SIGN, AFFECT, AND STYLE:
LISTENING TO SŎNG KŬM-YŎN'S KAYAGŬM SANJO

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Romanization Practice

This thesis makes use of the McCune-Reischauer system of romanization. This cannot be applied universally however because it obscures the recognition of familiar terms such as Seoul. Therefore where applicable I have used the common romanization. Names are also, for the most part, romanized in this system using a hyphen to separate the two syllables of Korean given names. When a person referred to has a stated preference I have used their own romanization practice, such as Song Bang Song and Byong Won Lee. The Korean surname 이 can be romanized as either Lee or Yi, as in Byong Won Lee or Yi Hye-ku.
# Table of Contents

Introduction: Definitions and Paradoxes ................................................................. 1

Definitions .............................................................................................................. 1

Ethnomusicology, Transmission, and Aesthetics ................................................. 5

Ethnomusicology and the Study of Musical Style ............................................... 13

Methodology and Research Conditions .............................................................. 16

Overview of Chapters ......................................................................................... 22

Chapter One. Kayagŭm Sanjo: Three Contexts ...................................................... 28

The Kayagŭm of Kayagŭm Sanjo ........................................................................ 28

Sanjo Among the Dramatic Forms .................................................................. 37

Sanjo as an Elite Education ........................................................................... 50

Discourse and Context ..................................................................................... 58

Chapter Two. The Significance of Sensation: Affects and Signs ......................... 61

Turino, Peirce, and Signs .................................................................................. 62

Signs and Context .............................................................................................. 66

Kristeva, Barthes, and Semiotics .................................................................... 71

Affect and Pedagogy ......................................................................................... 75

Chapter Three. The Signs and Affects of Pedagogy .......................................... 80

Indexes of Kayagŭm Sanjo ............................................................................. 83

Listening and Playing with Affects .................................................................. 92

Chapter Four. The Aesthetic Signs of Sanjo: Melodies and Personal Style ...... 120

Melodies ............................................................................................................. 121
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Style</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melodic Transcription 1</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melodic Transcription 2</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonograph Comparison 1</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonograph Comparison 2</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonograph Comparison 3</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonograph Comparison 4</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary of Korean Terms</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction: Definitions and Paradoxes

Definitions

An attempt to define kayagŭm sanjo in its contemporary context begins with three paradoxes. Sanjo is, by definition, an improvised music that is not improvised. It is an orally transmitted music that is “taken by heart, rendered by hand” which is often learned by means of Western staff notation. Finally, sanjo is a music of the passions and emotions, a dramatization of life, that is primarily studied in terms of its pitch and rhythm structure and its significance as a national treasure, or representation of Korea.

Throughout the latter part of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first scholars have attempted to define sanjo historically, pedagogically, musicologically, and socially. Song Bang Song states: “The term sanjo, literally meaning 'scattered melodies or tunes' refers to a particular instrumental form of music found on the Korean peninsula.... Korean sanjo is a particularly refined and restrained expression in which the arts of performance and creation are fused into one through improvisation.” Keith Howard and Lee Chae-suk counter this definition in their own explanations: “Sanjo is a solo instrumental form which developed out of the shamanist music of Cholla province.” “Sanjo is often said to be improvisatory, but although this may have been true at sometime in the past – as it still is of sanjo's prototype sinawi (Korean group improvisational music to accompany shamanistic dances) – it is no longer true in the present.”

1 The kayagŭm is a 12 stringed half-tube zither with 12 movable bridges, similar in appearance to Japanese koto, Chinese guzheng, Mongolian yatga, and Vietnamese đàn tranh.
translated as 'scattered melodies'...This begins to suggest a structural form, but can easily mislead, for it is clear that sanjo is characterized by extended and careful organization.”

Howard then goes on to describe the rhythmic organization and historical-national importance of this music.

Hwang Pyŏng-ki, in his definition emphasizes the sanjo musician, rather than specifically focusing on the sanjo form. “Sanjo is a kind of folk music developed in the southwestern provinces of Korea and performed on a solo melody instrument accompanied by the changgo, an hourglass shaped drum...Sanjo which is absolute instrumental music rather than program music, is made up of fascinating and dramatic melodies, and it requires virtuoso performing techniques.” “Since the time of Kim Ch'ang-cho (1856-1919, the purported originator of sanjo), kayagŭm sanjo has been made popular and developed technically by many prominent kayagŭm players...Traditionally, the transmission of sanjo proceeded according to the following steps:

1. Before starting to learn sanjo, the student must have already cultivated performance skills on the kayagŭm and learned the ch’ŏngak (elite instrumental music) suite Yŏngsan Hoesang with the folk fingering techniques.
2. Traditionally there are no written scores, and the student learns by rote imitating the teacher. The student has daily lessons, and during the learning period he practices all day everyday; normally it is possible to learn by heart all the melodies of his teacher's sanjo in the space of several months.
3. After studying with the sanjo teacher, he continues practicing and immerses himself in the various musical types of the southern provinces (for example, p'ansori, different sanjo, and sinawi), gradually polishing his performance.
4. When he can perform with complete familiarity the sanjo learned from his teacher, the student can gradually make alterations and introduce his own individual materials, eventually evolving his own variant sanjo. The new sanjo may be taught to the next generation by the same

method.
5. Forming an individual sanjo is only an initial stage: as time goes by, the performer continually makes improvements and corrections. That is, he inserts new melodies derived from his own inspiration or from deep impressions from learning other sanjos, he revises parts of melodies already present, and he eliminates less desirable materials."³⁶

This description elaborates on the notion of “kujŏnsimsu” or “taken by ear and cultivated by heart.”⁷

Lastly, Mun Chae-suk presents a definition of sanjo that is based on the formal features of sanjo, but also relates these formal features to a way of listening and to other closely related genres, “Sanjo, as an instrumental solo, was created out of the melodies of sinawi in Namdo (southwestern Korea) shamanist music and of p'ansori....Often called 'p'ansori without sasŏl (novel, story, words)', sanjo is composed of various keys. Keys like ujo, p'yŏngjo and kyemyŏnjo, which are used for p'ansori, occupy the core...The most striking feature of sanjo lies in its 'man-chung-sak (slow-moderate-fast) structure'. Starting with the slowest rhythm...it gradually promotes the audiences emotion, and adds the tension and excitement of the music.”⁸

In addition, the type of sanjo that this project focuses on specifically is kayagŭm sanjo. I will give a much more detailed description of the kayagŭm and its relationship to playing sanjo in the following chapters, but one aspect that all of these scholars' definitions have in common is that sanjo was first organized or composed, depending upon the scholar's ideas of what constitutes sanjo, by a late 19th century musician named Kim Ch‘ang-cho

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(1856-1919) for the kayagŭm. The kayagŭm is at present one of the most iconic instruments in South Korea, and several types of the instrument exist for performing different types of music, but the sanjo musician uses a sanjo kayagŭm, which is a half tube zither with twelve silk strings stretched over wooden bridges. The kayagŭm sanjo performer uses a variety of techniques, but most commonly plucks, flicks, or pushes the strings with the thumb, index and middle finger of the right hand, and uses a variety of bending techniques to alter the articulations with the same fingers of the left hand.

The three paradoxes that characterize the study of kayagŭm sanjo will not be resolved though a tidy conclusion because they are real tensions, not only in the study of kayagŭm sanjo but in the context and practice of sanjo as well. Rather, I have introduced them because they shed light on the current moment in kayagŭm sanjo's history when seen diachronically. These three paradoxes correspond to three contexts. Improvisation refers both to a mode of transmission and implicates a concept of how the performer relates to the instrument itself. The tension between oral and written transmission has developed in the context of Korea's changing social context for music, especially the introduction of the university education system. The third paradox refers to the intertextual nature of kayagŭm sanjo, or how we see it in relation to other genres of Korean music, and their shared reservoir of meaning.

This thesis is intended situate kayagŭm sanjo in these contexts and then to proceed to a detailed discussion materials of sanjo performance that performers use to communicate in these contexts. This thesis argues that by looking at the minute details of a performance, especially by recognizing the lived experience that constitutes the construction of sanjo's aesthetic character, we will achieve a more dynamic view of a sanjo performance. This view allows us to be more appreciative listeners to musicians who put much of their effort into achieving a certain aesthetic effect. It also allows us to more carefully examine the techniques
that are salient in the inter-cultural transmission of music.

This thesis begins in the first chapter by exploring the context and discourse surrounding *kayagŭm sanjo*. It then proceeds to provide interpretive tools to engage the context and the lived experience of the music through the study of how music communicates in the second chapter. The third chapter explores the transmission of *kayagŭm sanjo* by narrating the details of how the author learned the technical aspects of performance. The forth chapter applies this understanding to the analysis of *kayagŭm sanjo*’s musical style.

**Ethnomusicology, Transmission, and Aesthetics**

In *Music of the Other* Laurent Aubert presents what many practitioners consider to be important characteristics of their musical tradition: It is orally transmitted. It has an ancient origin. It is bound to cultural context. The question of what constitutes a tradition and the place of art or individual artistry in that tradition has been a consistent theme in ethnomusicology. Central to this discussion is the notion of musical transmission. A musical tradition consists not just of music that is continuously passed from one generation to the next, it also consists of the values that characterize that music. Ethnomusicologists have in particular been concerned with the division and interface of oral and written transmission, going so far as to classify musical cultures according to their method of transmission, for example: oral, written, recorded or printed. The relationship between authors, agents, and cultural groups is also important when discussing musical transmission. Ethnomusicologists have divided music into music that has a known author and music that is created by a group of people, folk music versus art or classical traditions. Finally transmission must be considered by the relationship between what is preserved or changed during transmission, and

by whom. This relationship has developed into the notion of a consistent content and a variable style.\textsuperscript{11} Considering these three aspects Merriam proposes a model for transmission based upon technique, agent, and content.\textsuperscript{12}

This discussion of transmission assumes a model of intra-cultural transmission that is context dependent. There must be a revaluation of transmission based upon a diachronic view of tradition and the role of musical transmission in music that is seeking a global audience. In other words, how do our notions of transmission change when the context of musical production undergoes a drastic change, and the production of music becomes increasingly oriented around producing aesthetic products? These changes arise not only from changes in native listening habits but also the interface with global listening habits. One way for researchers to examine the nature of transmission in this changing context is to take on the role of the learner and to reflect on the nature of their own lived experience of inter-cultural transmission.

In this thesis I document my experiences of musical transmission in the Korean musical genre \textit{kayagŭm sanjo}. Contrary to Aubert's characteristics of musical tradition \textit{kayagŭm sanjo}, even though it is a “traditional music,” is transmitted by the interplay of text and oral transmission. It is a music attributed to definite authors in the recent past. Finally, I argue that its aesthetics are not entirely context dependent. Although the context of \textit{kayagŭm sanjo} is an important determinate of how the genre has come to be performed as it is, I situate the context dependency of \textit{kayagum sanjo}'s aesthetics on how and by whom the music is performed. The concept underlying this thesis is that transmission involves a complex process of developing in the learner the ability to understand and transmit signs about the aesthetic content of \textit{kayagŭm sanjo}. The process of transmission that I experienced involved a

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Ibid.}, 189-90
\textsuperscript{12} Merriam, Alan P. \textit{The Anthropology of Music}, 150.
\end{flushleft}
constant leading and correcting by my teacher, Kim Il-ryun (b.1960) using a variety of creative techniques to achieve the desired sonic-aesthetic output. In this thesis I situate the analysis in terms of a narrative of how I learned to produce these signs.

The use of narrative in the ethnographic account shows how the researcher came to understand. In my case I have approached Korean music in order to understand its aesthetics and how these aesthetic preferences act to influence the transmission of the music. In addition, rather than attempt to present this narrative as if it depicted a direct account of insider knowledge, I have situated the narrative from the perspective of the researcher who is learning both an instrument and investigating the discourse used in training that contains both information about what the music communicates and how the musician technically accomplishes this. In reporting this I have used both comparative strategies and description of the mechanisms of lived experience. This follows a tradition in ethnomusicology that Titon has written about in his account of ethnomusicological fieldwork: “The new fieldwork leads us to ask what it is like for a person (ourselves included) to make and to know music as lived experience.” In this paradigm research becomes “experiencing and understanding” rather than “collecting and observing.” This trend is also reflected in what Jean During writes in The Spirit of Sounds, where it is the lived experience rather than the analysis of external knowledge that discloses the most “faithful account of the object.”

This research is intended to provoke the further exploration of epistemological questions in ethnomusicology. It does this by demonstrating one possible way of understanding and knowing. This research touches on a central question for music, which is

the conjunction of the the cognitive and bodily ways of percieving music. The

14. Ibid., 25
15. Ibid.
epistemological conclusion that I draw from this research also echoes what Peter Dunbar Hall writes about cross-cultural training in gamelan music. He shows that learners adopt novel and creative epistemological strategies when faced with a cross-cultural encounter in aesthetics.\textsuperscript{17} In my case, this also provides an account of Korean strategies of cross-cultural musical transmission, as my teacher also provided strategies based upon her own epistemology. I document some of these strategies in the third chapter of this thesis. Because of this, I both affirm the epistemological conclusions that Hall draws, and add to this that the ethnomusicological account, particularly knowledge about the culture surrounding instrumental practice and applied aesthetics, is an account that includes both the epistemological strategies of a student and a teacher.

The question then arises, “What is the purpose of this narrative and this account of understanding? Who was it written for?” This account may be of benefit to instructors of Korean music who are want to know how their music is apprehended inter-culturally. There is a growing interest in kayagŭm music not just among Koreans, but also among foreigners in Korea who have come to have a cultural experience. The contexts for these experiences include both classes at the National Center for Korean Traditional Performing Arts and national, regional, or local cultural centers as well as demonstrations at language classes, museums, or cultural centers. This group may primarily be interested in my discussion in chapter three of the strategies that were effective in transmitting the cultural knowledge embedded in and discursively surrounding Korean music. This includes both the metaphors that my teacher used to describe Korean aesthetics to me, and the way that I have translated her explanations of techniques.

This thesis as a whole will be useful to contribute to the research on cross cultural

encounters, both in education and in the process of cross-culturally transmitting a process of signification. This thesis may also be of use to those looking into issues of how to communicate musical aesthetics cross-culturally such as music demonstrations and workshops abroad. It does not purport to provide a solution or the most effective means of transmission, but rather reports what was pragmatic in my situation.

Since I am situating my discussion in terms of cross-cultural transmission, the notion of trans-cultural aesthetics comes to the fore. The notion of aesthetics may be construed as a process of creating binaries and othering: cultures are be divided into those that have an aesthetic concept in their music and those that do not. Merriam gives six criteria for a culture that may have a notion of the aesthetic in music, and then discuses what parts of an aesthetic concept are present in the musical cultures that he has researched. His definition of an aesthetic concept includes: 1) “psychic and physical distance,” 2) “manipulation of form for its own sake,” 3) “attribution of emotion producing qualities to music conceived strictly as sound,” 4) “attribution of beauty to the product,” 5) “creating something purposefully aesthetic,” 6) “the presence of a philosophy of aesthetics.” These characteristics, as this thesis shows, do in fact apply to kagûm sanjo, however, I want to take the discussion of aesthetics in a different direction. I look to the performer's use of the body as their primary aesthetic tool.

Rather than dividing my self and my aesthetic concepts from those of the culture that I am studying, I instead look at the ways that my teacher transmitted these aesthetic values to me. Of course I am not a neutral or blank slate that can be written over with aesthetic values. Rather this thesis shows that by struggling with how to produce the minute decorations and patterns, as well as the full melodies that characterize the art of the sanjo performer, I have been able to learn to recognize and reproduce these aesthetic moments. The type of education

that produced this aesthetic concept in my experience may prove to be important to sanjo as it seeks a global audience. According to Aubert one aspect that characterizes audiences of global music is that they are “attracted to 'the music itself,' its intrinsic value, and its stance as a meaningful cultural artifact.”19 If audiences can be instructed on how a music relates to aesthetic values they may be more receptive to “the music itself” even if it has unfamiliar aesthetics.

This thesis is also an attempt to go beyond an essentialist aesthetics to show the physical processes involved in creating an aesthetic. The goal of the theoretical exploration in chapter two is to present the theoretical basis of a non-essentialist understanding of aesthetics and signification. The application that I draw is that in order to demonstrate musical aesthetics in a cross-cultural situation it is effective to combine a strategy that shows both the common discursive understanding of the relationship of a musical aesthetics to its signification and the physical way that this aesthetic is produced. This should be incorporated not just through applied instrument lessons, but should be a part of the pedagogical material used in “world music” instruction from the elementary though the university level. This two part process will allow students to make the association between lived experience and aesthetics much more engaging.

In order to understand sanjo’s aesthetics it is important to understand the way that it relates to communication. This is the context dependent aspect of sanjo’s aesthetics. Ethnomusicologists have focused on the nature of musical communication in terms of whether it communicates concepts like a language, for example the use of talking drums to signal something with definite meaning and linguistic content. Mcleod, in his discussion of musical communication asks how to define the units in music that communicate. Similarly

Powers in “Language Models for Music” considers whether music has features that allow it to be analyzed semantically like a language.

In this thesis I present a number of ways that kayagŭm sanjo and music in general can be approached from the point of view of communication. Firstly I adopt a system that can be used to classify the signs that musicians use to learn music, to communicate with other musicians, and to communicate with audiences. Secondly, in this thesis I argue that sanjo performers communicate an individual mark on their performance through the use of their own technique and bodily approach to the instrument, and I adopt a corresponding theory, Kristeva's notion of the “semiotic and the symbolic.” Thirdly I adopt a theory that explains how sanjo's aesthetics are communicated from teacher to student at the level of sensation and affect.

The notion of communication returns to the issue of context. Rather than definite articulations that mirror language, I posit that what sanjo communicates is related to feeling and aesthetics. These aspects of sanjo are not always always fully given in a sanjo performance itself, but are derived from a set of feelings and aesthetics that sanjo shares with other genres. I argue that this meaning can be spoken about using Peirce's system of signs, which I adopt and explain in the second chapter, as indexical and iconic signs.

The same phenomenon can also be explained by intertextuality, a term from literary criticism that has been adopted by musicology and ethnomusicology. Kevin Korsyn explains the term in the context of musicology as the point at which the text and context meet. In his discussion however, he assumes that music is normally being described as completely context independent. In ethnomusicology the opposite has been true. Mantle Hood defines the process of ethnomusicological interpretation of works as involving the “charateristic music

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style identified in its own terms and viewed in relation to society.”21 This sounds exactly like what Korsyn has proposed to discuss twenty years later. In his discussion of shamisen intertextuality Tokumaru Yoshihito defines his task as showing whether the nature of intertextuality is of quoting or of incorporating style.22 Kayagŭm sanjo's intertextually is characterized by stylistic incorporation rather than the use of whole melodies. I argue in the first chapter that it is the use of a common reservoir of musical scales and rhythmic structures that create an intertextual relationship to other Korean musical genres, and that it is this relationship that gives sanjo a source of feeling and meaning.

Finally, although sanjo musicians present a performance of sanjo that communicates through a standard form of melodic modes and rhythms, I argue that they are also communicating in terms of their individual stylistic approach to the set melodic material. This communication highlights the agency of individual musicians to both adapt to a new context, and to interact and modify the context itself by their interpretation of melodies. Frederick Lau argues that human agency is vital to the relationship between individual practice and cultural norms or structures. Humans both “create and reproduce” culture through musical practice.23

This thesis reveals a moment in Korean musical history that shows both how culture is reproduced in the interplay of bodily agency that occurs in the teacher-student interaction during lessons, and also how kayagum sanjo musicians develop strategies as musical agents to differentiate their “style” from one another. This moment shows that the shift that has occurred as the repercussions of the university based teaching style that began in the 1960s has come to fruition in producing musicians who perform in a highly detailed and technical way. The approach to music does not involve reproducing melodies but making the melodies

one's own. The highly personal third chapter seeks to show the details and dynamics of learning to reproduce musical cultural norms through an analysis of lived bodily experience. The fourth chapter analyzes the melodic and decorative ramifications of style that musicians work with as musical agents. I have turned to “micro” analysis. Rather than starting with tonal relationships in a scalar or modal system, I show how macro considerations such as mode, rhythm, and the dynamic interplay of tension and release are built and consequently manipulated at the micro level. My account could be considered a “materialist-psychological” rather than “socio-political” account of musical agency.

**Ethnomusicology and the Study of Musical Style**

I am looking at sanjo, for lack of a better word, in terms of “style.” The notion of style has a history in the methods of musical analysis and transcription that have been developed through the course of ethnomusicology's history. Interestingly enough, perhaps one of the most pertinent definitions of style for this study comes from an early founder of comparative musicology, Eric von Hornbostel, who considered style to consist of a complex of motor habits and physical traits developed during musical training. This definition is useful for the etic perspective since it is an exterior, yet still qualitative, definition of how style works. It is also an extremely open definition since it could encompass a wide range of cultural practices regarding the norms and variability of stylistic deviation, as well as constants such as melody or rhythm that would characterized whole pieces, genres, and culture groups.

It is such an open definition that although it directs our perspective to at least a general area of inquiry, it does not offer much as far as the characteristics of what style might be. As ethnomusicology has developed as a field, the question of style has developed in the

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25. Ibid.
context of its larger concerns. For example, the early scholars who followed Hornbostal were concerned with the range of factors that might constitute a melodic style. They employed transcriptions in Western staff notation to analyze modal systems, melodic movement, and the regional or ethnic boundaries of melodic variability. Among the scholars in this area Bela Bartok was very influential in analyzing the regional variability of musical style through an analysis of melody, mode, and rhythm by collecting transcriptions from his own region.26

At the final stages of ‘comparative musicology’ Alan Lomax emerged with his Cantometric system, which he gave detailed consideration to in a work called Folk Song Style and Culture.27 Although his work has been heavily criticized because he uses his notion of style to make sweeping claims about many different kinds of music and its relation to cultural traits and values without the support of detailed ethnography, his work is still useful to theorists of style for a number of reasons. First of all, he included all of the earlier notions of style into a single taxonomy. He could include Hornbostal’s notion of style as physical mannerisms, as well as the more melody focused research of later scholars by devising categories for both quantitative and qualitative data. The primary limitation of his method, from my perspective, is that he limits his taxonomy to sets of bipolar continua.28

I will be making use of style in this historical sense, in the sense of constants that give a character to general musical cultures, genres, and specific pieces. In addition to this definition, I will be using style to refer to individual style, particularly the style of two Korean kayagŭm masters, Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn (1923-1986) and Kim Il-ryun (b. 1960). Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn was the originator, or composer, of the school of kayagŭm sanjo that is the focus of this thesis. Catherine Gjerdingen describes the processes that Sŏng used in her compositions, particularly the method by which she added and abridged the melodies that formed her

26. Ibid., 180-181, 189.
27. Lomax, Alan. Folk Song Style and Culture.
28 Ibid., 186.
complete sanjo. Sŏng was among the last generation for whom kayagŭm sanjo could be said to be a “lifetime’s work.” The composition of her sanjo lasted into the late years of her life, after she had immigrated to Hawai‘i.\(^{29}\) It is in this context that I examine the fully formed melodies that she passed down for specific stylistic characteristics that bear the traces of traditional Korean musical processes.

Secondly I will be examining the style of Kim Il-ryun, who was my teacher throughout the duration of this study, and the way in which she leaves her stylistic mark on Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's melodies. Kim Il-ryun is a master at all types of stylistic features, from dynamics, to phrasing, to decorative tones, and all types of articulation. For people familiar with kayagŭm sanjo, she has a very individual and recognizable style, which I will analyze in the fourth and final chapter of this thesis. I argue that this type of individuation typifies current musical practice in Korea, and in this sense the production of an aesthetic effect can be linked to the social conditions of music production. Since style can mean all of these types of processes, it is a term that is useful by virtue of its ambiguity. It is this ambiguity that can widen and enhance our understanding of kayagŭm sanjo. But since it is a constant throughout this thesis I will attempt to find closure in a definition that encompasses all of the meanings that I intend. Style is an operator that enables the material of music to produce an aesthetic effect. The theoretical challenge of this paper is to determine what makes up the processes by which the stylistic operator works, particularly as it applies to kayagŭm sanjo. I argue that by looking at the micro-level of style, the individual approach to minute decorations and effects, we can see how musicians maintain individuality within the framework of the same melodic material. However, this individuality is not common or easily approached, so this thesis rather than beginning with individual style begins with the way that style is taught as a bodily

\(^{29}\) Gjerdingen, Catherine. “Selection and Substitution of Melodic Material in the Kayagŭm Sanjo of Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn.” 60-61.
kinesthetic approach to the instrument.

