BRANDING MUSIC, BRANDING NATION:
THE USE OF TRADITIONAL MUSIC IN PROMOTING THE NATIONAL
IDENTITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

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ABSTRACT

In the late twentieth century, with the worldwide recognition of the Republic of Korea as an Asian economic power—one of the “little dragons”—the South Korean government focused on presenting a Korean identity distinct from those of neighboring Asian countries through preserving and restoring its traditions, including music. In the twenty-first century, South Korea has seen enormous economic success, not only in Asia but also in the world market. With such economic success, the government of South Korea feels a stronger national pride and now seeks to present new definitions of Korean identity with potential worldwide appeal, promoting a “Global Korea.” With this government’s newly-defined Korean identity, the government provides a more diversified fusion of music, still within the “traditional music” category, making it a cultural product of Korea.

In this paper, I argue that the current economy-centered government strongly influences traditional music policy and the traditional music field. As a result, the government has adopted the economic concepts of brand and branding into its traditional music policy. By branding traditional music as a national product, the government expects future economic benefit, albeit possibly indirect. Thus, in order to attract more potential international tourists or investors, the government holds an ownership of traditional music and chooses to exaggerate, dramatize, or diminish its characteristics, functions, and narratives. Through examinations on government divisions and their music projects, I clarify the government’s strong control over traditional music and its positional shift from tradition-preserved to producer of traditional music.
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ROMINIZATION AND NAMES

For the sake of simplicity and standardization, I use the current official romanization system for Korean words suggested by the National Institute of Korean Language (www.korean.go.kr) and the National Gugak Center (www.gugak.go.kr) for musical instruments and other music vocabulary. Where the names of Korean authors or musicians appear in Roman letters in books or on personal homepages, I follow the original; otherwise, given names appear first, followed by family name, including hyphens (e.g., Gil-dong Hong).
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Evolving Definition of Traditional Music

“Holding a G-20 Summit in Korea means Koreans are at the center of the world.” Such was President Lee Myung-bak’s sentiment on announcing that Seoul would host the 2010 G-20 meeting. The G-20 (Group of Twenty) is an international forum for economically leading countries, attended by the finance ministers and central bank governors of nineteen countries and the European Union, aimed at stabilizing financial markets and achieving global economic growth.¹ The 2010 G-20 Summit was held for two days, from November 11 to November 12 in Seoul, Korea, and neither the government nor the Korean people could hide their excitement at this significant opportunity to present to the world community their new Korean identity as something well-developed and fascinating.

To the government of Korea, membership in the G-20 and hosting the annual Summit were something more than simply participating in an economic forum: it signaled a remarkable change from passivity on the global scene to becoming a “leading” (seonjin) country a long-time dream. Koreans and their government felt greater

¹ The G-20 is the Group of Twenty Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (South Korea, Japan, China, Russia, U.S., Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Canada, Australia, South Africa, European Union, U.K., Italia, Germany, France, Saudi Arabia, India, Indonesia and Turkey). It was established in 1999 after the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis (www.g20.org). Emerging countries like South Korea with the Group of Eight (U.S., Canada, Germany, France, Italy, U.K., Russia, and Japan) joined as one of G-20. Republic of Korea chaired the annual Group of Twenty Summit in Seoul in 2010. The G-20 was established to overcome the economy crisis and stabilize the global economic growth.
confidence about national security and saw the necessity of improved global appeal of Korea’s distinguished culture. The economic growth of the so-called little dragons from the Asian stage to the World stage became great motivation for the presentation of a newly-defined Korea as high-fashioned, hip, and still unique in traditional culture, accompanying by a systematic and strategic marketing of Korea, its people, and its culture.

The government identified the need to reinforce strategic advertising systems for Korea internationally to match the recent rapid economic growth and elevated national status. In keeping with its current slogan, “Global Korea,” the government provided traditional music projects that reached out to the world. Beyond claiming traditional music as “our sound,” traditional music has been ambitiously branded and marketed as a Korean product to advertise the nation. The government is aiming at developing itself into one of the top-ranking nations as a brand, “Cultural Korea” (Munhwa Hanguk). In promoting Korea to the world, traditional music, which emphasizes and legitimizes a unique Korean identity, is an integral part of “Cultural Korea.”

In the late twentieth century, the South Korean government focused on presenting an identity distinct from those of neighboring Asian countries through preserving and restoring its traditions, including music. The National Gugak Center, the Korean Traditional Performing Arts Foundation, the Cultural Heritage Administration, and several other organizations under the direction of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, have endeavored for the systematic and strategic preservation and transmission of traditional music as a national symbol and identity marker of Korea. Traditional music has been continuously identified and promoted as “our sound,” in and outside of Korea.
However, in the twenty-first century, South Korea has seen enormous economic success, not only in Asia but also in the world market. Along with such economic success, the government of South Korea presents national pride and seeks to promote new definitions of Korean identity with potential worldwide appeal via “Global Korea.”

In this thesis, I argue that by branding traditional music as a national product, the economy-centered current government ambitiously blurs the definition of national music or *gugak* as something unique and traditional but also trendy and modern. In other words, the government’s description of *gugak* throughout branding is vague and mutable in order to satisfy the government’s needs. Thus, in order to attract more potential international tourists or investors, the government holds an ownership of traditional music and chooses to exaggerate, dramatize, or diminish its characteristics, functions, and narratives. To do so, musical transformation, new creation, and recontextualization are especially encouraged. Even if relatively “authentic” music is the subject, transformation and recontextualization occur to some degree, and only positive images, of course, are deliberately engaged to advertise the nation.

Branding traditional music, in fact, depicts the government’s strong control over traditional music and its positional shift from tradition-preserver to traditional music producer. In addition to supporting traditional music in order to strengthen national identity, the government has been exploring ways to popularize it as a musical culture to “compete” with musics from other cultures, European classical music, and popular music in- and outside of Korea. Through examining government-managed traditional music projects, I delve into the processes employed by the government in branding traditional
music as a national identity marker and, at the same time, as a popular product of Korea in the world “market.”

Branding traditional culture as a national icon, the government involves the redefinition of “Koreanness.” Then, what is Koreanness? Koreanness is often an ambiguous and very much mutable term depending on who defines it and who consumes it. I attempt to define it as something claimed by the government, in this case, to represent Korean nation. The definition of it continuously changes, of course. However, to give some generalized, typical, and clichéd ideas, hanbok (traditional dress), ancient temples, royal palaces, traditional instruments or orchestras, and traditional cuisine are often visual markers of Koreanness.

When the government seeks to define Koreanness or characteristics of the Korean nation, it provides only positive images, for the sake of national pride and public appeal. For example, the sorrowful sentiment and negative collective memories of the past, which are often related to “Arirang,” are effaced by the government in order to market the song as a “harmonizing” song (this point is discussed further in Chapter Four). Thus, sometimes government-defined Koreanness is steered toward appealing and positive national imagery. At other times, Koreanness is manipulated by an agency’s artificial processes toward dramatization and exaggeration, or abstraction.

Thus, a rigid definition of Koreanness does not provide a substantial explanation for the characteristics of Korea and its culture, but is instead a way of re-packaging Korea. The contents of that package vary depending on the political, social, and economic circumstances. The word itself does not have any core meanings, but rather, it
is only mutable periphery. Thus, it is partially beautified or glorified in order to lift up the national image and fascinate additional consumers who are potential tourists or investors.

By examining the current policy towards traditional music together with on-going projects and strategies, this thesis, based on my fieldwork in Korea during the summer and winter of 2010, focuses on how the governmental branding process for traditional music is used to present the current Korean identity of the twenty-first century. As Laurel Kendall states, “Traditions assume value as a consequence of contemporary concerns, needs, and imaginings” (Kendall 2011, 16); traditional music has been interpreted or utilized accordingly in different contexts. Once-popular music in the Joseon Dynasty or earlier was recognized as traditional music, marginalized in the early twentieth century; it became a national symbol in the late twentieth century, and it is now redefined to promote positive images of the nation.

After the political and social turmoil arising from Japanese colonization of the Korean peninsula (1910–1945) and the Korean War (1950–1953), the Korean government promoted strong nationalism to bring the people together and to legitimate national identity. The government endeavored to revive many elements of traditional culture. Since then, the government has continuously advocated traditional music as “our sound,” by creating specialized institutions, such as the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MCST) and the Korean Traditional Performing Arts Foundation (KTPAF), and by reviving the Bureau of Music from the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1910), now embodied as the National Gugak Center (NGC).

In the 1990s and the early twenty-first century, the music industry in South Korea expanded greatly with a remarkable increase in the number of music recordings, concerts,
and entertainment businesses, especially those in popular music owing to hallyu (“Korean wave”) fever. The hallyu, in which Korean popular culture—soap operas and popular songs—is consumed throughout most Asian countries, became motivation for the government and for some traditional musicians who sought to achieve worldwide recognition. With outside (Western or popular) influence, traditional music genres diversified, to include popular and fusion genres. The South Korean government is now leading and encouraging the recontextualization of traditional music to represent Korea’s modern identity through its support of numerous newly-created traditional musics. Along with globalization and the growth of international tourism, nation branding and the commodification of tradition became necessary not only to represent the national identity but also to make economic gain out of culture. The government heavily supports newly-created traditional music genres and related projects, as if in a compromise with an audience that is not so familiar with Korean traditional music. As producer, the government commodifies traditional music to attract the audience as consumers. By branding and promoting traditional music and distributing positive images of Korea, the government expects a bolstered traditional culture industry and increased international tourism and foreign investment. Traditional culture has become one major aspect of Korean capitalism.

In the late twentieth century, the desire to redefine Koreanness and to present a new, evolving image of the nation increased. Kendall highlights the socio-political and economic settlement as the recognition of needs for solidified Korean identity.

By the 1990s, South Korea had gained political stability, and a broad middle class enjoyed new forms of consumption and leisure, but South Koreans also expressed anxiety about what it meant to be Korean in a country replete with foreign commodities and cultural imports. (Kendall 2011: 16)
The more Korea has developed economically and accepted outside cultures, the greater the sense of crisis about losing Koreanness has grown. After the Korean War, the country was eager to get rid of the shadow of devastation. Once people did not have to worry about hunger, presenting Koreanness became a huge matter, and from it came the beginnings of branding traditional culture.

Branding (which will be discussed in depth in Chapter Three) is a commonly used word—sometimes as a form of Konglish (a pidgin misuse of English)—and a process for governmental traditional music (culture) projects, by which the government of Korea attempts to create popular national brands that can represent Korea. Branding is, in fact, a marketing strategy which usually begins with the naming of a company’s product, and the Korean government is focusing on the strategic popularization of Korean traditional music. Thus, branding, or brandhwa in Korean, should be understood as the marketing and advertising of Korean traditional culture by the government targeted mostly at foreign consumers.

These government projects show that the government not only serves as tradition-preserver, but also as a producer/investor, influencing the entire Korean traditional music industry and society (and vice-versa). Thus, although the government itself does not aim at direct economic benefits from its projects, its goals must be discussed in the light of clear concepts of their economic value and theories of consumerism.

1.2 Literature Review

Scholars like Martin Stokes (1997), Stuart Hall (1996), Simon Frith (1996), Thomas Eriksen (2002), and Gi-Wook Shin (2006) provide important theories and
resources on identity and nationalism. Their writings delve into the relationship between national (or ethnic) identities, culture, and tradition. Among these scholars, Stokes (1997) particularly emphasizes a social role of music as an identity marker. According to him, “music is socially meaningful not entirely but largely because it provides means by which people recognize identities and places, and the boundaries which separate them” (Stokes 1997: 5). Korean traditional music indeed provides Korean identity through the efforts of the government, whether it is demanded or not.

Hall states that national culture functions as a system of representation by “emphasizing origins, continuity, tradition, and timelessness” (Hall 1996: 5). In the case of Korea, by emphasizing continuity and the long tradition of gugak (national music/traditional music), master narratives, which declare that traditional music, or music of the past, is “our” distinctive sound and national music, have been successfully delivered to the public.

Frith defines identity as “a process not a thing, a becoming not a being” (Frith 1996 109). He emphasizes mutable identity, but I see identity as something that never changes, while its presentation—via branding—does. The core of identity itself is static but agency presentation continues to reshape and recontextualize. Frith argues that “an identity is always already ideal, what we would like to be, not what we are” (Frith 1996 123). Indeed, the Korean identity has been constantly reshaped and repackaged according to historical, social, and economic changes. The government has put emphasis on different aspects of traditional music, accordingly. The newly-defined Korean identity is presented through a process of branding traditional music. Just as Frith claims that
identity comes from outside, similar as in Hall’s idea, Koreanness is constantly re-defined since Korea has to and wants to appeal to others according to what they want.

Thomas Eriksen (2002) examines ethnic identities and awareness of “us” and “them.” He argues, “group identities must always be defined in relation to that which they are not—in other words, in relation to non-members of the group” (Eriksen 2002 10). Although he mainly focuses on ethnic identities, his theory may apply to my subject of Korean identity dealing with other national identities. However, due to the different nature of the comparisons—one ethnic group versus another—made in his work, I only refer to his fundamental ideas on the notion of “us.” Presentation of Korean identity, thus, matters when the government promotes “Global Korea” to a majority non-Korean audience.

Nationalism in Korea became a stepping stone for the preservation and revival of traditional music after the social and political confusion of the twentieth century. According to Shin (2006), nationalism in Korea, putting emphasis on tradition and national culture, was based on anti-Japanese and anti-communist development of an “ethnic nationalism.” Indeed, Korean traditional music as an element of distinct identity has established its role as a national symbol to legitimate Korea in the process of nation-building. The government has successfully elevated some traditional music—which earlier had not been enjoyed as music itself among casual listeners or non-Korean music experts—to the position of a national symbol globally.

Looking at the current government policy in South Korea, Sook Jong Lee and Kevin Hewison (2010) provide an important anthropological and economic study of globalization, neo-liberalism, and neo-liberal globalization. Lee and Hewison discuss the
Korean government’s domestic and international promotion of “Global Korea” as a brand based on “neo-liberal globalization,” which is a market-oriented concept employed for policy making.


So-yeong Lee (2005) provides ethnomusicological approaches to newly-created traditional music, changjak gugak. She identifies both “creating traditional music” (gugak changjak) and “traditional music fusion” (gugak fusion) as “hybrid music making,” but is clear in distinguishing between the two. She defines gugak fusion as part of popular music that can be sold in the popular market, and also claims that differences between the popularization and commercialization of traditional music need to be included in the discourse of Korean traditional music studies. She criticizes “commercial Orientalism” and argues that an artistic aspect and creativity are more important than popularity. Lee criticizes the reckless creation of newly-created traditional music, and holds a negative view of the commercialism of traditional music. She provides great information about newly-created traditional music, which the government highly supports, but does not include the government as a traditional music producer, which is my chief concern in this thesis.

Keith Howard, Hyun-Kyung Chae, and Hilary Finchum-Sung, each examines newly-created traditional music. Such newly-created traditional music, as a major part of
the government’s traditional music projects is often considered as representation of a newly-defined Korean identity. Chae (1996) astutely unravels *changjak gugak* and the social, historical, and political circumstances of its emergence, which is greatly useful for this study. She shows the evolution of *changjak gugak* and the government’s intervention in it. Finchum-Sung (2002) also perspicaciously defines and probes *changjak gugak* compared to *gugak* (traditional music) and the Korean identity represented through these musics in her dissertation, “*Uri Saenghwal Umak*: Music, Discourse, and Identity in South Korea.” In this study, I do not attempt to define *changjak gugak*. I delve instead into the presentation and representation of Korean identity through traditional music and newly-composed traditional music according to time, space, and people. These two different mediums of identity presentation influence not only musical transformation from traditional to newly-created, but also government policy on traditional music.

Although these resources approach *changjak gugak* ethnomusicologically and analytically, the role and function of the government is not the main subject. Although Howard (2006) examines the role of the government and its legislation for the cultural preservation system, in-depth information on current governmental policy and the commercialization of traditional music is not his subject. He uses the words “brand” and “rebranding,” but his subjects are not specific. Rather, the former is seen to determine “Koreanness,” while the latter is used to discuss only newly-created traditional music.

For Korean music history, Byong Won Lee (2007), In-pyeong Jeon (2000) and Bang-song (2000) Song provide acute Korean music history related to national and international socio-political history. Their findings supply me with a blueprint to understand the historical awareness of Korean identity distinguishing native music from
imported music, mostly from China since the Unified Silla era (668–935). The Japanese colonial period and the Korean War hampered the evolvement and prosperity of what is now called “traditional music,” but they also became major reasons driving the recognition and restoration of traditional culture.

1.3 Research Methodology

This thesis is based on my internship at the NGC in 2008 (February–April) and 2009 (June–July), and fieldwork in the summer and winter of 2010. I had ongoing relationships with informants established during internships at the NGC, and for my fieldwork in 2010, I went back to them for interviews and to gather data, publications, and recordings. These informants are government employees or Korean traditional musicians with bachelor or higher degrees in traditional music at the MCST, NGC, and the Korean Traditional Performing Arts Foundation. They were interviewed as traditional music experts and persons in charge of on-going events and projects.

Along with interviews my data-gathering has included comprehensive traditional music event reports from recent years, concert reports, publications, and CDs and DVDs produced by the government. These are not available for sale but were distributed to selected institutions, embassies, or scholars abroad, and were gathered through my informants. I also conducted library research on academic literature in the Korean language at the National Assembly Library in Seoul, Korea. I make use of non-scholarly sources, such as tourism advertisements, brochures, and governmental websites that deal with traditional music. These provide a basis for constructing an understanding of the
current government’s endeavors to project an imagined identity through branding traditional music pieces, genres, or performances as cultural products.

Collecting sound recordings was another integral part of my fieldwork. I did not make personal recordings but instead gathered recordings produced by the government. Again, not all of these recordings are available for sale, and thus, I had to ask my informants to lend or give me these materials.

I have also attended traditional music concerts, organized and funded by the government, that directly relate to my topic. I analyze such aspects as the purpose of the concert, the identities of the performers and audience, and how they interacted, in order to identify the government’s purpose in supporting such projects.

1.4 Positionality

Born and raised in Korea, I am both an insider and outsider in looking at this subject. Studying abroad in Hawai‘i as an international student has given me a multi-layered identity and complex identity presentation both in Korea and the U.S. My national identity as a Korean strongly influences my patriotism while I am outside of Korea. As a Korean, I have been influenced by the government’s master narratives; however, from my training in Western academia, I took advantage of being a Korean insider and also tried to be objective and neutral in analyzing the South Korean government’s policy on traditional music.

In the Korean traditional music field, I was an outsider who came from the U.S. and knew something about traditional music. While I was doing my internships and field work, I experienced recognition by the NGC employs as a “participating observer,”
which Helen Myers defined (1992). I was assigned to work mostly on English language-related projects such as translating documents, managing English web pages, and helping English-speaking visitors. Besides my English-related duties, I assisted with curatorial work and the archives. With my Korean language ability and a shared cultural background, I was warmly welcomed by employees at the NGC and other informants at KTPAF and MCST. However, since I do not come from the field of Korean traditional music but from Western ethnomusicology, I was musically an outsider to them. Most traditional musicians and employees went to the same high schools or universities, and they are *dongmun* (from the same school) as *seonbae* (elder graduates) and *hubae* (younger graduates). Thus, I did not fit into this category, which I found helpful for my objective observation for my research feeling slight freedom from hierarchical working atmosphere.

