artistic tapestry of God's creation. God has used the gift of music as a medium for propagating the gospel. A historical precedent exists for the Koreanization of church music. As a result of the music education of early missionaries to

Korea, Christian Korean musicians translated the lyrics of Western hymns into Korean and published hymnals that nurtured the faith of Koreans. Some of them, however, composed music responsive to Korean culture. Rev. James S. Gale [기일] (1863–1937) organized the Association of Korean Music in 1917 to develop rhythms and lyrics that fit the sentiments of Korean congregations.<sup>4</sup> Under the Gale's influence, Gil Seon Ju [길선주] (1869–1935), a Korean pastor, organized the first Korean church choir at the Jangdaehyun Church in Pyongyang, where he served (1913).<sup>5</sup> He also invited Korean traditional musicians to the church to discuss composing Korean hymns for worship in Korean Church.<sup>6</sup> Despite their efforts, however, the Koreanization of church music developed very slowly in South Korean church. A continuation of Gil's approach to church music, however, can contribute to the reunified Korean church. A Koreanized church music has been easily accepted by the North Korean church.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, if the South Korean church anticipates the recovery of ecclesial homogeneity between North and South Korean churches, reunification may be inspired by the study of Koreanized church music and the dissemination to and performance of this music in the South Korean churches. I look

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<sup>4</sup> Jun In Pyong, *The New Angle of Korean Music History* (Seoul, Hyundae Music Press, 2001), 335–336.

<sup>5</sup> Huh Ho Ik, *Pastor Gil Sun Ju's Ministry and Theological Thought* (Seoul, The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2009), 53–54.

<sup>6</sup> Moon Ok Bae, *The History of Korea's Acceptance of Church Music* (Seoul: Yesol Publishing Company, 2004), 144–146.

<sup>7</sup> The Culture and Arts Promotion Agency for Reunification, ed., *A Hymnal of the North Korean Melodic Hymns for the Reunification Generation* (Seoul: Culture and Arts Promotion Agency for Reunification Press, 2014), Preface.

forward to encouraging the composition of Koreanized hymns and developing a reunification

hymnal for Christian worship that represents a unified ethnic identity of Christians on the Korean

Peninsula.

# APPENDIX:

## A Table of Korean Hymnals<sup>1</sup>

Name of Hymnal (Transliteration and Korean Characters)	Date of Publication (Years of use of hymnal)	Editor(s)	Intended Denominational Use: Unity Hymnal (ecumenical), South Korea Presbyterian, North Korean Presbyterian, etc.	Number of hymns	Number of original Korean texts and tunes
<i>Chanmiga</i> (찬미가)	1892 (1892–1907)	George H. Jones Louise G. Rothweiler D.A. Bunker	Korean Methodist Church	27 (1892) 81 (1895) 90 (1897) 176 (1900) 183 (1905)	7 original Korean texts 1895 (3) 1897 (2) 1900 (2)
<i>Chanyangga</i> (찬양가)	1894 (1894–1907)	Horace G. Underwood	Presbyterian Church of Korea	117 (1894) 151 (1895) 160 (1896) 164 (1898) 182 (1900)	14 original Korean texts 1894 (9) 1895 (5)
<i>Chansungsi</i> (찬성시)	1895 (1895–1907)	Annie L. A. Baird	Presbyterian Church of North Korea	54 (1895) 84 (1898) 87 (1900) 123 (1902) 151 (1905)	7 original Korean texts 1895 (1) 1900 (3) 1905 (3)

<sup>1</sup> This table expands the one offered by Kim Seong Dae in “Korean hymnody,” *The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology*. Canterbury Press, <http://www.hymnology.co.uk/k/korean-hymnody> (accessed January 21, 2021).



<i>Bogeum Chanmi</i> (복음찬미가)	1899 (1899–1958)	Malcolm C. Fenwick	Baptist Church of Korea	14 (1899) 20 (1904) 243 (1925) 252 (1926) 274 (1939) 323 (1958)	
<i>Sunghoi Songga</i> (성회송가)	1903 (1903–1962)	The Anglican Church of Korea	The Anglican Church of Korea	168 (1903) 266 (1910) 150 (1924) 157 (1958)	
<i>Bogeumga</i> (복음가)	1907 (1907–1913)	Lee Jang Ha	The Holiness Church of Korea	100	
<i>Shinjung Bogeumga</i> (신증복음가)	1919 (1919–1929)	The Holiness Church of Korea	The Holiness Church of Korea	161 (1919) 211 (1924)	1 original Korean text 1919 (1)
<i>Buheng Sungga</i> (부흥성가)	1930 (1930–1947)	The Holiness Church of Korea	The Holiness Church of Korea	242 (1930) 245 (1937) 255 (1940)	2 original Korean texts 1930 (2)
<i>Chansongga</i> (찬송가)	1908 (1908–1930)	W.M. Baird F.S. Miller D.A. Bunker A.A. Pieters	The Korean Methodist Church	262 (1908) 264 (1909) 267 (1909) 266 (1916) 317 (1934)	9 original Korean texts 1908 (9) 1 original Korean tune 1908 (1)
<i>Shinjung Chansongga</i> (신정찬송가)	1931 (1931–1948)	Henry D. Appenzeller	The Korean Methodist Church, The Presbyterian Church of Korea	314	7 original Korean texts 1 original Korean tune

<i>Shinpyun Chansongga</i> (신편찬송가)	1935	The Presbyterian Church of Korea	The Presbyterian Church of Korea	400	7 original Korean texts
<i>Hapdong Chansongga</i> (합동찬송가)	1949 (1949–1966)	the Korean Christian Federation	The Presbyterian Church of Korea,/ the Korean Methodist Church/, and Korea Evangelical Holiness Church	586	6 original Korean texts 1 original Korean tune
<i>Sae Chansongga</i> (새찬송가)	1962 (1962–1982)	New Hymnal Compilation Committee	The Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea and The Presbyterian Church of Korea	620	2 original Korean texts
<i>Sungga</i> (성가)	1965 (1965–)	The Anglican Church of Korea	The Anglican Church of Korea	500 (1965) 589 (1990) 662 (2015)	25 original Korean texts 1965 (25)  55 original Korean texts 1990 (55)  57 Korean original tunes 1990 (57)  83 Korean original texts 2015 (83)  98 original Korean tunes 2015 (98)
<i>Gaepyun Chansongga</i> (개편찬송가)	1967 (1967–1983)	a hymnal revision committee	The Methodist Church of Korea, the Holiness Church of Korea, and the Presbyterian Church of Korea Evangelical Holiness Church	600	25 original Korean texts 27 original Korean tunes
<i>Tongil Chansongga</i> (통일찬송가)	1983 (1983–2006)	The Hymn Unification Committee	All the Protestant churches of Korea except the Anglican Church of Korea	558	17 original Korean texts 17 original Korean tunes
<i>Chansongga</i> (찬송가)	1983 (1983–)	Central Committee of the Christian Federation of North Korea	North Korean Church	400 (1983) 400 (1990) 400 (2006) ? (2010)	

<i>21<sup>st</sup> Century Sae Chansongga</i> (21 세기새찬송가)	2006	The 21 <sup>st</sup> Century New Hymnal Development Committee	All the Protestant churches of Korea except the Anglican Church of Korea	645	124 original Korean texts 128 original Korean tunes
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