**Methodology and Research Conditions**

My understanding of *kayagŭm sanjo* began, not when I first began to play *kayagŭm*, but when I was awarded a Fulbright fellowship and given support to study *kayagŭm* in South Korea from 2006 to 2007. At that time, my goal was to study contemporary *kayagŭm* music, specifically music written for the *sanjo kayagŭm*, and I had an initial meeting with Yi Ji-yŏng, who is one of Korea's foremost interpreters of contemporary repertoire and also a master musician in traditional chamber music as well as *sanjo*. She introduced me to one of her students, Kim Chŏng-yŏn, who was a graduate student in *kayagŭm* performance at Seoul National University. From the experience of learning with her, I realized that there is not a *kayagŭm* method similar to a graduated piano method where one learns pieces of increasing difficulty, but that after learning some *minyo* (folk songs), I proceeded directly to *sanjo*. During that year, I learned the shortened version of Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's *kayagŭm sanjo*, and some selections from the earlier version of her full *sanjo*. One of the most important moments in this study, was sometime a little after New Year's when I was having difficulty with playing the music in a certain mode, *kyemyŏnjo*, and she scolded me, as a good Korean teacher would. She said, “Obviously you have never had anything sad happen to you, and so you can't play this music. What would you do if your girlfriend left you, or even if she died? Imagine that and try to play this.”

This would be the beginning of many such admonitions, and the beginning of my thoughts that *sanjo* is composed of much more than rhythms and modes. Another important point that she would leave with me is that, when playing *sanjo*, the notation was not the music. One time in particular, I had forgotten the melody, and I felt that I needed to look at
the score to figure out where I was. She became extremely angry and said “Have you verified that we are playing the right music yet? Sanjo isn't something that you learn from notation.” I learned many other important, foundational things that year. I became well acquainted with almost all genres of Korean traditional and contemporary music, especially through attending performances at the National Center for Korean Traditional Performing Arts. I also started to collect recordings of sanjo performances, and contrary to what I had learned previously, I discovered that sanjo was not at all an improvisatory art, at least not in the sense that jazz is improvised. But at the same time, every recording and every performer had something unique in their approach that gave a certain style and vitality to the music.

One final thing that I learned at that time was that sanjo had entered a different age, or that it could be divided up into different eras each with their own process of learning and creating. One of my primary concerns at the time was the reason that Korean music had turned into composition in the academic, atonal, European contemporary sense of the word rather than proceeding more or less within a Korean sound world, like the early contemporary composer Hwang Pyŏng-ki had initially set out to do in the 1960s and 70s. I asked both my teacher and Yi Ji-yŏng whether they had ever considered playing their own music. My teacher was much more pessimistic saying that traditional Korean music was, in the sense of innovation, dead. Yi Ji-yŏng however simply said that when she had tried in the past she was not satisfied with her own music and thought that she would make better music if she left the composition up to the composers. Thus, already in my first experiences with Korean music, I had come to see it in terms of paradox, as an improvisational music that is not improvised, an orally transmitted music that is learned by notation, and a music of the passions that is highly structured and codified. I also had the first inkling that style was an all important aspect of musicianship in an era where composition and performance were becoming much more
The second stage in the construction of this thesis came when I finished my first stay in South Korea and came to the University of Hawaii to study ethnomusicology. This was a time when I was digesting and working over what I had experienced in Korea, and was changing my interests from contemporary music to the ways that traditional music generates meaning within contemporary Korea. There are two separate areas that have in particular influenced my thinking in this area. The first area is ethnomusicology's focus on the reasons that musical structure, based upon patterns of physical behavior, develops links with a culture's values and beliefs, and how this fits into patterns of cultural change. The second area is cultural study's focus on the way that the use of the body in aesthetic patterns is in equal parts culturally disciplined, but also forms semiotic relations that are affective but asignifying, meaning that they cause an effect in the listener that is not tied to a linguistic concept. Together these areas produced the question that has for the most part guided everything about this thesis: How can a musician embody a culturally significant emotional pattern while maintaining an individual voice?

Thus when I returned to Korea for the second time (Summer 2009 – Summer 2010), it was in order to explore though first hand experience in a pedagogical setting as a participant-observer the semiotic elements of Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's kayagŭm sanjo. I was supported in my second trip to Korea by the Donald Kim and Kim Ch'ŏn-hûng scholarships which I received through the University of Hawaii's Center for Korean Studies. Through the help of Dr. Byong Won Lee, I was able to study kayagŭm sanjo under one of the most accomplished musicians in contemporary Korea, Kim Il-ryun (b. 1960). Kim Il-ryun is unique in the sense that she is first a performer and second an academic, at least chronologically. Although she has been extremely important in creating a contemporary sound for Korean kayagŭm, it is not
contemporary in the sense that it is academic, atonal contemporary music. Rather she has been expanding the general population’s awareness of kayagŭm by performing and arranging ensembles to perform popular standards, such as Pachabel's “Cannon in D” or The Beatles' “Let It Be.” She was also quite instrumental in melding a Korean traditional sound world, or Korean modes and rhythms, with Western forms and tonality making Korean music and instruments easier for the contemporary ear to hear. She has been a founding member of some of the most influential ensembles that perform music in this vein such as, the Seoul Kayagŭm Trio, Oulim, Sookmyung Kayagŭm Orchestra, and now Chungang University's Kayastra.

If she has been one of the most accomplished and influential musicians in contemporary Korean music, she is also an accomplished performer and scholar of Korean traditional music. Following in the footsteps of her teacher Lee Chae-suk, she has learned, performed and recorded five of the major schools of kayagŭm sanjo: Ch'oe Ok-sam (1998), Chŏng Nam-hŭi (1999), Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn (2002), Kim Pyŏng-ho (2003), and Kim Chuk-p'a (2005). She was also instrumental in helping her teacher Lee Chae-suk in preparing her transcriptions of these major schools. She is not only an instrumentalist, but she is also quite a good singer of p'ansori (Korean musico-dramatic performance) songs and folk songs in the form of kayagŭm pyŏngch'ang (Vocal performance that is self-accompanied using the kayagŭm), a rare talent for someone who is primarily an instrumentalist. Like her instrumental technique, her vocal technique walks the line between the sweetness and refinement of contemporary technique and the earthiness of traditional vocal timbre. Among contemporary musicians she has an individual and recognizable style. Indeed, in her liner notes to her recording of Kim Chuk-p'a's kayagŭm sanjo, she recognizes this aspect of her musicianship writing “I had a wonderful time learning and playing this music, and over the years, it has become Kim Il-ryun's reading of Chuk-p’a's sanjo. I am only worried how it will
sound to the listeners. Whenever I learn a new *kayagŭm sanjo*, I repeat it over and over until I have created my own musical story.”

In an essay about Kim Il-ryun's recording of Ch'oe Ok-sam's *Sanjo*, Song Hye-jin also recognizes this aspect of her playing. “All music is different, but if the music is not processed by the emotions, and all of the melodies aren't connected, then it isn't music. Timbre weaves it together, and it is painted by the voice and hand. Isn't that art?” And Kim Il-ryun processes this music by heart and gives her color to this *sanjo*.”

Fortunately Kim Il-ryun is not just a performer but also a scholar of *sanjo*, having written her doctoral dissertation about the modal structure of Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's *kayagŭm sanjo*. As I will explain later, this aspect had a rather big influence on her manner of teaching this *sanjo* to me.

Because of her instruction on the instrument, and openness in sharing *kayagŭm* technique and emotion with me, I can say that the research was conducted under the very best of conditions. During this second trip I started from scratch, and although the length of time was the same as the first time that I learned Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's *sanjo*, because of the depth of her instruction, I only learned the techniques and melodies for the first section of this *sanjo* (*tasŭrŭm* and *chinyangjo*). I found that even though the melodies were the same, that learning from another teacher, everything was different and had to be relearned. This confirmed my expectations, and it was as if Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's *sanjo* disappeared, and I was left with Kim Il-ryun's *sanjo*.

My research during this trip was undertaken mostly at Chungang university in Kim Il-ryun's office, although when school was not in session, I was able to study at her home. I would take my *kayagŭm* by intercity bus from the Nambu Bus Terminal in southern Seoul to Chungang in Ansŏng south of Seoul. During our lessons, I would sit on the floor and Kim Il-

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ryun would sit on a bench facing me. I would, most of the time, start from the beginning so that she could check my progress on past sections, which we would play together so that I could observe her technique and become used to the appropriate sound. She would often stop to correct me or to explain some aspect that was not immediately apparent from the sound or notation. At first I learned the sections that she thought were the most important melodies, and then I returned and learned the intervening melodies, and the final section of Chinyanjo which, because of its transposition is considerably more difficult. I will focus on and analyze these lessons from a theoretical point of view in the third chapter, and Kim Il-ryun's explanations of the feeling, and her unique playing technique will form the core of the fourth chapter.

A fourth and often overlooked stage in this process is the analysis and concept making that takes place after the first hand experience is over. Although ethnomusicology is often primarily focused on discourse that constitutes the field, I think that my research, in a certain way works from many of the techniques of earlier comparative musicology and to a certain extent Korean musicology. I am often conceptually driven in my analysis, and although I am not comparing different musical cultures and looking for common musical features or features of primitive original music, I do look for that which is transcultural in Korean music as much as what is uniquely Korean in concept and articulation. Two rather large influences that have shaped this fourth stage are: A realization that in addition to individual style, which was my initial primary focus, I would need to account for the melodic style of Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's sanjo since any individual style cannot be written about sensibly without an analysis of melodic style to rest upon. Secondly, I have re-read Keith Howard, Nicholas Casswell, and Lee Chae-suk's work on sanjo,\(^\text{32}\) which is the only book length treatment available in English,

\(^{32}\) Howard, Keith, Casswell Nicholas, and Lee Chae-suk. *Korean Kayagŭm Sanjo: A Traditional Instrumental Genre,*
and although I recognize the validity of their work, and I take some of their concepts as points of departure, throughout the period of analysis, I constantly felt as if I was writing about sanjo against their work. In the final analysis, this was merely a feeling that I had during the analysis phase, and in fact their work has proved to be a foundation, and because of it I do not feel the need to do an in depth analysis of mode or rhythmic patterns, and I have been able to focus on the historical moments and aspects that are useful to this work in particular rather than feeling any need to be comprehensive.

**Overview of Chapters**

With these aspects of my positionality and research process taken into account, in the final section of this introduction I will give an overview of the concepts and contents of the body of this thesis. From my experience as a learner of and listener to Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's kayagŭm sanjo, my thesis is oriented towards an analysis of Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's sanjo in relation to two types of listeners: the listener who repeats her listening in playing and the listener who listens to sanjo as work that bears the traces of dramatism, improvisation, and individual style, that is, gives the work an aesthetic listening. My analysis bears on the simple question: how does this work communicate with these listeners in their respective positions? To answer this question I listen to this work in connection with two conceptual areas, semiotics and affects. I have tried, in my analysis to be careful not to simply apply theory to the material at hand, but to let the music interact with and affect as well as be affected by these conceptual areas.

The area of semiotics, even if it is restricted to musical semiotics, is too large of an area to summarize here, therefore I will focus on a few points that organize the conceptual section of this thesis. My basic assumption, which guides the way that I look at both signs
and affects, is that in both learning and listening, the effects are produced by a specific mode of communication, a sign. Signs are created by the teacher to create movement and action in the student. Signs are created by the musician to individuate themselves and to produce an aesthetic effect in listeners. Signs are also drawn from the musical text in two ways. The first way that this occurs is that the listener makes an association with another text and hears an intertextual sign. The second way that this happens is that the listener associates musical moments with the general movement of the rhythm, melody, or harmony and then the signs come from the music and refer back to the music.

The analysis of musical signs in ethnomusicology is most closely associated with Thomas Turino's discussion of the applicability of Peircian semiotics to music.\(^{33}\) His theory is useful in this context because it breaks down sonic events into categories based upon their material and the type of effect that they create in the perceiver. I will carry out a detailed explanation of the way that signs are created, according to this system in the second chapter, but it is important to note that this model of signs turns away from the linguistic model. Signs do not have to pass through the medium of language for them to act as signs. This fact sets Turino's and Peirce's theory apart from a type of semiotics that views culture and music as text to be read, and it allows us to maintain sonic realism in our discussion (the notion that musical sounds are real events that can act as signs if they are linked to the right type of matter.)\(^{34}\)

This type of semiotics also bears common features with Deleuze's concepts of art and signification. I do not purport to do a Deleuzian analysis here, but since Casswell in the aforementioned volume on *kayagŭm sanjo* does claim to do a Deleuzian analysis, I feel the need to say that although I take conceptual and methodological cues from Deleuze,  

\(^{34}\) O'Callaghan, Casey. *Sounds: A Philosophical Theory,* 8.
particularly in his work on Francis Bacon and in his work *Proust and Signs*, as well as from some of his interpreters or followers.\(^\text{35}\) I make no attempt to apply any of his concepts wholesale to *kayagûm sanjo*. The important aspects that Deleuze brings to the discussion is his notion of the materialism of signs, or their non-linguistic nature, as well as their ability to form continuous chains of effects, rather than redundant and meaningless circles of signification.

One final aspect of semiotics that I incorporate into my study is the semiotics of the musical body, particularly as articulated by Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes, with Kristeva's notion of the “semiotic and the symbolic” and Barthes' concept of “grain.”\(^\text{36}\) I will explain how these theories work in the second chapter, but here I will simply note what they contribute to this project. Both theories could be criticized for their reductionism, but at the same time, there are elements of these concepts that are helpful when one wants to, for example, explain the relationship between something that is meaningful and significant, and the elements that it consists of, which are asignifying or rather presignifying. Of the two, I will make much more use of Kristeva who sees the symbolic, or signifying processes, as constantly in a dialectical relationship with the asignifying matter, or what she terms the semiotic. Since this is in a sense in contradiction with the notion of musical semiotics, I will refer to musical semiotics, simply as signs, and when I use the term semiotic, it will be referring specifically to Kristeva's notion of the semiotic.

The second broad area of theory that I make use of in my analysis is the theory of affect. This is also something that entered into cultural studies through Deleuze's philosophy of literature, and specifically though Deleuze's interpretation of Baruch Spinoza. The study of


affect is primarily the study of causation. In this thesis, since I am looking at communication through listening, I will be looking at the way a body causes sound, and the effects that sound causes in a body. One thing that studying music and affect allows us to do is to replace the psychologism, particularly the Freudian theory that is at the heart of Kristeva's semiotics with a bodily and neurological model that can more adequately describe musical experience in transcultural communication. Therefore in the theoretical section I will be building an aesthetic theory that relies as much on a flow of bodily sensations and and the neurological processes that are affected by musical sound as it does on the symbolic layer that sound signifies and means through. For my purposes affect is useful in two areas. In the first place it is useful in describing the transformations that take place allowing someone who cannot hear a musical sign to understand a musical sign as such by disciplining the body with sound. Secondly it is useful in describing the more minute details that exist sonically and stand in a causal relationship to signs when talking about the individuation of musical style. For example I will ask: what are the minute details, not yet signs, but that make it possible for Kim Il-ryun to create musical signs in her performance, in her individual style?

Deleuze quotes Spinoza when he writes that affects are “the dark precursors of our common notions.” By dark precursors he means that they are not noticeable on their own, but that they are noticed retrospectively. Therefore I will be working backwards in this thesis, trying to uncover the “dark precursors” of the two types of listening and two types of musical effects that sanjo produces. I will start in the next chapter by describing three large areas that kayagûm sanjo is connected to, and the effects that these connections produce. The first of these areas is the relationship of the kayagûm, as an instrument, to sanjo and the unique possibilities afforded by this relationship. This section views the kayagûm as a material

38. Deleuze, Gilles, “Spinoza and the Three ‘Ethics” In Essays Critical and Clinical, 144.
object, as a set of physical possibilities that acts in conjunction with technique and melody, 
and as a symbolic object that has, throughout history in diverse media and arts gained cultural 
and national significance. The second area is the relationship of sanjo to what Hwang Pyŏng-
ki calls “dramatic” music. I will argue why, in contemporary practice, it is more meaningful 
to identify sanjo with “dramatic” music than to identify sanjo with improvisational music or 
to regional music. I will also explain what this relationship consists of and what this means 
for kayagŭm sanjo's form and significance. Thirdly I will describe sanjo from a social point 
of view. There are a number of theories that place sanjo in contemporary Korean culture, but 
it is the categories of urban folk music, national treasure, and elite academic music that are 
the most prominent and the most realistic.

The second chapter will describe all of the theoretical material that will be used in this 
thesis: signs, semiotics, affects, and effects. I will then recursively apply them to the 
categories from the previous chapter to demonstrate their effectiveness and to illustrate the 
concepts, which would otherwise be simply abstract material. First I will outline Turino's 
threeory of musical signs, and then I will put together a few categories of signs that specifically 
are used in kayagŭm sanjo. In the second section I will attempt to tie these two first 
components together with Kristeva's theory of the semiotic and the symbolic, and show how 
it is possible to analyze kayagŭm sanjo “from the body.” The third section of this chapter 
deals with the notion of affects and how they relate to music, particularly the pedagogy of 
kayagŭm sanjo.

The third chapter will be an analysis of educational listening. Analyzing “from the 
body” I will show two processes in kayagŭm pedagogy, at least in my experience of kayagŭm 
pedagogy. The first is a cross modal analysis, in which I show how sensations are used to 
produce musical abilities in a different sense category, for example the way voice is
transferred to touch, or the way that volume and intensity are modified by the right and left hand on different registers at different times to produce different effects. The second aspect of pedagogy that I will focus on is the way that pedagogy develops affects into signs over time. For example, how relations of cause and effect create articulations and decorations, which in turn create a variety of phrasing options.

The fourth and final chapter is an analysis of the aesthetic effect, which has been and is arguably the intended effect of a sanjo performance. If, as Kim Il-ryun would say, “Sanjo is like a life” it is a particular kind of life. It is a dramatic life, one that has been “soaked,” as some Koreans say, in all kinds of feelings and emotions. This final chapter is an attempt to gather together the signs that cause this aesthetic effect. I will examine how the melodies are constructed dramatically, through the traces of improvisation. Secondly I will show how different performers individuate themselves by means of various signs to produce an individual dramatic aesthetic effect. And lastly I will examine the symbolism of the aesthetic effect in Korean arts in general and in Korean music in particular, and how sanjo makes use of these large elements of signification in its own process of unfolding.
Chapter One

Kayagŭm Sanjo: Three Contexts

This chapter draws out three contexts, or three areas that kayagŭm sanjo could be said to be in connection with, indissociable from. These three areas, seen together as a network, establish an area of signification for kayagŭm sanjo. The first area, of course is the kayagŭm of kayagŭm sanjo. This includes the material, techniques, and historical significance of this instrument. The second area of connections is other genres of Korean music, particularly the genres most often compared to sanjo: p'ansori (dramatic vocal performance), minyo (folk songs), and sinawi (improvised ensemble music to accompany shamanistic drama and dance). The third section analyzes the social network of kayagŭm sanjo, being primarily a music that is located in the contemporary university system, government sponsored performance, or recorded media. As I will show, these are areas that are both affected by and affect sanjo, and in terms of significance, each of these areas allows the signs that kayagŭm sanjo produces to have recognizable meaning as well as adding significance to their own signs through a connection with kayagŭm sanjo.

The Kayagŭm of Kayagŭm Sanjo

In Kayagŭm Sanjo: A Traditional Genre, Nicholas Casswell uses Deleuze's theory of various milieus that communicate with each other through rhythm to give a theoretical name for the various layers of the kayagŭm, as it relates to sanjo. He writes, “To use a musical analogy that can be related to sanjo, the interior milieu could be perceived of as the actual sound of a particular string on the zither, with the material of the string (silk) acting as the exterior milieu. The instrument itself acts as the intermediary milieu, the limit places upon the
string in terms of tension and resulting pitch. The annexed milieu is the force of the fingers, the source of energy that allows the string to sound, whether plucked or flicked with the fingers of the right hand, or with vibrato achieved by an oscillating movement of the left hand." This abstraction relates how the various parts of the kayagŭm are connected, but there are two problems with his use of this theory. First of all, in his analysis, the kayagŭm only serves to illustrate a philosophical concept that has already been illustrated adequately, and as such, without further elaboration, does not serve to communicate something new about kayagŭm sanjo. In fact, in terms of sanjo interpretation it is clearer to simply show the physical relationship of musician, instrument, and sound. Secondly as the kayagŭm stands in relation to sanjo, there are many more connections that should be included. These connections could be: how the kayagŭm and sanjo are interlinked in a special historical relationship, how the kayagŭm and its materials are both material and symbolic, and how the kayagŭm acts like a canvas, or a set of possibilities for music making. This section serves to illustrate an expanded network of connections for the kayagŭm of kayagŭm sanjo.

The kayagŭm as an instrument, especially the kayagŭm associated with kayagŭm sanjo as opposed to the instrument played in chamber ensembles in the more noble genres of Korean music, grew up in significance and popularity in the 20th century because of kayagŭm sanjo. At present it is one of the most universally recognized and well regarded instruments in Korea, but this was not traditionally the case. In the chamber ensembles, which played aristocratic instrumental suites (p’ungnyu) and vocal suites (kagok) the kayagŭm, if it was used at all had a subordinate, punctuating role. As opposed to the komungo (six string fretted zither), which is deep, resonant, somewhat noisy, and coded masculine, the kayagŭm occupies

a lighter dynamic range, a higher pitch level, and had less audible post-articulation
techniques.\textsuperscript{41} The \textit{kayagûm}, which was easily drowned out by the raspy timbre and
continuously loud articulation of the wind instruments, only sounds audibly as a light pluck,
keeping the rhythm along with the \textit{changgo} (two headed hourglass shaped drum).

It seems that the \textit{kayagûm} is much more suited to solo performances, which would
showcase its full dynamic range without comparison to much louder and comparatively fuller
sounding instruments. Although the earliest examples of \textit{kayagûm} that have been found date
from the first century B.C.E., according to legend it was developed by a king of the Kaya
confederacy (42–562), and first played by the court musician Urûk (. It achieved some
prominence in the neighboring state of Silla, through which it entered into Japan and was
adapted to Japanese court music. After this short lived fame, it seems to have entered into a
lower category of instruments, especially during the early Chosôn period (1392-1592) when
the Confucian method of self cultivation through private instrument practice chose the
\textit{komungo} as its primary vehicle. It was not until the decline of aristocratic culture, brought
about after Japan invaded Korea in 1592 and Korean philosophy turned toward practical
reason (\textit{silhak}) and the ascendance of \textit{chungin} (middle class) culture, that the \textit{kayagûm} once
again achieved some public recognition. But it was not the same type of significance that the
\textit{komungo} had, nor was it valued for its musical aesthetics alone. Rather, the art of the era
shows that the instrument was associated with entertainment girls or \textit{kisaeng}.\textsuperscript{42}

This association is often what comes to mind when one mentions the \textit{kayagûm}, or
\textit{kayagûm sanjo} to the average South Korean, who may have only a superficial knowledge of
Korean traditional music. One example in particular is the 2008 Korean television series
called \textit{Painter of the Wind}\textsuperscript{43} which interestingly enough seemed to be as popular among

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., 22.
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., 34.
\textsuperscript{43} Paramûi Hwawôn. SBS. Aired 2008-Sep-24 to 2008-Dec-04, Episode 2.
middle aged women in Hawai‘i as among Koreans. The scene that seems most representative of the type of consciousness that Koreans attach to the kayagŭm is the scene in which a group of young painting apprentices are dining together and taking in the entertainment of a young kisaeng apprentice. Although the music that she plays is somewhat anachronistic, it is roughly reminiscent of the meterless first movement of kayagŭm sanjo, tasŭrŭm. This music, through the image of the kisaeng’s hands moving dramatically over the strings, emphasizing the most poignant pitches and vibratos, transports the main protagonist, through her inner vision, to a sweeping landscape where she encounters a happy, but unknown family, who later in the drama turns out to be her first, deceased family that she had continually blocked in her mind. The music and the image of the kayagŭm playing kisaeng are central points in this drama in two respects. First of all the sound of this instrument is a catalyst that allows Sin Yun-bok (born 1758) to enter a landscape in which she ultimately discovers her true identity. Because this is the central concern of the drama, this music is the theme that opens the drama, and often is an interlude of scenes where the feeling is deep, intense, and meaningful. Secondly, the music, and Sin Yun-bok’s relationship to the kisaeng allow her to create her art freely, and to express a reality that is more tied to the daily and practical lives of Koreans. Thus the music is linked to two central themes in the drama (although these aspects may not exist in a general sense): a sense of identity that is linked to the Korean landscape and family, and a greater realism in depicting and sensing the lives of Koreans.

This example shows a transformation of both the image of the kayagŭm and the image of the kisaeng in Korean culture. Although both are linked to entertainment and pleasure, they are also in a certain sense a gateway to a greater understanding about the nature of Korean life. Although whether someone who holds this view chooses to actually participate in this knowledge is another separate issue. It is possible to hold the view that there is deep meaning
in these symbols, but hold this view superficially.