### 1.5 Significance

This study examines the presentation of the current Korean national images throughout traditional music, by which the government has decided to appeal to a global audience. In this, the government seeks ways to position traditional music as more than simply an ethnic marker, and supports major parts of the traditional music industry. Yet, despite that major role, there is still a great need to study governmental policy-making and its part in branding traditional culture. While brand and branding are very common words used in governmental traditional music projects and even as part of “nation branding”—all of which aim at the popularization of traditional culture and of Korea itself—full definitions of the terms are not yet clear. Why and how the Korean
government brands traditional cultural products will be tested. Branding or commodification of traditional music to fascinate foreign consumers is wide-spread strategy throughout the world, especially, in Asian countries. I hope this research will be valuable, not only in ethnomusicology, but also in Korean studies, anthropology, cultural studies, and economics.

1.6 Chapter Outline

In Chapter Two, “Historical Background: Becoming Traditional Music,” I briefly outline Korean music history in order to examine ethnic/national consciousness through music. The history of music in this study starts from as early as the Three Kingdoms period and extends to the present-day rule of President Lee Myung-bak, illuminating significant musical, social, and political events. Throughout Korean history, the transformation and evolution of music, recontextualizing the function of music, have occurred according to historical, social, and political circumstances, finally becoming “traditional” music out of a desire to regain popularity.

With that historical background, Chapter Three looks into the government’s use of the words brand, branding, or brandhwa in the strategic process of marketing traditional culture and the nation itself. The government—through the MCST, Presidential Council on Nation Branding (PCNB), NGC, KTPAF, and the Korea Tourism Organization (KTO)—promotes traditional music as an identity marker and cultural icon. By branding traditional music as a representative national product, the government defines new-Koreanness and, through that presentation of Korean identity, expects economic benefits.
In Chapter Four, I analyze data stemming from major traditional music policies or projects, including the National Gugak Center’s publications, recordings, and concerts, and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism’s traditional music festivals. I examine the question of whether traditional music has become national music (and an icon that represents Korean identity) through these publications and CD/DVD production, and if so, how it represents an imagined Korean identity and how it negotiates shifting global identities. Doing so, I consider whether traditional music (performances) and projects supported by the government accomplish the project’s ultimate goal targeted at potential consumers (casual Korean and foreign listeners without specific backgrounds in traditional music).

Chapter Five focuses on the “Arirang to the World Project” as an example of the governmental branding of traditional music. The project’s contents, policy, and results are carefully examined. Also, the regionalism, history, and musical structure of “Arirang” are studied. The ambition to make “Arirang” into a song of the world is evidence of the government’s aggressive pursuit of a new national identity, self-confidence, and desire for an improved international status, whereas the presentation of national identity through traditional music in the past was more based on internal self-consciousness, national spirit, anti-communism, and anti-Japanese colonialism. The project’s current status, success, future aims, and public reactions are discussed. Focusing on the Korean Traditional Performing Arts Foundation’s Arirang to the World Project, I examine how the government re-defines Korean identity in promoting “Arirang” as a national brand.
CHAPTER TWO

EVOLVEMENT OF KOREAN MUSIC:
“OUR MUSIC” VS. FOREIGN MUSIC

2.1.  Gugak (Traditional Music)

This chapter briefly illustrates the evolvement of Korean traditional music and its
definition in the social, political, and historical contexts of past and present-day Korea.
Throughout Korean history, music has played an important role in politics and in
everyday life. Korean music has not only served to distinguish the culture of Korea from
that of neighbors like China and Japan, but has also revealed interactions between Korea
and those countries, and, later, with the U.S. and Europe. Such international political
relationships and cultural exchange caused fusion of musics and transformation of the
native music. The music reflecting such social circumstances was continuously redefined
and named, according to varying ambitions.

The fusion of musics is not only a frequent phenomenon today, but has occurred
throughout Korean history. Historically, in fact, clear distinctions were made between
native and imported musics. For example, while the heavy influence of the Tang Dynasty
also revealed itself in music, distinctions were made between Korean music and imported
Tang music. As early as the Unified Silla period (668–936), the term hyangak was used in
referring to native court music, while tangak referred to music imported from Tang China
(until later in the Joseon Dynasty, music from China continued to be called tangak). Thus,
a nationalistic or ethnic recognition of the native culture existed, despite the Korean
court’s dependency on the Chinese court.
The term, *gugak*—literally “national music,” but more often translated as Korean traditional music—became generalized in referring to native music of the past in contrast to Western music, mostly European art and American popular music. Native court and folk music categorized as *gugak* shows continuous distinctions made between indigenous and imported music, as well as acculturation and assimilation of foreign music, and finally transformation of native music. Now the term, *gugak*, is even broader and more ambiguous, including not only music of the past but also newly-composed *gugak*, which combines traditional music and common Western music figures.

Thus, the process of “music” finally being recognized as “traditional music” is closely related to outside influence on native music over the course of time. However, before I delve into further discussion, it seems necessary to understand the Korean term, *gugak*. In the native language, *gugak*, while it literally means “national music,” is commonly understood as music of the past, or the music of ancestors, and thus, it is interchangeably used with *jeontong eumak* which literally means “traditional music.” However, even though the subtext of the term *gugak* may imply music of the past, the word does not necessarily indicate any time-based dichotomies, such as traditional versus contemporary, or old versus new. Rather, it denotes native versus foreign, or at least it did when the term first emerged.

Nowadays, *gugak* is part of *eumak*, which means “music” in general but frequently refers to popular or Western music. With the influx of Western culture—mostly American popular culture and European art/music—through Japan or directly from the U.S. during and after the Korean War (1950–1953), *yangak*, meaning “Western music,” was used as an antonym of *gugak*, as *hyangak* was to *tangak*. Eventually, *yangak*
came to be replaced by *eumak*, which literally means simply “music.” Since then, Western or Western-influenced music has been dominant and is more familiar to casual Korean listeners, and the term *yangak* is no longer used. Thus, imported music became the standard, displacing the music that had already existed.

### 2.2. Early Music-Making in the Three Kingdoms: Goguryeo, Baekje, and Silla

Because of its geography, Korea was never isolated from other countries, either physically or politically. It had long served China as its little brother and China maintained its interference in Korean politics. Korea’s relationship with Japan, as well, is longstanding and historically significant. During the Three Kingdoms period, the Baekje Kingdom (18 BC–AD 660) heavily influenced Japanese culture through the introduction of Buddhism to Japan (Song 2000, 9). The influence of Central and West Asian cultures was brought to Korea via the Silk Road.

Although the music of the Three Kingdoms period has been lost, evidence of its presence exists in mural paintings from the Goguryeo Kingdom and carvings on Baekje-era incense burners. While the exact year of its beginnings (as a confederation of tribal states) is in dispute, the Three Kingdoms period extends from before the Christian era to the seventh century, with Silla unification of the peninsula in 668. The first kingdom, Silla (57 BC–AD 935), was established by King Park Hyeokgeose in the southeastern region of the Korean peninsula. The Goguryeo Kingdom (37 BC–AD 668) was established by King Dongmyeong; many tomb paintings from the period depict musical instruments. The third kingdom, Baekje (18 BC–AD 660)—which shared much in
common culturally with Goguryeo—was established by King Onjo (r. 18 BC–AD 28) in the southwestern part of the Korean peninsula.

Cultural exchanges between Korea, China, and Japan were significant in the Three Kingdoms period, and musical hybridization, adaptation, acculturation, and assimilation occurred. In addition, musical instruments were imported from Xiyu in China (western Central China; currently, the Xinjiang region) (In-pyeong Jeon 2000, 43–46). Despite their large dependency on China, the Three Kingdoms were also subjective in music-making. Wang San Ak of Goguryeo created the *geomungo* (6-string zither); Ureuk of Baekje created the *gayageum* (12-string zither); the Silla *gayageum* was introduced to Japan (*Shiragi goto* in Japanese); and *giak* (outdoor dance music, *gigaku* in Japanese) was introduced to Japan in 612 by Mimaji of Baekje.
Figure 1. Map of Silla in the Sixth Century

Figure 2. Map of the Golden Age of Goguryeo in the Fifth Century

Figure 3. Map of Baekje in the Fourth Century
2.3. The Notion of Indigenous and Foreign Music in the Unified Silla (AD 668–936) and Goryeo (918–1392) Dynasties

Unified Silla (Tongil Silla) absorbed the Goguryeo and Baekje cultures as well as Tang and Central Asian cultures. Unified Silla was culturally well-developed and Buddhism flourished during the period. Along with the development of Buddhism in Silla, Beompae (“the sound of India”), or Buddhist ceremonial singing, was introduced in 830 (Jeon 2000, 97–98). One of the most significant aspects of this period is the separation of native music, called hyangak, from Chinese music, or tangak. The terms hyangak and tangak were used continuously until the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1910). Even though a major part of court music was imported from the Tang Dynasty and Central Asia, the development of hyangak in the court needs particular attention. As Silla was the first kingdom to unify the Korean peninsula, it can be understood as the kingdom’s use of native music to rationalize the unification, legitimizing and solidifying the new nation through Silla’s own music, rather than a borrowed one.

In the waning days of the Unified Silla, the Goryeo Dynasty was established in 918 and the Korean peninsula was reunified by Taejo (also known as Wang Gun). During the Goryeo era, aak, meaning “elegant music” (yayue in Chinese, gagaku in Japanese) was imported from the Song Dynasty (960–1279) of China in 1116. Aak was music for Chinese court ceremonies and was also used in the court ceremonies of the Goryeo Dynasty, and later, of the Joseon Dynasty. Imported aak instruments included the pyeonjong (bell chime) and pyeongyeong (stone chime). In the Goryeo Dynasty, music
was systematically performed, studied, organized, and transmitted by several departments at the court that continued until the Joseon Dynasty.\(^2\)

### 2.4. Development of Korean Music in the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1910)

Most of what is today called Korean traditional music emerged in the Joseon Dynasty, perhaps because of the relatively recent regency of the era or possibly due to the notation system developed during the period in the case of court music.\(^3\) Various musical genres, including *aak* (court ceremonial music), *yeonryeak* (court banquet music), *pansori* (narrative story-telling), *gagok* (classical singing), and *sanjo* (instrumental solo), emerged or matured during the Joseon Dynasty. Many *hyangak* pieces were composed as parts of *yeonryeak* in the court, and instrumental music for the elites and the middle class developed.

Court music of the Joseon Dynasty also served an important role as part of politics. As early as the Three Kingdoms period, Confucianism together with Chinese rites and ceremonies had been imported and employed in the courts of Korea. However, Confucianism had developed into a fundamental part of politics and philosophy by the time of the Joseon Dynasty, and both kings and politicians of the era appreciated ceremonial music as a major part of politics. It is well-known that Confucius enjoyed

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\(^2\) Music had been under the strong control of the court as part of politics. There were three departments which managed court music: Jeonakseo, Aakseo, and Gwanseupdogam. In addition, Akhak, the music bureau of the court, was established at the end of the Goryeo Dynasty; it became the prototype for the Jangagwon of the Joseon Dynasty, to which the Jeongakdan (traditional music orchestra) of the present-day National Gugak Center traces its origins.

\(^3\) *Jeongganbo* is a type of box notation which indicates rhythm, pitch, and pitch duration in a piece. *Jeongganbo* is still used, together with Western staff notation, in traditional orchestras, and at universities and traditional music high schools (see Jeon 2000, 179–84).
music and credited it as a part of virtue and politics. When a new king was enthroned, both the repertoire and the very tuning of scales to be performed at particular ceremonies were revised.

As much as music from China was appreciated, there was a strong nationalistic concern about the predominance of Tang music over native music. As an example, King Sejong (r. 1418–1450), whose creations included *Hunminjeongeum* (the Korean written language, now known as *hangeul*), enforced Music Policy Reform and created a notation system in 1447 (Jeon 2000, i). In addition, more *hyangak* pieces were created: for example, “Yeominrak,” “Jeongdaep,” “Botaepyeong,” and “Yeongsan Hoesang” (Jeon 1996, i; Song 2000, 32).

The following figures are early notation of “Yeominrak” written in *jeongganbo*. “Yeominrak,” meaning “enjoy with the people,” was performed at court banquets; today, the Jeongakdan of the NGC continues to play the piece. The *jeongganbo* notation of “Yeominrak” is rather simple compared to the one still used at the NGC, universities, and traditional music high schools.

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4 The *Analects of Confucius* (*Lunyu*) recounts discussions between Confucius and his students about music. The eighth chapter, *Taibo*, for example, directs one to “develop a loving heart for the good-natured and a loathing heart for evil things, stand at ceremonies [follow the decorum], and complete one’s personality with music” (Seong 2010, 227–28; translated by the author).

5 As part of the Music Policy Reform, King Sejong also published *Yongbieocheonga* from 1445 to 1447. A collection of ten books documenting songs, *Yongbieocheonga* contains *gasa* written in *hangeul*, *hangshi* written in Chinese (four characters and four lines), and accompanying explanations (Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea: www.cha.go.kr).
Figure 4. *Jeongganbo* of “Yeominrak” from Sejong Anal No. 22
Along with King Sejong’s efforts to bolster Korean music and separate it from Chinese music, tangak (aak) was assimilated into the native Korean musical style, beginning in the sixteenth century. As an example, tangak instruments were used in combination with Korean instruments. Tang instruments like the haegeum (2-string fiddle, similar to urhu) and ajaeng (7-string bowed zither) were used for hyangak (native music) (Jeon 2000, 231–32). Such instrumentation is still maintained. Nowadays in Korea, aak refers either specifically to Confucian ritual music (mummyoak), or, in a broader sense, to court music in general.

Out of the four music departments of the Goryeo Dynasty, two (Jeonakseo and Aakseo) were combined and renamed Jangakseo, while the other two (Gwanseupdogam and Akhak) were merged to form Akhakdogam. In 1466, however, the Akhakdogam was absorbed into the Jangakseo, the name of which was again changed to Jangagwon before 1470 during the reign of King Seongjong. In 1895, the Jangagwon was transformed into the Gungnaebu Jangryewon; it became Gyobangsa in 1897, and Jangakgwa in 1907 (see National Gugak Center: www.gugak.go.kr; Jeon 2000, i; Song 2000, 22). Interestingly, Jangakgwa currently is the Planning and Management Division of the National Gugak Center. The name was, however, borrowed from the traditional department, and today’s Jangakgwa is not a continuation of the 1907 office. Through its systematic administration, the court music of the Joseon Dynasty developed through the acculturation of already-imported tangak.

At the end of the Joseon Dynasty, during the reign of King Gojong, Western music started to gain popularity (Song 2000, 31; Chae 1996, 18–19). Hyun Kyung Chae states that “Korean traditional music on the contrary, especially that of aak [court music],
which symbolized the power of the King and the monarch, declined rapidly under the peoples’ demand for a new, modernized, egalitarian nation” (Chae 1996, 18). Even though it was not called “traditional music” then, native Korean music—especially the court music of the time—seemed to be regarded as old, not-modernized, and inegalitarian.

Chae points out that it was around this time (at the end of the Joseon Dynasty) that the word *gugak* emerged, to be distinguished from Western music. As there had been distinctions made between the native music, *hyangak*, and Chinese music, *tangak*, the awareness of native music as “Korean music” or *gugak* was not new, but the usage revealed more of a nationalistic idea than just geographic separation (i.e., *hyang* meaning native and *tang* meaning China, though not specifically the Tang Dynasty). With the emergence of the term, both *hyangak* and *tangak* were included under *gugak*. Thus, *tangak*—which had been considered to be foreign music—became less foreign thanks to the influx of Western music, which was completely foreign.

However, Chae defines *gugak* as an “abbreviated form of Han’guk umak [Hanguk eumak; Korean music]” (1996, 19). Reflecting Korea’s need to deal with more countries, including Russia, France, Japan, and other Western powers by that time, making reference to native music as *Hanguk eumak* indicates a more serious awareness of the Korean nation in distinction to other nations, compared to the time when native music was labeled as *hyangak*. 
2.5. A Dark Age of Korean Music in the Japanese Colonial Period (1910–1945)

Many scholars agree that the Japanese colonial period was a dark age for Korean traditional music. Japan’s dogmatic colonialism in Korea seized not only the land but the culture as well. Regarding the Japanese government’s suppression of Korean traditional music, Chae writes:

Japan’s thirty-six years of enforcing these strict policies had a major role in obliterating the unique musical languages of Korea. Korean traditional music was barely sustained, and only in areas where it could be practiced at a safe distance from major institutionalized musical activities. (1996, 20)

Bang-song Song also states that

Numerous pieces of the ritual music of the Choson [Joseon] Dynasty disappeared during the Japanese colonial period. The only surviving ritual music of Chongmyo [Jongmyo, royal shrine] and of the Confucian Shrines is that handed down by these students of the NCMI [National Classical Music Institute] after the Liberation. (2000, 34)

The Japanese government’s suppression of court and folk music strongly influenced the decrease of gugak during and after the colonial era. In addition to discrimination against the native culture, Western music, which was first introduced to Korea in the late nineteenth century, continued to flourish during the Japanese colonial period. Song states, “The characteristic of the Japanese colonial period was the uncritical acceptance of Western music by Korean musicians who were taught by Western missionaries or who had studied in Japan” (ibid., 31). Gi-wook Shin also points out the influx of Western culture: “Articles published in various magazines in the early 1920s provide ample evidence of the prevalence of Western values and ideas at the time” (Shin 2006, 125).
2.6. Traditional Music as a National Symbol in the Republic of Korea (1948–): Presentation of National Identity

The Korean War (1950–1953) brought enormous social turbulence, poverty, starvation, and death. The government of South Korea was desperate to recover from the tragic past and establish a stronger nation. In such tragic circumstances, music-making might seem almost impossible but, surprisingly, the National Gugak Center was founded on April 10, 1951 (National Gugak Center website: www.ngc.go.kr). Mercer notes that “identity only becomes an issue when it is in crisis, when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty” (1990, 43). Along these lines, the South Korean government tried to legitimize and solidify the national identity, in terms of domestic awareness and international presentation, via its distinguished culture. In fact, the tragic memory of colonization and war stimulated nationalism and self-awareness in Korea. According to Shin, “in response to colonial racism and international socialism, Korean intellectuals increasingly stressed the importance of distinctive tradition and national culture” (2006, 125).