It may seem that the *kayagŭm* is most important in this historical and symbolic sense, but the *kayagŭm* as a physical instrument is also quite important in both the physical method of playing the instrument and in terms of the image of a “natural Korean-ness” that it gives to the music. For example, my *kayagŭm* came from a traditional *kayagŭm* maker, Ko Hŭng-kon, who is recognized as “Major Cultural Treasure No. 42.” The government, and by extension, Korean society, has a symbolic interest in maintaining the physical processes of *kayagŭm* construction. These processes are of enough interest to also be included on websites, and in introductory texts about Korean music. To get perspective on this, for us, it would be odd to find clarinet construction methods in an introductory text about classical music. What is so special about the *kayagŭm* that as a physical instrument and as a material construction method it is representative of Korea? First of all, the process is decidedly not modern or convenient. It takes time. The materials are selected from the old wood of fine trees. Specifically for the top piece of the *sanjo kayagŭm*, the maker uses paulownia wood. A tree much younger than sixty years is not seen to have the strength to form a resonant instrument. After the wood is selected, it is exposed to the elements, particularly wind, rain, and snow, for three to five years, and only the pieces of wood that survive this drying process without blemish or crack are suitable for instrument construction. The instrument is then constructed without nails, and is scorched with a hot iron to seal and enhance the grain of the instrument. The maker also hand twists silk threads for the strings and hand carves movable bridges. The instrument also contains sets of images, both in the form of the instrument, and often imprinted on the head, sound board, and bridges. The shape of the tail for the court instrument is a set of ram's

horns, and for the *sanjo* instrument it is the tail of a phoenix. The phoenix is often embedded on the instrument with mother of pearl or gold colored paint. The shape of a sun and a moon also illustrate the back piece, incorporating the notion of dark and light (*ŭm/yang*) into the body of the instrument.

For *sanjo*, as a musical genre, these images are also carried out sonically with the music itself. In later chapters I will detail the musical imagery more carefully, but here I simply wish to point out the use of visual and sonic analogy. The form of the music represents the image of the phoenix, starting from a grounded slow earthly pace in the earlier movement and taking flights with the rapid ascending sequences of the last two movements. The music also makes use of alternating patterns of dark, simple, passive tones, with strident, bright, and active tones. Thus the aesthetic images which are brought out in the music are embodied to some degree on the instrument.

The *kayagŭm* is not a commercial enterprise. Although Korea is a well known site of factories for other commercial instruments such as Samick or Young Chang pianos or Gibson and Fender guitars, the *kayagŭm* maintains the opposite approach. In this context, new production methods are not in competition with the old. They are wholly separate and uncommunicating realms. Thus in a musicians house or in stage space, the images of modern electric instruments can be perceived side by side, but are always produced heterogeneously. This is why when a *kayagŭm* plays with a synthesizer or guitar, it is seen as fusion or pastiche, as two separate elements that sit side by side, but cannot be put into communication without an unnatural “fusion.” It is interesting to note, however, that the images of Western classical instruments with their similar old fashioned production methods can be put into communication much more easily. They express a relative nearness. The timbres of *kayagŭm* and clarinet, for example, could form a well realized contemporary composition rather than
an experiment in combining images.

This is similar to what Chan Park writes about her work of re-producing or “recycling” p'ansori, for modern audiences. She notes that during the eighties and nineties, in Seoul, for modern urban consumers it was fashionable to acquire antique books to use for window decorations and wall papers. So in one sense recycling and maintaining the exactness of old materials and methods is a sort of “postmodern” arrangement of images. It can, however, take us to a deeper level than mere image. She writes, “Tradition is a treasure-house buried under the modern and post-modern 'forward' and 'extrovert' movements, and to study it is to humbly turn our focus 'backward' and 'inward'; that traditional discipline and creativity is the process of packaging old materials for new audiences in new contexts rather than a new concoction in place of discipline.”

The kayagŭm then, has a material discipline that draws us materially backward and inward toward a type of identity that places our modern selves in relation not only the images of past culture, but also opens us to the “inwardness” of the aesthetics and discipline of a past way of being. The way that kayagŭm, as an instrument, opens this world for us is through its canvas as a set of physical, technical, sonic possibilities.

The kayagŭm, as both and image carrier and as a material-sonic canvas was the springboard that was needed to create contemporary Korean composition. Or, if it was not a necessity, it was perhaps the most convenient option. In an early modern Korean composition, Norit’o, composer Yi Sŏng-ch’ŏn conceived of a kayagŭm that was capable of making Korea the musical equal of Western nations. In this composition, Yi tried to turn the kayagŭm into Korea's piano, transcribing a composition originally written for piano for the kayagŭm. It was originally arranged following a commission by Lee Chae-suk for her second recital. The difficulty of accomplishing this feat, especially on the 12 stringed version of the kayagŭm,

46. Park, Chan E. “Recycling an Oral Tradition Transnationally.” In Contemporary Directions: Korean Folk Music Engaging the Twentieth Century and Beyond, 122.
since it came before the modern versions of the instrument, which have additional strings, has meant that this composition has been often talked about as a foundational early work of modern Korean composition, but is seldom recorded or played. Indeed Yi was criticized for abandoning the traditional soundworld, and attempting to force the *kayagŭm* into both the image and the sound of an instrument that it was not.\(^47\)

In describing this tension, and her solution for it in her modern composition *Su Gul Gae Gong* (*Tree Dig Open Sky*), Yun Hye-jin writes philosophico-poetically: “The image of a tree with its roots firmly planted in the ground appears fixed and immobile, but the image of branches reaching towards the sky contains the flow of dynamic respiration. A tree, comprised of the energy of the earth and a yearning for the sky, is fixed; but it may be taken to signify indefatigable growth of the roots in the ground and branches in the sky. The traditional tone of a twelve string *sanjo* and the traditional tuning fundamentally possess the intonations and inflections of traditional music. The tonal space of this piece, viewed with a perspective of this fundamental fact, may be accepted as a familiar novelty.”\(^48\) This approach, although Yun takes it as a novel solution, is actually a turning away from modern techniques, and from atonality or the conceptually based “new music” that filled the rest of the program that night. In a brief discussion after the concert, I expressed my admiration of the piece to Yi Ji-yŏng, and she said that she could not see much difference between this composition and the traditional *sanjo*.

The approaches that these two composers take shows that the relationship between traditional music and contemporary practice is often contested and ambiguous. Whereas the two approaches take root in the “fundamental sound world” of the twelve string *kayagŭm*, and in fact take the possibilities of this sound world as their point of departure, the

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conclusions arrive at opposite conceptual results. The conclusion that I draw from this discussion is that, as I talk about the *kayagŭm* as a set of “material sonic possibilities” it is only by virtue of its connection to *kayagŭm sanjo*, as an actualization of these possibilities that these possibilities are perceived by listeners. If the *kayagŭm* is connected to a modern compositional practice, passing though a piano based praxis, as in Yi Sŏng-ch’ŏn or a more “avant garde” composer such as Ku Bon-u, who wants to “liberate” the Korean sound world, the possibilities are entirely different. ⁴⁹

The possibilities that *sanjo* actualizes are afforded by the physical outlay of the instrument. The right hand is normally positioned by the musician planting her right hand with her smallest finger extended and touching along the end piece (*hyeonch’im*), which acts as an anchor and often guides the hands movements when it moves between strings. The left hand is positioned by the span of the thumb and the index finger when outstretched following the position of the *anjok* (movable bridges) as they are moveable and of varying position. The characteristic sound world is created by a range of techniques for the right hand, which articulates a tone, affects the amplitude and timbre of a tone that is played, and modifies the duration of a tone within the acoustic limits of the strings vibrating potential. The left hand then modifies the sound before or after the the right hand articulates it. The left hand acts in some cases to modify the articulation of a tone, as in pressing a string rapidly and at the same time as the right hand articulation to increase the intensity of an attack. It can also seem to modify the duration by increasing the intensity of a vibrato after the articulation. Finally it can modify the amplitude by sharply pressing up on a note as a part of an appoggiatura type of decoration at some point after the tone is articulated or by releasing a string which was bent, which seems to lower the amplitude of an articulation. The left hand is also in charge of a wide gradation of pitch bends, and “microtonal shadings.” The hands always act in ⁴⁹ Ku Bon-u “Beyond ’Cheap Imitations’” *The World of Music.* 42, no. 4 (2002): 133-136.
rhythmic conjunction to achieve the special character of kayagŭm sanjo, and it is this physical basis, which was probably developed over a undocumented history of improvisations, that serves as the canvas upon which a kayagŭm musician writes or overwrites a sanjo. This is an issue that will be discussed in much more technical detail when I analyze the signs and affects of kayagŭm sanjo performance and pedagogy in the third chapter. What is important to note is that the kayagŭm, as connected to a certain type of music, in this case sanjo, creates a sound world and acts as a physical range of possibilities which achieves significance as a musician varies this sound world and violates expectations to create musical pleasure.

It is in these three aspects – the history of the kayagŭm as an image, the physical production of the kayagŭm, and the range of sonic possibilities – that the kayagŭm acts as a context for kayagŭm sanjo. The musician uses this context to create signs and to affect others. In the past musicians used the raw material of the instrument and its sonority to craft the melodies that have been formalized and codified into the sanjo genre. At present a knowledge of the way this context works allows musicians to creatively interact with it and to create an individual voice within the field of kayagŭm sanjo performance.

Sanjo Among the Dramatic Forms

The second area that serves as a context for sanjo is the range of other types of music that kayagŭm sanjo is connected to. There are a variety of interpretations to this historical aspect of sanjo, since it is not exactly known. However based upon similarities of form, process, and region, scholars have been able to draw connections between sanjo and other forms of music. There are two main effects of categorizing a type of music. The first is that the category will show something about the processes involved in making the music, either in terms of instruments used, or the method of playing, or perhaps the context that makes the
music necessary. The second type of categorization creates connections and reveals aspects of the music through a shared content, whether this is in shared structural elements or poetic intention.

The first and perhaps most popular category to place sanjo in is that of a “professional folk music” which has been transformed into an urbanized modern folk music. This category reflects, more than the style of the music itself, the type of people who listen to the music. Thus it is part of a three part distinction of “court,” “folk,” and “religious” music or simply of aristocratic music to music of the common people. As Mun Chae-suk writes, “Folk music refers to the kind of music that was created and enjoyed by common folks rather than by the royal court....Musical cultures were different among the classes.”50 Thus the common folk, the min of minyo, min’gan, or minjung, become the significant aspect of this classification. For sanjo, this classification is, if not entirely inaccurate, not really expressive of what kind of music sanjo actually is, nor of its actual history. The genre itself was properly founded as the Chosŏn dynasty was already well in decline, in the late 19th and early 20th century. Thus the class system that defined that time does not have much to do with this type of music. In its modern context it can be seen as the antithesis of a popular music of the people because it requires a rather cultivated attention span and listening practice to enjoy. The founder of sanjo, Kim Ch’ang-cho, as illustrated by Hwang Pyŏng-ki’s definition of sanjo’s archetypal pedagogy, would have been well versed in music for religious ceremonies and aristocratic chamber music, if not court music, as well as his region's folk music.51

If sanjo does not easily fit into the category of a folk music, another common category that scholars and teachers typically use to classify this music also has difficulty fitting with

51. Ibid., 205.

sanjo's contemporary incarnation. Sanjo is often linked to sinawi (group instrumental accompaniment for shamanistic rituals) as a type of ch’ükhŭng ŭmak or improvisational music. Sinawi is improvised by the musicians who weave together a polyphonic texture by playing melodic fragments over a set rhythmic cycle, which, like sanjo, progresses from a slow chinyangjo through other, increasingly rapid dance rhythms. Sanjo has been called a “solo sinawi” and the process that Byong Won Lee ascribes to a sanjo performance bears much similarity to sinawi when he writes “the corpus of sanjo consists of precomposed melodies grouped according to modal configuration, spontaneous melodic and rhythmic variation on pre-composed melodies, and extemporization of new materials.” This may mostly be seen as a historical fact, although based upon the school of playing, there are still some musicians who improvise parts of their performance. For example, Yi Ji-yŏng's version of Sŏ Kong-ch’ŏl's school of sanjo, is improvised in the hwimori section.

It seems more likely that sanjo and sinawi are linked through a common historical ancestory, with the same musicians developing sanjo and sinawi out of less formal improvisations. Song Bang Song writes, “Shaman ritual's entertainment accompaniments became enjoyable in their own right and became independent entertainments.” The same musicians who accompanied the shamanistic rituals also accompanied yangban (aristocratic class) parties. It seems that, historically speaking sanjo is the formalization of these improvisational melodies along the form and technical discipline required to play p’ungnyu, or elegant music. Indeed, many musicians up until the modern time such as Sim Sang-gŏn,

54. Ibid., 43.
57. Ibid., 237
Kim Chuk-p'a, Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn, and Mun Chae-suk, have been equally adept at both sanjo and p’ungnyu. Even though this is the case, the notion of sanjo's improvised nature permeates the discourse and definition of the music. Both of my teachers, although they taught from notation and required the music to be learned note for note, continually stressed that sanjo was not a music that is learned or played from notation. They stressed the importance of knowing the music well so that one could vary and abridge the performance in process, especially with decorative elements. Even though there was never any instruction in improvisation given, and they never indicated that melodic improvisation was an option, they both referred to sanjo as by definition ch’ŭkhŭng ŭmak.

It may be the case that performers even recognizing that this is a vital part of sanjo, would not improvise during a performance for fear that “improvisatory music may seem to have interminable length, either because the performer is carried away by inspiration or because he waits endlessly for a real inspiration.” They also avoid teaching a lesson through improvisation for fear that the student would never learn the music, as was the case with Sim Sang-gŏn's students, whose school of playing does not have a contemporary exponent. The reasons for these fears is best explained socially, which I will do in the third part of this chapter, but the main reason for this discussion is to illuminate the paradox that sanjo is seen as an improvisational music even though this is no longer a central feature of most schools of playing. Rather, when sanjo is called an improvisational music, it is a symbolic or signifying use of language rather than a descriptive use of language, and it serves to point to sanjo's origins and historical development.

In addition to these common categories, I would like to argue for the use of a different category for sanjo, which highlights its contents, features, and genre associations more than

its social or historical meaning. Perhaps more commonly than “solo sinawi” sanjo is referred
to as “p'ansori without text.”

Although sanjo is such a well defined genre that it in fact does
not need to be defined by another genre, the meaning and emotional tropes that the genre uses
have these intertextual resonances. Emphasizing certain connections that sanjo makes in form
and intent develops a category that reveals something about the symbolic and poetic nature of
sanjo. Hwang Pyŏng-ki, in a book of his interviews makes just such a statement when he
talks about sanjo in relation to other types of Chŏlla-namdo (the southwestern province in
South Korea) music. “The music is very dramatic and shows the influence not only of
southern music, but also ch'ŏngak (court music for scholars – hsn.) -What do you mean by
'dramatic'? - The southern folk songs are very programmatic. The music describes the text
very closely like word painting. If the text says 'high', the music will have 'high' notes.
P'ansori is also like this. Later there was an instrumental version of p'ansori, and that is the
sanjo we are speaking of. It is the abstract instrumental music that came from the vocal
music. In other words, it's not a reproduction of a vocal piece, but virtuoso-like instrumental
music that has the character of Namdo music.”

This statement is not so much historically accurate as it shows a certain aspect of
sanjo and its affiliations. So following Hwang I also will categorize sanjo as an abstract
dramatic music. The three genres that reveal different aspects about sanjo's dramatism are all,
like sanjo, from the southwestern province of Korea, Chŏlla-namdo. Southwestern minyo, or
folk songs, reveal the dramatism of a type of impressionistic lyric and melodic interaction
that gives a deep seated flavor and emotion. The operatic genre p'ansori is dramatic in the
sense that it uses a wide variety of modes and rhythmic patterns to tell a story that amplifies
the elements of daily life and expresses both a social consciousness and the overwhelming

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60. Mun Chae-suk. *Ihae Hamyon Sarang Hanūn Hanguk Ŭmak*, [If You Understand It You
world of inner life and passion. Sinawi is associated with two types of drama. The first is a type of ritualized invocation of spirit that takes its form from the basic rhythmic patterns that are continuously repeated for each respective stage in the ritual. The second aspect is the dramatism that draws out ecstasy by harnessing the flows of the various layers of intensity in vocal and instrumental performance. P'ansori is in this regard the closest connection, and the links that it bears musically are its melodic progressions, or modes, its rhythmic patterns, and its decorations, timbre, and “microtonal shadings.”

In the poetic sense it bears a relationship to the three genres as it depicts the drama that characterizes ritual and spirituality, as well as the emotional drama of an ordinary human life.

As indicated above, sinawi, is a type of formalized music that was taken away from shamanistic rituals purely for its entertainment value. The aesthetic value cannot, however, be divorced from the genre's spiritual context. The strategy, as in most types of shamanism, is to achieve unity with the spirit world, an expansion of self that is enabled by the power of music. One aspect of this power is the way that traditional musicians were able to extemporize melodies for the dancer, since the exact length of time it would take for the dancer to enter an alternate state of consciousness could not be determined ahead of time, “the esthetic quality of sinawi is, therefore, based upon how well the performers can interweave their art instantaneously with such limited models for extemporization and how well they can intensify the ecstasy of the dancer through their artistic creativity.”

This ecstatic quality is evident in the way that melodies for sanjo are composed as well. Although most modern audiences used to a much louder dynamic cannot easily perceive this aspect of sanjo's dramaticism, it is a core function of sanjo's aesthetic effect, and I will return to this effect as I analyze the particular signs that are use in Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's sanjo in the fourth

63. Ibid., 39.
Another aspect of the similarity between sinawi and sanjo is in the use of the rhythmic pattern chinyangjo. This is a rhythmic pattern that is common to all of southwestern music, folk songs, p'ansori, as well as sinawi, and of course to sanjo. As stated above, the rhythmic patterns used in this music were traditionally symbolic and according to Keith Howard develop “the affective transformation characteristic of rites of passage.” It is probable that the chinyangjo rhythmic pattern was used in this sense as a part in this music as a type of processional where the parties involved in spiritual invocation would appear and make a transformation that would allow interaction with the spiritual world. In other types of music the alternation of rhythms would take on significance through depicting a cycle of life, death, and rebirth. For sanjo this dramatic passageway is highly significant since the form is based upon the progression of rhythmic patterns from slowest to fastest, which rather than the drama of a life cycle transform the drama to a depiction of a life taking flight. Nevertheless, chinyangjo is the dominant character of a sanjo performance. Out of the seven cycles often presented, it takes up to half of the performance time. It is “the emotional core of the genre.” The cycle of chinyangjo not only embodies a type of drama in reference to the external form of the whole music, but it has an internal drama as well. Chinyangjo is a twenty-four beat pattern, although each beat is in modern notation typically given a three beat measure. In traditional discourse, especially about p'ansori, this pattern is divided into four six beat sections (kag) which each reflect a part in a cycle of tension and release, named accordingly “rise, hang, bind, loosen.”

65. Ibid.
67. Ibid., 62.
Chinyangjo is a pattern that is common to all three types of music that are connected to sanjo: sinawi, p'ansori, and minyo. It is a core that unites the dramatic aesthetic of all of the music, but it functions differently in each genre. Whereas in sinawi and minyo it either results in the ecstasy of the dancer or the emotional catharsis of the singers, in p'ansori its character is much more open, and it does not always reflect these emotions. In p'ansori a rhythmic pattern is only one part of an aggregate of musical and textual signs. Melodic mode and the personal use of decorations to suit the situation, as well as the full meaning of the text also play a large part in telling the stories of p'ansori. The stories of p'ansori are never composed of a single emotion, rather they take the audience through a full range of emotions that amplify the character of everyday life. Thus there is often deep misfortune and tragedy mixed with satire, word play, slapstick, and even vulgarities, all of which resolves in a happy affirmation of a virtuous life, characterized by the five virtues: Duty toward one's husband (Ch’unhyangga), duty towards one's father (Sim Ch’ōngga), duty towards one's brother (Hŭngboga), duty towards one's king (Sugungga) and relationships between friends (Chŏkpyŏkka).68

The story of Ch’unhyangga, as told by Kim So-hŭi, is exemplary of the emotional transformations and the various signs that create its epic drama. Ch’unhyangga, in brief, is the archetypal epic of love and fidelity. A young nobleman, Yi Mong-ryong, becomes infatuated with the intelligent and beautiful, Ch’unhyang, the daughter of a regional kisaeng and an official. The two are married, but Yi Mong-ryong must go to Seoul to take the exam that was required to become an official. While he is away Ch’unhyang is approached by another official, and when she does not consent, she is imprisoned. Yi Mong-ryong passes his exam and returns to avenge his bride's disgrace. The story begins with an attitude of play and revelry as Yi Mong-ryong and his servant Pangja take off from the young nobleman's studies

for a travel in the countryside. Yi lets his donkey free to eat grass, and surveying the scene describes it in song. In Kim So-hŭi’s rendition this is the famous “Chŏksŏngga” named after the mountain that dominates the scene. This song is in the chinyangjo rhythmic pattern, described above, but instead of ecstasy or catharsis, this song promotes an elevated, almost equanimous, mood. According to Song Hye-jin, it is both the use of a traditional Chinese poem for part of the lyrics, the use of the ujo melodic mode rather than the sorrowful kyemyŏnjo mode, and the slow thoughtfulness of the chinyangjo rhythmic cycles that creates this mood. Song states that opposed to other modes where sadness and happiness are freely mixed, ujo is calm and composed.

The same mode and rhythmic pattern are used to different effect a little later in the drama, as Ch’unhyang and Mong-ryong are first united in love, and they have the exchange that is the famous “Sarangga,” “Song of Love.” This song is divided into two parts, and the first part evokes the poetic and imagistic, if objectified, sense of love that Mong-ryong has for Ch’unhyang, and in the second Ch’unhyang overturns his sense of poetry, and dematerialized love, and they both engage in earthly, bodily love, although in an aestheticised sense. It is in fact this aesthetic tension between the two aspects of love that give this section its character, and in many ways it parallels a kind of development that characterizes sanjo, giving a good perspective from which to examine the thread of dramatism that links the two genres. Like sanjo it begins in ujo mode in the slow chinyangjo pattern, and then changes to the walking tempo (or another medium paced repetitive activity) chungjungmori pattern in p’yŏngjo mode. This does not exactly parallel sanjo, but instead invokes two of sanjo's transformations at once. Sanjo moves from the slow chinyangjo to the more quick chungjungmori pattern, but

the modal transformations all occur within the chinyangjo movement itself: starting with the largeness, and self assured exclamations of ujo, to the playfulness of p’yŏngjo, and the the final sorrow and depth of pathos in kyemyŏnjo mode.71

Sanjo and p’ansori, in this way, share a kind of emotional and dramatic core. Sanjo is however, much more formalized and not driven by a story text. It is “p’ansori without text.”72

Although this discussion began with serene, joyful, and passionate scenes, this is not the dramatic aesthetic that typically characterizes Korean music, particularly the music of the southwestern province. Kyemyŏnjo is the mode that dominates most of a sanjo performance, although this is not the case with p’ansori, sorrow, loss, and tragedy depicted through kyemyŏnjo mode are often central components of p’ansori. Soon after the exultation and love of the first scenes, Mong-ryung realizes that he cannot live a life of nobility and have a kisaeng for a wife. In the song that follows this announcement, the rhythm is still chinyangjo, but it is now poetic in an entirely different sense. Through this slow meter, and a melody filled with downward sliding tones and low vibratos, as well as the rapid appoggiaturas that characterize kyemyŏnjo's melodic pathway, Kim So-hŭi narrates the actions of Ch’unhyang as she first faints, and then she sings in the voice of the weeping Ch’unhyang.73 This song presents the archetype of the type of pitiable life, ruined and made meaningless by external uncontrollable circumstances, that constitutes many of the Southwest's regional folk songs. Indeed this song is quoted in some versions of the most famous folksong of the region: “Yukchabaegi.”

The version of “Yukchabaegi” analyzed by Yi Hye-ku in his “Essays on Korean

72. Mun Chae-suk. Ihae Hamyon Sarang Hanŭn Hanguk Ŭmak. [If You Understand It You Will Love Korean Music], 207.
Music” quotes from this scene, but starts the song with the lyrics typical of most versions of the song “When one lives, how many hundred years does one live? In death does it make any difference to be a hero? While we are alive we might as well enjoy what we like.”

True to Hwang Pyŏng-ki’s statement that the music depicts the lyrical content in many southwestern songs, Yi Hye-ku finds many parallels by analyzing the modal structure of kyemyŏnjo. This song is in chinyangjo rhythm, and like the song of Ch’unhyang weeping, this serves to accentuate the long sliding tones depicting the descending tears. Yi finds that the whole tonal organization of kyemyŏnjo serves the purpose of creating this pathetic “mood.” The strong vibrato on the tone “D” depicts a restless, unsettling feeling. The small interval between the “B flat” and the “A,” which is actually less than a half tone, and is always, in kyemyŏnjo crossed by sliding from the upper tone to the lower tone, is effeminate and like weeping. This progression often ends on the “A,” but this leaves the listener tense and dissatisfied because the listener looks for resolution to the note “G,” which is the central tone. “Yukchabaegi” is so iconic of the region's music that the mode used in this song, called kyemyŏnjo in sanjo and p'ansori, is also called, in the regions folksongs, yukchabegitori, -tori meaning mode.

These feelings of helplessness, insignificance, and sorrow and their aesthetic-dramatic expression have a name in Korea: han. For scholars studying the meaning of Korean performance, han is a central and often contested terminology. Nevertheless, for Koreans it is almost universally recognized as defining, if not the contemporary Korean experience, an archetype of Korean experience. Nevertheless, I find that a discussion that reduces Korean art to the expression of han, and also, consequently reduces Korean identity to this concept of han, does not adequately reflect the intent of Korean art. Korean art is not ultimately pessimistic, rather the aesthetic effect, as in p'ansori, and sinawi, is cathartic, spiritual, and

75. Ibid., 198.
The concept of han is, rather than an essence, a highly contingent term. Although it is a part of Korean aesthetics, and should have a place in discussion, if only by virtue of its ubiquity, it needs to be grounded in its historical context to be able to unravel its meaning. Since this is not the primary topic of this thesis, nor is it even the central aesthetic component, I will summarize the main discussions of the term that have appeared. Chan Park puts the process by which it became a central concept succinctly, “One of the debates in Korean musical aesthetics lingers on the question of han, commonly translated as 'grievance,' 'unrequited desire,' or 'regrets.' Singling out a set of sorrowful melodic patterns typically referred to as kyemyun mode, some claim han has 'the' essence of Korean music.”

If han is not necessarily essential, it is useful. Over the course of the 20th century it has been used to give Koreans a sense of common feeling, and to renew an interest in the aesthetic aspects of Korean art. According to Keith Howard the concept increased in its usage in public documents at the same time as the term “minjung” or “common masses” was gaining popularity. Han linked a state of feeling with national identity through a shared experience of external oppression, especially in recent memory, at the hands of Japan. The term incorporates a sense of collective suffering, but it also incorporates a private sense of longing and regret. It is the sense, as in the story of Ch’unhyang, one's private sufferings take on a public significance. Willoughby also quotes Marshall Pihl's study of p’ansori, The Korean Singer of Tales, saying that through art it is revealed that undergoing suffering is as important as the final experience of catharsis. This means that rather than looking to the

76. Park, Chan E. Recycling an Oral Traditional Transnationally. In Contemporary Directions: Korean Folk Music Engaging the Twentieth Century and Beyond, ed. Nathan Hesselink, 125.
poetics of large experiences, Korean art reveals an aesthetic of intricacy, detail, and
everydayness. The drama of the everyday is one of the central components of Korean art.

It is through this sense of the aesthetic drama of both the large collective significance,
and personal small feelings that these three types of music – sinawi, p’ansori, and, minyo –
connect to sanjo aesthetically. Kim Il-ryun is fond of the the expression “Sanjo is like a
life,” 79 and Hwang Pyŏng-ki makes a similar statement when he talks about sanjo as a type of
secular music “Music is the sound of all kinds of emotions in human life. This kind of music
will let you laugh and cry hard.” 80 Rather than sanjo as a type of improvisation or folk
performance, both of which have changed with time, sanjo maintains its identity by virtue of
its connection with and emergence from the dramatic music of the southwest province. This is
not simply a technical distinction. It is instead an approach to the music that will guide much
of my analysis. In contemporary practice people do not listen to sanjo because it expresses
common emotions, or if it does it does not do so in a common way. So to listen to it as folk
music equating it with “the people” or as expressive of a contemporary societies shared
values would result in a confused listening. Rather people listen to it for or as a part of an
aesthetic education, to hear something uncommon. It guide us “inward” and “backward.” It is
a dramatic music that has the effect, if listened to correctly, of creating “inner” drama.

It is also important to notice that although the drama of the melodies is already set,
bearing the traces of past improvisations, the performance is still dramatic and
improvisational in the way that a performer approaches the music in terms of intensity,
timbre, and decoration. Ricardo D. Trimillos writes that the notion of improvisation has been
codified in the West based upon its two part division into improvised and non-improvised

Yŏn’gu.” [A Study of the Changes and Transformations in Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's School of
Kayagŭm Sanjo.] 299.
music. Within composed work there is also a place for either proscribed improvisation on a theme and variation, or a composition may “capture the spirit of improvisation” in the form of a fantasia or toccata.  

Trimillos presents the processes of improvisation for Tuasag vocal performance in the hope of expanding the “tools” of ethnomusicology's “metatheories.” I also am trying to examine the definition of sanjo as an improvised music in order to contribute to ethnomusicology's metatheories towards a diachronic view of improvised music. Thus like a fantasy in Western music, sanjo currently contains the “spirit of improvisation,” but the melodies are no longer extemporized. If improvisation occurs it is more likely to occur in the use of decorations or the abridgment of a sanjo performance.

I will return to these themes in chapter four, as the culminating goal of this thesis. However, as I have only very briefly indicated the social reasons for this type of aesthetic listening, it makes sense in concluding this chapter to give an overview of the “social field” that sanjo is connected to, and to the context for the two types of listening that this provides.

**Sanjo as an Elite Education**

In the definition of sanjo given above by way of introduction, it was indicated that sanjo is not only defined by its contents and its form, it was also defined by a process of playing the music and a process of learning the music, but that paradoxically, the very things that sanjo was defined by, no longer were common in practice. The main shifts that sanjo has undergone in the latter half of the 20th century and the contemporary context, within which sanjo makes its meaning and has its aesthetic effects, are defined by three aspects. The first is the shift in status from a popular entertainment music to a music of national significance. The second is a shift from an improvisational music to a music that is, for the most part,

performed verbatim. The third is a shift from a music that was learned privately through a master to disciple personal relationship to a process that is guided by the requirements of a contemporary university system. This history begins, as does modern Korean history, with the end of the Chosŏn period and the beginning of the Japanese Colonial Period (August 22, 1910).

In many ways the period from Korea's colonization through the end of the Korean war is the lowest point in Korean history, and a continual source of bitterness. For sanjo however, this period is seen as the golden age, and it is the musicians from this period who have set the standard and the repertoire for the contemporary player. Sanjo became a mature genre as the record industry was being introduced to Korea in the 1920s and 1930s. Although the initial history of sanjo is not well known because of scarce written documentation and complete lack of audio recordings, this second generation was able to fix the form and style of sanjo because their performances were released as audio recordings, although in abridged formats.\(^82\) However, because these masters still taught by rote in the traditional student teacher relationship, they did not fix the repertoire, and it is a constant academic exercise for scholars to try to locate the melodies of the present fixed schools in the music of the second generation masters.

The third generation masters, although they modified and added to the repertoire, still preserved sanjo as a basic form, that is, every performance would include at the very least the chinyangjo, chungmori, chungjungmori, and chajinmori rhythmic patterns. The basic character of sanjo was also fixed as a genre that came from the southwest province and was primarily based on permutations of the kyemyŏnjo mode.\(^83\) Certain third generation masters, most notably Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn, were able to modify the basic form of sanjo to a certain degree.\(^82\) Howard, Keith, Casswell Nicholas, and Lee Chae-suk. *Korean Kayagŭm Sanjo: A Traditional Instrumental Genre*, 10. \(^83\) Ibid., 11.
Although Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn herself was from Chŏlla-namdo, when she married her husband, Chi Yŏng-hŭi, she added the mode characteristic of his province's (Kyŏnggi, the central province surrounding Seoul) folk songs, kyŏngdŭrŭm, to her music. She also added the kūtgori rhythmic pattern, and her sanjo remains the only one with this pattern.

Part of sanjo's aesthetic significance, as noted above, comes through the connections that it has as a regional music. It was during the third generation, however, that kayagŭm sanjo took on a national significance, nominated as Intangible Cultural Property 23 (December 21, 1968). The Intangible Cultural Assets, system has been widely discussed in most historical studies of modern Korean music, and scholars have often criticized its effects on traditional culture, saying that it maintains the appearance of traditional culture, but does not maintain its deeper processes of transmission and change. Since the asset system was created in the 1960s, all of the cultural properties that were nominated at that time have maintained the same form that they had when they were nominated. It addition it gave the government sponsored scholars the authority to designate what was and what was not authentic culture. With regard to kayagŭm sanjo, musicians and scholars have debated the need for any government support and protection for a music that is currently so popular. Nevertheless, performers such as Mun Chae-suk and Yi Yŏng-hŭi have claimed that the system has benefits that are overlooked, especially when it is compared to a situation where music is solely preserved and transmitted by the modern university education system. They argue that the university, with its focus on efficiency and learning for the sole purpose of passing one level on the way to learning a wider repertoire, is not capable of producing musicians who understand the values of the music and are able to play the music in an

84. Ibid., 56.
appropriately detailed fashion. The assumption is that a performer who was solely dedicated to one type of music, handed down from a single teacher would preserve these details without combining them with modern techniques.  

It seems that for the moment, however, the committee for *kayagŭm sanjo* as an intangible cultural asset has chosen to maintain the place of the genre itself, but not to have a living treasure or specific school associated with the genre. Since *kayagŭm sanjo* no longer has a specific living representative, the university more often represents the context of *sanjo* pedagogy and performance. The first Korean music to be taught as a university subject was taught at Tŏksŏng Women's University beginning in 1954, however it was not until 1959 that a full degree course in Korean music began at Seoul National University.  

The role of the university in developing Korean music's image into a socially acceptable, even elite, art form cannot be overlooked. Prior to the university programs there was not a comprehensive professional pathway to becoming a traditional musician. Of course the Changagwŏn (royal music institute) had always taken responsibility for the education of future court musicians, but this bore little significance for musicians who did not play in court ensembles. The only institution that taught a full course in these “entertainment” forms of music were the *kisaeng* institutions, and later the *kisaeng* schools called *kwŏnbŏn*, where some early *sanjo* masters taught as a part of a comprehensive education in a variety of arts including instrumental performance and vocal music. Even though these schools produced some great performers, including the third generation master, Kim Chuk-p'a, these schools and the role of the entertainment girls is, even at present, looked down upon as lower class, if not down right immoral. The university system, which came in the wake of the Korean war

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after the kisaeng schools had long been closed, provided Korean music, and particular kayagŭm sanjo with a reputable, even elite, professional image.\textsuperscript{90} This was especially important at a time when gender relations were being renegotiated, and since a majority of the performers of kayagŭm sanjo are women, it has provided them with a socially acceptable means of being artists.

Although the university system and government protection of the traditional arts, including kayagŭm sanjo, has been a necessary and largely beneficial system for music with little commercial potential, as with the Intangible Cultural Assets system, scholarly discourse has emphasized the negative effects that the university, and the cultural modernity that it has introduced, have had on kayagŭm sanjo. These effects can be grouped into two general areas, the first being the place of sanjo in relation to other genres and the process of an incremental education in the whole field of Korean traditional music. The second is the effects that the type of pedagogy used in the university, primarily the use of notated scores and recordings, has had on the individuality of musicians.

The university curriculum places sanjo within a full course that is designed to give the students not only a well rounded capability to play many types of Korean music, but also an understanding of Korean music from a historical and theoretical perspective. Musicians see sanjo as a hurdle to pass over as they become certified musicians, but because their teachers will be much more accomplished musicians in sanjo performance, younger students prefer to focus on contemporary compositions so that they can compete with older musicians once they graduate. Thus although kayagŭm sanjo is the most important traditional genre, it is not the key to success.\textsuperscript{91} So sanjo practice time, as well as performance time, has to compete with all


\textsuperscript{91} Ibid., 255.
of the other genres available to the contemporary kayagŭm performer. The contemporary performer does not have time to even learn the techniques and existent school's music deeply, let alone take on the lifetime's work of adapting and modifying and learning to improvise in the traditional style. Some scholars see this as a lowering of aesthetic quality. Byong Won Lee references the traditional idea that to play someone else's music is a sign of incompetence. Other scholars, have evaluated the lack of improvisation as a sign of decay in traditional genres, separating them from their original function, such as shamanistic music. Chan Park notes a similar trend in p'ansori where for efficiency's sake a performer will learn an entire performance in the style of their teacher from a recording, narrowing the traditional stylistic diversity of the genre, a process that she calls “vocal cloning.”

The university system, and especially the early creators of that system, played a significant role in the process of sanjo's formalization. As noted above, sanjo underwent several stages in its formalization. First of all sanjo as a genre is a formalization of improvisational music from the southern province. This was the work of a first generation of masters, including the reputed founder of the genre Kim Ch’ang-cho. Secondly, the second generation, through its use of mass media, formalized the style and form of the genre. The third generation, through its interaction with university and government based national culture, took the genre to another level of formalization, with the invention of fixed melodies associated with several “schools” or “ryu” of kayagŭm sanjo. The primary technology that enabled this was the use of Western staff notation based transcriptions in teaching kayagŭm sanjo to the fourth and fifth generations of musicians. Lee Chae-suk, is in this regard, the

94. Park, Chan, E. Voices from the Straw Mat: Toward an Ethnography of Korean Story Singing. 164-165.
most noteworthy musician of that era. Although Hwang Pyŏng-ki had already been using transcriptions to teach kayagŭm sanjo since 1961, Lee Chae-suk was the first musician to master all five major (perhaps major because she learned to play them) schools of kayagŭm sanjo. She was able to accomplish this by using transcriptions. The five transcriptions that she made have been edited and in publication since the 1970s and they are the most detailed and accurate transcriptions available.95 This method of learning, as effective as it is, has also drawn much criticism, mostly in the vein of the arguments against the university and government system as a whole. Byong Won Lee notes that Western staff notation is not adequate to express Korean music because it cannot transcribe the exact pitches of Korean music easily.96 In addition, since Koreans and Westerners, he claims, have an entirely different approach to notation, it cannot be used as a sign system in the same way, hence it loses its effectiveness. In my experiences, this has not been the case, although this may be due to the ubiquity of notation in Korean music education and the adaptation to its conventions over time. Kim Hee-sun has also noted that, beyond the issue of pitch, it is impossible to capture the nuances of sigimsae, or the set of playing techniques used to give each mode its distinctive coloration.97 Nonghyun, the deep vibrato often used in Korean music, is the most difficult aspect of this because of all of its possible approaches and gradations of speed and depth. Byeon Gye-wŏn rather than focusing on the inaccuracies, to the contrary, notes that Western notation is much more accurate in certain respects than Korean traditional notation. He states “Western staff notation is more flexible in expressing the progression of notes and is better able to encapsulate rhythmic structures. In fact, its function for Western music has been

as more than a memory aide, and musicians tend to observe pitches, durations, ornamentation, dynamics, and mood indications as accurately as possible. Ever since the introduction of staff notation to Korea, Korean musicians have accepted it as a widely used mensural notation.\textsuperscript{98}

Although Western notation may be more accurate, Lee's point still stands that it might be accurate in exactly the wrong ways, limiting areas that should be flexible, and leaving areas open to interpretation that should be fixed. This is of course why Korean, as well as Western music, has not done away with the role of the student teacher relationship in music pedagogy. It is vital to learn what is important about a music first hand, and from someone who can give other types of signs and affects than one finds in notation. This will be the primary focus of my analysis in chapter three, since all of my first hand experience of Korean music is based upon this relationship. In addition the most successful and skillful musicians are those that learn to display their creativity, whatever the conditions of their education were. They are able to create music from notes, and provide the audience with an aesthetic effect. The development of this theme will be the topic of chapter four of this thesis.

The university has served as both a safe haven, where traditional music is given a higher value than in commercial, wider society, but it has also drawn the criticisms that I have noted above. Whether these criticisms accurately assess the situation or not, it seems that they will not have any effect on the practice of Korean education in the near future, although perhaps audiences will become tired of more or less fixed reproductions and demand a musical practice that values individuality over efficiency. In any case, the contemporary context, the one in which I learned about the music that is the object of this thesis, the Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn school of kayagŭm sanjo, is defined by the processes of formalization that took

place in the preceding generation, through the development of government protection and university education based upon transcribed scores. The current generation is not however merely content to tread water. Kim Hee-sun notes that the current generation of performers seeks to enlarge the kayagŭm as a global instrument, and this is true of many of the students who I have met as well. The current generation, including my teacher Kim Il-ryun, is characterized by the creation of smaller groups, who transmit kayagŭm music through mass media, including the internet, radio, and television. They seek employment beyond government stipends, and university positions, although most successful musicians do have university positions. She writes “Kayagŭm performers of the 21st century are no longer elite musicians, but rather, self promoted producers of cultural products within the new era of globalization.”

**Discourse and Context**

The context that this section describes is not a static context, but rather one that continues to change because of the interactivity of all of the elements, but particularly through the agency of individuals and groups who are musicians, scholars, teachers, and cultural authorities. They interact with this context in both discursive and non-discursive ways. I have tried to show that kayagŭm sanjo does have a discourse, a situation, but that there are also non-discursive elements to its situation. These can be the physical instrument and the gestures that are necessary to maneuver this instrument, which, of course are imagined through discourse, but affect the world without the aid of discourse. The instrument and its techniques create signs within a physical context that gives rise to action in that context, moving the musician in the stream of a performance, or moving an audience by


58
connecting to felt relationships of expectation and the resulting fulfillment or negation. It can also exist in the material connections between genres, which have a history of material connections, and meanings related to the similarities between the felt process of music and the felt process of life, although these feelings are amplified and dramatized. Or the non-discursive context could arise from the technology of a printed notation and the way that this sign system affects the musical process.

When agents interact with the context they initiate processes of positioning and dislocation. Kayagŭm sanjo is both given form and shape by its situation, and it is drawn out of its previous forms and meanings because of continuous contextual changes. The relationship between a genre, the body of a performer, and an instrument is dynamic and individual, but over time and with social relationships of authority and discipline can also arrive at stasis and the formation of conventions. The possibilities afforded by the interaction of a musician and an instrument draw a music out of a fixed text into an interactive process. So too looking at the context of genre relationships can position a type of music in a fixed relationship with predetermined habits of feeling, and public concepts of feeling. Deepening knowledge of a genre's history also draws out new aspects of its possible meanings and ranges of feeling.

By listening to a traditional form with uncommon aesthetics, and understanding how these aesthetic effects have historically come to exist a listener takes on the affects of turning “backward” and “inward.” So too, the social context of a musical form positions it in more or less fixed relationships, but as society is a dynamic field, and takes up new concepts and creates new institutions and relationships it draws music out of its previous relationships and through society and music's mutual ability to affect one another creates the possibility of new types of signs.
The necessary conditions for interacting with a text and context, however, are both a knowledge of the types of signs that are used to communicate by that text within that context, as well as a knowledge of the way the text, context, and agents interact at the level of cause and effect, the “affective” level. In the next chapter I adopt a theoretical stance that allows me to better conceptualize the way that signs are forms and the way that humans affect one another with the medium of music. I use the material covered in this chapter as a test ground for this stance, and as a larger strategy the middle chapter connects the two halves of this thesis, showing how the minutia covered in the final half is communicating with and affecting the context and the musical text of kayagŭm sanjo.
Chapter Two

The Significance of Sensation: Affects and Signs

In the introduction I indicated that *kayagŭm sanjo* is often paradoxical, and that this paradox can be overcome by two types of listening. In the previous chapter, I outlined three contexts that form the cultural structures that musicians produce and actively engage in. *K*ayagŭm musicians and instrument makers work together to produce a whole gestalt from the symbolic image of the *kayagŭm* itself to the sonic characteristics that define the genre *kayagŭm sanjo*. The musicians and audiences are also aware the context of *sanjo*'s intertextual relationships, and as in the case with Hwang Pyong-ki and Kim Il-ryun, musicians make use of these relationships pragmatically. The primary pragmatic value that I have observed through the lesson experience is that these intertextual relationships can help to transmit the ethos of a musical technique. Thirdly musicians and institutions, particularly government institutions and the university education system, collaborate to create *kayagŭm sanjo*'s social context. By creating this context they create a social space for the production, reception, and transmission of their music.

If the notion of context is a theoretical given, the process by which musicians communicate and signify within these contexts is not universally given or accepted. In scholarly discourse the terms “sign,” “semiotic,” and “affect” can have a wide range of meanings, and because of this the ability to talk conceptually about music is often tied to idiosyncratic interpretations of these terms. In ethnomusicology the use of narrative serves to show how the researcher came to understand the music that they have encountered. Conceptual narratives also situate the study in relation to other bodies of knowledge. This section continues the narrative of this thesis by showing how I came to understand the
relationship of the macro level structures of contexts to the micro level interaction with these structures, such as the way a tone is articulated or the way a melodic passage is taught to an individual student. This chapter is also intended to put the concepts in this thesis in terms of a general vocabulary so that scholars in fields such as cultural studies and anthropology might be able to gain from the insights provided by the ethnomusicological method.

The discussion in this chapter proceeds from the large to the small. First it shows, one solution that ethnomusicologists have provided to answer the question “How and what does music signify?” This first section proposes that music has several possible types of signs, and that the notion of the agency and positionality affect both the point from which the sign is transmitted and the point where it is perceived. The second section uses the notion of “grain” and the “semiotic” to describe the process that a musician uses to individuate themselves by writing their unique listening and performing over the larger structure of the musical form with an individual approach to kinesthetic style. The third section proposes that the concept of affectivity can provide a useful way to talk about what happens during the learning process. The concept of affect lead me to examine the micro-level interplay of context and agency as a learning musician interacts with the material situation of the instrument, the lesson environment, and the structure of the music.

**Turino, Peirce, and Signs**

Music has a layer that is symbolic. In this I mean that it has a layer that is articulated separately through language that mediates the experience of music. Humans use this symbolic layer in a wide variety of contexts, such as teaching, composing, and critiquing music to talk about and imagine music that is not currently being heard. This is an abstract linguistic layer of music. Music also has an existence in culture that is not linguistic but achieves meaning by
its practicality and co-occurrence, and can be tied to the lifeworlds of musicians and society existentially. Music also exists as a direct and unmediated encounter in experience. Musical sounds are experienced as events produced by their sources, and these events have a direct effect on the nervous system that perceives it. Humans create music and musical concepts in the symbolic, existential, and affective domains.

This chapter deals with the nature of how musicians communicate with music. One interpretation of this comes from the science of signs used by ethnomusicology to designate categories of the way that music acts as a bridge between subjects and objects. This system of signs was adapted for ethnomusicology by Thomas Turino, and was originally conceived by Charles Sanders Peirce. The second way that I deal with these is a recursive analysis of the material of signs, the things that give signs their power to have effects upon listening subjects, this exists in the material world of causation, the affective realm.

Turino/Peirce's method of analyzing signs is based upon the interaction of several three part structures. The first is the three part structure of significance in general. This is made up of the sign, the object, and the interpretant. The sign is “something that stands for something else to someone in some way.” The object is the thing that the sign is given in place of, and the interpretant is the result of making the connection between the sign and the object. The interpretant can also be of three varieties, energetic, emotional, or a sign-interpretant.100 For example a clock is a sign that for most people stands for their position in the twenty four hours of a day. Of course the interpretant always requires a particular situation. For example at a certain time the effect could be that one goes to work. At another time the effect could be a realization that one has been wasting time. For a person who did not know how to read a clock, however, the clock might stand for some completely different

object, such as the goal of learning how to understand a non-digital clock. Or for a person not interested in the time it could stand as a sign for the object of their or another's status, wealth, or style. It could also be completely ignored. The sign and the object may not meet if the subject is not geared in a way to produce that connection, in which case it is not a sign: it is only a clock.

Secondly, the unique quality of Turino/Peirce's sign system is that signs act in chains where the interpretant, the effect of understanding what a sign stands for, is then given a new object, and a new interpretant is created when the two are brought together.¹⁰¹ For example the clock that is a sign that I should go to work creates this effect of me grabbing my keys and going out the door: interpretant one, energetic interpretant. This interpretant then becomes the sign for my good timing, since I am ready in the morning at the appropriate time to go to work, with the resulting interpretant being emotional: self-satisfaction. This linear relationship stands in contrast to another type of possible sign relationship, the dialectical relationship, which I will discuss when I write about Kristeva's semiotic later in this chapter.

There are also three ontological levels of signs: the qualisign, the sinsign, and the legisign. The qualisign is the immediate quality of a sign, for example the raspyness or clearness, the loudness or softness of a tone. The sinsign is the actual instance of any given sign: this tone, this passage, this concert. The legisign is the sign as a general type, for example, styles of music, types of decorations, modes or scales as generalities. From the top down, legisign to qualisign, these are layers. The legisign consists of specific instances as well as qualities.¹⁰²

There are also three types of relationships that a sign has to its object. The first type is called the iconic relationship, this is a type of sign that can stand as a sign because it in some
way, however convoluted, it has similarities to the object it stands for. For example, downward sounds may bear relationship to the motion of tears, or to the general downward sloping expression of a sound or sorrowful eyes, or even to weeping which starts high and slopes downward. Therefore certain figures in music may bear iconic relationships to experiential objects.\textsuperscript{103}

The second type of relationship is an index. This shows that signs are related to their objects because they occur together. For example, a certain rhythm may be indexically related to harvest, or to a particular region's music because it is often experienced in co-occurrence with those objects. When the sign is used in other context, subjects who have experienced these co-occurrences will be able to perceive this musical material as a sign. The third relation is the symbolic sign. This sign is able to stand for an object because it has been related through the use of language. This may happen, for example, in learning how to produce music by reading notation which was explained to through language.\textsuperscript{104}

The last “trichotomy” is the set of rheme, dicent, and argument. A rhematic sign is related to possibilities rather than things that necessarily exist. Turino calls this a “qualitative possibility.” A dicent represents the actual existence of an object. Turino uses the example of a whethervane indicating the actual existence of the wind. Dicents in music show the way that sound represents the existence of ability in a musician. An argument is the least important as related to music because it is wholly in the linguistic, symbolic, realm, such as signs in mathematics referring to other mathematical concepts. Of course there are some people who view music in this fashion, not as sounds but as note signs that stand for concepts rather than sounds, but most scholars agree that one characteristic that separates music from language is that music is non-propositional. Turino/Peirce then organizes the possible permutations of

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., 226.
\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., 227.
signs to show that there are ten possible classes of signs with the different combinations of the three trichotomies.