The 1960s and 1970s were periods of economic development. Park Jeong-hee, who became president in a military coup, led a strong dictatorship in Korea. For economic growth, President Park remained in a close relationship with the United States of America. As a result, American cultural inflows continued. Such Western musical influence created a new traditional musical style, changjak gugak, newly-created traditional music. According to Chae, changjak gugak emerged since the 1960s, as a reflection of social changes while maintaining the “distinctiveness and superiority of the Korean heritage” (1996, 2). Thus, “traditional music” became no longer traditional as it was newly-created, with new flavors added for the expression of a new Koreanness.
Some scholars dispute the definition of *changjak gugak* and the extent to which the field should admit non-traditional musical features. Those conceptions of *changjak gugak* vary over time, from one scholar to another, and from musician to musician. Chae’s definition of *changjak gugak* as “newly-composed Korean Traditional music” might be too vague or confusing for a reader with no prior information, since “new” and “traditional” have opposing meanings. In this sense, Hillary Finchum-Sung’s definition of *changjak gugak*—literally “created gugak”—as “new compositions that are based on traditional [g]ugak structures and composed for Korean traditional instruments” is useful (2002, 7).

In the 1980s, traditional music, including *changjak gugak*, gradually regained popularity. Universities and high schools formed their own *pungmul pae* (percussion groups). Laurel Kendall claims that the indigenous heritage tradition was revitalized with official preservation projects and popular movements associated with political protests in the 1980s (Kendall 2011, 16). The 1988 Seoul Olympics was one of the most important and significant events for Korean music history in presenting *gugak* and *changjak gugak* as music that represented Korea. It was the first major international event through which Korea could convey its national images in which East and West meet, putting behind its tragic history.

Both Chae and Margaret Walker Dilling recognize the Seoul Olympics as a

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6 As a form of *changjak gugak*, *samulnori* (literally, playing four objects; i.e., a percussion ensemble) was invented by Kim Deok-su in 1979. Kim and his group played four percussion instruments: *kkwaenggari* (leading gong), *janggu* (hour-glass shaped drum), *buk* (barrel drum), and *jing* (large gong). *Samulnori* derived from farmer’s outdoor music; however, it was newly-created for urban stage settings. Since its creation, *samulnori* and its dynamic rhythms have become one of the favorite genres of both Korean and foreign audiences. Thus, along with the success of the genre, it became one of the most common musical genres that appear either at national events or in TV commercials to advertise the nation.
watershed event for the Korean government and traditional music circles. Chae points out the symbolic meaning of traditional music in terms of the presentation of the Korean people, culture, and nation. The presentation of Korea, not as archaic, but as modernized based upon tradition, started around the time of the Seoul Olympics.

This new traditional music enjoyed a tremendous surge in popularity when the 1988 Seoul Olympics featured [changjak gugak] as the theme music, and then again in 1994, when the “Year of Traditional Music” decreed by the South Korean government promoted frequent performances of new traditional music in various symbolic venues. Approaching the dawn of a new century, the nation seems genuinely excited about the possibility of having finally found the “true” Korean music. (Chae 1996, 3)

For her part, Dilling argues that

[A]ccording to ceremony planners, [the Seoul Olympics in 1988] was a showcase for Korean traditional music in its uniqueness and excellence, a synthesis of East and West in sound, and a vehicle for attracting culturally diverse sensibilities to a sympathetic resonance with the Korean people. (Dilling 2007, 169)

With the economic growth and rising status of the country in international affairs, the government of South Korea had to present Koreanness on a global scale. Tsuyoshi Hasegawa claims that “[n]ationalism in China and South Korea is an expression of their growing confidence in their own economic power” (Hasegawa and Togo 2008, 2). Chae also states that

National pride and solidarity among Koreans have grown strong with the remarkable economic recovery of the late 1970s. South Koreans, especially the younger generations, who used to be so dismayed by the loss of the nation’s cultural identity, have embraced the new musical tradition based on the traditional art form, believing that it can represent a unique and ideal Korean Culture. Thus new traditional music, which started with an idealistic goal among a small group of composers, has been accepted with great enthusiasm by the public. (1996, 184)

_Changjak gugak_ in the 1960s and 1970s earned its fame due to strong nationalism; however, reasons for interest in fusion music among the even-younger generations of the 2000s are neither simple nor clear. The increase in _changjak gugak_ and
its composers could be due to the trend of exposure to more diverse sources, ambition to satisfy more diversified audiences, increased support from the government, or economic reasons—for example, to earn a better salary.

In the 2000s, Korea surmounted the economic hardships of the late 1990s. The nation repaid its debt to the International Monetary Fund, and again tried to broadcast positive images to attract foreign tourists and invite foreign capital. Korean popular culture, in the so-called hallyu, earned a large audience in many Asian countries, including China, Thailand, Malaysia, and Vietnam (Korean Herald 2008). Thanks to hallyu, the number of foreign tourists rapidly increased and the government took this as an indication of the necessity of strategic presentation of the nation and its culture. Promoting “Dynamic Korea” and “Sparkling Korea” as slogans of the MCST and the Korea Tourism Organization, the government aimed at systematic advertisement of the nation and its culture. Since 2009, the new government again has the intention to present Korea as economically and culturally developed.


Briefly summarizing the musical history of Korea, I have examined how the music of Korea has been defined, reflecting social, political, and economic circumstances. The influx of music from other places was continuous, and a fusion of such music with native Korean music was the result. The traditional distinction of native music and non-native music, hyangak versus tangak, brought another type of distinction, gugak versus yangak, as Western music was introduced to Korea, and finally, jeontong eumak versus eumak. As changjak gugak is new musical creation that is based on any

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kind of traditional musical feature—including, for example, instruments, pentatonic scale, timbre, motivation, or mood—the government is generous to the new style in order to depict cultural diversity, and images of a nation globalized yet distinct and traditional.

Throughout Korean history, it is notable that when a new dynasty or nation was built, native/traditional music was emphasized. The notion of “native sound” existed in the Unified Silla for the legitimization of the first unification of the peninsula. The nationalistic idea that Koreans should perform “our sound” earned strong viability in the early Joseon Dynasty. And, after liberation from the Japanese occupation, the government of Korea strongly promoted and educated students in traditional music as “our sound” to bolster national culture that was forgotten during the colonial period. Thus, native/traditional music has historically played an important role in nation building, forming a cycle in the defining process of Korean music. After the phase of native/national music being emphasized, influx of foreign music occurred followed by acculturation of it and fusion of the native and foreign. In such a process, resistance also occurs among the government, musicians, or the people. Finally, a new form of music is defined to be Korean music.

The music of Korea, which has never been isolated from foreign sources, has reflected international relations and cultural exchanges. The government of Korea has consistently used traditional music as a national symbol even though the definition of it and the purpose of that use may vary. Sometimes, the dominance of foreign music was viewed negatively; at other times, the government encouraged its citizens to follow the global trend or to soak in foreign elements to present a fashionable and globalized Korea. Today, the government eagerly accepts fusion in traditional music. In the following
chapters, I discuss how the current government utilizes *changjak gugak* as a subject to brand in advertising the nation and the music itself for better global appeal.
CHAPTER THREE
BRANDING KOREA THROUGH MUSIC

3.1. Brand, Branding, and Brandhwa

For an in-depth examination of the government’s traditional music policy, projects, and approach to traditional music, I first need to define a few terms. In Korea, “brand,” “branding,” and “brandhwa,” are commonly-used terms for the government’s projects related to traditional culture. The government and governmental divisions which I discuss above often mention these words, and branding is their major strategy in promoting traditional music. Although these are foreign words (waeraeeo) in Korea, they are written in hangeul (Korean letters) with Korean phonetics: burand (브랜드), buranding (브랜딩), and, combining English and Korean, brandhwa (브랜드화, “to make into a brand”). In the use of these words, there are, of course, some differences in nuance from their English cognates.

In fact, as in English, branding is a term usually used in consumer culture. Branding is a marketing strategy that promises the first ownership of a product. According to the Oxford Dictionaries Online, brand as a noun is “a type of a product manufactured by a particular company under a particular name.” Brand as a verb is “to assign a brand name to” (Oxford Dictionaries Online). In this thesis, a brand refers to a cultural, ethnic, or national symbol that is to be developed as a cultural product targeted at international consumers. Thus, a brand in traditional music projects can be understood as a piece, genre, performance, or the entire body of traditional music produced by Korea.
The government of Korea positions these musics under the name of “Korea.”

One might confuse the use of the words *brand* or *branding* in Korea with terms such as *cultural symbols, icons, and trademarks*. These latter are words that represent a cultural identity mostly with long traditions, originality, and uniqueness. However, cultural symbols, icons, and trademarks are not always defined or determined by the government. They can be things or persons that are recognized due to their long presence, or they may be promoted by the government for the sake of the national spirit, to bring people together and to find a nation’s roots, but not necessarily to promote them to the world community.

Brands used in the cultural projects of the Korean government also require characteristics such as long tradition, originality, and uniqueness, but equally emphasized are the government’s ownership, international presentation, economic benefits, and the government’s artificial processes that polish them as cultural products, with the potential to fascinate international consumers. Thus, brand is distinguished from icons, symbols, or trademarks by the government’s economic-centered intent to canonize the repertory as national products. If required, the government will even become actively involved in elaborating the repertory for better appeal.

The reasons that the Korean government uses the word *brand*, and not *symbol, icon, or product*, should be understood in terms of the governmental expectation of economic benefits, even indirect ones, such as an increase in incoming international tourists, attractiveness to foreign investment, and stimulation of active export trade, through providing positive and familiar images of Korean brands. In fact, the current
South Korean regime focuses on economics more than other aspects. For economic success, the government seeks ways to “globalize” Korea.

With the slogan of “Global Korea,” the conservative Lee Myung-bak government has demanded not just liberalization but ever more attention to policies that promoted “globalization.” Korea has increased its foreign assistance, encouraged internationalization amongst its people…and is seeking to be a more active participant in global governance mechanisms such as G20. Since his electoral victory…“Global Korea” has become a brand to be promoted locally and internationally. (Lee and Hewison 2010, 182)

Lee and Hewison claim that the current Korean government is based on “neo-liberalism,” which they define as “something of a catch-all for a range of supposed market-oriented ideas and interests and an ideological position on the role of market and state in economic life” (ibid., 183). Traditional music policies follow this “neo-liberalism” by employing the process of branding.

In order to delve into the current government’s branding policies, I first examine the MCST’s aim and attitude in managing traditional music projects. Second, I visit the NGC, which is the government’s major traditional music institution, to examine its ongoing projects, brands, and imagined identity. Third, I briefly discuss the PCNB in order to find out the government’s position on branding the nation. Finally, I examine TV commercials produced by the Korea Tourism Organization and how traditional music is incorporated and understood in the nation branding of these advertisements.

3.2. Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, and Other Governmental Divisions

To consider the branding process for traditional culture at the governmental level, it seems necessary to briefly discuss the governmental divisions that manage traditional culture (music) projects. I will examine most of these in-depth in later
chapters with related subjects. Since many institutional names appear, I wish to clarify those first, in order to provide basic information about the institutions, their goals, and their tasks.

First of all, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MCST) is the highest government office dealing with all culture, sports, and tourism related policies and projects. Other institutions, which will be discussed below, are either part of, managed by, or supported by the MCST. The Ministry’s ultimate goal is to make “Culture Enjoyed by Everyone: Happy Republic of Korea.”

![Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism Logo](image)

Figure 5. Logo of the Ministry of Culture Sports and Tourism

The responsibilities of the MCST, which include culture and arts, the tourism industry, national library planning, sports, traditional history museums, media, and advertising, are divided among eleven bureaus. There are eleven subsidiary institutions, including the National Gugak Center, the Museum of Korea, the Folk Museum, the Theater of Korea, and the Korean National University of Arts, as well as the Cultural Heritage Administration, which is closely related to the MCST.

The MCST serves to 1) stimulate “contents projects” of the next generation (meaning creating media or art forms especially targeted to the global market); 2) bolster
the tourism industry; 3) foster competence in sports; and 4) brand “Cultural Korea” (*munhwa Hanguk*). Through projects and policy-making in these four areas, the MCST aims to provide “fair opportunity and competition,” by distributing Korean culture for all to access. It desires to legitimize the national identity through its unique culture and develop a creative national culture (www.mcst.go.kr).

![Diagram of MCST and Subsidiary Institutions]

**Figure 6. The MCST and Subsidiary Institutions**

The National Gugak Center (NGC), established in 1951, is the primary traditional music institute in Korea, and includes three orchestras—Jeongakdan (court music orchestra), Changjak akdan (newly-created traditional music orchestra), and
Minsokakdan (folk music orchestra)—as well as a dance theater troupe, concert halls, a research office, and a Korean traditional instrument museum. The NGC provides weekly, monthly, and annual concerts, publishes books and brochures, produces CDs and DVDs, and holds workshops to teach traditional musical instruments to foreigners at the Center and through outreach. The Center makes a claim to historical pedigree as the inheritor of the tradition of Iwangjik Aakbu, the court music bureau of the late Joseon Dynasty and the Japanese colonial period. NGC endeavors for the “globalization of traditional music,” “popularization of traditional music,” and “systematization of traditional music” (www.ngc.go.kr).

Along with the MCST and the NGC, the Korean Traditional Performing Arts Foundation (KTPAF), founded in 2007, is another important institution dealing with the traditional music of Korea.

Figure 7. Logo of the Korean Traditional Performing Arts Foundation
(From its website: www.ktpaf.org)

As a public corporation, the KTPAF provides services similar to those of the NGC: “1) revive and abet new creations of traditional performing arts; 2) popularize and industrialize [commercialize] traditional culture; 3) distribute traditional culture among the socially marginalized classes; and 4) globalize traditional culture [popularize it worldwide]” (www.ktpaf.org).

While not music institutions, the Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA), the Presidential Council on Nation Branding (PCNB), and the Korea Tourism Organization
(KTO) all have significant impact on the recognition and promotion of Korean culture, including its musical heritage. The CHA manages all national and municipal designations of cultural heritage, including Intangible Cultural Heritage, a designation assigned to much traditional music (www.cha.go.kr). The PCNB was established on January 22, 2009 to enhance Korea’s national status and prestige in the international community by implementing systematic and comprehensive strategies.

Launched to raise awareness of the Korean brand among people all over the world, the PCNB has as its central mission to inform the world about Korea. The PCNB is dedicated to promoting Korea’s image as a country that contributes to international society, that produces world-class products and services, and that respects other cultures (www.koreabrand.go.kr).

Figure 8. Logo of the Presidential Council on Nation Branding
(Image provided by the PCNB via e-mail)

The presence of the PCNB and its aim, “to create a caring nation loved by all,” reveal the government’s strategy to advertise the nation itself and its traditional culture in order to present a new definition of Korean identity.

The KTO also uses traditional music to represent the nation. Television commercials about Korea are produced to bolster tourism. In the commercials, traditional music often depicts a unique and exotic Korea. The KTO as a public corporation serves to establish the image of a “fascinating touristic Korea,” contributing to economic
development (kto.visitkorea.or.kr). KTO introduces its corporate philosophy as “To improve the quality of life in Korea and spread Korean culture worldwide through the strengthening and development of the tourism industry.”

Figure 9. Logo of the Korea Tourism Organization
(From its website: www.visitkorea.or.kr)

3.3. **National Gugak Center: Representation of Korean Traditional Music**

In the past, the government, through the NGC, focused on perpetuating “authentic” traditional music. Lee (2000) points out that interpretation and preservation of manuscripts from the Joseon Dynasty were popular research topics among Korean musicologists during the 1960s and ’70s. However, in 2004, the NGC expanded its mission to seek the perpetuation and popularization of a variety of traditional music genres and formed Changjak akdan, the newly-composed traditional music orchestra. Changjak akdan, consisting of younger musicians, is as active as Jeongakdan. The NGC claims that Changjak akdan reflects contemporary society, while managing and developing *changjak gugak* for the future (www.gugak.go.kr).

The goal and purpose of the NGC as stated on its website is to “preserve,

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7 The NGC, as a major traditional music institute, promotes *gugak* by providing concerts of both traditional and newly-created music, resources, conferences, workshops, and lectures for both Koreans and non-Koreans. The NGC at its present location in Seoul opened in 1988, and three additional branches have since been opened in Namwon (1992), Jindo (2004), and Busan (2008).
transmit, and create traditional music that can be loved by the people”—a goal also embedded in its slogan, which states that “the NGC creates the tradition of the future.” Through these, the NGC emphasizes the importance of the preservation and transmission of traditional music and yet suggests a transformation of traditional music to negotiate the shifting Korean identity between that of the past and in the future.

The NGC significantly contributed to the representation of Korean identity that the government has assigned. The Center concentrated on preserving traditional music and presenting it as the national symbol, and yet has evolved in its role. It has reflected the government’s redefinition of Korean identity through music; such process is seen explicitly in the Center’s English name changes. Howard summarizes the modern history of the NGC since its official reestablishment with the endorsement of the President:

The National [Gugak] Center opened in the Pusan enclave in 1951 with just 13 musicians and three administrators. Although the Korean name remains intact, its English name has changed over the decades as its brief has evolved to include dance and folk music. Initially known as the National Classical Music Institute, in 1988 it became the Korean Traditional Performing Arts Center, and in 1995 the National Center for Korean Traditional Performing Arts. (Howard 2006, 52)

The change in the English name of the NGC is worth a brief discussion. As Howard mentions, the Center’s Korean name, Gungnip Gugagwon, has remained the same since its opening, while its English name has been changed a number of times. On the one hand, in the Korean version, the word gugak has been maintained since it is simple and can refer to broader music or dance genres, even changjak gugak. On the other hand, multiple factors drove the changes in English: first, the NGC’s focus expanded to include dance and folk music; second, better English translations emerged along with an increased number of Korean scholars trained in Western disciplines, including Byongwon
Lee, Hye Kyung Uhm, Chan E. Park, Hyun Kyung Chae, Yong Shik Lee, and Heesun Kim, who influenced the representation of traditional music; and third, Western scholars who study Korean music, such as Alan Heyman, Robert Provine, Keith Howard, Nathan Hesselink, Andy Sutton, Heather Willoughby, and Hilary Finchum-Sung, provided more objective understandings of traditional music and the NGC.

In fact, the name, National Center for Korean Traditional Performing Arts, was again changed in 2010 to National Gugak Center. Deliberately or not, “National Gugak Center” exhibits some attitudinal changes. Koreanness is more directly expressed by including a romanized Korean word, revealing the attempt to refashion gugak as not just a Korean term referring to traditional music but to make it into a representative cultural product which the government often uses as a brand. In addition, the new name indicates that the presence or status of the NGC is well-known, compared to its state in the past, when it had to explain what it was.

Despite both changes in the name of the Center and the recontextualization of the musicians of the NGC and their repertoire, the claim is made that its tradition traces back to the court music department of the past, even though the NGC Jeongakdan is not the only group playing court music. According to the website of the NGC, “since the opening of the center, musicians of the Jeongakdan were gathered and they transmit our own court music, elite music, and classical music” (www.gugak.go.kr).

It is interesting to see how the government, via the NGC, has emphasized the role of the Center as the successor to the traditional court music department, Jangagwon.