The importance of the Turino/Peirce framework in understanding music is that it allows us to overcome fuzzy thinking about what music means and how it means. This system is used to create classes of signs and then show when and how these signs exist in certain instances. Furthermore Turino/Peirce also shows that signs exist for certain people in certain ways, and that there is a definite plurality and relativity in the creation of signs. To answer the question of what a sign means it is necessary to articulate and answer for the question “in relation to what?” This is an important question to give definition to the way that music operates in the human context. Nevertheless, it also is open to speculation about the possible existence of signs, their contingency being realized by virtue of the fact that they have been brought into play in the context of discussion. Turino/Peirce allows us to develop concepts about music, and to structure these discussions while maintaining clarity of thought, which is key to discussing an art that flows away through time and evades our intellectual grasp.

This system therefore provides both flexibility (within certain systematic bounds) and clarity. It can be used to generate concepts about music in relation to almost anything. Thus, the relationships between sanjo and its three contexts, which I have already illustrated above, will make good material to test out the effectiveness of this system in regards to sanjo.

**Signs and Context**

My discussion began by showing that the kayagŭm acts as an important context for sanjo by acting as a bridge between sanjo and the material-cultural world. Kayagŭm sanjo could be said to act as a sign of old Korea or traditional Korea, for example. In Korean
dramas that portray the Chosŏn era, for example the drama that I referenced above, *Painter of the Wind, sanjo* is evoked both iconically and indexically. The first aspect in this semiosis is the qualisign. The girl playing the *kayagŭm* bears certain qualities, such as traditional dress and hair style. She sits in a certain way in respect to the table of men who she is entertaining. She is depicted through the filming as having graceful movements and gestures in relation to her instrument. When the music comes out it has the quality of the *kayagŭm* tone, the melody which alternates between gestures that flow and stop by virtue of bending and releasing strings, and plucking, dragging the finger across, or flicking the strings. The rhythm also switches from a non-metrical rhythm to a metrical rhythm, which is visually separated by another chain of semiosis which interrupts a singular flow of signs, but also draws the single chain of signs into their true meaning in relation to the characters and the drama. The music acts as an icon, and even though it is not *sanjo*, it bears similarity to *sanjo*. It is also related as an index of old Korea by being similar to the sonic qualities that one experiences when one visits cultural sites such as Ch’angdŏkkung or Kyŏngbokkung Palaces in Seoul, or when one visits re-creations of traditional villages. There are also numerous other indexical links between *kayagŭm sanjo* and traditional culture in other television shows and films. The sign however does not point to the actual existence of such an old Korea, it is rhematic, a qualitative possibility, the possibility of an old Korean state of mind. In fact the music is often out of place and anachronistic. It would not be typical, given *sanjo’s* class and genre associations that it would be performed at a palace, and it would not have been performed, probably, during the period depicted in the drama since it is set about 150 years earlier than *sanjo’s* reputed origination.

A second example: the *kayagŭm’s* morphology was described above, and this has a complex sign system association with the aesthetic values embedded in *sanjo*. For example I
follow a chain of signs that links the sun and moon which are cut into the back of a *kayagŭm* to fundamental processes of *sanjo* symbolically, iconically, and indexically. This image is said to encapsulate the symbol of universe at the base of the *kayagŭm*.105 The moon is indexically related to relative darkness, coolness, and relaxation. The sun is related indexically to heat, intensity, work, and light. Through language, a legisign-symbol-argument, darkness, coolness, and relaxation are signs for feminity and passivity. Whereas by the same process, the sun is a sign for masculinity and positivity. The music then meets this interpretant when it becomes a sign for the two processes that occur within *sanjo*, as *sanjo* is animated by tension and release. Thus the polarities of the two meeting in this interpretant continue the chain, acting as a sign for the aesthetic values of the genre in general.

Similarly, the discussion of dramatism and genre relations discussed above can also be viewed through the lens of Turino/Peirce's signs. Although *kayagŭm sanjo* is not technically a folk music in that it is enjoyed by a certain kind of people, the folk, scholars and record companies continue to link *sanjo* iconically and indexically to the folk. *Sanjo* is in an iconic relationship with the folk music of various provinces since it uses melodic modes and rhythms that are used in folk music. The discourse connecting *sanjo* to other folk genres posits an iconic connection. The form of *sanjo* contains rhythms that come from the common theater, *p'ansori*, and the common religion, shamanism, of former times. Thus it is iconically linked to these “folk” art forms. Indexically it is also linked because the melodies and rhythms that characterize this music co-occur with events that former common people would have associated with, for example a melody from the Cholla province that co-occured with common labor would be an indexical relationship. In present day it is indexically related to folk culture by being played at “folk museums” and “folk villages.” Conversely however, it

could also be indexically related to elite culture since recorded examples of sanjo are played at palaces as well. This is where the importance of having good contextual understanding comes into play, and sanjo in this case would more likely be seen as “traditional” rather than aristocratic. Although since it is a palace it would seem more appropriate to broadcast music that is historically an index of aristocratic culture.

The emotional meaning is also both indexical and iconic in its relationship to sinawi and p'ansori. P'ansori is a fantastic source for understanding this type of relationship because of the wide variety of melodies that are indexically linked to texts with various moods. As Hwang Pyŏng-ki also notes, the music of this genre can be seen as very programmatic, an exclamation sounds like an exclamation, wailing is musically rendered as wailing, even non-emotional events are rendered musically and textually, like running or birds flying. A melody in sanjo can start a chain of semiosis that can often be linked back to an image or a mood in p'ansori. For example, the beginning phrases which open sanjo, are similar to the song from Ch'unhyangga, referenced above, Choksongga. The singer is in revelry about the grandness of the mountain scene, and making very noble statements, quoting ancient Chinese poets. The music is accordingly also expansive and wide, with strong notes that have only slight vibrato. The mode ujo is the legisign that stands for this type of mood and delivery. This legisign is a sign that is common to both sanjo and p'ansori, and because in both genres the musical sign bears similarity to its object, it is in an iconic relationship. The sign is also a rheme since it denotes the possibilities of being in such an expansive state. Thus there is a rheme-iconic-legisign. The music is also an iconic sign of the flying pheonix and the creation of ecstasy in a dancer, which is linked symbolically and indexically to sinawi. The musical rhythms and melodic contours could be iconically linked to the ecstatic dance if it bears similarities to the rhythm and shape of the motions. It could also be indexical if the melodic shapes and rhythms
are only signs of the dance because of co-ocurrence. Nevertheless, the interpretant of this sign is often an energetic interpretant, causing states of ecstasy and movement in the person who hears it.

Looking at the music from the point of view of the sign systems that it uses can also complicate genre relationships. If sanjo were taken as an indexical sign of nobility because it is played at palaces, then a confused reading of the sign would result because it also is a sign of folk life, indexically tied to folk villages in the same way. Sanjo however does enter a chain of semiosis that links it to nobility in another way that is, rather than a confused reading of sanjo’s signs, an indication of the extent of sanjo's intertextuality. The techniques that are used in Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's sanjo stand as signs for a type of elegance of expression in sanjo that is not present in other folk genres. Particularly the technique where one pulls the string to lower the tone slightly, rather than pressing it, stand as a sign for her borrowing from and familiarity with p’ungnyu kayagŭm (elegant music) or ch’ŏngak kayagŭm (correct music). This type of sign is also not unlikely in p’ansori, another supposedly folk genre that makes use of elegant poetry and sometimes quotes from elegant songs, and although these are signs to stand for the elegance and nobility of the characters in the drama rather than the elegance and nobility of the singer or audience, they do indicate that the two worlds are much more permeable than classification systems, cultural history, and class stratification would have one believe.

Indeed, when the last context, the social and educational context, and scholarly debates about the proper method for learning, the signs available to kayagŭm musicians, and the signs which their education process knowingly or unknowingly emits are of primary importance, yet they complicate the issue. Many scholars take the whole process of learning as a sign. Some of the objects that the sign may stand for are authenticity, aptitude, purity,
efficiency, or elitism. These signs are almost always dicent signs, signs about the real existence of something or other, like a windvane shows signs of the wind. Byong Won Lee and Hwang Pyŏng-ki both reference a process of learning the kayagŭm, and these processes are made of more or less the same steps in progress. Find a teacher. Disciple oneself to that teacher. Practice and learn all of the time. Find more teachers and incorporate their music as well. Then spend the rest of your life writing your own sanjo, and improvising during performances. For those scholars this is the sign of an authentic tradition, because indexically it is related to learning that took place before modernization and Westernization of the education process. In fact in Lee's article, the way that a musician reads notation was also a dicent sign of their level of Westernization. If a musician follows the notation, note for note, he is a Westernized musician, and if he varies the notes according to his feelings, this is a sign of a Korean musician. This sign is also linked indexically to an experiment in which Korean musicians and Western musicians were told to play the same score, and the results were split based upon their musical affiliations. This indicates a chain of semiosis that links the very specifics of learning to read music, through one's psychological identity, all the way up to one's national identity. For university based musicians however, the method of education, and the positions that university educated musicians can hold are all dicent signs of an improved place for sanjo in society.

**Kristeva, Barthes, and Semiotics**

From these few examples, given to show some of the possible interpretations of the signs in the contextual connections that sanjo makes, it is possible to generate a number of problems, and to look at existing relationships in a variety of ways. However the notion of change, as well as the idea that sign producing and sign reading subjects are active, and often
times do many important things that are asignifying, not that they do not mean, but that they are not linked indexically, iconically, or symbolically to an object. These asignifying marks are interestingly drawn to the forefront of post-structural semiotics. The question is not, “What does this sign stand for?”, but “What is it that leaves its sign?” or “How do I leave my sign?” Whereas semiotics, as in Piercian semiotics, is interested only in a process where by an object communicates something to someone, for Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes this is the symbolic, and the semiotic, following Kristeva's etymology is a “Distinctive mark, trace, index, precursory sign, proof, engraved or written sign, imprint, trace, figuration.”

For Barthes too, the semiotic involves hearing not the sound-signifiers, but “the grain of the voice,” or “the lungs” versus “the teeth, throat, and tongue.”

In this sense a sign becomes a sign as in a signature. This however should not be taken in the egotistical sense that a sign only refers to one's self, but to the necessity, the unavoidability, of leaving one's traces on one's activities. Peter Szendy also makes this theme, although from the position, not of a musician, but of a listener in his volume entitled Listen. He writes, “How can a listening become my own, identifiable as my own, while still continuing to answer to the unconditional injunction of a you must? What space of appropriation does music reserve for its listeners so that they can in turn sign the listening of a work and interpretation, an improvisation?....Can one make a listening listened to? Can I transmit my listening, unique as it is? That seems so improbable, and yet so desirable, so necessary too.”

Barthes too expresses a similar idea in Musica Practica, but from the perspective of the musician, “One must put oneself in the position, or better, in the activity of an operator, who knew how to displace, assemble, combine, fit together; in a word, who knew how to

108. Szendy, Peter and Jean-Luc Nancy. Listen: a History of our Ears, 3-5.
structure. Just as the reading of the modern text consists not in receiving, in knowing or in feeling that text, but in writing it anew, in crossing its writing with a fresh inscription, so too reading this Beethoven is to operate his music, to draw it in to an unknown praxis.” 109

What is this “unknown praxis”? How does one make one's listenings heard? This involves an aspect of semiotics that is wholly different from Turino/Peirce's semiotic, one that relies on the disruption of meaning, and a “break in the symbolic” to transmit its signs. Kisteva begins her theory of signification with the pre-subjective, unformed body. She invokes a Freudian model of development: the presubjective body is nothing but drives. In a process of signification these drives are ordered and put into stases. They are disciplined, and since they seek the approval of society, the subject is formed around the restrictions and laws that are a part of the social order. This social order produces the symbolic capabilities in the subject, but the “discontinuities” between the drive charge and the amount that is allowed to be expressed in the symbolic results in asignifying gestures, patterns of speech, and repetition of rhythms which the drive energies are transferred, displaced into. She calls this the semiotic, meaning the mark or sign of the pre-communicative drives.

For Kristeva the presubjective process of ordering and displacing drive energies is inaccessible. Because the semiotic comes before the symbolic, the only way that the semiotic can be seen is through a work of art that is purely semiotized, or musicalized. Thus the characteristic rhythm and emphasis of a voice, the intensity with which one gestures come from this interaction between the drives and civilized communication. These aspects in particular show what Kristeva means by the semiotic. As in the grain of the voice, where the lungs stand for the mysterious symbol of training and the throat and teeth for the body and language that work against the symbol, the semiotic works against the symbolic, entering into communication and coloring it with asignifying elements.

I do not want to endorse Freudian psychology, firstly because I do not understand it, and secondly because I think that it is too limited in scope to explain Korean aesthetics. However the idea that there is a dynamic system of communication that consists of two parts, one that communicates meaning and symbolic structures, and the other that transfers stored up, passionate, uncontrollable energy into that communication seems to be an appropriate metaphor for what happens in a contemporary sanjo practice. This will be a primary theoretical source for the fourth chapter, but to indicate the direction I am heading I give three uses of this idea. First of all, the melodies of sanjo contain both elements of significance, elements that can stand for identifiable emotions, and elements that are purely related to the energy of those symbolic ideas. Secondly, although a certain stylistic approach to sanjo can be shown to be a sign for something, when looking at the particular elements, the elements of sanjo can be divided into the melodies, which are the proper symbolic content, and the bodily approach to those melodies. Barthes description of the grain of the voice is the “way language works on the melody.” Since sanjo is not a vocal music, it would seem odd to discuss it in terms of vocal grain, however, in the third chapter, I will show that in fact there is a vocal element to sanjo pedagogy, and that the way that a teacher vocalizes the melodies has an implication for the development of style. Thirdly, Kristeva, in describing the semiotic and the symbolic, makes an analogy to computer theory's analog-digital distinction, showing that the analog is distributed in the digital to preserve itself. This is a good metaphor for the process that has occurred in sanjo in a transfer from a continuous art into an art represented by discrete elements. It is also a good metaphor for the way that, during education in order to transmit certain continuous elements, they are “digitized” or made into discrete elements, until they are turned back into analog elements in performance.
Affect and Pedagogy

The dynamic nature of signification, where asignifying elements are also projected into the act of communication, points to the material base of communication, and to the cause and effect dynamic in its system. Unlike most signs, these elements are more deeply embedded and nearly imperceptible. The study of affects is best described as the study of “the ability to affect, and the ability to be affected, and the consequent effects on the ability to act.” There are signs that have affective properties, “the sign as a trigger point for movement,”110 this type of sign is best described by Turino/Peirce's notion of the energetic interpretant, or the sign that causes motion. I will be spending a great deal of time talking about these signs, when I describe the semiotic processes involved in kayagŭm pedagogy, however, in talking about affects, I am largely referring to the asigifying material and psychological elements that directly cause movement without the tripartite organization of sign-interpretant-object.

Affect is a term that is used to designate a new movement in cultural studies, away from the language based concepts of the linguistic turn, and a return to “unmediated experience.” This theoretical strain, as opposed to affective psychology, which is more purely oriented towards the emotions, is rooted in the philosophy of the 17th century philosopher Baruch Spinoza, particularly as re-interpreted by the 20th century French philosopher Gilles Deleuze. In a book dedicated to the movement, Michael Hardt, introduces the conceptual orientation of “The Affective Turn.” He draws three consequences from a turn away from a study of language and towards a study of affects, “Each time we consider the mind's power to think, we must try to recognize how the body's power to act corresponds to it...An affect straddles the relationship insofar as it indicates the current state of the mind and the body.”

Secondly, “The mind's power to think corresponds to its receptivity to external ideas; and the body's power to act corresponds to its sensitivity to other bodies. The greater our power to be affected, he posits, the greater our power to act.” and lastly, “They (affects) involve both reason and the passions. Affects require us...to enter the realm of causality, but they offer a complex view of causality because the affects belong simultaneously to both sides of the causal relationship.”

The discussion of affect does have a history in music theory, particulary the musical concept of *Affektenlehre*, which was a guiding compositional doctrine from the Baroque period. In this sense the term, as in affective psychology, refers to the causes of emotional states. The composition itself was seen to contain musical tropes that evoked emotional responses in the audience, so *Affektenlehre*, or the doctrine of the affections, correlating musical material to emotional responses was proposed. Similarly recent psychological research into music has made use of the term affect to describe the “intensity of emotional response” to musical stimuli. The concept of affect that comes from the European philosophical tradition (ie. Spinoza, Deleuze, and Hardt) bears similarity as well as divergence from these two uses of the term. The philosophical use of the term incorporates the notion of the emotions (in Spinoza the affects are always meet with a body as a continuum between joy and saddness), but it also corresponds to the way that external event cause changes in our body. “Affectus was determined as the continuous variation of the power of acting. An affection is what? In a first determination, an affection is the following: it's a state

of a body insofar as it is subject to the action of another body.”

The example that I use in this thesis comes from the lesson situation, in which a teacher follows a number of strategies to provoke a change in the student. A teacher may try to cause an emotional response that in turn affects the approach to the instrument. On the other hand a teacher may physically adjust the positions of a student's hands, or they may provide some visual or auditory sensation that is intended to modify the intensity of the student's performance. These would all fall under the notion of affect that I am trying to convey.

Affects not only constitute lower level cause and effect, but their continual apprehension results in a cumulative effect. According to Deleuze, following Spinoza, affects are the “dark precursors of our common notions.” That is, it is not thought that allows us to think, rather it is the imperceptible, small elements that cause us to form our ideas and concepts. In his study of Francis Bacon, Deleuze uses this notion to great effect in developing concepts from the “logic of sensations” that which “affects the nervous system directly bypassing the boredom of a story.” He begins his study with the way that lines and shapes act on the picture, which is a kind of portrait, to isolate the figure. If affects act directly on the nervous system, however, the nature of art and the nervous system has been relatively untouched in cultural studies and ethnomusicology. This could be for the same reason that Brian Massumi writes that phenomenology also lost ground to the linguistic turn, “because of new ideas concerning how the subject and experience are mediated and shaped by a power structure.” It is the notion that unmediated experience is either inaccessible or naïve. However, linguistic mediation is not the only way, nor is it even the primary way that culture shapes experience. Rather, it would seem that culture also works affectively, using material

115. Deleuze, Gilles. “Spinoza and the Three ‘Ethics’” In Essays Critical and Clinical, 144.
structures that act upon the nervous system to give experience a “logic of sensation.”

Furthermore, the way that music works within the nervous system is much more complex than the direct apprehension of sensations. Rather, the nervous system employs devices to create models of sound that give an idea of general structure based upon expectations before the piece is fully heard.\textsuperscript{118} The body also amplifies musical experience and acts as a record of what is happening in a musical structure, through keeping the beat by swaying or tapping, or by creating bodily tension and release as a model of the musical structures of tension and release.\textsuperscript{119} Both the body itself and the nervous system are affected by the sound itself, but they also create models and expectations based upon past experiences, which are then either confirmed or violated by reality. However it is also this constant violation and realignment of expectations that is the primary and most subtle source of musical pleasure. Thus affects do work on the nervous system directly, but the nervous system also models them and from them produces signs that act as dicent signs for the existence or non-existence of musical pleasure. This musical pleasure may be called the aesthetic effect, and although since every type of music and sound practice involves different forms and different logics of sensation, this pleasure taken in the “groove” of music, or the constant variation and readaptation is a part of its beauty.

In this chapter, I have adapted three areas of theory that I will use in the analysis that follows. In all of the analysis some combination and interaction of the three parts will be used. I will use the codes of communication that Turino/Peirce was able to categorize as a basic starting point. However, integral to the analysis is both the chain of semiosis and the dialectical process that characterizes the interaction of the semiotic and the symbolic. These are all systems of signification. They are all already in the process of communicating

\textsuperscript{118} Levitin, Daniel J. \textit{This Is Your Brain on Music: The Science of a Human Obsession}, 104. 
\textsuperscript{119} Jourdain, Robert. \textit{Music, the Brain, and Ecstasy: How Music Captures Our Imagination}, 324.
concepts and common notions, but by looking at the asignifying roots of these concepts, the many layers that constitute the whole of a sanjo performance will become clear.

By looking for the affective relationship, how musicians are affected as well as how they affect, I will be looking at music from the bottom up. Also, by applying the conceptual systems and categories that I have derived by analyzing chains of semiosis, I will be working from the top down. These two approaches meet in the process of education in kayagŭm sanjo. During the education process a student must open to the affective elements of cause and effect, in order to expand her capacity to interact with the instrument. At the same time this is, as Deleuze states, “an apprenticeship in the signs of art.”  

In learning how to read the signs of one's instrument and produce signs with that instrument and the “matrices of enunciation” that characterize the genre, one is on the path of musicianship. Listening is also an act that is culturally and contextually determined. However choosing and engaging in a certain mode of listening also can be considered an art that one leaves one's mark upon. This mode of listening is characterized by having the knowledge to interpret signs as well as being open to being affected by the details of the performance.

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Chapter Three.

The Signs and Affects of Pedagogy

“Although it is widely practiced as a route to gaining performance competence, studying a musical instrument can also become a conduit into the uncharted realms of affective participation that challenge ethnographic boundaries as well as notions of cultural knowledge.”

“Within the specific focus of 'analyzing from the body,' the analyst constructs arguments by treating the physical movements and sensations of embodied human beings involved in various sorts of music making as primary sources of musical evidence. Among the physical aspects of musical experience, we include those bodily engagements that are both outwardly observable by others and inwardly felt by and individual. Our attention to what humans do and feel affirms that music is a human activity rather than a thing to be studied outside a human context. This focus on activity blurs the traditional boundaries between subject and object and reflects the lowering of barriers between mind and body characteristic of embodiment theory in general. And finally, in addressing the various ways in which people make music, we embrace all aspects of the musical experience without privileging one in an a priori way.”

Signs and affects are united at the level of practical experience. When one learns to play an instrument, one looks for the specific way that certain signs are transmitted, and tries to approximate the method of transmitting these signs in one's own playing. Similarly, the learner opens herself to the affects transmitted through sound, vision, and touch in an effort to increase her capacity to act. When trying to understand how kayagûm sanjo means, and how it is supposed to move the one who listens to it, I was inspired by two projects, from which I have quoted above. The first is Regulia Quereshi’s attempts to understand the culture of

making music with the *sarangi* in Pakistan. Her study is theoretically interesting in that it gives a theoretical basis to the dynamic experience of musical aesthetics. One learns what musical aesthetics are by participating in them, rather than, or in addition to analyzing the surrounding discourse of aesthetics. In many ways she is also engaged in showing that signs and affects are linked at the practical experiential level. She writes “Musical meaning and affect need to be considered as being historically and socially situated. But their flavor, tone, and effects are accessible through personal participation, not only in the practice of making music but in the relationships that engender the active, oral sharing of a milieu-specific conversation about and within the experience.”

The importance of this way of thinking is that it depicts the formation of musical subjects as something that is active and participatory rather than passive. Social codes and discipline are not simply written on the body. The body and mind are engaged in creating connections to all types of material and processing them aesthetically. This type of learning is established when the student opens herself to the authority structure where the teacher co-imprints her listening onto the student's listening to produce an aesthetic effect.

Secondly, it is different to propose a theory of how the body gives meaning to musical experience and to do an “analysis from the body.” Quereshi too, although she writes that she will analyze from her experience of learning the *sarengi*, primarily writes about her experience of social structures and the discourse of gender surrounding her learning of the instrument. For this reason, I want to narrow the focus that she initially starts out with, in this chapter, to applied aesthetics. In this aspect, my approach is guided by Judy Lochhead, who claims that “bodily movement is creative and meaningful in and of itself.”

of the *ku-ch'in* (Chinese seven string zither) Bell Yung also argues that *ku-ch'in* performance has a kinesthetic aspect that has its own aesthetic. She maps the movements of the players left hand to show how it is coreographed, how it is significant in terms of movement itself. The practitioners who she studied with were concerned, not only about the resulting sound of a performance, but the movement's "naturalness."\(^\text{127}\)

Learning the intricacies of *kayagŭm sanjo* techniques has been a way for me to examine the specific creativity and meaning of certain *kayagŭm sanjo* melodies. The ethnographic account is intended to show cultural values. The positionality of a social and cultural outsider who grapples with the melodic and technical material used by cultural and social insiders and practitioners entails surrendering to the affective events of education. Through this process the outsider can then begin to develop an understanding of the aesthetics of a music by examining the ways in which they acquired these techniques. Often the sections that I had the most difficulty learning provided the most material for this type of aesthetic analysis because of the many events necessary for the teacher to transmit her knowledge to me. These events involved Kim Il-ryun using theory, metaphor, and vocalizations of the appropriate sound, in addition to visual and auditory instruction through her own demonstration of the melodies to affect the way that I performed the music. Over time the detailed instruction that affected the performance of particular techniques, sometimes even the articulation of a single tone, revealed aesthetic signs that indicated the unity of phrases and whole melodies.