The National [Gugak] Center rightly sees itself as the inheritor of a long tradition, going back well before 1116. Celebratory volumes to mark the thirtieth, fortieth, and fiftieth anniversary. . . the fifth year of the reign of Shilla’s King [Jindeok], is the date given in the twelfth-century History of the Three Kingdoms (Samguk
beside a list of court music officers at the so-called [eumseongso] under the Board of Rights (Yebyu). (Howard 2006, 51)

My intent here is not to criticize the imagined identity of the NGC’s traditional orchestra, but rather to point out the government’s purpose in promoting the NGC as the successor to the tradition of the court music department. By establishing a specialized traditional music institution, the government endeavored to perpetuate a once-weakened tradition, and, it seems, to revive the autonomous regime of the past, by reestablishing a department that had previously existed. The constructed identity of the Jeongakdan and the NGC is enough to make people believe that the music they provide is the “authentic” court music or the real national music. In other words, the genre that they play is court music but the function of it has changed from court banquet or ritual music to urban entertainment and presentation of the national identity.

Thus, traditional music as a national symbol in contemporary Korea is constructed rather than real. Nonetheless, the existence of such a governmental institute provides the presence of a long history, with the chance to present characteristics of Korea and its people, at least partially, and further, reinforces an established nationhood.

3.4. **Gugak Projects**

In the course of its economic growth and technological development, Korea encountered influences from all over the world and embraced changes in traditional music. In the beginning—after liberation and in the 1950s—the government focused more on reviving and restoring *jeontong gugak* rather than supporting *changjak gugak*. However, today’s government has also been a great patron to *changjak gugak*, in contrast
to the government’s attitude until the early 1980s, which sought to ensure the persistence of traditional music. The dual positions of the government may not provide a single, unified image of traditional music but do encourage diverse traditional music activities and performances. When the government is supportive of the newer genres and is open to changes in conventions, it can also allocate resources to distribute those renovated and mixed musics labeled as newly-created Korean traditional music. In so doing, the government presents Korea as both traditional and contemporary.

The gugak projects managed and supported by the government may be musically and broadly divided into two categories: jeontong gugak and changjak gugak, which seemingly share both ultimate goals of presenting Korean identity and making traditional music popular. However, there certainly are differences between the two categories. Projects incorporating traditional genres seek to elevate the status of traditional music, gain popularity for it in everyday life, and distribute the unique traditional culture of Korea on a global scale.

Changjak gugak efforts, however, bolster the traditional music industry, to fascinate a wider audience and create a new Korean tradition. In contrast to jeontong gugak, changjak gugak is inclusive of foreign musical features and encourages renovation, Westernization, hybridization of diverse cultures, and fusion incorporating elements of popular music. Changjak gugak is reflective of technological development, mobility, cosmopolitanism, and globalization, and echoes the government’s negotiation of identity between the indigenous and foreign, original and affected, different and similar.

The two categories of gugak demarcate different government attitudes toward traditional music genres. Traditional genres maintain conservative practice and
interpretation of the “authenticity” of traditional music, especially in the case of court music or for pieces that are written down. Despite the undeniable recontextualization of the music, the preservation and perpetuation of traditional music do not allow much flexibility for change and musical evolution. Uniqueness, differences from others, long history, elegance, and loftiness are key terms for this category. By preserving and promoting traditional music, the government seeks differentiate itself from other nations.

By the late twentieth century, *changjak gugak* was often used to represent the current Korean identity that the government wished to project to the world. Without a doubt, Korean traditional music has been promoted by the government as a vivid ethnic identity marker. The 1988 Seoul Olympics, in particular, marked a great turning point in the government’s conception of “Korean music” from traditional music of the past to pop, newly-created, and fusion music, as well as the transformation of brand images that the Korean government had been trying to emphasize and market. In order to sell the economically and culturally developed, modernized, and globalized (i.e., Westernized) Korea to the world, Seoul Olympics planners used not only traditional music but also Western, newly-composed, and popular music (see chapter two). Since then, a number of newly-created traditional music pieces have been composed and performed, and the definition of “traditional music” has been continuously redefined.

Another reason may be that the government’s goal to present national images as trendy and yet distinct could be well expressed through *changjak gugak*. Shows like “Nanta,” which is a contemporary music and dance show based on *samulnori* rhythms, feature the 2010 Korea TV commercial as a representative image of Korea. “Nanta” is partially traditional or Korean but very much cosmopolitan and hybrid. *Changjak gugak*
is supposedly a fashionable Korean brand reflecting the cultural hybridity and diversity of present-day Korea in embracing globalization. Changjak gugak projects are, thus, a process of re-packing (re-defining) gugak to be a reflection of contemporary Korea; this well-packaged music becomes a product of Korea.

3.5. Branding Nation through Traditional Music

In its frequent efforts to advertise the nation, the government of South Korea seems to make its appeal with a mixture of diverse cultures. Not limited to relatively “authentic” traditional music as a Korean brand, changjak gugak generally plays a significant role in national branding. Since the 1990s, the South Korean government has systematically and officially advertised and branded Korea as a product. In Korean tourism advertisements, music represents the Korean identity, as continuously changed and re-defined by the government. To study the current images of Korea that the government wants to emphasize, I look at TV commercials produced in the years 2008, 2009, and 2010. The KTO, supported by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (which became the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism in 2009), used the theme (and logo) of “Korea Sparkling” in 2008 and 2009. Since the KTO is dependent on the MCST, the advertisements themselves are closely related to the government’s master plan.
“Korea Sparkling” (2008) starts with a traditional tune played on solo *gayageum* (12-string zither). During the first eight seconds, the soft and simple melody is played until the *jing*, a large gong, punctuates the melody. The *gayageum* tune and the accompanying scene with mountains, river, and a traditional boat provide the image of “morning calm,” which was a typical impression of Korea among foreign visitors in the early 1900s. (Thus, “morning calm” became the famous line adopted by Korean Air.)

After the *jing* hits, a *samulnori* ensemble joins in. *Samulnori* literally means “playing four objects”; here, the four objects are *jing* (large gong), *kkwaenggari* (small gong), *buk* (barrel drum), and *janggu* (hour-glass shaped drum). *Samulnori* is an “innovation of the genre,” from farmers’ outdoor music to an urban staged genre, created by Deoksu Kim in 1978. *Samulnori* has since become one of the most popular of Korean traditional musical genres (Hesselink 2004). It is a type of “invented tradition,” as defined by Eric Hobsbawm:

> Invented tradition is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. (1983, 1)

In this ad, *samulnori* serves as transition from the traditional *gayageum* solo to the electronic percussion that follows. The rhythmic sound of *samulnori* smoothly leads to the electronic beats and to the Korean people’s World Cup slogan, “*Dae han min guk!*”
(calling out the country’s name in the Korean language).

Example 1. Sparkling Korea 2008. 30 seconds TV commercial. Gayageum introduction

Traditional music and Western or pop music-influenced electronic sounds are alternately played with fast changes of imagery featuring Korean nature scenes, samulnori and a girl on a traditional swing, break dancers, mass transportation and an older man enjoying a soccer game on his cellular phone, Korean people enthusiastically supporting the 2002 World Cup, a traditional circus in the center of downtown Seoul, and nightclubs. The advertisement starts with the morning calm, proceeds through a fun and happy daytime, and ends with dynamic nightlife.

“Korea Sparkling” (2009) is similar in format to the 2008 advertisement, but the government’s definition of “Korean music” is much more of a fusion in this new version. It continues to use the same instrument, the gayageum, but, while the melody played in the 2008 advertisement was based, at least in the beginning, on the traditional pentatonic scale, Johann Pachelbel’s “Canon” is played on gayageum in the 2009 version. In fact, the background music is “Canon B-boy” played by Sookmyung Kayageum Orchestra. Pachelbel’s “Canon in D” is adored by traditional musicians in Korea as part of their
Western music repertoire and the piece often appears in other TV commercials and movies.

Although the “Canon” is a melody-oriented piece, the gayageum emphasizes its percussive sound and serves to lead to electronic percussion. As in the 2008 ad which used Korean voices (in shouts of “Dae han min guk”) as an instrument, Korean voice is also used in the 2009 advertisement. The use of shouting voices directly describes the government’s representation of Korean people as enthusiastic, dynamic, and fun. Images which appear in the ad are of nature and the four seasons, a gayageum player, food, Lotte World (one of the largest theme parks), K-pop, a ski resort, and the Han River, under the copy “Countless pleasures.” And, in describing many places, the images change very quickly to the fast tempo of electronic percussion and scratching sounds. This advertisement introduces touristic sites rather than abstract images of Korea and Koreans. The tourist attractions are relatively modern and capitalistic venues, and the familiar Western tune, “Canon,” dims down the traditional Korean identity. However, the government re-defines this music as “Korean” because such a Western sound is presented through a traditional instrument, the gayageum.
Example 2. Sparkling Korea 2009. 30 second commercial. Gayageum and Beat Box

For the advertisement from 2010, the Korea Tourism Organization changed their theme from “Korea Sparkling” to “Korea Inspiring.” In the new government of President Myong-bak Lee, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism was merged with the Ministry of Sports and renamed the Munhwa Cheyuk Gwangwang-bu, or Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, in February 2009. The theme of the MCST is “Korea Be Inspired”; however, the advertisement’s title is “Korea Inspiring” and its copy reads “Be one with earth and sky.” Beyond the change in its theme, “Korea Inspiring” (2010) is quite
different from “Korea Sparkling” (2008 and 2009). Instead of using fusion and Western or popular music-influenced sound effects, “Korea Inspiring” employs a traditional buk (barrel drum) solo, which had also been used in the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

Not only the sound but also the images featured are different from those in the previous ads. A traditional dancer performs seungmu (literally “monk’s dance,” it is a type of solo folk dance inspired by Buddhism; it was designated as National Important Intangible Cultural Heritage No. 27 in 1969), with traditional sites or nature as background. Nothing like the earlier high-tech, urbanized, and young images is shown, except for the last scene in which the city can be viewed in the distance beyond the traditional architecture of the palace, so one can see both traditional and modern buildings in Seoul. The music is entirely traditional, background scenes are traditional, and the dancer is traditional as well.

Thus, in the third version, the government re-defines Korean music as exclusively traditional music. However, there is an irony in this advertisement. Although the drumming is traditional, the absence of “music” or melody seems to de-emphasize the “exotic,” “odd,” or different characteristics of Korean timbre for the foreign audience.

The difference between the two “Korea Sparkling” (2008 and 2009) ads and “Korea Inspiring” (2010) is that, on the one hand, the “Korea Sparkling” ads depict Korea as the one inspired by other cultures and capable of presenting a hybridity of cultures. On the other hand, in “Korea Inspiring” (2010), the government positions its nation and culture as the subject inspired by nature, which ultimately inspires other cultures and peoples, as condensed in the line, “Korea Inspiring.” Just as the National
Gugak Center changed its name to incorporate a Korean word, the 2010 ad shows more subjectivity and national pride.

The music in the tourism advertisements is supposedly “Korean music” representing Korea, its people, and the culture as defined by the Korean government. While the government tried to promote and preserve traditional music as the national symbol until the third quarter of the twentieth century, the Korean government of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries has been emphasizing more hybrid and commodified music to present and represent the current national and ethnic identity. Rather than a unified national identity and ethnic homogeneity, various national characteristics and cultural diversity are emphasized in current Korean tourism advertisements.

The Korean government constantly re-defines what “Korean music” is to provide space for images of the nation to appeal to the world community and tourists, and such a definition will keep changing according to social, political, and economic priorities. “The state agenda is less concerned with issues of authenticity and historical accuracy than are scholars. The primary issue, as promoted by government, is the dissemination of indigenous culture” (Howard 2006, 36). The recontextualization of traditional culture is a common phenomenon in most societies. However, it is interesting to see how music is continually affected by social variables and outcomes. Once, Korean music was defined as the heritage of the past; then, it was re-defined as the hybrid of traditional, pop, and Western music. In “Korea Inspiring” from 2010, Korean music is re-defined as a heritage of the past once again but one that can be easily accepted by other cultures. Authenticity does not matter here, but rather how Korean music is defined or redefined by the
government in its campaigns in order to express its modern national identity and pursue profits in capitalist society. Korean music, once defined as mostly cultural inheritance from the past, is now being redefined by the government to facilitate the promotion of Korea’s new image that features a high-tech, international, multi-cultural, and foreign-friendly nation.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE GOVERNMENT’S SHIFT IN MODE:
FROM TRADITIONAL MUSIC PRESERVER TO MUSIC PRODUCER

4.1. Government Production and Publication of Books, Brochures, CDs, and DVDs

Government-published and produced books, booklets, brochures, and CDs have promoted traditional music as a Korean national symbol. Kendall states that “These renderings of quotidian or once little-valued things into visual icons of Koreanness occurred through the work of mechanical reproduction in the publication of books, glossy magazines, art books, postcards, and illustrated magazines and the manufacture of kitsch (cf. Benjamin 1969)” (Kendall 2011, 12). Chapter 3 discussed presentation of national identity through traditional and newly-created traditional music by the government. Beyond this identity presentation, the current government adapted branding strategy into its cultural policies in order to make traditional music a product. Government divisions that deal with branding traditional music and their goals were examined in a broader sense.

In this chapter, I examine substantial government “branding” projects conducted by several divisions discussed in the earlier chapter. Indeed, there are many government music branding projects—almost too many to track—including presenting concerts, holding festivals, producing CDs and DVDs, publishing books and brochures, running summer schools and “residency schools” abroad, holding workshops for foreign scholars who are interested in Korean traditional music (all expenses paid for the two-week or six-month programs), and establishing cultural centers abroad. Besides the government-managed projects, there are even more provincial, municipal, and individual publications,
CDs, and traditional music classes, festivals and traditional music concerts performed by individual musicians or organizations with the support of local governments. Thus, the full set of roles played by the South Korean government in perpetuating and stimulating the use of traditional music as a national symbol, and also, to gain both domestic and international popularity for the music, is much greater than one would imagine and well beyond the capability of this thesis to discuss.

This chapter spotlights the government’s traditional music projects, and further, delves into governmental control over traditional music. By examining the CDs, DVDs, books, brochures, concerts, and festivals produced by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (hereafter MCST) and the National Gugak Center (NGC), I argue that the government, continuously providing traditional music as a national symbol both domestically and internationally, has switched its mode from that of a preserver of tradition to that of an active advertiser/distributor of traditional music. As part of my argument, I examine the NGC’s publications and CDs from the 1960s to the present, together with NGC concerts, and music festivals organized by the MCST. Also, I discuss how those government divisions employ branding strategy (see chapter 3) for traditional music projects, and also, how the branding process influenced recent trends in terms of topic and material choice.

During my fieldwork in Seoul in the summer of 2010 and also during my internships at the NGC in 2007 and 2008, I visited the MCST and the NGC several times. At the NGC, I collected English books, such as the *Korean Musicology Series*, volumes 1, 2, and 3, in which I participated as an assistant editor during my internship there. Also, CDs and DVDs with bilingual jackets, copies of *Gugak Yeongam* (Annual Report of
Traditional Music Events), and NGC journals were kindly provided to me. From the MCST, I received newly-created traditional music CDs with English jackets, annual reports on performances, festivals, and events, Arirang to the World Project reports, and other reports on the distribution of performing organizations, concert halls, et cetera. NGC materials chiefly focus on topics in music research, while materials on the evaluation of events, distribution, and overall policy are produced by the MCST. Resources that I collected from the Korean Traditional Performing Arts Foundation (hereafter KTPAF) mostly concerned the Arirang to the World Project, which I discuss in the next chapter, although materials received from the MCST usually carried an indication of KTPAF cooperation.
Korean Jazz, Writing a New Chapter in Its History

Today, traces of jazz are found everywhere music is played, and many different styles of jazz are invented where musical basis is strong. The primary factor behind this lies in the spirit of jazz that emphasizes “originality”. Musicians across the globe have been inspired by the fact that in the world of jazz, music which repeats what has already been tried or is generic does not create a sensation nor has the meaning of life. As such, efforts are being made from all corners of the world to establish one’s own unique style. Korea is not an exception in this endeavor.

It goes back to the 1930’s when jazz first made its way into Korea under the Japanese imperialism. In 1945, Korea earned independence and with the deployment of U.S. troops, jazz started being heard in the country. However, jazz then was largely for the entertainment of the U.S. soldiers rather than Koreans. For this reason, some view that it was not until the 1980’s when Korean jazz took root. Regardless of what view may be right, it is without a doubt that Korea’s jazz today is seeing a variety in style, with modern jazz at its center. In particular, Korea’s jazz scene has witnessed a series of notable albums being released since the 1990’s. Currently, collaborations between musicians are rapidly expanding as foreign artists visit Korea more frequently.

The second CD in this compilation album offers a glimpse of what is happening in the Korean jazz scene at the moment. It includes a host of songs from the alto saxophone virtuoso Tae-Hwan Kang who made a splash in Europe since making his

Figure 14. “Into the Light,” CD produced by the MCST, jacket in English

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Looking at the materials such as books, brochures, and CDs, the government’s efforts to provide information in both Korean and English, or sometimes in English only, are explicit, and the materials reveal the government’s positional shift in traditional music-making, as well as its aggressive expression of national identity externally through traditional culture. In fact, the materials and festivals produced and held by the government can be broadly divided into two categories: one for domestic users/readers and the other for international users/readers, although the tendency seems to be to blur the target user’s identity by providing more bilingual or even multi-lingual materials. Nevertheless, for both domestic and international users, access to these materials is quite limited: they are neither to be sold nor are they widely accessible. For example, books published by the NGC are distributed to selected scholars or institutions such as universities, embassies, and libraries in- and outside of Korea. Other individuals must visit the NGC archives to use these resources, but, since these materials are not advertised, one has to know of the source beforehand or simply be lucky.

Thus, it is hard to evaluate the demand for these materials or how they are used, but through producing them, the government’s intention to bolster traditional music nationally and distribute it to the world is clear at least. As an example, since 1968 the NGC has published traditional music notation. *Hanguk Eumak: Anthology of Korean Music Volume 1* (original: 한국음악 Anthology of Korean Music Volume 1), for instance, contains “Sujecheon,” “Manpajeongsik,” and “Jangchunbulno” in staff notation. In the 1960s, ’70s, and ’80s, music notation for most court ritual and banquet music, as well as folk music such as sanjo (instrumental solo), minyo (folk songs), and pansori (narrative story telling) was published. In contrast to its origins as a conservative national
institute (especially for court music), the NGC’s publications of traditional music in staff notation, also including English annotations, illustrate the efforts of past Korean governments to make Korean traditional music understandable to foreign scholars and potential musicians, and to fascinate the domestic Koreans who preferred Western music.

Besides notation, other books published by the NGC include Hanuk Eumakhak Haksul Chongseo (Collection of Korean Musicology), which presents translations and studies of historical music books from the Joseon Dynasty; Hanuk Eumak Jaryo Chongseo (Collection of Korean Music Resources), consisting of traditional notation, documents, and paintings; individual research; traditional musical instrument research; Minsokak Jaryo Chongseo (Collection of Korean Folk Music Resources); Minsok Eumak Gyoyang Chongseo (Collection of Korean Folk Music); Yuseonggi Eumberan Yeongu Seonjip (Revival of Recordings on Phonographs); Gugagwon Nonmunjip (Journal of the NGC); Gugak Yeongam (Annual Report of Korean Traditional Music Events); English books; and educational volumes. This earlier work concentrated on perpetuating and reviving traditional music notation and documents from ancient sources written in Chinese characters, resetting them in hangeul, in the Korean language.