Another goal of this chapter is to give a more detailed explanation of the way that a performer specifically uses the *kayagŭm* as a context for creating their desired aesthetic effects. This is a way to look at the aesthetic effects of *kayagŭm sanjo* from the perspective of

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its basic sonic material which is used by musician to communicate within the social and historical structures that give it context. In addition this conception works towards describing such ubiquitous frameworks as mode and rhythm from the way that they are experientially constructed. The first section of this chapter will give some basic definitions and general signs that everyone learning about kayagŭm sanjo should know. This is the simple material that one will find in the introductory section of any kayagŭm sanjo or kayagŭm method book. As shown in the debates on the effectiveness of sanjo notation to capture the nuances of a performance, this information is often simply used as a reminder, as an indexical sign for the actual movements that are learned through experience. Secondly I will examine the process of learning sanjo from the point of view of the affective experience one undergoes during a lesson. This chain of affects includes what I call cross modal transformations, where one type of affect is constantly being changed into a different type of affect until one is able to produce the actual intended sound. For example vision, voice, touch, and the intellect undergo transformations as they affect the way that a player touches and responds to the affects of the instrument itself, relating to a greater ability to act in accordance with both the nature of the instrument and the values of aesthetic discipline. Thirdly I will take this process of transferring affects from one mode to another to show how these affects come together to create signs, a semiotic dialectic that incorporates the flow of energies with the restrictions placed by the social interactions in a pedagogical situation.

**Indexes of Kayagŭm Sanjo**

Before one learns how to understand the signs of kayagŭm sanjo, the student orients her body in relation to the instrument. The instrument itself is a long half tube zither of about four feet. The player sits either cross legged on the ground or sits in a chair and uses a stand
for the instrument. If the player sits on the floor one end of the instrument, the end with the
hyŏnch’im (the wooden piece that a player rests her right hand on when she plays) and
wooden knobs that the strings are tied to is rested on the players right thigh. It is more
common and more comfortable to sit in a way that the right leg is crossed over the left leg
and also in front of the left leg. This raises the lifted side of the kayagŭm higher. The left side
of the kayagŭm rests on the floor at a slight angle away from the body. The kayagŭm is
positioned so that the arms are not too tightly constricted, allowing free flowing movement,
although to reach the lower strings with the left hand often requires the performer to bend at
the waist to the left and over the instrument. It is an older tradition to sit on the floor like this,
and this is most commonly how sanjo is performed. This position is often an dicent-indexical
sign of a traditional piece of music in a mixed program, and when the players are seated in
chairs using stands for their instruments, it is a sign of contemporary music. In Kim Il-ryun's
office however these positions were signs of our relational position. The students would sit on
an elevated section of the floor and Kim Il-ryun would sit across from and above them on a
bench with her kayagŭm on a stand. This was also a sign that it was her office, and since she
would be teaching in the room all day, it would be more comfortable to sit on a bench than to
sit on the floor. This position also makes it easier for the student and teacher to observe one
another, as the student would see the teacher's hands, and the teacher would see the student’s
movements looking by looking down across her instrument.

When the performer is seated in this way, the right arm is slightly bent at the elbow
and extends out in front of the body to articulate the strings near the hyŏnch’im on the right
side of the anjok (movable bridges). The left arm is positioned out to the left at varying angles
depending upon the location of the anjok. It follows the anjok with the hand touching the
string several inches from the point where the anjok holds the string up. This positioning is so
that when the string is pressed by the left hand it is not too close to the bridges to be difficult
to press, and not so far that it is unable to tighten the string to the degree that it can be raised
several steps from its original open pitch.

Beginning to learn kayagŭm sanjo starts with learning what certain signs are called,
how they sound, and how to make them yourself, in a generalized sense. The first signs that
one learns to interpret are the signs that attach the notes of Western staff notation to the
strings of a kayagŭm. Sanjo kayagŭms have twelve strings. In notation the notes are depicted
differently. When I was first taught kayagŭm sanjo I was only taught how to read notation as
it was attached to particular strings. Sanjo notation varies with respect to clef, but the most
accurate transcriptions, such as Lee Chae-suk's authoritative sanjo transcriptions show the
actual note values by transcribing the music into alto clef as opposed to treble clef. Thus a
sounded “C” is on the second staff line from the bottom. But many scores treat the kayagŭm
as a transposing instrument. This was merely the convention adopted by those transcribing
sanjo in the 1960s, and if one only plays sanjo, reading the notation is not a problem because
the outlay on the staff is the same regardless of the inconsistencies in the clef used.

Musicians have problems however when learning to play contemporary compositions by
composers who write for the kayagŭm using a G clef and writing in concert pitch. The
solfege used during lessons, regardless of the type of notation used, refers to a fixed do that is
the concert pitch “C.” Another device embedded in some transcriptions is the mnemonic
device called kuŭm. Kuŭm are the syllables that were used to name each string. This helps
players not only to remember the music by singing along with the music using the syllables,
but it also helps in the notation in the case where pitch is played on a string that is pressed
down to alter the pitch, making it difficult sometimes to tell which string to play the note on.

128. Kim Hee-sun. Contemporary Kayagŭm Music in Korea: Tradition, Modernity and
Identity, 65.

85
This was something that Kim Il-ryun explained to me halfway through our lessons, which seemed strange because it would seem to be fundamental knowledge. The names for each string in kuŭm from lowest to highest are: 청 (ch’ŏng) – D3, 흥 (hŭng) – G3, 동 (tung) – A3, 당 (tang) – D4, 동 (tong) – E4, 징 (ching) – G4, 땅 (ttang) – A4, 지 (chi) – B4, 짜 (jjing) – D5, 청 (ch’ing) – E5, 쥬 (jjong) – G5, and 짧 (jjaeng) – A5.129

The most basic technique for playing these notes is to pluck (ttutda) the string with the index finger of the right hand. To do this, the hand is placed on the hyŏnch’im with the fifth finger extended out. The index finger is slightly bent at the knuckle and joints, and the thumb is pressed against the first joint of the index finger to give it support. When this finger plucks the string it presses the string from the front side, and it simultaneously drags backward across the string and curves upward, the left side of the hand pivoting away from the instrument with the right side of the hand remaining attached. The first thing that a student learns is how to make a good sound on each string, starting from the lowest and successively sliding along the hyŏnch’im as they pluck each higher note. The kayagŭm, especially in playing kayagŭm sanjo, is a monophonic instrument, and it is usually important that each note is sounded alone and with clarity, so after each note is played it is also dampened by the most convenient finger, usually the finger adjacent to it as the index finger simultaneously plucks the following note. A pluck can also be accomplished by moving the hand away from the hyŏnch’im and touching the string further in towards the center of the instrument. This technique gives the note a wider, deeper, more mellow timbre. Since plucks are usually assumed to be the basic mode of articulation they are often not indicated, but where the pluck does not follow the normal style for a special articulation or a change in attack, it is indicated with a the arabic numeral “2” printed above the note.

The second technique that must be mastered is the flick (t'wigim). The flick is often times indicated with this notation printed above the note: ○ However, the flick is sometimes not indicated in the score because it is understood that a note will be flicked when it is re-articulated to shape the note as if it were a continuing rather than a re-articulated note. The flick is accomplished by placing the nail of the index finger slightly down from and behind the string to be articulated by bending at the first joint and knuckle and holding the nail side of the index finger with the fleshy part of the thumb, which wraps around in front of the finger nail. The articulation takes place as the index finger applies enough force against the thumb to release the grip and swing rapidly up and forward to strike the string with the nail at an appropriate speed and intensity. It is important for the player to make this articulation without striking any of the adjacent strings, and the player will need to practice this articulation on each string moving backwards and forwards, up and down the scale, until a relative fluidity is achieved.

There is also another type of flick, a double flick (ssangt'wigim) indicated by writing the numerals “8-0” above the note to be articulated. This flick is similar, but uses both the middle finger and the index finger. The middle finger is placed behind the index finger, bent at the same degree. It flicks the string first followed by the index finger. This double flick can also be paired with a index finger pluck or a index finger pluck and a thumb pluck to play rapid passages and decorative multi-part articulations on the same string. Many of the faster passages in sanjo consist of this figure played in rapid sequences on different strings in eighth, sixteenth, or triple note patterns.

Most melodies also use decorative techniques that combine two fingers in a variety of motions. The technique that is indicated when a “2-1” is written above the notation is that the thumb and the index finger will grab two strings, no more than one string apart, and in a
twisting motion drag the index finger across the string from the front side, muting the sound with the middle finger as soon as the next note is sounded as the thumb turns upwards and plucks with the fleshy part. This technique is literally translated as plucking or picking up (chipta). If the strings are further apart, often an octave, the middle finger and thumb are used in the same way, which is notated by writing “3-1” above the score. Often when these techniques are used the first note is played in a decorative staccato which has a brief noisy sound followed by the clear pure sound of the plucked note. Staccatos are also sometimes used on individual notes either by quickly damping the note with the same finger or an adjacent finger.

One final technique is indicated by the arabic numerals “1-1.” This symbol means to drag the index finger of the right hand over a string and also the string adjacent to it, moving up the scale. The Korean term for this is actually milda, which means to push, but whereas push normally indicates movement away from the body, this technique indicates movement towards the body of the performer.

The right hand techniques are fairly straightforward, and if they are not easy to master, especially in rapid passages, apart from the initial pain associated with the playing the rough silk strings they do not pose a significant challenge. Much more difficult are the techniques for the left hand which by pressing, pulling, releasing, and applying various types of vibrato to each note gives the music its true character. Although there are general notations for these techniques, each instance is played slightly differently to give character, emphasis, and to shape the phrase in conjunction with the right hand articulations. The left hand is positioned with the index finger and middle finger together, and the thumb pressing for support on the middle joint of the index finger. The fourth and fifth fingers are slightly spread out and up. This is supposed to look like a bird. Good form is a sign of elegance. The middle
finger and index finger are placed diagonally on the string with the fleshy part just below the
tip of each finger pressing across the string. It is important not to press straight down on the
string both because it is a less strong position, and because it is easy to miss or slide off of the
string when the contact area is too small. Sometimes this position is varied so that, if a
passage is rapid the thumb can also be used by pressing with the outer edge using the
indentation just above the joint to latch onto the string. This is also used when the bends
alternates in sequences involving two strings and both the combination of the middle and
index finger and the thumb must be used. When the left hand thumb is used it is indicated in
the score with a Chinese one: 

The most fundamental and ubiquitous technique for the left hand is the vibrato, called
nonghyŏn. This symbol indicates a shallow vibration. This symbol indicates a
medium vibration that can change in intensity and depth during the duration of the note. This symbol indicates a deep nonghyŏn. These notation are useful in that, if a player is not
certain of the particular modal relationships, especially as the mode is changing, they will
remember when to vibrate, but since most types of vibration are characteristic of the mode
and contextualized by the movement of the melody, they are not often consciously noticed. In
addition, although they can indicate a relative type of vibrato, one deep vibrato will differ
from another deep vibrato depending on the expressive curve of the melody or the desire to
build intensity on repeated notes. Similarly, they do not indicate the speed of the vibrato, only
the depth. The speed of vibrato is also an important characteristic, but it is often the players
personal flavor that they give to the music, rather than something that is always fixed.

Another technique that is often used in sanjo melodies that gives them a unique and
lively character the chŏnsŏng, or kurŭnŭn ŭm. This is indicated by this symbol: . To play
this type of note one either presses deeply and rapidly on the string and without pausing on
the higher note and rapidly releases the note, or one only presses up rapidly, dampening the
tone with the right hand making a unique staccato effect. The pitches for these techniques are
only partially distinct. The first technique results in a downward sliding sound that ends with
the pitch of the final note, and the second technique ends with an indistinct upward sliding
sound, more an quasi-percussive effect than a melodic tone.

The final general techniques are moving presses and releases. There are two types:
bends that end on or begin from a distinct tone and bends that release to an indistinct tone
because it coincides with the envelope of the sound. The technique indicated by this
symbol is unique to kyemyŏnjo. It indicates a downward slide of somewhat less than a half
tone. This is called the broken voice, or kkognunmok. This symbol indicates a note that
was discrete bending upwards as the sound fades or ceases. This symbol indicates the
opposite effect, of releasing a tone slowly so that the descent of the pitch coincides with its
decreasing amplitude and final silence. There are also bends and glides between notes that are
something like a legato melodic decoration where the tone slides between two pitches, but is
not a vibrato. In some scores this is indicated by using a tie or a legato sign, but in Lee Chae-
suk's transcription it is indicated by lines that connect the tones like this: \  \  

These are the more or less common symbols that indicate techniques used in many
types of sanjo, but there is a special technique that is used in Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's sanjo that is
not used in other types of sanjo. This is indicated with a Chinese symbol, since it is a

 To play this tone one grabs the string with the left hand between the index finger and the thumb and the index finger and pulls on the string to loosen it between the fingers and the bridge, lowering its tone, and then releasing the pressure allowing the tone to slowly rise again.

These signs in general are rhematic-indexical-legisigns. In addition they can be said to
characterize an energetic interpretant because the effect of reading these symbols and connecting them to their appropriate objects results in an energetic change in the use of the body. They are indexical because the object that they refer to is connected by co-occurrence. In other words, without the experience of learning the behaviors associated with these signs one would not be able to interpret them as signs. However certain signs, particularly the signs for the left hand techniques are more or less iconic because they depict the type of action that will occur with images of motion in time. These signs could also, depending upon the subject who interprets them be related symbolically through their object because often times a linguistic explanation and definition, as I have been giving in this overview, accompanies them in kayagŭm method books. This is particularly true of the finger numbering techniques, which gives each finger a sign based upon linguistic conventions.

Mastering these signs is one of the primary requirements for students as they begin to learn kayagŭm sanjo. However, simply mastering these signs is not enough. Even though scores have been published that serve as a guide to the music, both of my teachers continually made the distinction that the notation was not the music. Although there are many types of analysis that stop at the point of things that can be analyzed using notation, the notation will be a point of departure for my analysis. As a side note, it is interesting to note that both those who criticize the effect that notation has had on kayagŭm sanjo and those who purely analyze and teach from the notation seem to stop at the point of the things that are quantifiable according to notation. The student who learns kayagŭm sanjo, though, is not able to stop at the notation, rather they use notation as an index of a certain kind of experience that is brought into an energetic present when the signs of the notation become present, and later still, when pure memory acts as an imperceptible sign for those same experiences.
Listening and Playing with Affects

The notation, then becomes an index that in one way refers to an ideal sanjo, a written and encapsulated whole that is similar to a composition. At the same time, this index is continually written over in the act of the performance itself. This is the point at which Kristeva, Barthes, and Szendy, and the processes that they imagine, become good metaphors for the process of learning kayagŭm sanjo. The first step is to learn how to communicate the basic melodic sense of sanjo and then to proceed to more detailed elaborations of this melody by applying the teacher's transmitted style. After this point, a musician will develop these techniques to indicate an individual style.

The process of a sanjo lesson consists of affects and signs that move in several directions. The first direction is from the teacher to the student. The teacher gives off signs by the way that she sits, by issuing commands, or by giving explanations. She issues affects by demonstrating passages, by singing, and by making emotional gestures. The teacher is not the only thing that issues these signs and affects. The student too issues signs. Signs that indicate competency, dicent signs that indicate the amount of time spent practicing. There are also signs that indicate curiosity and interest. The student directs affects toward the instrument, and the environment by carrying out actions that change the state of the kayagŭm, as well as creating and sustaining sound events. The instrument too has its own signs and its own affects. There are signs on the instrument that indicate where to place one's hand, how much to press the strings, whether the strings should be tuned or not. It also issues affects by physically interacting with the body of the student, responding to each gesture. The music itself is also an entity that is brought into the room by the interaction of lower level affects and signs, and the music both as a structure and as sonorous material affects those who produce it, causing them to hear the movements and status of their bodies and respond to this
self-audition. The form of the music, and the paths of the melodies act as energetic and emotional signs that produce both models of the music in the body and nervous system, and make demands upon the student to create certain effects and provide the appropriate nuances. This picture points out that far from being a one or two way disciplining or marking, or an act of representation, the signs of music, even music made alone, is in a type of ecological network of causation.

The primary transformation that occurs in kayagŭm sanjo, in the experience of learning it, is turning this affective and semiotic environment into sounds. I will start with a simple example. One of the goals in playing kayagŭm sanjo is to achieve the proper emotional intensity of a passage. Sanjo is not a luke warm or intellectual music. It is a dramatic music. Kim Il-ryun points out that when one wants there to be a pure sadness, the saddest type of music, one does not play the nonghyŏn loudly, rather one plays the nonghyŏn softly but intensely. She asks “What is sadder: hysterical sadness, or the sadness that has no sound?”

In order for this transformation in playing to take place, in order to create a sign for this type of sadness then, one must make a deep, rather fast, and intense vibrato with the left hand, as if it were full of weeping, and negative energy, but when articulating the note, it must be plucked a little bit further away from the hyŏnch’im, and it should be plucked softly.

In this case there are two transformations that take place. The first is that Kim Il-ryun impresses her emotional ideas onto mine so that I will be able to understand, intellectually what sanjo is trying to convey. But also to convey this emotion, she elicits my participation in judgment. She sings the music in two different ways, and forces me to choose which is the most appropriate for this situation. Once the appropriate aestheticized sign of sadness has made an impression on me, then she plays the music on the kayagŭm again, and I must

transfer this sonic material into my own coordination of my two hands in order to make this
effect. At this point I am also monitoring the effect that I make to adjust the nonghyŏn.

This aspect of self audition and monitoring also makes an interesting commentary on
the division between the right hand processes and the left hand processes. The right hand
bears more similarity to a digital system, where the information is coded in discrete parts.
When the moment is past, a sign for that particular note, and its co-occurrence is written onto
the text in that position. Conversely, the monitoring of the left hand creates a stream in time
that, for the duration of the note is in constant affective feedback. The response from the
instrument, felt by the hand, and the sound produced and heard by the ear constantly force the
body to change its relation to the instrument, until the duration of the sound event is finished.
This example shows that there is an affective transformation from sound to intellect, from
sound to the nervous system, and from the two points, which are synthesized, out through my
body to affect the instrument. This affect is then processed through feedback.

From this point I will be referring to transcribed examples from the chinyangjo section
of Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's kayagŭm sanjo. I have only included excerpts from a longer transcription
because there are already several commercially available transcriptions, and it made sense to
only include the parts of my transcription that I actually analyzed. I will refer to the notes as
commonly written, a perfect fifth higher than notation in concert pitch. The transcriptions also
are in this transposed notation, which is common for the kayagŭm. I have included numbers
that indicate which kag\textsuperscript{131} the example shows. Also I have included measure numbers for the
longer examples, which will only refer to the position within that example. The measure
numbers are positioned above the first measure of each line. When an example is long enough
to merit it, I have also used roman numerals to indicate where the kag falls in the example.

\textsuperscript{131} A quarter of one chinyangjo rhythmic cycle. In sanjo and p'ansori, a kag is a basic
rhythmic unit.
The diagonal lines indicate when a note is bent, but not articulated as a discrete pitch.

Although *chinyangjo* is its own rhythmic concept, I have included a Western time signature indication that corresponds to the division of one 3/8 measure to one sixth of a *kag*.

An affective transposition that is common in music education works from vision and

Example 1. The strident tones and bright technique that exemplify the ujo mode create a dynamic opening for kayagŭm sanjo. the visual imagination, into motion, which is then fed back into sound and the adjustment of motion. In the opening rhythmic cycle of the *chinyangjo* section of Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's *kayagŭm*
sanjo (example 1), there is a repeating decoration that slides between “E” and “D,” starting on “E,” and sliding back and forth twice. The first slide is a sixteenth note and the second slide a thirty second note, so it is a kind of syncopated and lopsided ornament, but it also projects a kind of exclamatory and joyful singing that characterizes the ujo mode. The decoration itself is repeated four times in the opening cycle in measures 3, 9, 11, and 23, but it is played on an alternation between “A” and “G” in the ninth measure. Kim Il-ryun, as well as my first teacher Kim Chŏng-yŏn both emphasized the idea that there should not be straight lines in sanjo. They both took this to be an iconic sign for nature, that there are no straight lines in nature and that is what sanjo is trying to communicate. I began playing with no idea of how to accomplish this, and whenever I played, reading the sign as an alternation between the two notes I would start by pressing the string, to raise it it the pitch “E,” then I would release the string. I would repeat this the correct number of times, but even through the notes and the rhythms were articulated correctly, the music was not correct.

The way to remedy this mistake was for Kim Il-ryun to examine the motion of my hands. My hands would only move in two dimensions, up and down. Rather than attempt to explain the aesthetic theoretically, Kim Il-ryun, showed me, visually, how to rock the hand in three dimensions, up and down, back and forth, and side to side. This motion produces a subtle rhythm in the music that is not captured by rhythmic notation, and is not able to be explained verbally. Even my explanation here does not teach one how to accomplish this decoration, it simply points to its existence. After showing me visually how to do this left hand technique, she explained to me that there are two different kinds of motion. The first kind, up and down, is rhythmical, and follows the rhythm notated. The variation comes in pivoting the hand in a rocking motion from side to side, and using one of her favorite musical metaphors for sanjo, making waves. In this case, the visual affect was transformed into
movement, this movement produced the right sound effect, and produced a moveable concept that I was able to transfer to other instances of this decoration, and to any similar areas where a curved glide rather than a straight glide is needed. Secondly, there was a metaphorical explanation that reinforced the visual explanation by mimicking the movement in time-space.

The notion of roundness, which Kim Il-ryun consistently emphasized, was useful in many different types of decorations. This means that rather than playing a note with a straight envelope and pitch, the note should be eased into and eased out of. Also it means that a downward gliding pattern should not be in a straight descent. These figures should be played so that the tone, if viewed on a sonogram as shown in appendix B, would look round rather than straight. It can also be combined with the first principle where the affective transfer segregates the energy that operates between the two hands, one playing softly and the other moving with relative speed and intensity. When these two concepts are combined, it creates a passage of great dynamism.

The passage transcribed in example 2 introduces a movement that Kim Il-ryun calls “thunder and lightening.” (example 2, measures 1-6) It is a section where brief intense figures are placed alternately with sections of near silence. This section sets up quite a bit of tension,
but it is followed immediately by a release. The melodic motion that releases the tension (example 2, measures 7-11) starts as a downward slide from a high “C,” the highest note that is played in this kayagŭm sanjo. The pitch slides to a “B flat,” and then is not damped, but is flicked to re-articulate the “B flat” and is quickly pressed upward and dampened to achieve a fast upward staccato. The string is then fully released on the next articulation which slides down from the “B flat” to the “A.”

Kim Il-ryun taught that the important aspect of this passage is that it must be played roundly and softly, and that it reverses the process of building tension that was displayed in the previous kag. The first articulation (measure 7) bends downward, but like in the previous example, it must not be in a straight line. Although in the notation it begins on the “C,” it is to be played as if it is rolling up to and down from the “C” in a circular path, only, it is not articulated until it is imperceptibly close to “C.” The second articulation recovers some of the tension that was released by the quick staccato movement upwards.

The interesting aspect of this articulation is that although the envelope for a typical note on the kayagŭm would seem to always follow from a loud attack to a linear decay, some notes, particularly those that are staccato upward bends create the illusion that they are louder when they end than when they started (the beginning of measure 8). This is achieved by virtue of the first concept that I discussed, where the right hand quietly articulates, but instead of a continuous intense pattern, like a repeated vibrato, the left hand makes one quick intense movement upwards, which is abruptly muted before the ear can perceive any decay. In teaching this passage, Kim Il-ryun, indicated that the notes should make the sound “hwiip” instead of “eee-eee” This affective strategy maps a verbal, phonemic gesture onto the musical pattern, and gives a curvature to the motion required. Thus when I monitor myself, I listen for my teachers vocal gestures in the music.
This third strategy, whereby a vocal affect is transferred to the dynamics of motion, is one of the most common types of transference that I noticed while learning kayagŭm sanjo, and it points to an important aesthetic concept for kayagŭm sanjo. Borrowing from Deleuze, I will call this concept athleticism.\textsuperscript{132} He uses this concept in reference to painting, and the way that motion is depicted in paintings as a striving for some unreachable goal. In sanjo one is not able to accomplish the task of reproducing a voice, but often every motion will be engaged in producing this type of nuance. By playing with the use of dynamics and contours in both hands, one can approach a sound like singing.

The first time that I noted Kim Il-ryun trying to transfer the affects of voice into my techniques was in mid-October 2009 as we were working on the opening melody of the chinyangjo movement. Her vocalizations showed the overflow of the passions into the music, and were often accompanied by gestures that were the motions of the hands writ large, with practically the whole body. For example, there is a simple pattern that uses the “E” string to glide back and forth between “E” and “A” (example 3). Since the sound of the string can easily fade out before the entire motion is completed, when we played this section together she often sang to carry the sound to the end to show that the desired technique to accomplish after the sound had died out was to return the string to its originally position by means of small downward gliding vibrato rather than a straight or curved downward glide.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example3_4.png}
\caption{Examples 3 and 4. From kag 9 and 22 respectively. Portions where Kim Il-ryun used vocal affects.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{132} Deleuze, Gilles. \textit{Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation}, 9-14.
Kim Il-ryun used a similar but more intensive technique to transfer the appropriate affect for the melody in example 4. These two sections bear a great deal of similarity in fact. The second pattern is only a type of elongated expression of the first pattern. When she was teaching this section however, she vocalized and bent her whole frame forward to show the intensity of the left hand's press. She said “for the intensity of this to be correct you have to press the note all the way to the floor.” And when she sang she carried the note over the measure, as it was instrumentally re-articulated in the next measure. In fact, as the tone became quiet and died out on the instrument, her vocalization of the tone grew louder, to show that even as the sound's amplitude dies out, the intensity of the note increases through the whole passage. Thus to play this passage well, the performer must maintain the intensity of the voice in their inner ear and try, although it is an impossible task, to map its contours onto the sound of the instrument.