In the late 1990s, a new trend emerged in NGC publications. Aside from the Korean Musicology series, English books for distribution abroad were published beginning in 1997. These books were written by Korean music specialists abroad or by scholars based in Korea but capable of writing in English, mostly holding PhD degrees earned in the U.S. Titles include Styles and Esthetics in Korean Traditional Music, A Study of Musical Instruments in Korean Traditional Music, Korean Music: A Listening Guide, A Stroll through Korean Music History, Theoretical Perspectives on Korean
Traditional Music: An Introduction, Pansori, and three volumes in the Korean Musicology Series.

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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year of Publication</th>
<th>Author</th>
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<tr>
<td>Styles and Esthetics in Korean Traditional Music</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Byong Won Lee</td>
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<td>A Study of Musical Instruments in Korean Traditional Music</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Yun Myeong-won</td>
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<td>Korean Music: A Listening Guide</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Keith Howard</td>
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<td>A Stroll Through Korean Music History</td>
<td>2000</td>
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<td>Pansori</td>
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<td>NGC</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>Byong Won Lee and Yong-shik Lee, eds.</td>
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<td>Sanjo (Korean Musicology Series III)</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Yong-shik Lee, ed.</td>
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Figure 15. English Books Published by the National Gugak Center
Source: Gungnip Gugagwoni Mandeun Chaek gwa Eumban
(Books and Recordings produced by the NGC)

These English books are significant because the government provided the titles and contents only in English for the purpose of introducing traditional music to a foreign audience. Thus, beginning in the late 1990s, the Korean government recognized the importance of the distribution of traditional culture, separate from its preservation and exhibition. The country’s business growth, which made Korea into an Asian economic power, brought the nation self-confidence in presenting its national culture. The government might have expected that awareness of Korean music throughout the world would not only solidify Korean identity but also lead to the popularity of traditional music back home. Since the first publication of an English-language book, Styles and

Along with books in English, the NGC regularly releases CDs, DVDs, and books to popularize traditional music worldwide, and its brochures aim not only to popularize traditional music but also to advertise the Center itself and its efforts to preserve traditional music.

Figure 16. National Gugak Center Advertising Brochure

The National Gugak Center brochure proudly introduces the Center itself, its long tradition, its resources, and its mission; it was redesigned at the time of the Center’s change of name. As seen above, both Korean and English are used on the same page.
However, since the brochure will more often be read by foreign visitors or by people abroad, the Korean language seems to appear as a national identity marker. In the brochure, diverse visual images of the NGC and its orchestras and performances are presented. Musicians in traditional attire and the vivid colors of *hanbok* (traditional dress) provide exotic visual representation of Korean musicians and the NGC.

While books and brochures mostly concern traditional music (of the past) or the Center itself, CDs and DVDs are more diverse in their subjects. CDs produced at the NGC are recordings of concerts or of ensemble or solo repertoire, the personal early recordings collections of donors (often famous foreign ethnologists/ethnomusicologists), and historic recordings from the early twentieth century. The many recordings produced by the NGC cover a broad range of music: royal court ritual, royal shrine ritual, royal banquet, folk instrumental, folk song, classical song, shaman ritual, and children’s song. The recordings are categorized as *Hanguk Eumak Seonjip* (Korean Music Selection), dedicated to the preservation and perpetuation of traditional music; *Gugak Dongyo Seonjip* (Traditional Children’s Song Selection), both traditional and newly-composed; *Gungnip Gugagwon Saenghwal Eumak Series* (Music in Life Series) for popularizing traditional music in Korean people’s daily lives; *Gungnip Gugagwon Chucheon Eumban* (A Selection of Korean Traditional Music); *Gungnip Gugagwon Special Eumban* (NGC’s Special Recordings); *Gungnip Gugagwon Gyoyuk Eumban* (NGC’s Educational Recordings); *Muhyeong Munhwa Yesul Series* (Intangible Arts Series); and *Gungnip Minsok Gugagwon Gihoek Eumban Series* (Namwon National Gugak Center’s Special Recordings).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Albums</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Hanguk Eumak Seonjip</em> (Korean Music Selection)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td><em>Hanguk Eumak Seonjip.</em> No. 29 “Jongmyo Jeryeak” 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gugak Dongyo Seonjip</em> (Traditional Children’s Song Selection)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td><em>Gugak Dongyo Seonjip.</em> No. 20 “2009 Gugak Dongyoje”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gungnip Gugagwon Chucheon Eumban</em> (A Selection of Korean Traditional Music)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>“Hanguk-eui Giak 1” and “Hanguk-eui Giak 2” 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gungnip Gugagwon Special Eumban</em> (NGC’s Special Recordings)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>“Gut Pungnyu. 2007” <em>Changjak Eumak Series</em> “Segyereul Wihan Joyul, Daehwa” (Tuning, Conversation for the World) 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gungnip Gugagwon Gyoyuk Eumban</em> (NGC’s Educational Recordings)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>“Gyogwaseo sok Uri Minyo” (Our Folk Songs in Music Text Books) 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gungnip Minsok Gugagwon Gihoek Eumban Series</em> (Namwon National Gugak Center’s Special Recordings)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>“Namdo-eui Sori” (Sound of Namdo 1999)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 17. NGC Recording Categories
Source: *Gungnip Gugagwoni Mandeun Chaek gwa Eumban* (Books and Recordings produced by the NGC)
The materials that I have gathered, including CDs, DVDs, books, and brochures, are all produced in bilingual form (the DVDs are in Korean with English and other foreign language subtitles). Since none were meant to be sold or distributed to the domestic public, the purpose of such production and publication becomes clear: advertising Korean traditional music abroad, which the government calls the “globalization” and “popularization” of traditional music.

Through production of relatively authentic traditional music CDs, the government distributes unique images of Korea. However, in addition to the traditional music CDs from the NGC, the MCST produces and presents contemporary music CDs that are also labeled as “Music of Korea.” Most of the non-NGC CDs produced by the MCST or other organizations tend to be less “authentic” or traditional. Researcher Park at the MCST related that more changjak gugak CDs than jeongak (court music) CDs are produced by
the MCST. *Changjak gugak* CDs from the MCST are distributed to the world as music representing Korea. Here, the government’s ambition to brand *changjak gugak* as a national product is explicit.

Among the CDs I gathered during my fieldwork, the second and third of the *Into the Light* series are labeled as “Music of Korea” (the first CD was unavailable). *Into the Light II* is titled *Classical & Contemporary*; number *III* is *Traditional Music & Jazz*. Notes on the former state that the music in this album is defined as either “Jazz in Traditional Music (CD 1)” or “Korean jazz (CD 2)”—neither easily defined. In my opinion, “Jazz in Traditional Music” is a fusion of Korean traditional music and jazz, closer to newly-created contemporary traditional music or *changjak gugak*. “Korean jazz” in this album is more likely jazz played in Korea or by Koreans. On the first disc, instrumentation is not limited only to traditional musical instruments but includes Western instruments such as piano, drum, saxophone, guitar, cello, and clarinet, while only Western instruments were used for CD 2. As an example, the following is a transcription of the beginning of track no. 1 from *Into the Light: Music of Korea III, Traditional Music & Jazz*.

In “Change 1” from *Queen & King*, only piano, drum, and triangle are played, even though CD 1 is categorized as “jazz in traditional music.” No traditional instruments were played and traditional musical sources are difficult to identify, except in the description of the piece by the composer. The drum plays a few drone-like rhythms alternately in 6/8 and 2/4, and when the time signature changes, the tempo, which starts around \( \dot{\text{j}} = 160 \), gets faster. The piano plays the melody in octaves rather than with harmony. It begins simply and softly but gets louder and more dynamic.
Example 3. “Change 1” from *Queen & King* from *Into the Light: Music of Korea III, Traditional Music & Jazz*
Even in this one album, the government provides different definitions of “Korean jazz.” For both CDs, the music is relatively less “authentic” or not traditional at all. On the one hand, the fusion music on CD 1 maintains a unique Korean sound but incorporates non-traditional sound as well. On the other hand, jazz music played by Korean musicians on CD 2 presents another “Koreanness” which understands and can lead the world’s popular, mainstream, and globalized culture.

Along with CDs, twenty DVDs overall were produced for the purpose of gugak education, advertisement of traditional music, and distribution of the traditional performing arts. The NGC has produced DVDs on their performances of “Jongmyo Jeryeak” (Royal Shrine Ritual Music), and “Munmyo Jeryeak” (Confucian Ritual Music), as well as the *Hanguk-eui Eumakgwa Muyong Series* (Korean Music and Dance Series), numbers 1–4.
Figure 19. DVDs of Royal Court Banquet Performances “Music of Peace, Dream of the Dynasty”
Figure 20. “Enjoying with the People”

Figure 21. DVD cover: Jongmyo Jeryeak (Royal Shrine Ritual Music)
4.2 Concerts of the National Gugak Center

The National Gugak Center provides numerous traditional music concerts by the NGC orchestras, Jeongakdan (court music orchestra), Changjak akdan (newly-created traditional music orchestra), Minsok akdan (folk music orchestra) and Muyongdan (dancers), and by individual musicians who rent the halls. There are three primary stages: Yeakdang, the large main auditorium, Umyeondang, the small secondary auditorium, and Byeolmajiteo, the outdoor stage. Concerts are held in different halls depending on the genre, stage setting, theme of the concert, season, and musicians. The NGC’s concerts are divided into five categories: daepyo brand gongyeon (representative brand performances), gihoek gongyeon (special performances), jeonggi gongyeon (monthly/annual performances), sangseol gongyeon (permanent performances), and gita gongyeon (non-categorized performances).

Figure 22. Umyeondang, National Gugak Center
Daepyo brand gongyeon are the “Representative Brand” concerts of the NGC; in other words, the NGC aims to position these concerts as exemplary brands, or products. The NGC’s Brand Concerts include Royal Court Banquet Music (*Gungjung Yeonryeak*): “Music of Peace, Dream of the Dynasty” (*Wangjo-ui Kkum, Taepyeongseogok*); Newly-created Traditional Children’s Song Competition/Concerts (*Changjak Gugak Dongyoje*), and New Year’s Day Newly-created Traditional Music Festival/Concerts (*Seol maji Changjak Eumak Festival*).

“Wangjo-ui Kkum, Taepyeongseogok” is a large scale production, which incorporates music, dance, royal attire, and royal cuisine. The performance is a revival based on documents depicting *Bongsudangjinchan* (the sixtieth birthday banquet of the King’s mother, Hong) during the reign of King Jeongjo (r. 1776–1800) of the Joseon Dynasty. The music is played by the court music orchestra (Jeongakdan), with some additional musicians if necessary. Muyongdan, the dance troupe, appears as court entertainers. The entire birthday party scene is staged as if King Jeongjo’s mother, Hyegyeonggung Hong, were herself enjoying the banquet—the audience sees the back of Hyegyeonggung Hong.
The NGC advertises this concert as based on propriety and filial piety, as “fundamentals of Korean philosophy.” It also claims that through this performance the audience can experience being at one with the sky and earth (www.gugak.go.kr).

_Changjak Gugak Dongyoje_ (Newly-created Traditional Children’s Song)
Competition/Concerts) is actually a competition for “popularizing and creating wonderful newly-created traditional children’s songs.” It is co-sponsored by the Samsung Cultural Foundation, KBS, and Gugak FM; it is one of the rare concerts/projects co-sponsored by organizations other than the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism.

![Poster of Changjak Gugak Dongyoje](image)

Figure 24. Poster of Changjak Gugak Dongyoje (Newly-created Traditional Children’s Song Competition/Concerts)

The New Year’s Day Newly-created Traditional Music Festival/Concert: “New day, New music, Opening for the Year of the Rabbit” (Seol maji Changjak Eumak Festival: “Sinmyonyeon-eul Yeoneun Sae Nal Sae Eumak”) was performed February 3–5, 2011 to celebrate the year of the rabbit. The NGC advertised this year as the “Renaissance of newly-created traditional music” and this concert as the beginning of the Newly-created Traditional Music Festival, held to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the NGC. Music was played by both the court music orchestra and the newly-created traditional music orchestra, and the Seoul Metropolitan Youth Traditional Music Orchestra was also featured. This concert is a new genre, compared to other concerts
discussed above. The NGC’s Representative Brand Performance includes not only traditional music of the past but also newly-created traditional music. Indeed, the NGC presents itself as both traditional and creative through its suite of “brands.”

*Gihoek Gongyeon* is a special performance, usually held only once to mark a special occasion. It may be performed, for example, to celebrate special days of the lunar calendar, or for some virtuoso’s birthday. *Jeonggi Gongyeon* is a category of monthly and annual concerts. “*Music of Peace, Dream of the Dynasty (Taepyeongseogok)*” is a NGC brand concert, but also an annual concert. *Sangseol gongyeon* is a permanent or ongoing concert series; these are performed every Friday (Friday Permanent Concert) and Saturday (Saturday Luxury Concert) with changing themes. *Gita goyeong* are other concerts, whose themes or schedules do not fit into the four categories above. Most of these are not projects of the Seoul NGC, but are productions of other regional branches (concert resources from the NGC website: www.gugak.go.kr).
As is notable in the pamphlet above, even though the Saturday performances’ venue is the NGC, a French-language pamphlet is produced for the benefit of French visitors who wish to enjoy the music of Korea. Thus, the government endeavors to promote the NGC and its concerts as a touristic site where any foreign visitors are welcomed.

One of the concerts that I attended during my fieldwork was an imaginative revival of the music of Baekje (BCE 18–CE 660)—one of the Three Kingdoms—that the
instrumentation is based on the carvings on an incense burner. While the subject could be interpreted as traditional, the music was completely newly-composed, and the purpose of the event, supported by the local government of Chungju where Baekje originated, seemed to be to create a cultural product or a representative local “brand” in order to boost the travel industry.

The NGC provides a great number of concerts per year at its other regional branches. On its website, the Center states that, through its concerts, “You can dance with breezes of the forest and the energy of our ancestors, who saw the yard as the stage” (www.gugak.go.kr). The NGC invites the audience into an imagined scene in nature. Also, traditional music concerts are interpreted as imitation of the life of “our [Korean] ancestors” who enjoyed music anywhere, anytime. Traditional music, then, is presupposed as something that is presented as if by nature, and thus, the NGC suggests that one who visits Korea should see these concerts to experience Korean native spirituality.

4.3 Festivals of Traditional Music

Traditional music festivals, including local festivals and concert-like festivals, are mostly sponsored by local governments, often with the help of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and the Korean Traditional Performing Arts Foundation. The government wields strong control over these regional festivals. The MCST allocates a large amount for the budgets of traditional music festivals. Some are entirely organized and sponsored by the MCST, and others are organized and hosted by separate local or festival-oriented organizations using MCST funds.
There are many concert and competition festivals in urban areas, mostly at the NGC if indoors, and many regional festivals held by provincial and municipal governments throughout South Korea. In this chapter, I focus on festivals that are run mainly, or are significantly funded, by the MCST. Some of these festivals (chukje) developed from regional traditions and others were created by the government to stimulate traditional performing arts as a driver for domestic and international tourism. The government puts huge amounts of money towards these festivals for the purpose of preserving traditional performing arts, engaging traditional music in contemporary life, creating new performing arts, and finally, bolstering tourism.

During my fieldwork, I gathered several documents containing data on traditional music concerts and festivals. Among these resources, *Evaluation of 2009 Traditional Performing Arts Festivals and Newly-composed Traditional Music Concerts (2009 Jeontong Yesul Chukje mit Changjak Gugak Gongyeon Pyeongga Boboseo)* published by the MCST carefully evaluates traditional music festivals’ advantages, disadvantages, success, and aspects for improvement in order to analyze its contribution to the traditional performing arts and decide budget amounts for the next year. Since I visited the MCST in the summer of 2010, the latest version I could collect was for 2009. The MCST’s evaluation of these festivals reviews the purpose of the festival, organizations, venues, advertisements, budget, contribution to performing arts, contribution to art exchange, social outcomes, artistic completeness, audience’s reaction, et cetera. By evaluating these areas, the MCST holds strong power to control these festivals. The government’s criteria in analyzing the festivals as successful or not are closely related to the government’s
policy on traditional music, for the “popularization” and “globalization” of traditional music.

To discuss a few major festivals held by the MCST: Jeontong Yeonhui Chukje is a performing arts festival held at the National Museum by the MCST. It was organized by the MCST in order to preserve, transmit, and create traditional performing arts, and in addition, to globalize traditional performing arts through exchanges of performing arts of the world at the festival. This festival was assigned a budget of 810,000,000 won (around $718,085.00 when $1.00 is 1,128 won). By creating a festival which encourages both traditional and newly-created traditional performing arts, the government provides space for traditional musicians and cultural “contents” or products for the general public and potential foreign tourists.

Gurye Dongpyeon Sori Chukje is a pansori festival, which was first held in 2009 by the Organization for Gurye Dongpyeon Sori Festival (Gurye Dongpyeon Sori Chukje Chujin Wiwonhoe). It was co-sponsored by the MCST, Jeolla Namdo Provincial government, Guryegun (Gurye district), Korea Tourism Organization, Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation, and Gugak FM. The MCST contributed 200,000,000 won ($177,304.96 when $1.00 is 1,128 won) as a “Tourism Promotion Fund” towards the festival’s entire budget of 300,000,000 won ($265,957.45) in 2009. Although not entirely organized by the MCST, the festival reveals the interest of the government and other related institutions or companies in developing it as a touristic event. The government’s expectations for the festival’s potential direct and indirect economic impact is thus visible.
A festival entitled “Making Traditional Performing Arts into a Tourism Resource” (Jeontong Gongyeon Yesul Gwangwang Jawonhwa) clearly illustrates the MCST’s intention to utilize traditional music as a cultural product that can fascinate foreign tourists by emphasizing exotic Korea. This is not a typical festival, but rather more like a series of outdoor concerts. Musicians from the NGC perform at ancient palaces such as Gyeongbok-gung, Changdeok-gung, and Jongmyo (Royal shrine).

During my internship at the NGC, I emceed one of these ancient palace concerts at Yeongyeongdang, Changdeok-gung on May 29th 2008. I was invited to emcee this concert due to my English ability. I was not given any script other than the program, and thus, I had to create my own English script with short explanations of the pieces. Since these ancient palaces are major international tourist sites, the language ability of the emcee was a major concern. It was obvious that the festival concerts were targeted at foreign audiences visiting the castles. Indeed, the majority of the audience was made up of foreigners. The audience at the concert was less than fifty of them and more than three forth of them were foreigners. Korean audiences included friends of those of foreign tourists to give tours, Korean emigrants who were visiting Korea, and few other concert-related people such as a hanbok designer and friends of the musicians.
At this concert-like festival, the NGC musicians provided court banquet string ensemble music (*julpungnyu*), “Cheonnyeon Manse,” classical vocal music (*gagok*), “Taepyeongga,” court dance, “Geomgimu,” *daegeum* solo (*sanjo*), and narrative story telling (*pansori*), “Chunhyangga.” What was interesting is that the concert venue was the court but the repertoire was not entirely court music. Rather, the NGC musicians included folk music such as *sanjo* and *pansori* in order to provide more diversity in their repertoire. However, by saying “to draw elite music” or “*pungnyu eumak-eul geurida* (풍류음악을 그리다 see the figure above),” it allows to add more various genres at the concert. In fact, Yeongyeongdang, a building in Changdeok-gung, was modeled after an
elite house outside of the court and it was built by the son of King Sunjo, Hyomyeong seja, to amuse his father. Thus, the repertoire somehow maintained the tradition, and at the same time, was modified from the tradition to attract the audience.