Another way that the voice is mapped onto the motions and coordination of the two hands is by using the syllable “t” at the end of a vocal sound to indicate an inaudible upward bending staccato, which is actually quite common. It seems commonplace to emphasize the concept of space and silence in Asian arts and music, and in sanjo, I think that the concept should be thought of much differently, because it is not silence as in emptiness, nothingness, or space. Bell Young references a concept of soundless movement in Chinese zither playing. In the case of the Chinese zither the silent movement of the left hand was a paradox that Yung solves by concluding that it is not only the sound, but also the kinesthetic movement that has an aesthetic value for zither musicians. Toru Takemitsu also writes about the Japanese aesthetic concept of ma, or soundless space that gives power to his compositions. Takemitsu claims that this silence, which he perceives in temple bells and the drumming in Noh

(Japanese theater) performances, is a tensed silence. It gives power but also follows the Japanese musical aesthetic that seeks unity with nature.\textsuperscript{134}

In the case of Korean music, this silence does not have a similar concept. Rather, as show from the contours of my teacher's vocalization, this silence coincides with the continuation of the tone in a mental space. Also rather than pure silence, there are many activities that happen as a tone approaches silence that give the tone a unique shape and timbre. The continuing movement of the left hand as the tone approaches silence and after it has become inaudible, rather than emphasizing the “naturalness” of the movement, emphasize the role of the tone in the phrase. This movement continues and connects tones as a voice would. Even in the silence after the tone fades out the affects of vocal performance may be mapped onto the movements of the left hand.

By vocalizing the “t” sound when teaching how to play certain patterns, Kim Il-ryun helped me to organize motions that would have been imperceptible. In example 5 there is a repeated “C” first a quarter note, and then an eighth note, which is followed in the next measure by a vibrated “D” that descends back down to “C,” played on the same string. In order to make a connection between the “C” and the “D,” but to avoid the boredom of a simple articulation, the final “C,” at the very last moment sweeps upward to a note of indeterminate pitch and is muted before the string is plucked again.

A similar but more dramatic example of the way that this vocalization works is in example 6 where the repeated “E” notes are punctuated by a nearly silent rapid upward bend. Each “E” is approached by a downward half-step glide, indicated in the transcription as a downward sloping line. Just before the next note is articulated, the left hand must rapidly press the string down, bending the note upwards to a note of indeterminate pitch (notated as a staccato “G”) and muted.

This technique is not obvious from the notation, and in addition the actual motions and the way that they affect the sound are obscure enough to make explanation of the exact motions overcomplicated for teaching this passage's technique. The effect is created by the rapid press upward which seems to choke the note, and at the same time it is muted by the fleshy part below the first joint of the index finger, which simultaneously plucks the string below. It is much simpler, in practice time to try to force the instrument to make a sound similar to the consonant “t.” Thus the mapping of vocal affects, have much pedagogical as well as aesthetic value. They are able to organize the mind and body towards both the dramatic effects that occur as the sound is fading out, as well as to the minute details of sound sculpting.

The affects and signs transmitted in the lesson in the dynamic interaction of the teacher, student, instrument, and sound, do not remain chaotic, haphazard, and merely pedagogical. Instead, through intention, they are gathered together into a whole gestalt that
creates a system of aesthetic signs. This practice of gathering together what one learns, with
the goal of creating a beauty specific to kayagŭm sanjo is the most rewarding experience of
the lesson process. It is not possible to examine every type of sign in sanjo, rather there are a
few general concepts that can be linked to practice through the use of signs. They are built
from the bottom up, from the student's willingness to be affected in order to produce action,
to the transmission and gathering of this physical sound until a general feeling is made. This
feeling is the unifying style connecting the disparate and often, to the untrained ear, abruptly
changing and undeveloped lines. These signs are also organized from the top down, and
during lesson time the signs were taught in the context of what they are meant to signify.
Thus there are certain general concepts that are reference points for nearly all of the
educational experience: building a general figure from movement, constructing phrases from
these figures, constructing modes in the unity of phrases, and constructing a general sense of
tension and release that characterizes many of the melodies, particularly in the chinyangjo
section.

In the first stages of learning the student cannot make whole melodies and phrases.
They can play all of the notes, but they do not even constitute figures, they are only notes.
The first step is to be able to render a certain figure properly, to give it the sign that all of the
notes are part of a certain gesture. The most basic figure is the simple unadorned note. This is
not often used in kayagŭm sanjo, but it is the figure that starts the chinyangjo section
(example 1). In kuŭm this note is called the saraeng. It is a kind of exclamation. It sets the
stage, saying “Listen to this. Something is going to happen here.”135 Before it is connected
into the opening phrase the student must practice the figure, it consists of an octave using the
fingering “3-1.” The initial note is immediately dampened. It is not really a tone, but a noise
that precedes and, in a certain tonal profile, bears resemblance to the real sounded tone which

is the upper note of the octave. The hand should grip both strings and press hard as if trying to pinch the strings together and then twist, dropping the front of the hand down onto the lower sounded string to create an abrupt noise, while using this leverage to give the upper sounded note a loud amplitude and a duration that can last the whole bar without fading out before it is re-articulated in the next bar.

In many ways the process of the opening phrase simply extends this figure into the whole phrase. It continues to indicate that something is about to happen and to call for attention. This is achieved by adding interest to the figure by slightly varying it. The use of a flick for both re-articulations of the note in the second bar indicates that the note, rather than stopping with the measure will continue into the next measure. The way that the performer uses vibrato here is also important, and it is the key to sculpting these two bars into a whole figure. The first note, the saraeng, must not be vibrated, but as the figure continues into the second bar, the left hand, which has been resting on the string without moving, should begin to press up and down on the string, at first slowly and then gradually increasing in speed. The depth of the vibrato should also go from extremely shallow, almost non-existent, to being shallow but audible. These changes coincide with the first and second flicks. This example shows how a figure can be characterized by its mode of articulation, its amplitude and duration, and the type and amount of vibrato that is applied.

![Example 7. From kag 28. Showing two different left hand approaches to descending figures.](image)

Another interesting example of the way that figures are isolated and defined occurred as I
learned the two similar but different patterns that bring closure to the second melody in the *chinyangjo* movement (example 7). There are two six note patterns, figures that slide in between two notes. The rhythm of these sliding patterns is in three parts. The first puts emphasis on the beginning note, making it a dotted sixteenth note followed by a thirty-second note, the second two pairs reverse the emphasis by beginning with a thirty-second note followed by a sixteenth note. This rhythmic pattern characterizes both of the two figures. The motion involved in playing this is to start out with the rocking technique that I described above, curving the slope so that the descent is more sharp towards the end. Then this is followed by two inversions of this motion with an initially sharp descent. This motion also unites the two figures.

Kim Il-ryun, when teaching this passage indicated that each pattern had its own technique creating a different effect. The first slides are accomplished by *t’oesŏng*, which is a simple curved downward glide. The second figure makes its motion by *nonghyŏn*. It moves outward from an initial light vibration which shakes the stability of the tone to the point where it glides back and forth. Thus the figures are separated, but united in a sequential relationship. The second echoes the first on step and one string lower, but it expands its expressive motion by incorporating subtle vibrato into the technique.

Another type of figure that is an important building block is the sudden stopping of a tone as it glides downward. This is used many times in the *chinyangjo* movement. It makes a subtle and silent type of weeping gesture, but it can also function in a phrase to make a more dramatic release of tension rather than the gradual release of tension in the long figures presented in the previous example. The first time that this gesture occurs is transcribed in example 8. This example can be seen in context in the first melody fully transcribed in Appendix A, measures 9 and 10.
The figures leading up to this have made a gesture of falling from “D” to “A,” which takes place over seven beats. This figure expands the dramaticism of this fall by contracting the length of time, making the same gesture over the course of three beats, and by widening the range of the decent, falling from a high “E” to an “E” one octave lower. The rapidity of this gesture is facilitated by two figures that fall in sequence. These figures consist of first pressing down the string with the left hand to raise it to the desired pitch before articulating, which is accomplished by gauging the pressure of the string with one’s sense of touch. The right hand articulates with a light pluck. Then the left hand fully releases the string at the same time that it is dampened by the thumb of the right hand. This release coincides with pressing down the lower adjacent string (“A”) to the previous string (“B”) and positioning the index finger to pluck this string.


Example 9. From kag 61. Showing interplay of staccato and slides to create sequential figures.

This movement creates a gap in sound that is intentional. This gap in sound heightens the expectation for what will happen next. Will the figure consist of only one sharp glide down and then a straight note? Or will it be in some way extended? It is however brief enough of a figure that the conclusion seems to follow directly from the process.
The inverse of these abruptly dampened figures are the downward glides that stretch out and seem to extend the time within the measure. There are two beautiful examples of this technique. The transcription in example 9 contains this type of figure. This example is taken from the second melodic transcription measures 35 and 36 in appendix A. The downward glide is approached by staccato notes from below, and in the second case a type of staccato appoggiatura, that first surrounds the figure and then flows forward through the figure. This type of figure approaches a note, but the whole duration of the note is flowing downward, and it just barely reaches its destination before it is damped. The specific approach to this figure is somewhat individual, and I have compared five different versions of this figure in sonograph 3 in appendix B.

Example 10. From kag 70-71. Showing progressive variation of the staccato-slide figure to create tension.

This figure both can relax a phrase and it can be used to extend a figure's intensity. This is exemplified by the repeating figures in example 10, which is also from the 2nd transcribed melody in appendix A, measures 86-95. These figures consist of a long straight “G,” a staccato intermediary tone, “B flat” which is created by pressing the a string with the
middle and index finger, and the downward flowing tone that starts by depressing the “B” string to “D,” articulating with a pluck and then releasing in a downward curve (measures 3-7 of example 10). The figure in measure 7 is only a slight variation of this figure, as the second tone, rather than being articulated as an unaltered stacatto, is articulated as a downward gliding tone from “B flat” to “A.” As the tone approaches “B” the string is damped and the figure is repeated three times. I will return to this in the next chapter, as I write about the aesthetics that Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn uses in creating her melodies, but here it is important to note that even though the figure is the same, it increases in intensity by continually modifying the amplitude of the phrase and by varying the exact form of the figure. The first variation, which occurs in the third instance of this figure in measure 5 is on the final note of the figure, adding an extra upward staccato movement towards “D.” The second varies the articulation of the second note, sliding from “B flat” to “A.” The third varies the first and last notes, starting from a low “D” and holding the high “D” at the end across the beat, where the melody turns in an appoggiatura with the notes “B flat,” “C,” and “A” before resolving to “D.”

Another common figure in Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's chinyangjo is a figure that starts out on a discrete tone, rises by gliding to the adjacent tone, and then briefly returning to the initial tone glides past it, turning into the kind of indeterminate downward glide that I described in the previous figures. This all occurs on a single articulation, but it shows the possibilities for a complex of left hand events creating a figure out of a single articulation. When Kim Il-ryun

Example 11. From kag 43. Showing figures that use light vibrato as a timing and stylistic device.

Another common figure in Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's chinyangjo is a figure that starts out on a discrete tone, rises by gliding to the adjacent tone, and then briefly returning to the initial tone glides past it, turning into the kind of indeterminate downward glide that I described in the previous figures. This all occurs on a single articulation, but it shows the possibilities for a complex of left hand events creating a figure out of a single articulation. When Kim Il-ryun
taught me how to play these figures, she told me that the first note should be lightly vibrated two times. Most of the time this figure occurs in kyemyŏnjo mode, and therefore, the note that the figure begins on is often “B flat,” which rises to “C,” and is normally ends on “A.” Often times, as in example 11, this figure is repeated several times in different subtle variations before it descends to “A,” often with a simple kkŏgnŭn mok or broken tone, which is a glide downward of slightly less than a half step.

![Example 12. From kag 57. Showing a multipart figure that combines chonsong with gliding tones in a single articulation.](image)

A similar, but more complex, figure exists. In example 12, the initial note is not vibrated. Instead, it is a long indeterminate glide that suddenly is followed by a chonsong, or rapid press upward and release, and then it again returns to the long downward glide of indeterminate pitch. This figure is something of a rarity.

![Example 13. From kag 36. Showing a basic multipart figure in kyemyŏnjo.](image)

A figure with similar motion, but played on discrete tones as a kind of appoggiatura, is a consistent characteristic of kyemyŏnjo mode. The figure in example 13 begins with a kkŏgnŭn mok, sliding from “B flat” to “A.” It is followed in the same articulation by a quick
sweep upward to “C,” which prepares the hand to play a downward sweep. This motion glides downward quickly resting briefly on the “B flat,” just long enough to implicate it as a discrete tone, and then releases to a light vibrato on the “A.”

These three figures are characteristic of three part figures that are played on a single articulation. They convey similar effects, and the basic outline of the left hand technique is the same. The particular identity of these figures can be determined by the details, depending upon the intensity of the glides, the discrete or indeterminate character of the individual notes, and the presence and duration of vibrato at any part of the figure. These examples show that vibrato has several functions within a figure. The first is to create interest in a note which has been repeated. The second and, within kyemyŏnjo, most common is as a function of relationships between tones, where the deeply vibrated tone resolves to a non or lightly vibrated center tone. The third is as a function of timing, which lets us know in the more rhythmically complicated figures when to move from pitch to pitch. For example, in example 11 measure 2 and example 13, before proceeding to the “C,” Kim Il-ryun taught me to lightly vibrate the “B flat” twice in order to keep track of the subdivision of the beat as well as to impart a dynamic shaping to the tone.

From these examples it is also clear that it is nearly impossible to discuss the reasons why a figure is shaped as it is without discussing its modal function. As indicated above, modes are top down determinants of tonal behavior and movement in kayagŭm sanjo. Nevertheless, each instantiation of the mode contains signs that give off the modes character. It is important to remember that modes are fluid and dynamic, and it is possible to have deeper or more intense manifestations of a mode. It is also possible to have half modes, or for certain figures to have non-modal behavior near to a change in mode.

A mode is an abstraction of the arrangement of melodic possibilities as well as the
mood or character of a given melody. During the discussion of genre relations above, kyemyŏnjo and ujo were primary means of an expressive relationship between sanjo and p'ansori. In p'ansori, these modes are changed based on the mood of the song or on the character who is being depicted. In sanjo these relationships are more or less formalized. In Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's sanjo the chinyanjo movement begins in ujo, changes to p'yŏngjo, and ends on kyemyŏnjo, which is later transposed to a lower kyemyŏnjo. Although there are melodies that change modes and then switch back to the earlier mode, this is the form of the movement in general. Even if it is formalized, this is not the beginning of a student's experience with making a mode. A student begins by learning how to make certain figures, which become an index for the mode's properties, and later the mode also comes to stand as a general sign that orients the movement. A student learns initially from movement, turns this movement to a common notion, and applies this concept to other areas.

The first movements that I learned characterize ujo (see example 1). When playing this melody the first time I played it much too quickly, and I did not emphasize the proper tones. Kim Il-ryun consistently made me repeat the opening line if it was not strong enough or if I made even a small mistake in phrasing, because it is such an important passage in the whole performance. It is the strong yet dynamic movements around “E” that make the opening section have the desired impact. “E” is a focal point, but it is difficult in the first melody to understand why. The “E” has very little context, but the movements around it seem to gravitate towards it. The only notes that are played apart from it are highly unstable. The “E” is the only note that stays by itself without vibrating or moving to another tone, but by the third kag (bar 13) this orientation of technique has changed, placing “G” in the same position, technically, that “E” occupied before, a very loosely related sequence. In the beginning of the fourth kag, measures 19-21, the “G” loses its stability, becoming only the
starting point for reaching to the upper “B.” After the “G” takes on this character, the “E” resumes its place as a central and stable tone (measures 22-24), finishing the rhythmic cycle by echoing the opening figure before beginning a restatement of this cycle one octave lower in the next rhythmic cycle. Repeating and varying material in lower or higher octaves is a common strategy in Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's sanjo, but often it is not a simple restatement of the same melody an octave lower or higher. Melodic transcription 2 measures 31 and 33 (in appendix A) for example begin with the same “A” figure in different octaves, but the subsequent variation of the phrase differs for each example.

The techniques to be mastered when learning how to play this section indicate some important aspects of the character of this mode, and the figures learned, when connected together as a melody, give the student a good picture of the mode. The first element is the qualities of heroism, solidity, and a self-assured nature. These are iconically derived from the stability of certain tones in relationship to other tones such as the “E” in the first two kag and the “G” in the third. It is also derived from the almost consistently rising patterns. The shape of the first two kag is centered around a single “E,” which is embellished throughout the course of measures 1 through 6, and in measures 7 through 12, is approached in consistent upward sliding motion from one octave below. Another character is the relative lack of vibrato. There are many gliding tones and tones that move in fluid motion back and forth, but tones only seem to vibrate when directly preceding the stable “E.” Ujo’s techniques then, give it its singular character. This character is, as stated above, supposed to draw the listener's attention, to indicate that something is about to happen.

By contrast, the figures that combine in the p’yŏngjo section create different signs which are iconic signs of peace, expansiveness, and relaxation.\textsuperscript{136} The opening notes are unadorned. The type of nonghyŏn used is very shallow and has the effect of making the notes

\textsuperscript{136} So In-hwa. \textit{Theoretical Perspectives on Korean Music}. p 92.
more expansive. There are many instances of figures, as I mentioned above, that are three part structures, with an initial note the rises briefly by a single tone, and then slowly either returns to the original tone, or glides slowly past it fading out into silence on an indeterminate note.

One of the starkest examples of p’yŏngjo’s character is transcribed in example 14. The notes that are played are simply played with no vibrato. They are not connected by any

Example 14. From kag 33. Showing the expansive non-vibrated tones characteristic of playing in p’yŏngjo.

In addition there is one other type of figure that gives this mode its character. In the last kag of p’yŏngjo’s first rhythmic cycle, transcribed in example 15, there is an “E” that is approached from above by a decorative “G.” The technique that Kim Il-ryun taught me for this figure is to only lightly touch the string at the beginning, and then to lift my hand off of the string rolling gracefully forward. This is, in a sense, to relax even from a point that has no tension. There is not an audible bending of the note, but it is a very subtle sense of settling

Example 15. From kag 34. A passage where the characteristic light touch used in p’yŏngjo creates a distinctive style.
down into the correct note.

If p’yŏngjo is built from techniques with a light, refined, and graceful way of touching, kyemyŏnjo is built from a series of intricate but intense hand movements. In my experience the process of learning to produce these movements, which correspond to both shaping the melody and the dynamics of the tone quality, was non-linear and piecemeal. At first I learned to produce tones and figures. I then received instruction as to the character of the mode. Finally I returned to the figures themselves in the process of integrating them into the entire melody. However, the process of playing these modes is much different. I begin with the intent to create a melody with a certain emotional character while paying attention to the way that my hands and the sound produced interact in real time.

Learning kyemyŏnjo required the most affective instruction, and it also builds a most characteristic sign system from the techniques created through this affective training. This mode seems to capture a more human mode of vocalizing, and based upon the amount of vocalization that Kim Il-ryun made on this mode compared to other modes, it would seem that this mode has a higher level of athleticism.

One characteristic instance of this melody is transcribed in example 16. This section begins with the three part figure that I described above (measures 1-6), where the amount of vibrato is used as a time keeping device. Through a variety of techniques tension is maintained around the “B flat.” The “B flat” is first indicated by a light vibrato and a glide upward to “C” and a quick return to “B flat.” The “B flat” is drawn out and extended in time through the use of double flicks and single flicks, and adding a light vibrato increases the tonal color. The three part figure is then repeated again in the third measure. Then the “B flat” is approached by a plucked glide downward from “C,” and the sound remains on the “B flat” until the sound nearly decays, at which point it is followed by a light downward tail the end
of which is indeterminate. This is a sign of a weakening in the tension, and two measures later after being held out by continual re-articulation, the note finally resolves to a definite “A.”

Example 16. From kag 43-46. A passage that showcases the typical intricate and dynamic technique in kyemyŏnjo.
Most textbooks will indicate that kyemyŏnjo consists of a scale-like structure, only that each pitch has a separate color by having a unique type of vibration. This is true to some extent. Learning the mode by building it from the progress of figuration, shows that it is the type of mode that colors the way that the figures progress. Whereas ujo and p’yŏngjo seem to operate more through echoing of sequences, kyemyŏnjo, as in this passage, builds tension through the subtle variation of repetition.

This is also true of measures 6-12 of example 16. The “B flat” is again a beginning of the focus of tension in this phrase. It is approached by a noisy decorative pluck with the third finger on the lower “G” string, and then it is articulated with the thumb, a “3-1” pattern. The performer allows the open “A” string to sound briefly before sliding upward to the “B flat” by slowly applying pressure to the string. This movement is indicated by an upward gliding line in measure 6. She briefly hovers around “B flat” with a light vibrato, but as the note fades into silence, she releases the hold on the string with her left hand so that the note slides down in pitch, indeterminately. Then, rather than maintaining the same type of focus around “B flat” that was exhibited in the last segment, the melody expands outwards. There are three figures that each time expand in range of the gesture with the left hand (measures 6 and 7), but play the same articulation on the same string with the right hand, although in increasingly shorter durations.

In measure 8, after these figures have expanded to the point where in the third figure one has to nearly touch the soundboard by bending the string to achieve the correct effect, it briefly resolves to an non-vibrated “G.” The rest of this rhythmic cycle then plays with the relationship between the deeply vibrated “D” and the non vibrated “G.” It is this relationship, the dominant to the central tone, “D” and “G” respectively, that most scholars indicate, along with the “B flat” - “A” kkŏgnŭn mok, characterizes kyemyŏnjo. This relationship is so
emphasized as each cycle approaches resolution, that some scholars have called kyemyŏnjo a three note mode, including “B flat” and “A” in the same note. Viewing this melody in terms of three stages of building, from affect, to figuration, to the building of phrases, shows that the aesthetic character of kyemyŏnjo contains typical forms of movement between these tones.

One final section that I will analyze occurs in the final half of the chinyangjo section. According to Kim Il-ryun, this section was composed after Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn immigrated to Hawai’i, and after her husband had died. She told me, “This scene is the saddest scene. Not a sad seen, but the saddest. It encompasses all the feelings of old age, of losing one’s country, losing one’s loved ones.”

![Example 17. From kag 131. Passage Showing the techniques characteristic of Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's later additions to her sanjo.](image)

This section is in kyemyŏnjo that is transposed down four steps so that the central tone is on a “D” rather than a “G.” The breaking tone comes between “F” and “E” rather than “B flat” and “A.” It is lower and darker in sound. In this section, the slides are often broken into three discrete chromatic pitches, as opposed to the two distinct pitches of the non-transposed kyemyŏnjo. As in the earlier kyemyŏnjo section, it often follows a melodic strategy that varies the figures by expanding them outward from a starting point. In example 17 the figure begins with a three part chromatic descending figure. Lee Chae-suk's transcription only shows a two

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note figure, but it is three distinct pitches moving from “G” to “G flat” to “F.” In the next bar the descending pattern expands from chromatic pitches to the fully articulated pattern “G”-“F”-“E.” The third articulation begins with a decorative staccato sweep up to “F” from an open “E.” Then it stops and re-articulates the already depressed “F” with a pluck, followed by an appoggiatura-like pattern that flows from “F” to “G” and then descends with the typical kyemyŏnjo breaking tone pattern before resolving to “D,” the transposed center tone. This bodily gesture expands the intensity around whatever tone needs to be emphasized. Learning to play these figures requires the student to develop this intensive and gestural approach to music, rather than a strictly scalar approach. Often this is accomplished affectively, as the teacher maps this intensity indexically onto the reading of the notation with her voice. Thus the method of articulating figures, and tying them into melodies is a feature of athleticism that attempts through bodily movement to write the features of the voice onto sound.

Melody, mode, rhythms and the notion of tension and release (kinjang - iwan) create a symbolic relationship with the student's actions, giving a network of meanings with which the student gauges his or her performance. On the other hand, the affective and semiotic incursions on this symbolic system write over the system's values, creating indexes for each specific figure and variations that diverge from the stereotypical way of playing.

Through these two functions, intellectual and bodily discipline, the student is imprinted with the aesthetic values of sanjo. The student may have his or her unique voice because of an unorthodox physical approach, but it is in the initial desire that these aspects be disciplined through the teacher's transmission of affect. However, for professional kayagŭm musicians, having a unique voice is what makes them valid in the contemporary context, in which there are many recordings of the exact piece of music. In a sense this is what Byong Won Lee predicted, when he noted that Korean uses of notation would begin to approach
Western musical practices. Given the uniqueness of the Korean training methods and the aesthetics that must be expressed that cannot be captured by any notation system, it does not seem too likely that the music itself will lose its aesthetic value, only the process by which those values are embedded in the performance will change.