4.4 The Government as Producer of Traditional Music

Aside from preserving traditional music as a national symbol and identity marker to hold the Korean people together, in the recent years, the government has sought for the popularization of traditional music in- and outside Korea. Providing several types of cultural “contents” including publications, visual materials, concerts, and festivals, the government intends to develop traditional music as historical and historic Korea. However, to emphasize the fresh and trendy Korea at the same time, the government is actively involved in traditional music-making including newly-created traditional music production. The government simultaneously emphasizes the importance of preserving “authentic” traditional music and creating outside-influenced, newly-created traditional music.

As is explicit in the NGC’s aim to preserve traditional music and to distribute it to the world through its publications, CDs, and concerts, the branding process is employed to make traditional music into the Korean government’s property. Where the government once concentrated on perpetuating traditional music in order to legitimize the nation as an integral process of nation building, and continued on to emphasize traditional music as an identity marker, it now seeks to re-produce the music of the past into music of the present and produce new music based on old sources. The Korean government—continuously planning new performing art forms to attract more people—is therefore a major producer
of traditional music, capable of producing all kinds of products, like a jaebeol, or conglomerate, more than a record company, publisher, or concert hall. Through its publications, recordings, concerts, and festivals, discussed above, the government commercializes traditional music as a national product, projecting Korea as culturally rich, fun and exciting, familiar yet exotic.
CHAPTER FIVE
ARIRANG TO THE WORLD

5.1. Arirang to the World Project

This chapter scrutinizes “Arirang to the World,” a major project of the Korean Traditional Performing Arts Foundation (KTPAF) and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MCST), the former as host and the latter as organizer. “Arirang to the World,” or “Arirang Segyehwa” (Globalization of Arirang) is an attempt to make “Arirang”—the government’s selection as the representative Korean folk song having Korean sentiment, simultaneously cheerful and sorrowful—into a cultural product or national brand of Korea. It is targeted at international “customers” who will perceive the tune as representing a distinguished Korean people and their culture. Through this project, popularizing “Arirang” as a brand, the KTPAF and MCST expect to establish a strong worldwide image of Korea and its people. Furthermore, they also expect that people around the world will not only recognize “Arirang” as a famous folk song of Korea but “buy” the song to make it their own.

To do so, the government brands “Arirang” as a cultural product of Korea appealing to the world “market.” As I discussed in chapter 3, the process of branding traditional culture by the government often requires some transformation, exaggeration, or diminution of the subject in order to meet the government’s goal for the project. For example, in the process of branding “Arirang” as a national product, the government defines “Arirang” as a representative folk song of Korea, continuously making its claim to the Korean people and employing the song at national events. While doing so, the
government shows vague positionality, shifting inclusiveness/exclusiveness to other cultures, and blurred identity presentation. It is noticeable, throughout the project, that the government sometimes strongly emphasizes ethnic homogeneity (inclusive of North Koreans) focusing on a long shared tradition, and at other times, suggests cultural diversity along with globalization. Depending on to whom “Arirang” is presented, it seems that “Arirang” is the song of only Koreans, while, at other times, it transforms into a song of the world.

The Korean Traditional Performing Arts Foundation (*Jeontong Gongyeon Yesul Jinheung Jaedan*) is a public foundation, closely related to the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, located at the National Gugak Center in Seoul. The committee was formed in 2006 and received official sanction from the MCST in 2007. In 2009, the Korean name of the foundation was changed from *Gugak Munhwa Jaedan* to the current *Jeontong Gongyeon Yesul Jinheung Jaedan*. The KTPAF website states that it “contributes to gugak [Korean traditional music] preservation, transmission, and expanding its status.”

Currently, KTPAF’s efforts fall into four categories:

1. **Restore, Re-create, and Vitalize Our Traditional Arts:** a) holding a competition for newly-created traditional art genre performances; b) regular concerts (25 times a year); c) investigation of and support for local festivals; d) traditional performing arts restoration and re-enactment;

2. **Popularization and Industrialization of Traditional Performing Arts.** For “popularization”: a) tours and workshops; b) performances of traditional arts at ancient palaces (60 times per year); c) traditional art camps for teenagers; d) Korean Folk Arts Festival; e) *Munhwa goggam bangbang gokgok* (Nationwide
Cultural Experience); f) school for traditional performing arts and culture (4 courses/90 classes). For “industrialization”: a) production of digital materials (CDs and DVDs); b) development of traditional musical instruments and their acoustics, and related technology;

3. Share Our Tradition with Socially Isolated Classes: a) free concerts for low-income people (12 times per year); b) neighborhood concerts (4 times per year); c) etiquette school for teenagers; d) production of educational CDs and DVDs;

4. Globalization of Traditional Performing Arts (Establish the ground for globalization): a) Arirang Globalization Project; b) translation for the contents of traditional arts; c) collection of resources about Asian traditional music and production of documentaries; d) Korea-ASEAN traditional music orchestra; e) lectures abroad by Korean music specialists and residency program (lecturers spend a number of months abroad and give lectures) (www.ktpaf.org).

Careful examination of the “Arirang to the World Project,” which is a part of KTPAF’s “Globalization of Traditional Performing Arts” initiative, reveals how the Korean government markets Korea to the world through traditional music by branding “Arirang” as a cultural product. Below, I unravel the project’s ultimate goal, major tasks, and expected benefits. Doing so, I study what aspects—such as the government’s positionality, definition of new Koreanness, ultimate goals, and agency—are championed or challenged, and thus, how the government of South Korea utilizes traditional culture in its “nation branding” process.

The slogan of Arirang to the World is “Arirang, The Korean Song of 70 Million,
to be the World Song of 7 Billion.” KTPAF and MCST state the purpose of Arirang to the World as follows:

Currently in progress is a project to build a global and modern image of Arirang by integrating values that will appeal to people around the world. With this project, the Ministry seeks to bolster cultural pride and confidence at home while also strengthening the solidarity of overseas Koreans and improving its national image. (KTPAF 2009b, 5)

The Project consists of research and interviews, the 2009 International Symposium, the 2010 Arirang Festival, record production, publication and distribution of advertising brochures in five languages (Korean, Chinese, English, Japanese, and Russian), and the production of educational film materials. According to the document “Arirang JungJanggi Baljeon Gyehoek” (Arirang Development Plan) released on June 24, 2009, KTPAF allocated 2009 and 2010 for advertisement of the Arirang to the World Project, 2011 and 2012 to establish the foundations of the project, 2013 and 2014 for further development, and 2015 and 2016 to stabilize activities.

According to the “Announcement of Arirang to the World Project Plan (2009),” reasons behind the song selection and the Arirang to the World Project were as follow:

- As a response to the Chinese and North Korean governments. China made “Arirang” part of its national repertoire, by staging the Cheonnyeon Arirang (Arirang of Thousand Years) Concert since 2006, while the North Korean government has utilized the song since 2002 in Dae Jipdan chejowa Minjok Yesul Arirang (Mass Games and Ethnic Art, Arirang) to advertise its political regime. (KTPAF claims that “Arirang” is in danger of denationalization. This section shows that the government denies the Chinese government’s claim for “Arirang” and the North Korean government’s use of the song as a communist propaganda
song. Here, the South Korean government is the only agency that can promote “Arirang” as a national song.);

- As a part of promised governmental tasks and the public commitment of President Lee Myung-bak to the “Creative transmission of traditional culture” (The definition for “creative transmission” is unclear throughout this section. However, KTPAF and MCST plan to create performing arts that are based on “Arirang.”);

- As the result of the “culture code” tested by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (March 2009), which showed that Koreans identify “Arirang” as the “passport of Koreans” and “another name for Korea” (Survey research was carried out, but the source of the data is not clear. It just says “Koreans,” and does not specify age, gender, education, or job affiliation any further.);

- As a representative icon of Korea. “Arirang” was the fifth most recognized among Koreans—following taegeukgi (Korean flag, 32.8%), kimchi (31%), hanbok (traditional dress, 24.8%), and mugunghwa (rose of Sharon, 20.5%)—as a representative Korean cultural icon in research done by MCST in 2008. In 2009, “Arirang” (7.3%) took second place, following hanbok (10.7%), even though its percentage decreased (it was only musical category to rank highly);

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<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<th>6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Icons</td>
<td>Taegeukgi (national flag)</td>
<td>Kimchi</td>
<td>Hanbok (Korean dress)</td>
<td>Mugunghwa (Rose of Sharon, the national flower)</td>
<td>Arirang</td>
<td>Taegweondo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 25. Representative Icons of Korea
December 2008 Survey Results, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Icons</td>
<td>Hanbok</td>
<td>Arirang</td>
<td>Kimchi</td>
<td>Hangeul</td>
<td>Taegeukgi</td>
<td>Samulnori</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 26. Representative Cultural Icon of Korea
December 2009 Survey Results, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism

- As a key to alleviate the tension between South and North Korea, since “Arirang” is popular in both countries, and to harmonize the diverse cultures and peoples living in Korea. (This is quite an interesting section, seemingly contradicting the first section. Although the government of South Korea admits that “Arirang” is a song of both South and North Koreas, the agency that can own and promote it as its national culture is not North Korean but South Korean.);

- Due to the pervasiveness of “Arirang” in Korea and throughout the world, and because of its musical characteristics. The song’s simple melody, diverse styles (8,000 possible texts, 20 melodic styles, diverse legends and stories), and Korean sentiment (happiness and sorrowfulness) show its possibilities as munhwa contents (cultural product). (This section provides generalization of the government-defined “Korean sentiment” and the assumption that “Arirang” can attract people around the world due to the song’s simple musical character and diverse text styles—a very optimistic point of view, considering that many folk songs from other cultures share similar characteristics.)

Research on “Arirang” at the national level has occurred since 2006. However, before the government jumped into the Arirang project, personal research, several regional projects, organizations, and regional festivals devoted to the song already existed. For example, four regional projects, including Gimje Gihaeng Belt, had budgets
totaling US$16 million; twelve regional festivals, including the Milyang Arirang Festival, budgeted approximately US$1.7 million; and sixteen organizations, like Jeongseon Arirangje Wiwonhoe (Organization for Jeongseon Arirang), were active.

With such activities already present across Korea, the government began its support for systematic research, transmission, and recreation of “Arirang.” The KTPAF sees its three major tasks in the Arirang to the World Project as, first, “systematizing Arirang research,” second, “recontextualizing Arirang to a positive and cheerful song,” and third, “popularizing Arirang.” According to the “Arirang to the World Project Plan (2009),” the song’s cultural and historical values are relatively “underestimated” and people have “negative impressions” of “Arirang” due to its historical background. MCST research finds that those negative impressions exist because “people recognize Arirang as a symbol for the tragic history and there is no personal affiliation to the music due to the separation of traditional culture from contemporary life.” This is quite opposite the “Announcement of Arirang to the World Project Plan (2009),” and its reasons behind the song selection and the Arirang to the World Project. The “culture code” tested by MCST had announced that Koreans see “Arirang” as the “passport of Koreans” or “another name of Korea” (see page 4). Again, exactly which Koreans think of “Arirang” as the “passport of Koreans” and which ones separate themselves from traditional culture are not clearly specified. The government almost forcefully employs “Arirang” as the most representative folk song of Korea, but also notices the limited demand for it by Koreans themselves. The government of South Korea, thus, selects situational positions for better advantage.

The document released by the Presidential Council on Nation Branding in 2010
showed that South Korea as a nation brand ranked eighteenth out of fifty nations, based on SERI-PCNB NBDO (the Samsung Economics Research Institute-Presidential Council for Nation Branding Nation Brand Dual Octagon) is a statistical model for ranking of nations as brands developed by SERI. It is based on survey research about eight categories: economics/corporations, science/technology, infra[structure], policy/system, traditional culture/nature, contemporary culture, people, and celebrities. It is interesting that traditional culture is categorized with nature; traditional culture is interpreted as something that has always been there, like nature).

The government, including MCST, KTPAF, and PCNB, claims that the negative image of Korea has built-up due to the Korean War, its poor economic status in the 1950s, the dictatorship of the 1960s and 1970s, violent protests in the 1980s, and political turbulence related to North Korea, which still continues. Thus, the government’s intention now is to elevate the status of the nation and “create a competitive brand” out of, for example, “Arirang,” and even the nation itself, “Cultural Korea” (Munhwa Hanguk: Korea that is rich in culture and cares for culture).

5.2. “Arirang,” The Representative Folk Song of Korea, and Its Regional Styles

Before I begin dissecting the Arirang to the World Project, I will examine how “Arirang” was recognized as the “representative folk song” of Korea—by the government and the people. Does “Arirang” truly represent Koreanness? Does it present new Koreanness? Why was it “Arirang” and not other folk songs? What aspects of “Arirang” make the song “another name of Korea,” which the government wants to provide as the Korean image? Why is “Arirang” considered to have “Korean sentiment”? 
What is Korean sentiment anyway? To answer these questions, “Arirang” and its regional styles need to be studied.

“Arirang” has twenty melodic styles and possible eight thousand texts. “Arirang” has been treated—or maybe forcefully installed—as the representative song of Korea, considering its involvement at several important national events. The song was performed at the 1986 Seoul Asian Games, the 1988 Seoul Olympics, the 2002 FIFA World Cup Korea/Japan, and the 2008 New York Philharmonic Concert in Pyeongyang. “Arirang” presented a unique Korea to the world and was a highlight of these significant events as the face of Korea, warm and welcoming, with the promise of harmony and wishes for future encounters.

The first part of the slogan, “Arirang, The Korean Song of 70 Million, to be the World Song of 7 Billion,” defines the song as currently adored by both South and North Korea. Howard (1999) points out North Korea’s rare maintenance of the original for the basic form and regional versions of “Arirang” without innovations, as is common procedure in North Korea. The thirteen provinces on the Korean Peninsula and Jeju Island are areas demarcated largely on the basis of the traditional land divisions of the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1919; these were the Joseon paldo, or eight provinces of the Joseon Dynasty, until 1896). Regional cultures have developed along with those divisions, each province having a distinct culture including differences in language dialect, housing, food, and musical styles. Regional identity based on the geographical regional divisions is still clearly distinguishable, and regional affiliation, or more seriously, regional favoritism (jiyeok gamjeong), sometimes still causes social and
political problems.
Across the diverse styles of “Arirang,” each version maintains the “almost non-lexical syllables,” *a-ri-rang*, in its refrain. About the meaning and origin of the syllables, *a-ri-rang*, there are many possible theories and tales. However, the identity of Arirang is often agreed upon as a hill, although its location is disputable. According to the brochure, *Arirang: The Soul of Korean*, published by the KTPAF,

> Arirang Pass is the hardships we often face in life. The joy, anger, sorrow, and pleasure in life are the “hills” that we cross. Arirang is the song that we sang while crossing the “hills,” and the song that contains the infinite optimism and love for life and pulls us from our sorrow toward joy, from despair toward conquest, and from darkness to light. (KTPAF 2009a, 8)

As stated above, the Arirang *gogae* (hills) are interpreted to represent the “hardships we often face in life.” However, the origin of “Arirang,” where Arirang *gogae* actually are, and what *arirang* means are not clear, although several explanations exist in tales, stories, and scholarly hypotheses. In *Arirang: Song of Korea*, Lee Chung-myun discusses several theories of the song’s origin. The first identifies Arirang Hill as a pass between two sites in Gyeongju, the capital city of the Silla Kingdom, in Gyeongsang Namdo (Southeast Province): one site is a well called Aryeongjeong and the other is the Aryeongcheon stream.

A rough high hill is located between the two. The pass was named Arirang Pass, it was not easy for Silla people to cross the pass. By the way, a girl was drawing water from the Aryeongjeong [well] and saw a knight sitting by the Aryeongcheon Stream to sharpen his sword. She fell in love with the knight at first sight, and then sang the song of Arirang with yearning for him. (Lee 2009, 58)

Another hypothesis, that “Arirang” originated from the Silla Kingdom, traces back to the Queen of Silla, Aryeong, who was the wife of Park Hyeokgeose, the first Silla king. This theory claims that *arirang* derived from the Queen’s name, and that the song
was written for her (Lee 2009, 62). In addition, Lee relates another tale with origins in the Joseon Dynasty.

In the middle of the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1910) in Gyeonggido Province, a couple named Seongbu and Yi Rang served as servants in the house of Kim Jae-su. One day they participated in the community riot, so they were chased by the government troops. In order to escape from the chase, they went into the hilly area where no one lived. They were happy together for a while. However, after sometime, Yi Rang was determined to go back to the riot and to support their comrades. … The wife, Seongbu was left alone. She waited for Yi Rang to return. … She missed him every day singing Arirang and watching the pass he crossed. (Lee 2009, 59–60)

Other possible origins for the word, *arirang*, trace back to the Gyeongbokgung reconstruction. Some say that the word derived from *a-i-rong*, which means “to be deaf.” Due to the burden of taxes, which were used for the reconstruction of Gyeongbokgung, people wished to be deaf so that they could not hear the tax demands from the government (Lee 2009, 60).

In his talk at the 2009 Arirang to the World International Symposium, Keith Howard remarked that the identification of Arirang hill as the Donam-dong hill in northern Seoul had credibility. However, he also mentioned several other legends for other regional Arirang pieces. For the legend of “Miryang [in Gyengsang Namdo/Southeast] Arirang,” it is said that a lady waited for her lover at Mungyeongseje, which was a pass for trade connecting Seoul and Busan, singing “Milyang Arirang.” “Jindo Arirang,” another version from Gyeongsang-do, is said to be the transmission of Park Jong-gi, a famous *daegeum* player and also a shaman, from mountain spirits. Others say that Park created “Jindo Arirang” together with shaman dancers in Park’s hometown (KTPAF 2009c, 25–26).
As stated above, the origin of “Arirang” is not clear, and almost too many hypotheses exist. In fact, a diversity of origin tales and theories is not unique to “Arirang.” Most folk songs in any culture have a long tradition, sung by the common people, and are orally transmitted; thus, their origins are not known. Here, I do not intend to identify the most scientific hypothesis for the song’s beginnings, but simply illuminate various versions of the stories, tradition, and imagination, showing historical interest and concern about its ethnic roots in Korean society. In addition, the various tales provide a plethora of “cultural contents,” in which the government may see possibilities to create or develop new genres or new stage performances as tools for the fascination of foreigners.

“Arirang,” in this matter, provides the most diverse set of styles, versions and stories among Korean folk songs.

“Arirang” is one of the most developed folk songs in terms of its various regional styles. To mention the most famous, “Arirang’s” regional styles include “(Gyeonggi) Arirang” from Seoul/Gyeonggi-do, “Miryang Arirang” and “Jindo Arirang” from Gyeongsang Nam-do (South-east), “Jeongseon Arirang” and Gangwondo Arirang” from Gangwon-do, and “Haeju Arirang” from Hwanghae-do (above Gyeonggi-do) in North Korea.

Such regionalism in “Arirang” is understandable, first of all, due to the long presence of the song; many regional versions derived from the original, which cannot be traced. Second, the developed regional styles could develop separately due to geographical divisions resulting from high mountains and rivers bordering the provinces.
“Arirang” pieces generally follow regional folk song styles. According to Inok Paek’s (2007) astute study of folk vocal music, Gyeonggi minyo (folk songs) are “easy to sing,” employing clear, lyrical vocal quality. Also, texts for Gyeonggi minyo are “more cheerful and buoyant than those found in other areas” (Paek 2007, 69). “Gangwondo Arirang” and “Jeongseon Arirang” are included as part of Dongbu minyo, which refers to folk songs in eastern areas, especially the east of the Taebaek mountain, of the Korean peninsula (mostly Gangwon-do). Dongbu minyo is mostly based on tri-tones with passing tones added; it is faster in tempo compared to other regional minyo, and texts are often humorous (Paek 2007, 73).

The most significant characteristic of Seodo minyo, which includes songs of Pyeongan Province and Hwaghae Province in North Korea, is its nasal vocal quality.
Delicate vibratos are also noticeable (Paek 2007, 72). (For Namdo minyo and Jeju minyo see Music of Korea, 65-90).

With the government claim that “Arirang” should be the representative image of Korea and its people, I would like to examine the soundscape of Korea, to validate their proposal. Thus, in this chapter I examine five popular regional styles of “Arirang” in order to see if those various “Arirang” pieces can or should represent the current state of “Koreanness” or not. First, I will analyze each melodic line and the lyrics of regional styles of “Arirang.” Then, I will compare those regional versions and their relation to each other, as the government promotes the various styles of “Arirang” as one of its reasons to declare the song to be the national image.

The most famous regional styles of “Arirang” come from four provinces throughout Korea: Gyonggi (Seoul) Arirang, Jindo Arirang and Milyang Arirang from Gyeongsang (Kyongsang, south-west) Province, and Jeongseon or Gangwondo Arirang from Gangwon (Kangwondo, west) Province; in addition, there is Haeju Arirang, which originates from Haeju of Hwanghae (right above Gyeonggi-do) Province in North Korea.

Music notation was provided by my informant, Kim at the KTPAF, as an electronic file during my fieldwork; the English versions of the lyrics are my own translations.

“Gyeonggi Arirang” is often called simply “Arirang,” and it is known as the original form of all “Arirang” pieces. This is one of the most popular “Arirang” pieces not only in Korea but outside the country as well. “Arirang” became hugely popular when it appeared in Un-gyu Na’s movie of the same title, released in 1926 (KTPAF Arirang Akbojip). It is based on the pentatonic scale of B♭ - C - E♭ - F – G - B♭, and E♭
Example 4. “Gyeonggi Arirang” (KTPAF)

The text consists of refrains ([A]) and verses ([B] and [C]). “Arirang” starts and ends with the refrain [A]. Between refrains, the verses are sung. The text is as follows:

[A] A – ri-rang – a – ri-rang – a – ra – ri – yo – – – – – – –

[B] Na – reul-beo-ri-goga-si neun-nim-eun – – – – – – –

Sim – ni do-mot-gaseo-bal – byeong nan da – – – – – – –

[C] Jeo-sa-nee-ji neun-hae-neun-ji go-si peo-ji-na – – – – – – –

Nal-beo ri-goga-si neun-nim-ga go-si peo-ga-na – – – – – – –

is the main tone.
Gyeonggi Arirang is sung in *semachi jangdan* (*semachi* rhythm), as illustrated below.

("Arirang arirang, ara ri yo"

\[A\]  \textit{rirang-}l go – gae-\textit{ro-}l \textit{neo-}meo-\textit{gan-} l da \hfill ("(He is) Climbing up the Arirang hill")

[B] Na – \textit{reul} \textit{l} \textit{beo – ri-} go- \textit{l} ga-si-neun-\textit{ni-} l meun---\textit{l} \hfill ("My dear who leaves me alone")

\textit{Sim – ni-do-}l mot–ga–seo-\textit{l} bal-byeong-nan-\textit{l} da \hfill ("will hurt his feet not so far from here")

\[A\] A – \textit{ri-rang-} \textit{l} a – \textit{ri-rang-} \textit{l} a – ra - - ri- \textit{l} yo - - - \textit{l} \hfill ("Arirang arirang, ara ri yo")

\[A\]  \textit{rirang-}l go – gae-\textit{ro-}l \textit{neo-}meo-\textit{gan-} l da \hfill ("(He is) Climbing up the Arirang hill")

[C] \textit{Jeo – }sna-ne \textit{l} ji-neun \textit{hae-neunl} ji-go-\textit{si-}peo-\textit{jil} na – – \textit{l} \hfill ("the sun setting down to that mountain, does it want to set")

\textit{Nal beo-ri-gol} ga-si-neun-nim – \textit{l} ga-go-\textit{si-}peo \textit{ga-l} na \hfill ("My dear who left me, does he want to leave")

\[A\] A – \textit{ri-rang-} \textit{l} a – \textit{ri-rang-} \textit{l} a – ra - - ri- \textit{l} yo - - - \textit{l} \hfill ("Arirang arirang, ara ri yo")

\[A\]  \textit{rirang-}l go – gae-\textit{ro-}l \textit{neo-}meo-\textit{gan-} l da \hfill ("(He is) Climbing up the Arirang hill")
The melody of the refrain ([A]) begins from the lower range and gradually ascends. The first verse [B] shows melodic contrast from the refrain. It starts with a high sustained B♭ descends to E♭. Each end of phrase has only one text syllable for the last measure (measures 4, 8, 12, 16, 20, and 24) even though the melismas are not widely spread out (it sounds more like vibrato).

“Miryang Arirang” is a style originating in Gyeongsang Province especially Nam-do, Southern Gyeongsang-do. It is based on the pentatonic scale of B – E – G – A – B, and E is the main tone. It also uses semachi jangdan. Compared to “Gyeonggi Arirang,” the melody of “Miryang Arirang” is highly ranged.
The lyrics of “Miryang Arirang” are the following:

("A–ri- a- rirang | seu-ri-seu -ri-rang | a – ra - ri-ganan--l ne   - - l")
The beginning refrain is also repeated at the end, and after each verse, the refrain [A] follows.

The melodic contour of “Miryang Arirang” is much more dramatic, compared to “Gyeonggi Arirang.” While the melody of “Gyeonggi Arirang” ascends or descends gradually, the melody of “Miryang Arirang” shows sudden jumps as seen from measure 2 to measure 3 and quickly ascends or descends in the faster tempo ($\dot{=} = 95$). However, as
with “Gyeonggi Arirang,” the last measure of each phrase is melismatic with one syllable in descending motion.

“Jindo Arirang” also derives from Gyeongsang Province, but in this case Northern Gyeongsang Province or Gyeongsang Buk-do. It also employs semachi jangdan and E is the main tone based on its pentatonic scale of B – E – G – A - B.

Example 7. “Jindo Arirang” (KTPAF)
The lyrics of “Jindo Arirang” are as follow:


[B] Mun – gyeong - - | sae – jae - neun – | wen go- - - | gaen – ga - |      "What on earth is the Mungyeong saejae hill?"

Gu-bu ya - - | gubu- gu – bu | nun – mu – ri – ro - | gu – na |      "each hill brings tears on my eyes"


Uri- ne - - | ga-seum-so – gen | hui – mang-do- | man – ta |      "We have full of hope"


“Jindo Arirang” is one of the most rhythmic “Arirang” pieces among the regional versions. The fast tempo (J. = 92) and staccato-like melody evoke cheerful feelings.
There are two famous regional styles of “Arirang” from Gangwon Province, which is an area formed with high mountains. The main tone in “Jeongseon Arirang” is A out of the pentatonic scale of E – A – C – D – E.
Example 8. “Jeongseon Arirang” from Gangwon-do (KTPAF)
The lyrics of “Jeongseon Arirang” are the following:

[A] A- ri -- rang- | a- ri -- rang- | a - ra - ri - - - | yo - - - - |
("A- ri -- rang- | a- ri -- rang- | a - ra - ri - - - | yo - - - - ")

A- ri - rang – | go-gae - go-gae -ro---| na-reul neom-gyeo- ju ---| ge - - - |
("Let me climb the Arirang hill")

[B] Nu - ni ol-la - na | bi - ga ol-la - na | eok - su jang-ma – jil la -- | na - ---|
("Would it snow, would it rain? Would the rain pour?")

Man - su - san | geo-meun gu-reu – mi | mang mo – yeo –deun ---| da - - - |
("the dark cloud of the Mount. Mansu is gathering")

[A] A- ri -- rang- | a- ri -- rang- | a - ra - ri - - - | yo - - - - |
("A- ri -- rang- | a- ri -- rang- | a - ra - ri - - - | yo - - - - ")

A- ri - rang – | go-gae - go-gae -ro---| na-reul neom-gyeo- ju ---| ge - - - |
("Let me climb the Arirang hill")

[C] A - u ra - ji | baet – sa- gong – a - - - | bae –jom geon-ne – ju --- | ge - - - |
("Hey, the boatman of Auraji! Let me ride the boat")

Ssa – rit - gol | ol-dong – bae - - gi - - - | da | tteo-reo- jin - - - | da - - - |
("All Camellia at Ssaritgol falls")

[A] A- ri -- rang- | a- ri -- rang- | a - ra - ri - - - | yo - - - - |
("A- ri -- rang- | a- ri -- rang- | a - ra - ri - - - | yo - - - - ")

A- ri - rang – | go-gae - go-gae -ro---| na-reul neom-gyeo- ju ---| ge - - - |
("Let me climb the Arirang hill")

[D] Jeong – seon – ui | gu - - myeong eun - - - | mu-reung- do-won-ani | nya - - - - |
(“Isn’t Gumyeong of Jeonseon Paradise?”)

Mu-reung do-won -eun | eo - di | ga- -go- - | san-man chung-chung- ha - - - | ne --- |
(“Where is the paradise? There are only mountains.”)

[A] A- ri -- rang- | a- ri -- rang- | a - ra - ri - - - | yo - - - - |
(A- ri -- rang- | a- ri -- rang- | a - ra - ri - - - | yo - - - - |)

A- ri - rang – | go-gae - go-gae -ro-- | na-reul neom-gyeo- ju --- | ge - - - |
(“Let me climb the Arirang hill”)

The melody of “Jeongseon Arirang” is not as popular as that in earlier styles of “Arirang,” but its lyrics are more developed and they are descriptive of Gangwon Province. It was originally sung in free rhythm but nowadays it is sung in jungmori rhythm. “Jeongseon Arirang” is relatively slow compared to other “Arirang” pieces.

The main tone of “Gangwondo Arirang” is F in the pentatonic scale of C - F - Ab - B♭ - C. “Gangwondo Arirang” derived from the same province as “Jeongseon Arirang” but musically it is very different. First of all, the rhythmic pattern is not based on triple meter but quintuple meter, which is eonmori rhythm. Thus, it is another fast and cheerful style of “Arirang.” The melody of “Gangwondo Arirang” is relatively simple and syllabic. Repeated tones and lyrics are distinct characteristics of this style.
Lyrics of Gangwondo Arirang are as follow:

   (“Climbing up the ariari hill”)

   (“Camellia of Ajukkari! Do not blossom!”)

   (“Who are you trying to entice oiling the hair”)

Example 10. “Gangwondo Arirang” (KTPAF)
“Gangwondo Arirang” employs eonmori jangdan as illustrated here.

Example 11. Eonmori jangdan

“Haeju Arirang” is the “Arirang” of Hwanghae Province in North Korea. Among the “Arirang” versions that I discuss in this chapter, “Haeju Arirang” is only piece that derives from North Korea. The main tone is E based on the pentatonic scale of E – G – A – B – D – E. It also employs semachi jangdan.
The lyrics of “Haeju Arirang” are the following:

[A] A-ri-a-ri | eol-ssu | a-ra-ri | yo -- |
(“Ari ari eol ssu, arari yo”)

A-ri-rang- | eol-si-gu- | no-da-ga-se- |
(“Arirang, yay! Let’s take a break and have fun!”)
Indeed, the diverse styles of “Arirang” I examine above show the long tradition and pervasiveness of “Arirang” throughout the nation, whether or not they share a common origin. Along with regional styles, there are even more diverse styles of “Arirang,” based on text styles and musical characteristics, such as “Gin Arirang” (long Arirang), “Gu Arirang” (Old Arirang), “Arirang Taryeong” (Arirang in taryeong rhythm), and “Pungnyeon Arirang” (fruitful year Arirang).

Musically speaking, in fact, I find it difficult to locate melodic similarities between these regional styles of “Arirang.” Modes, rhythms, dynamics, sentiments, vocal timbre, and tempo are different. In fact, such regional characteristics are shared with
other folk songs as well. The only shared characteristics that I find here are in the lyrics of refrains, which consist of the word, *arirang*, and melismas at the end of phrases. Also, except for “Haeju Arirang,” the other four “Arirang” pieces employ low-range refrains and highly-ranged verses as a kind of climax of the pieces.

Despite doubts about the relationship between these regional styles of “Arirang,” the government of South Korea, given such diversity, could promote “Arirang” as the most representative folk song of Korea, due to the widespread nature of the song, with no region’s people being left out from the construction of a national identity as a whole. In addition, the song’s diverse tunes, texts, and tales provide the government great cultural resources to develop it as a national product or “cultural contents” (*munhwa contents*), for sale in the world “market.” It remains controversial whether or not “Arirang” is the representative song of Korea, but it seems reasonable to consider it as the representative Korean “folk song.”

5.3. **Recontextualization of “Arirang” and Its Functional Change**

What is also important to examine, considering the evolution of “Arirang” through Korean history, is the song’s contextual transformation and the changes in its function. Before the reconstruction of Gyeongbokgung (1864–1868, during the reign of Heungseon Daewongun, King Gojong’s father, as regent), which many scholars agree signaled the arrival of nation-wide popularity, the song’s use as an entertaining love song seems to have been the preeminent function of “Arirang,” although it may also have been sung while working. During the Gyeongbokgung reconstruction, “Arirang” was still entertainment for construction workers, to alleviate their physical hardships and
homesickness, although, if “Arirang” was sung during construction and increased efficiency, it could also be seen as a work song. In addition, the construction workers sang about their hardships and the unfairness of the Joseon government. Thus, it was also a song of passive resistance to the Joseon Dynasty.

During the Japanese colonial period (1910–1945), “Arirang” was a song of “uri” (us), and thus set a boundary between Koreans and Japanese. It was also a song of resistance, non-violently expressing the strong will to reclaim the country and overcome the suffering under the rule of the Japanese government. After the division of the Korean peninsula and the Korean War (1950–1953), “Arirang” was a song of nostalgia. In the Republic of Korea, especially in the 1970s and ’80s, folk songs were popularized by the “nationalistic trends of the literary and folklore movements” (Paek 2007, 67). Later on, “Arirang” was finally assigned to present Koreanness by the government, being performed at national events. Today, the government seeks to assign new functions to “Arirang” and evolve the entertainment aspects of the song by planning the creation of new performing arts. In addition to all this, KTPAF introduced “Arirang” as a “healing song” and claimed that it had power to harmonize different peoples and cultures.

In the transformation of “Arirang” in social contexts, functional change occurred, driven mostly by people against the government, until the end of the Japanese colonial period. However, if the agency singing “Arirang” in the past was only the people in the past, now the government is the presenter and promoter of the song.
Three historic and historical periods or events—the Gyeongbokgung reconstruction, anti-Japanese colonization, and the 2000 Sydney Olympics—are significant in discussing “Arirang” and its development. Each shows different subjectivities and agencies in terms of singing the song. During Gyeongbokgung rebuilding, “Arirang” was the harmony and socialization between workers, while at the same time it was resistance to exploitation by the authority of the Joseon government at the end of the nineteenth century. Although the singing of “Arirang” was not violent or aggressive in expressing the workers’ burdens, the song expressed their hardships, sorrows, and homesickness. During the Japanese colonial period, “Arirang” was a song of resentment that the nation was lost, and thus it was resistance to the Japanese government in the early twentieth century. Koreans ruled by the Japanese government shared sorrowful and pitiful feelings that could be felt with sympathy only among Koreans, not Japanese.

The third event, the 2000 Sydney Olympics, is, however, a different story. Both South and North Korean governments agreed to play “Arirang” when the athletes of the two countries entered the opening ceremony. It was not a song of resistance anymore, instead “Arirang” was a song of hope, harmony, and brotherhood at the end of the
twentieth century. “Arirang” presented both South and North Korean homogeneous ethnic identity and unified national identities at the 2000 Sydney Olympics. While the subject singing “Arirang” had been the people complaining about their times from the end of the nineteenth century into the early twentieth century, by the end of twentieth century, it was the government who decided to play “Arirang” as a wish for the future unification of the two countries. Now, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the government of South Korea has chosen “Arirang” to popularize Korea and its music on the world stage. The song of the people’s lamentations has become the song of the government’s wishes.

5.4. 2009 Arirang to the World International Symposium

The 2009 Arirang to the World International Symposium was a kind of opening ceremony for the Arirang to the World Project. Even though the project itself, including research, had already started, it was a moment to advertise the project to the press and people. At the symposium, Yu In-chon, the former Minister of the MCST (February 2008—January 2011), was in attendance, and several musicologists and experts in Korean music participated to discuss the value of “Arirang.” Clotaire Rapaille (author of *Culture Code*), Lee Chung-myun (author of *Arirang, the Song of Korea*), Keith Howard (Associate Dean at the University of Sydney), and Inger Marie (Norwegian jazz artist) presented papers.

Major Korean newspapers, including *Dong-a Ilbo*, *Chosun Ilbo*, and *JoongAng Ilbo*, carefully reported on the symposium and its presenters. *Chosun Ilbo* presented summaries of all the talks, and illuminated the role of “Arirang” as a cultural symbol to
resolve conflicts (*Chosun* 11/10/2009). *Dong-a Ilbo* interviewed Rapaille, and noted his positive answer to a reporter’s question of whether “Arirang” could appeal worldwide (*Dong-a* 11/10/2009). *JoongAng Ilbo* also reported on Dr. Rapaille’s marketing lecture to Korean CEOs, and cited his emphasis on national pride in order for Korean enterprises to be successful globally (*JoongAng* 11/11/2009).

In his keynote address, Rapaille spoke on “Why Culture Matters to a Business: Taking Arirang Global,” making the claim that each culture has different characteristics and “culture codes.” One culture is different from another, depending on its structure and contents. Then, he asked what determines Koreanness and what uniqueness of Korea distinguishes it from other countries (or cultures). He saw “Arirang,” or the sentiments embedded within it, as the uniqueness of Korea and the major element of Korea’s success. He emphasized the importance of pride in one’s own culture, and said that the government and enterprises of Korea needed to find out the substantial essence of Korean culture, and thus, decode the “Korean culture code” in order to contribute to the world (KTPAF 2009c, 9–17).

Lee Chung-myun claimed that “Arirang” is the “code of harmony” and the “soul of Koreans.” He argues that the song served as a code for harmonizing people from different backgrounds during the rebuilding of Gyeongbokgung, which started at the end of the 1880s. Lee also cited the 2008 New York Philharmonic performance of “Arirang” in Pyongyang, North Korea, as an example of alleviating tension between the U.S. and North Korea and of reconciliation between the two Koreas. He recommended establishing a national research institution for “Arirang” (KTPAF 2009c, 19–23).
In his talk, Keith Howard provided research information about “Arirang”: legends of its origins, regional styles, several versions, new “Arirang” pieces, lyrics, scales, sentiments, and functions of the song. As readers can note from the title of his speech, “An Icon of Korea, a Korean Icon for the World,” Howard sees great possibilities for “Arirang” to be popular worldwide. He claimed that “‘Arirang’ expresses Korean identity, which consists of dynamics, passion, sadness, and sorrow. However, the melody is not only about the sadness. Rather, it is also about the death of people, pillage of land, loss of possession, returning to hometown, and desire for peace” (KTPAF 2009b, 26–27).

“Arirang consists of the sentiment of Korea as well as the world: suffering and joys of life” (KTPAF 2009b, 31; KTPAF 2009c, 25–31).

Both Howard and Lee Chung-myun mentioned the rebuilding of Gyeongbok Palace, the Japanese colonial period, and the 2000 Sydney Olympics as historic events in the history of “Arirang.” The first event, the reconstruction of Gyeongbokgung (destroyed during the 1592 Japanese invasion) in 1867 (www.royalpalace.go.kr), exploited a number of workers from all over the country under the management of Heungseon Daewongun (1820–1898), who was the father of Emperor Gojong (1852–1919, r. 1863–1897). Lee and Howard see that this event as having been a moment for increasing the song’s popularity. During the Japanese occupation, Koreans continued to express their hardships and wishes for relief by singing “Arirang.” And with the unified entrance of South and North Korean athletes at the 2000 Sydney Olympics, “Arirang” was suitable because it is the most well-known folk song in both Koreas and can evoke feelings similar to those triggered by national anthems.
In her talk, “Arirang Has Open Melody and Healing Sound,” Inger Marie, a Norwegian jazz artist, introduced her experience on first exposure to “Arirang” and discussed her reasons to include it in her repertoire. She claimed that “Arirang” has a power to “heal” people and that it deals with complex human feelings that not only Koreans but all human beings experience. She pointed out that, in order to present Koreanness on the world stage via “Arirang,” “it is important to maintain the essence and the core of the song, which are singing ‘Arirang’ as a healing song and expressing despair, sorrow, competition, resistance, sympathy, love, and hope” (KTPAF 2009c, 37; KTPAF 2009c, 33–8).

I was informed by Kim Dae-jin, the director of Project Division I at the KTPAF, about his reasons for inviting those speakers and not scholars based in Korea. He said that there were two criteria for choosing the speakers. “The first was a person who has a different (objective) view on Arirang. And the second was a person who can influence enterprises and the field of business marketing for the purpose of advertising the project.” (Interview 1/20/2011)

The 2009 International Symposium for Arirang to the World will explore the unique variety of historical, cultural, artistic, and moral aspects of Arirang that make it an ideal cultural icon of Korea. Professionals in the fields of business, marketing, culture and art will discuss this potential and present ideas for reinventing Arirang for the global community. (KTPAF 2009b, 5)

As I summarize the speeches by Rapaille, Lee, Howard, and Marie, all see a positive future for “Arirang” as a cultural icon of Korea to present Koreanness worldwide. Many Koreans agree that “Arirang” has a special power to evoke patriotism, nostalgia, and brotherhood. As the final piece, it often highlights Korean traditional music concerts abroad. It is sad and exciting at the same time. As an international student, I also
become emotional when I hear “Arirang” outside of Korea. However, reviewing the 2009 International Symposium and other data, the expected results from this project need to be more specific, beyond the overall purpose “to build a global and modern image of Arirang by integrating values that will appeal to people around the world” (KTPAF 2009b, 5). If the ultimate goal of the “Arirang to the World Project” is “to bolster cultural pride and confidence at home while also strengthening the solidarity of overseas Koreans and improving its national image,” one must wonder if it is possible to improve a national image by making a song popular.

At the moment, the government of South Korea and scholars participating in the Arirang to the World Project seem to believe that “Arirang” indeed has such strong power to bind Korean people together and further to attract foreigners via that Korean sentiment. By hiring these positive voices of foreign scholars, the KTPAF rationalizes the project. Throughout the project, the government expects to express the uniqueness of the nation and elevate the national image. The government then insists that “Arirang” is the most well-known folk song throughout Korea, and thus, “Arirang” is Korea and its people, and reflects their long history. What is confusing is that the ultimate goal for this project is to emphasize the importance of marketing at both the enterprise and governmental levels. However, each scholar’s view on “Arirang” as a cultural product or as a cultural icon/identity marker is not clearly defined. The KTPAF’s ultimate goal for the project, to make “Arirang,” a brand of Korea that is “compatible” in the world “market” needs to be clearly defined.
5.5. *Arirang: The Soul of Korean, Advertising Brochure*

One of the major tasks of the government with regard to traditional music is publishing books, booklets, and brochures for distribution to colleges, public libraries, and embassies in order to advertise the traditional culture of Korea. As a part of the Arirang to the World Project, the brochure, *Arirang: The Soul of Korean,* was published in five languages including Korean, English, Chinese, Japanese, and Russian. Government-printed material, *Arirang: The Soul of Korean* provides educational information about “Arirang” with a positive interpretation and emphasis on its long tradition. It claims that fifty musical styles of “Arirang” and eight thousand versions of its text exist throughout Korea and in 128 places in the Korean diaspora. The brochure introduces the first Western notation of “Arirang,” as transcribed by Homer Hulbert, an American missionary to Korea (KTPAF 2009a, 22).

The brochure also identifies the first fusion of “Arirang” with Western music:

The jazz musician, Oscar Pettiford, who visited Incheon in 1951 heard Arirang being hummed by a soldier. Impressed by the melody, Pettiford remembered it and wrote a jazz version of the song, Ah-Dee-Dong BLUES, and included it on an album. This is the very first jazz version of Arirang, and is considered as one of the greatest arrangements made by popular foreign musicians. (KTPAF 2009a, 30)

Pete Seeger’s recording is also discussed:

The legend of American folk music circles and antiwar activist singer, Pete Seeger, included Arirang in his first live album in 1953. He took the lead in introducing anti-war and peace songs even before Bob Dylan and Joan Baez, and it is noteworthy that he sang Arirang as the song that opposed war and hopes for peace. (KTPAF 2009a, 31)

In addition to the historic records above, contemporary musicians including Paul Mauriat (*Arirang Miracle* 1976), George Winston (*Plains* 1999), and Inger Marie featured “Arirang” on their albums (KTPAF 2009a, 36). With these citations, KTPAF
attempts to prove that “Arirang” is not only loved by Koreans but has also been recognized by these famous musicians and thus has potential for worldwide popularity.

Arirang is the healing song for everyone on earth. Arirang is the song of harmony and hope for the 21st century. Arirang is the melting pot that dissolves conflict, confrontation, resentment, sadness, and disruption into unity. Arirang, the song that 70 million Korean people sing! We hope it becomes the song of peace and unity that 7 billion people of the world sing together. “Arirang, Arirang, Arariyo, Arirang Gogaero Neomeoganda.” Arirang will lead us on a journey where the whole world sings the song of unity in the search of hope beyond difficulties and sadness. (KTPAF 2009a, 39)

5.6. “Arirang” Brandhwa

The Arirang to the World Project directly reflects the current government’s approach to traditional music and the way the government positions itself in-between the preservation of “authentic” tradition and the re-creation of tradition, along with the commercialization of traditional culture. The Project consists of complex identity layering in the global context and also selective identity presentation. Fundamental to the Project is the long history of “Arirang” and the social meanings embedded (or that may be assigned) in the song. The Project aims to convince Koreans and non-Koreans alike that Korean ethnic characteristics and national identity are presented through “Arirang.”

In using the term, Arirang Brandhwa (making “Arirang” a brand), “Arirang” becomes a cultural product which may possibly fascinate foreign consumers. “Brand” or “brandhwa” means more than just highlighting and signifying a cultural icon. Arirang brandhwa means making “Arirang” a brand which it had not previously been. KTPAF has branded “Arirang,” which was just a famous folk song (or, to be generous, the representative song of Korea) as a cultural product of Korea and Koreanness targeted at international consumers. In other words, the government has provided it new meanings
and definitions. After the song gains popularity, the government expects not only increasing interest in “Arirang” but also in its locus, Korea. It is as if “Arirang” were the popular product of a company called Korea, and due to good reviews of the song, the company value rises. Thus, by branding “Arirang,” the Korean government seeks to brand the nation itself as a product and expects the national status to rise on the global stage.

However, as the speakers at the 2009 International Symposium remarked, in order to establish a research center and have Arirang Festivals, more specific and specialized activities and events will likely be required. The one-directional distribution of information by producing advertising materials including educational books, CDs, and DVDs is far too limited, only to certain readers or consumers. Development of pre-existing festivals, so that local people and foreigners can interact and together enjoy “Arirang,” promises to be more efficient. Beyond branding “Arirang” as the representative song of Korea, positioning “Arirang” at the center of touristic sites to enable people to experience the song rather than just reading about it would truly benefit local businesses as well as the image of Korea as interesting and exciting.

With the current neo-liberal (market-oriented) Korean government, the Arirang to the World Project directly relates branding of traditional music and branding the nation through traditional music. However, the government seems to be confused between its past positionality as the public sector, which does not aim for economic benefits but endeavors for presenting the national identity, and its current one, as a modified corporate-like entity, which is the current government’s focus in its pursuit of a “global Korea.”
CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSION

The South Korean government took the concept of branding from commercial marketing and adapted it to serve its traditional music policy. The branding of traditional culture and the nation is expected to provide positive national images, elevating the nation’s cultural and economic status in the world community, in order to “compete” with other leading countries, based on market-oriented theory. The government’s competitiveness, often revealed through its international policy, is based on a neo-liberal position, in which the government sees itself as a modified, corporate-like entity, but has also developed out of a desire to rise above the nation’s long history of subordination to China, Japanese colonialism, poverty, social chaos due to the division of the peninsula, political relations with the U.S., and the dominance of Western over native culture. As a solution, in the second half of the twentieth century, the government put forward traditional music as a national identity marker, emphasizing its long tradition, the loftiness of the court and the elites, and its uniqueness. While North Korea abandoned many traditional aspects in its music and avidly pursued “modernization” of traditional music and instruments, as had been done in the People’s Republic of China, South Korea has been concerned with restoring, preserving, and perpetuating traditional music. Throughout the efforts of the South Korean government, traditional music has been developed into a national symbol that presents Korean identity, independent of its popularity among casual listeners. The long history of Korean traditional music, like the musics of other nations, legitimizes the South Korean government’s political and cultural
autonomy. This endless presentation of Korean identity secures Korea on the world scene.

Ironically, however, those same classical characteristics of traditional music obscure the modern Korean identity—fresh, high-fashioned, and hip—that the government also wants to promote. Thus, it now concentrates on developing traditional music as a fun and popular performing art to attract potential local and foreign audiences, as well as an identity marker. As a result, in the process of branding, the government chooses to exaggerate, diminish, or elaborate on the music of the past to attract a wider range of audiences. Through these endeavors, the government continues to re-define Korean music. In fact, though, this new definition of Korean music is very much mutable in the branding process. According to where and to whom it is presented, and depending on other socio-political and socio-economic circumstances, different aspects of Koreanness are emphasized. In such cases, the government presents the final product as the image of Korea, not the end-product of the process of branding.

Along with analysis of the NGC and the CDs, DVDs, books, concerts, and festivals provided by the MCST, this thesis has particularly focused on the “Arirang to the World Project” as a case study to deconstruct the government’s branding process for the folk song, “Arirang.” By unraveling their ultimate goals, tasks, and plans, we reveal the government’s positional transformation towards traditional music—from that of a traditional music preserver to an active producer—and the artificial processes of branding traditional music. In the process of branding “Arirang” as a song of Korea and marketing it in the “world market,” the negative implications and historical meanings of the song were minimized. Instead, “Arirang” was polished as a positive, “harmonizing,” and
“healing” song for the purpose of attracting people worldwide. Since that effort is still ongoing, it is hard to judge the project’s success. However, the government’s artificial process to present what it wants to show—the new definition of Korean identity—is clearly depicted in the project.

Despite low demand for it, traditional music’s meaning in contemporary society is not so trivial. Kendall argues that “traditions, so named, become accessible through a variety of modern forms that enable their contemporary consumption” (Kendall 2011, 16). In fact, traditional music is off the mainstream while K-pop (Korean popular music) dominates, having also become a great source of new-Koreanness. Nevertheless, the government’s continuous promotion of traditional music as national symbol in- and outside the country has driven the government itself to develop systemized marketing of traditional music and nation branding.

The government continues to move forward, taking further steps to brand traditional music as one of its national products to present national identity and also to accrue benefits from it. Branding traditional music continues to deliver the government’s master narrative that traditional music is “our sound” and represents Korean identity. However, in choosing the word “branding,” the government places itself in an industrial mentality, expecting more demand from international consumers. From the current Lee Myung-bak government’s slogan of “Global Korea,” and its market-oriented policy, via the process of branding traditional music and pursuing its popularization, the government seems to expect possible indirect economic benefits, such as an increase in the number of tourists, an influx of foreign investment, and an increase in demand for Korean products (for example, cars, electronic goods, TV programs, and other cultural products). By using
such commercial and capitalistic words as “brand” and “branding,” the government has revealed its new strategy to promote Korea internationally through traditional music.

I conclude that the current government’s prioritized economic policy (as an “economic government”) has strongly influenced traditional music policy. Thus, traditional music policy adopts the branding process, in anticipation of potential economic benefits. Consequently, the government has expanded its role from that of a tradition preserver, in order to present Korean identity through traditional music, to one of a music producer, distributing traditional music for the popularization of the music and the nation.

The logical follow-up to this study should be research into traditional musicians’ roles and involvement in branding Korean music, and consumer reaction to the government’s process of branding traditional culture as a nation brand. My concern there would be to identify how the government’s presentation of Koreanness reflects the Korean peoples’ presentation of their ethnic identity, and thus, how the government re-defines another new-Koreanness. Also, there need to be updates on the processes and results of the “Arirang to the World Project,” scheduled to continue until 2016, as well as evaluation of which aspects of the project were successful and which were not. I see a continuing need for scholarly research into the phenomenon of the branding process for cultural products of Korea.
GLOSSARY

Aak. Court ritual and ceremonial music; nowadays, court music in general.

Ajaeng. Bowed zither; imported from China but employed for native music.

Brandhwa. Making something into a brand.

Changjak akdan. Newly-created Traditional Music Orchestra of the National Gugak Center; formed in 2004.

Changjak gugak. Newly-created traditional music; new compositions that incorporate musical characteristics of traditional music.

Daegeum. Transverse bamboo flute with river reed membrane attached; literally, “large flute.”


Gagok. Classical song cycle accompanied by string and wind ensemble; male and female singers alternate.

Gayageum. Twelve-string zither.

Geomungo. Six-string zither with a plectrum.

Gugak. Music of Korea; national music; traditional music.

Haegeum. Two-string fiddle.


Hanbok. Korean traditional dress (attire).

Hangeul. Korean letters created by King Sejong and his subjects (called Hunminjeongeum).

Hyangak. Native music; traditional distinction of indigenous music from imported Chinese music.

Iwangjik aakbu. Yi Dynasty Music Bureau during the Japanese period; successor of Jangawon.

Jangagwon. Court music department of the Joseon Dynasty; the Jeongakdan of the National Gugak Center traces its roots back to Jangagwon.
**Jangdan.** Rhythmic pattern or cycle.

**Jeongakdan.** Court Music Orchestra of the National Gugak Center; formed in 1951 with the opening of the NGC.

**Jeongganbo.** Traditional music notation; a type of box notation, created during the reign of King Sejong; pitches, durations, rests, and ornaments are indicated.

**Jeontong eumak.** Traditional music.

**Jiyeok gamjeong.** Regional favoritism.

**Jongmyo Jerye.** Royal Shrine (Ancestral) Rite; designated as National Important Intangible Cultural Heritage No. 56 and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.

**Jongmyo Jeryeak.** Royal Shrine Ritual music; designated as National Important Intangible Cultural Heritage No. 1 and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.

**KTO.** Korea Tourism Organization; public corporation.

**KTPAF.** Korean Traditional Performing Arts Foundation; public foundation.

**MCST.** Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism.

**Minsok akdan.** Folk Music Orchestra of the National Gugak Center; formed in 1979 with the expansion of the NGC.

**Minyo.** Folk songs; Korean folk songs as developed in regional styles.

**Munhwa Hanguk.** “Munhwa Hanguk” [Cultural Korea] is a slogan of the current government which endeavors for cultural development.

**Munmyo (jerye)ak.** Confucian ritual music; imported in 1116 (during Goryeo Dynasty) from the Song Dynasty of China.

**Neo-liberal globalization.** Capitalist development in a world where production has been globalised through supply chains that extend everywhere (Lee and Hewison 2010, 183).

**Neo-liberalism.** A catch-all for a range of supposed market-oriented ideas and interests; an ideological position on the role of market and state in economic life (Lee and Hewison 2010, 183).
NGC. National Gugak Center; was Center for Korean Traditional Performing Arts.

**Pansori.** Narrative story-telling; one-person opera accompanied by gosu, a buk player.

**PCNB.** Presidential Council on Nation Branding; established in 2009.

**Pyeongyeong.** Stone chimes imported from the Song Dynasty of China.

**Pyeonjong.** Bell chimes imported from the Song Dynasty of China.

**Samulnori.** Percussion ensemble consisting of four instruments: kkwenggari (small gong), jing (large gong), buk (barrel drum), and janggu (hour-glass shaped drum).

**Sanjo.** Virtuosic solo instrumental genre created by Chang-jo Kim in the late nineteenth century; literally, “scattered melody”; gayageum, geomungo, daegeum, haegeum, ajaeng sanjo forms have been developed (Byeon, Han and Kim 2008, 115).

**Segyehwa.** Globalization.

**Seungmu.** Monk’s dance; inspired by Buddhist music.

**Tangak.** Imported Chinese music; term used from the Unified Silla (BC 57–AD 935) period to the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1910).

**Yangak.** Western music.

**Yeonryeak.** Banquet music.
APPENDIX A

LAYOUT OF GOVERNMENT DIVISIONS FOR NATION BRANDING

President, “Blue House (Cheongwadae)”

Presidential Council on Nation Branding (PCNB)

Belong to MCST

Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA)

Cooperate with

Funded by MCST

National Gugak Center (NGC)

Korean Traditional Performing Arts Foundation (KTPAF)

Korea Tourism Organization (KTO)
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