This chapter was a picture of the type of listening that the student must learn to be open to if the effect will be an ability to reproduce the music. However aesthetic listening requires different aspects of sanjo's signs to be taken into consideration. Thus the next chapter makes an analysis of the aesthetic signs of sanjo, and the mode of listening that will characterize understanding this music in a contemporary context.
Chapter Four

The Aesthetic Signs of Sanjo: Melodies and Personal Style

In the last chapter, I noted that vocal and gestural affects were used to transmit a certain type of knowledge about *sanjo*: a knowledge of how to move one's body in relation to the instrument and the sounds of *kayagŭm sanjo* and how to build the nuances that take sounds from isolated figures to melodies. In performance melodies take shape through a bodily expansion of emotion and the resonation of sound and gesture. A melody in *sanjo* is germinal. Kim Il-ryun even claims that the important melodies in *sanjo* can be traced back to moments in the two minute introductory section, *tasŭrŭm*. It is not necessary to go to this extant to realize that melodies in *sanjo* have a continuously evolving form that decorates and expands from a core gesture. In the first part of this chapter I want to examine some of the possible forms that these melodies take and how they develop over time. This is intended to provide a counterpoint to a modal theory of melody that only stresses the relationship of tones to each other in a scalar sense. Modes are one compositional device among many.

To understand the aesthetics of *sanjo*, however, it is not enough to merely examine the melodic material, in Kristeva's and Barthes' formulation, the signifying material. The total gestalt of a performance includes the way that a performer applies their own individual reading and development of these melodies. This development involves decorating individual tones and applying a unifying style to phrases and melodies. Therefore the second part of this chapter will examine parts from the melodies analyzed above and compare the work of five players, Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn, Kim Il-ryun, Hwang Pyŏng-ju, Ji Ae-ri, and Chi Sŏng-ja, as they interpret the melodies of this music. I will show that it is the interaction of these elements that forms the aesthetic effect of *kayagŭm sanjo*. 

120
Melodies

_Sanjo_ is a work that is made of individual melodies and their development throughout the various movements. A melody consists of signs that show how the melody works, how it was formed. These signs indicate points of starting, stopping, and mid-melody pause points. These stopping and mid-melody resting points are sometimes called cadences in Western analysis. There are sonic patterns and points that are consistently repeated throughout either a smaller melody or throughout the whole _chinyangjo_ movement, and through this type of unity, indicates the type of development that will take place. For example, it indicates whether a melody will have contain variation that each time starts from a central figure that is repeated, or weather the figure itself will be varied. Sometimes a melody may be highly centered and revolve around the development of a single figure or tone. Other melodies consist of a wider range of movement and the countour of the melody or phase will indicate which points in the melody are places of stopping, resting, tension, or release.

Often a melody in Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's _sanjo_, specifically the melodies in _chinyangjo_ will consist of an abrupt motion in some direction. In _ujo_ mode particularly, these abrupt motions indicate a tone that is a reference point in the melody, and the melody will often return to this tone as it follows out the various pathways possible between the starting point and cadence tone. These tones, in _ujo_ mode are also often wide leaps. An example of the relationship between the opening tone and cadence tone is readily apparent and easily grasped in the second melody in _chinyangjo_ (In appendix A). In the first half of this melody all five _kag_ begin with an indication of “D,” although it is sometimes approached decoratively. Three out of the five _kag_ end on “C,” with the other two ending on “A.”

If reduced to the “main tones,” _kag_ 1, 3, and 4 are all “D” for the first five measures.

[138. As indicated earlier, the division of the example into _kag_ is marked with a roman numeral assignment in the score.]
and switch to “C” only on the last measure. *Kag* 2 and 5 are more complicated because they work on a descending pattern that moves around “D” and the “A” below it. Both the “A” and the “C,” however, are not stopping points. They are resting points that indicate onward movement. The melody finally ends, after the second half of the melody complicates and strays from these basic tones, on a “D” one octave lower than the original starting pitch.

The interest, given the relatively restricted contours of most of these melodies, is in a kind of cyclical development. Although the “D” is a strong tone and it is consistently repeated in *kag* 1, 3, and 4, it is consistently destabilized by sliding to and from the adjacent tones in a variety of decorative patterns. For example, the first *kag* should be divided into three figures. The first contains only “D” in the typical quarter and eighth note combination (measures 1 and 2). The second slides twice from “B” up to “D,” but on the last slide after resting on “D,” creeps upward towards “C,” and at the next articulation moves quickly back towards “D” (measures 3 and 4). The last destabilizes the “D” by sliding from “D” to “C” and back in a single articulation. Then the melody rests on “C,” which prompts a return to “D” (measures 5 and 6).

These figures indicate a pattern that is a movement from solidity, which expands stretching upward, and finally to a destabilization that prompts a return. The 3rd and 4th *kag* also follow this three part pattern. *Kag* 2 and 5 have a different three part motion. “D” is indicated and then slid away from towards “C” in measures 7 and 25. Then the melody tends downward to “B” in measures 8 and 26. In the 2nd *kag* this is not notated, but it is implicated as the “C” releases to “B” as the performer releases pressure on the string. The second section then makes abrupt movements that jump from the middle “A” to the lower “E.” In the first instance (measures 9-10) this is a kind of exaggerated appoggiatura, and in the second instance (measures 27-28) it is a more simple transition. The final figure in some way
emphasizes that “A” is the resting point of this three part segment, either in jumping from the lower “A” to the middle “A” in measures 11 and 12 or in a slide from “A” to “G” and back again in measures 29 and 30.

In this type of division into internally referential signs the elements that are important in pedagogy are also important in aesthetic listening. The movement from the smallest part, a single note, into larger figures which form the developmental blocks of the changdan's division into kag, and finally into a complete melody that moves from the starting signal to the ending signal. This analysis is not however a generalization, but is specific to the section that I analyzed, as there are other types of possible development. This melody is convenient for this type of consideration because it conforms to an easily recognizable pattern, but there are some melodies that are more oriented towards passion than form, and they often overflow the clear cut divisions. One characteristic that is shared by both the more formal and less formal melodic structures is the tendency to have a melodic feature that will propel one line of the rhythmic cycle to the next, as the “C” did in the first example.

The second melodic transcription (in appendix A) is an example of this more free flowing, less repetitive movement. Incidentally this section is in kyemyŏnjo, which as a more passionately marked mode may account for this type of melody. However, I have not seen any purely modal basis for this distinction because many of the melodies in kyemyŏnjo are also highly formal and repetitive. Often the divisions of the rhythmic cycle are not observed in this particular melody, at least not entirely, and halfway through one rhythmic cycle (measure 71 in the transcription), in the words of Kim Il-ryun, the melody picks up and runs away. The cycle is not finished, but the melody changes anyway. Or conversely, the kag is finished and the melody is not so it carries over into the first beat or two of the next kag.

The opening of this melody begins characteristically with the wide and dramatic leap
that signifies the start of a new melody. It then proceeds with a fairly standard development with a movement from the dominant tone, the widely vibrated “D,” and repetitions and permutations of this note for the next three bars (measures 2-4). The final three bars encompass an extended downward slide ending on the breaking tone, the half-step slide from “B flat” to “A.” The 2nd kag, starting on measure 7, however is highly emotive and is not typical of kyemyŏnjo tonality because of a heavy emphasis on the high “F.” Kim Il-ryun calls the trills that open melodic fragment line thunder and lightening, and it seems to have that effect. The next two figures are gestures centered around the “F,” with an initial upward abruptly cutoff bend from the “F,” followed by gliding turn like movements around the “F,” and finally sliding downward indeterminately from the “F.” After repeating this type of figure twice, the line ends resting on the “D,” but it is a compressed ending that, lacking the normal two bar rest, as indicated in the last example, stretches out into the next kag. This melody has a shape that expands in the middle with dramatic upward swooping gestures, which causes the ending of this kag as well as the beginning of the next to have a greater urgency, because they feel late. In the 3rd kag, which is a gradual descent from the upper “C” to the middle “A,” ending on the breaking tone, to offset this urgency, the line is played with a subdued dynamic. According to Kim Il-ryun this balances the gesture because it would be too shrill if it were played loudly, being both in the highest possible register and a having a long dramatic type of movement.

The 4th through 7th kag also exhibit this type of extension that offsets the beginning of the phrase or extends into the phrase on the next line. The 4th kag emphasizes the repetition and permutation of the rhythmic pattern consisting of two sixteenth notes and an eighth note, first on the “B flat” to a breaking tone, followed by a bar long echo of the breaking tone. Then on a “G,” which is the center tone in this passage. The “G” pattern is followed by a figure that
echoes and reinforces the “G’s” central qualities by springing off of a staccato of the
dominant “D,” followed by an appoggiatura which starts on “G,” moves to the unstable
breaking tone and returns to “G” with a single articulation. Then in measure 23 there is a
sequence of this rhythmic pattern on “D” and “G.” The “G” pattern overflows the bar, and in
the measure 24 there is a temporal extension of the breaking tone which also overflows into
the 5th kag, and moves in sixteenth notes toward “D,” ending the phrase in the second
measure of the 5th kag (26) with a typical cadence pattern on the center tone “G.” The next
phrase (measures 27 through 30) is cut short to four measures to finish in line with the
rhythmic pattern, but each figure in the pattern, extending from the stretched out first note of
the phrase, overflows it's measure with connected decorative figures.

The phrase beginning on the 6th kag of this melody takes the second to last measure
(28) of the previous phrase as its point of departure and expands outward from it. Each
segment beginning in measures 28, 31, and 33 begins with two “A's” approached by a
kkŏgnŭn mok. Instead of cadencing, the melody works through variations beginning on the
broken tone, indicated by the slide downward to “A,” in more and more emphatic gestures,
twice in the lower octave and once in the middle octave, until it springs forward to the
melodic core of the phrase in measures 32 through 36. This core emphasizes the relationship
between the heavily vibrated “D” and the center tone “G,” and finishes the phrase with a
curious pattern that connects the tones “D” and “G” by way of an indeterminate downward
slide from “F” to “E” in between the two in measures 35 and 36.

This sliding tone is not characteristic of the mode, but even though it is sliding
downward, it seems to have a lifting effect on the mode. This figure, once again extends over
the boundaries of the rhythmic pattern, but instead of cramping the starting of the next figure,
the phrase in the 7th kag spreads out and is stark and spacious, contrasting with the dense
rhythms and decorations of the preceding passage. The next figure proceeds from the lowest
tone, dramatically approaching the “G” by way of the “D,” creating both the resolution of the
tonal relationship and the lifting characteristic of the stark upward rhythmic and scalar
movement. The rhythmic pattern repeats by using the same lower anchor tones in measures
37, 39 and 41, but each time slightly changing the upper tone until it is no longer a “G,” but
has stretched upward to an “A,” finishing the line with a characteristic tension that draws out
the next phrase. This middle segment of the melody is similarly spread out, often flowing
from one line into the next, and as before ignoring the boundaries of the rhythmic pattern. In
the 12th kag, the melody suddenly becomes dense and the figures, instead of being centered
around the development of a single tone are characterized by wide leaps and repeating
rhythmic figures that build off of octave jumps.

The figures and their development that make up the last half of this melody, beginning
in measure 71, bring out another feature of Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's sanjo that I want to emphasize.
In the beginning of this paper, I indicated that contemporary sanjo could be defined by three
paradoxes, one of which is that it is an improvisational music that is not improvised. This
melody provides a vantage point from which to view this paradox. If the sole definition of
improvisational music is that it is in practice improvised, then sanjo is definitely not an
improvisational music, since even the master's of today play nearly a whole concert by
memory, although there are some exceptions, which I discussed earlier in the paper. On the
other hand, if music could be considered improvisational by means of its content rather than
its performance practice, such as Chopin's, Schubert's or Sibelius' impromptus, then kayagŭm
sanjo can be heard as a music that has an improvisational melodic style. In terms of melody,
this section iconically signifies the melodic tropes of improvisational music.

The path that the melody follows in the 13th and 15th kag is a type of passionate
development in which a figure is repeated and compressed in time, in measure 75 through 78 until it seems to spin out of itself and then follows a pattern of upward motion, in measures 79-81 until a final resolution on a cadence tone in measures 84 and 85.

This is typical of improvisation where inspiration comes from realizing the possibilities of extending repetition through its various possible permutations, returning to an anchor each time, and then attempting to find a possible resolution in a melodic contour from this repetition. The alternation between minute figural development and free flowing melodic passages, the alternation between a time pattern and violations of that pattern, and the alternation between dense and heavily decorated passages with stark expositions of a few vital tones, these values make up the aesthetic pleasure of sanjo melodies. They may fall under the general aesthetic of “tension and release,” or “rise, hand, bind, and loosen.” However knowing this, it makes more sense to work from the details up, rather than the top down when analyzing melodies, which is what I have tried to to in interpreting these two characteristic melodies.

Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's melodies often proceed through internal consistency and self-reference. The movement in a melody is a sign for a particular type of development. For example, the rhythmic articulations in the melody that give closure to the kag or changdan as they repeat can refer to the underlying rhythmic cycle. Even when this pattern is violated it is significant because it creates either tension or relaxation in relation to the underlying pattern. In addition, there are many “internal icons” or figures which by bearing resemblance to one another come to be signs of internal coherence. Conversely by repeating the figures a number of times the musician-composer shows that there are a variety of ways to develop from the basic elements. Return and repetition realizes the many possibilities of germinal growth.
Personal Style

There is another aspect to sanjo aesthetics which does not bear internal reference to melodic concepts. This is, for lack of a more specific term, the musician's style, as opposed musical or melodic style. This style is characterized by an approach to bodily gesture and athleticism. It is more affective than significant. It is the realization of a musician's ability to act, accumulated through many years of discipline and opening themselves to the affects of their instrument, the affects of their instructors, and the affects of sound itself.

To examine how the style affects the melody, I have made use of sonographs. The question concerning sonograph devices has been primarily focused on the problem of subjective and objective poles of analysis. Jarizabhoy, for example, critiques the ethnomusicological concern with truth, accuracy, and objectivity by suggesting that it is neither possible nor desirable to achieve the accuracy promised by the proponents of musical graphing tools. While Jaraizboy makes a valid point with his argument, the debate between the subjective and objective poles of analysis can take away from an actual discussion of the possibilities of using tools for musicological analysis.

Jarazbhoy’s primary foil in this discussion comes from Charles Seeger’s writings on musical graphing tools which would be combined with traditional notation to reveal a more accurate perspective and remove Western prejudice from the analysis of non-Western music. Of course Seeger’s hopes and claims, as Jaraizbhoy shows, are somewhat exaggerated and misguided. Seeger himself opens his developments in musicological thinking to philosophical and ethical debate by invoking the idea of accuracy and objectivity as a means of rising above the inherent difference between Western and non-Western concepts of music. Nevertheless, Seeger also makes many good observations about the possibilities and uses of this technology.

that will be overlooked if a philosophical and ethical perspective overly determines the discussion of transcription. One quote in particular shows the a possible constructive use of this technology.

“As a strictly musicological tool, the graphing apparatus brings to our existing notational techniques the needed complement to show ‘what happens between the notes’ and what any departures from their theoretical norms really are in terms of actual hearing – and what these norms should be in terms of musicological thinking.”

While this quote does invoke the subjective-objective dichotomy, I want to set aside that debate and focus on what can be positively attributed to sonographs in an etic discovery mode of musicology. I make use of the graph in this study to examine style. This style is considered in terms of the earlier discussion per Hornbostel’s definition. Hornbostel and Seeger make a good complement to each other theoretically, and my aims are a continuation of their type of musicology. Like Hornbostel wanted to describe style as a totality of motor approaches to what is played, or “how something is played, rather than what is played,” Seeger wants to look at style from this perspective as well. Writing about how the graph augments Western staff transcription he states:

“If it causes us some trouble to find out just what the notational equivalents are, we must not complain that the performer did not render notes. Rather, we should be glad that instead of rendering notes he rendered music, and the we may set ourselves with greater assurance to the task of finding out what he did sing, without preconceptions that he meant to, or should, have sung notes.”

Turning to the problem at hand, the style of kayagŭm sanjo, this is precisely the problem of the existing transcriptions. They lack the ability to show individual styles and performances because transcribers have only been able to approximate what is musical about

its performance – what comes between the notes. As discussed above, the documented change in
the notion of “style” in Korean music, means that an ever greater focus should be given to
1) how the notes are played and 2) the minute details of the parts of performance heretofore
thought decorative.

It is not a matter of greater objectivity or subjectivity on my part, rather it is my ability

to visualize and compare the parameters set by my tools that will allow me to comment in

some small degree on style from an etic perspective. I have taken sections from five player’s

renditions of Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn’s kayagŭm sanjo and submitted them to the tools of an

sonographing program. This is enabled by a program called Sonic Visualiser, which is a

freely distributed tool for audio analysis being developed by the Centre for Digital Music,

Queen Mary, University of London.¹⁴² This provides some of the same functions available

and initially pioneered by Charles Seeger’s melograph. It also provides a much wider range of

functions, applications, and parameters than the melograph. For example, the feature that I

utilized in the program allows the visualization of pitch, amplitude, and time. The parameters

available included the amount of filtering applied to the signal to render the graph intelligible,

the amount of detail in terms of pixels, and the method of coloring, which can show

amplitude through the range of different colors. The program also allows the user to zoom in

on the graph to achieve the perspective and detail appropriate to the mode of inquiry. The

graph then, shows what was played in terms of melodic content and relative amplitude (based

upon the recording levels) with accuracy.

Each of the players considered in this paper have a unique historical relationship to

Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's kayagŭm sanjo. Some of them have developed their playing through contact

with Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn, however some of the others are have learned indirectly as the third

generation of players. Those who learned the music from Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn also learned to play

the music at different times and would have learned from her at different personal levels of ability. According to Gjerdingen, the techniques that Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn taught to students was related to her perception of their ability, and so a performer's technical style may be related to this aspect of their personal development.\textsuperscript{143} Even when withholding judgment on a particular version's authenticity these two historical factors concerning when a student learned to play provide some insight into the development of a personal interpretation. With this in mind, I will consider the individual histories of each interpreters development and relationship to Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn.

The first recording that will be featured in the transcription is of Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn herself. However the quality of the recording makes it difficult to use to get a sense of Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's style. It seems like the CD was mastered from a decaying tape, and it is sometimes difficult to tell the difference between the tape flutter and her nonghyŏn, for example. Nevertheless for historical reasons I have included it in this process.

Hwang Pyŏng-ju lays claim to a history and relationship to Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn sanjo that is uniquely authentic. In the liner notes to his recording of his interpretation he goes so far as to say “Although master Sŏng had many students, she believed that there was no other student to continue her line of kayagŭm except Hwang Pyŏng-ju.” This is not consistent with the information that Gjerdingen records in her thesis, which continually mentions the importance that Sŏng placed on the the later developments of her music, which Gjerdingen claims was passed on to only her and to Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's daughter, Chi Sŏng-ja. Looking at the recordings available shows that nearly all the recordings, except Hwang Pyŏng-ju's contain material from Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's later music. The reasons that Hwang gives for the particular authenticity of his version is that it was the original version, “which is still

\textsuperscript{143} Gjerdingen, Catherine. 1980. “Selection and Substitution of Melodic Material in the Kayagŭm Sanjo of Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn.” 82-82.
considered an important sanjo lineage.”

Hwang Pyŏng-ju is also unique in that he was among the first to publish written transcriptions of Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's sanjo. It is interesting that he claims this as a point of authority, yet later on points out that notated music has led to a loss of “uniqueness in its (sanjo's) creativeness and improvisational qualities.” A final important biographical detail is that Hwang chose to focus only on Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's kayagŭm sanjo, which is a rarity among current kayagŭm performers.

Kim Il-ryun, was of course introduced already, but it will suffice to say a little bit about her relationship to Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's kayagŭm sanjo. She learned this sanjo at first from Lee Chae-suk, who was her first teacher, and one of the musicians who has most influenced the contemporary kayagŭm context as a pioneer teacher in the university system and by transcribing and teaching sanjo from transcriptions. Like her mentor, Kim Il-ryun is also an innovative musician, but also a musician who continues to return to the genre of kayagŭm sanjo. She also learned Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's kayagŭm sanjo directly from Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn, but it seems that she is much more contemporary in her orientation than a musician like Hwang Pyŏng-ju. Instead of highlighting the authenticity of her productions, she takes delight, as noted above, in making something a part of her, and placing herself in the work of art.

The fourth performer that I consider is Chi Sun-ja, not to be confused with Chi Sŏng-ja, who is mentioned above. Chi Sun-ja is Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's fifth daughter. She began to learn from her mother from the age of ten, and was accomplished enough to take over teaching duties for her mother when she was on performance tours. She immigrated with her mother to Hawai'i in 1974, and this caused her to abandon the idea of becoming a professional musician, but according to the liner notes for this recording, twenty years later, she was

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145. Ibid.
convinced to record her version of her mother's music.

The final interpreter that I will consider is Ji Ae-ri. Her performance is described as the result of incredible and seemingly natural ability and a superior educational pedigree. Her teachers include Hwang Pyŏng-ju, Hwang Pyŏng-ki and Lee Chae-suk, two of whom are revered scholar musicians, and the other is Hwang Pyŏng-ju, the rightful heir to Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's kayagŭm sanjo. Without forgetting the stake that Hwang Pyŏng-ki may have in promoting his student, his recommendation gives an indication of certain prized aesthetic features in sanjo performance.

"The more masterful a piece, the more difficult it is to bring out its flavor in performance. On March 18th of this year (1993) at the Korean Traditional Performing Arts Center, Ji Ae-ri held a recital of Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn sanjo, and those who understand the heart and depths of sanjo were very surprised. Ji Ae-ri, although still in her twenties, played with brilliant musicianship and superior technique, thoroughly portraying the style and flavor of this sanjo."

While Hwang Pyŏng-ki is primarily concerned with her age, I am more concerned with her abilities as an interpreter. Hwang's formulation rightly praises Ji Ae-ri as a performer, but he does not go far enough because he does not recognize her performative ability as an active and creative contribution to “style and flavor.”

Sonograph 1 (in appendix B) comes from the first melody transcribed in appendix B, the beginning of the second melody in chinyangjo. The sonograph is cropped to show the last four measures of this line. Examining the details of the sonogram shows that each performer has a unique approach to the upward slides that characterize this passage. Chi Sun-ja's is perhaps the most extreme in that she renders each note discretely and slides between them quite rapidly. Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn herself took a similar approach although she does not articulate

147. Ibid.
the first tone separately, only as a point from which to slide. On the opposite extreme, Hwang Pyŏng-ju barely articulates a stable tone, sliding through the first tone, and on the re-articulation sliding into a vibrated tone. Ji Ae-ri and Kim Il-ryun have a similar approach, sliding up and rounding the first articulation, and on the second articulation they quickly slide up to the “D,” hold and lightly vibrate the tone before proceeding to the upper “E.” The difference between the two is that Ji Ae-ri has relatively deeper and slower vibrato, and Kim Il-ryun does not have much vibrato at all on these notes.

There is a similar divergence of approaches on the descending tones. In this case, Kim Il-ryun and Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn are the least decorative and are more precise in descending from the “E,” the “D” is also left as a strong and drawn out tone rather than a heavily vibrated tone. The other performers approach the downward slide by slightly lifting the tone and then resting on a more or less vibrated tone. In this case Ji Ae-ri seems to be the most extreme with wide and rather quick vibrato on the “D.” On the final articulation, from “D” to “C” and back to “D,” the musicians seem to exhibit a higher degree of similarity.

The second example (sonograph 2 – in appendix B) comes from the next kag (melodic transcription 1, bars 7-12), as the melody develops a downward turn, at first gradual and then abrupt. The main variables in this section, are the use of vibrato in the two note figure, the shape of the abruptly descending notes, and the speed of the vibrato on the final “D.” Hwang Pyŏng-ju is alone in lightly vibrating the opening “D.” This note is not supposed to be vibrated, as is indicated in the score. This was also the instruction that I received from Kim Il-ryun. This note receives a slight tail as it fades into silence, and Chi Sun-ja and Ji Ae-ri both approach this with shallow vibrato. The “D” in the second measure is also indicated to be without vibrato, but both Chi Sun-ja and Ji Ae-ri lightly vibrate this tone during the course of descending to the “C” from “D.” Hwang Pyŏng-ju slightly vibrates the “C,” and Kim Il-ryun
do not vibrate this tone at all. It is difficult to tell from the recording and the transcription how Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn approaches this figure. It makes sense that it should not be vibrated, because it is supposed to slacken and release from the “D” toward the “A.” The sharp downward figures that approach the even lower “E” are compressions of this figure, so it would seem more aesthetic to approach it as Kim Il-ryun does, by an initial sharp glide downward, and then a lengthy continuation of the downward glide.

The five musicians approach the two sharp quick downward turns with relatively similar technique, the only difference being the amount that they slide up to the “E” after they articulate the note. This gives the note a slightly rounded quality, but also somewhat decreases the sharpness of the attack. The final ending on “E” is widely vibrated by all the players, but there are relative speeds and slowness of vibrato as well. The speed of a vibrato is largely up to the player, but would serve two functions, either to increase the intensity in conjunction with increasing the wideness of the vibrato, or to give a passage a uniform character. Since this is the first time that this note is played in this melody so far, it would seem that neither would be factors that would weigh in on the players approach to this note.

The next two examples are from melodic transcription 2, the 7th melody in the chinyangjo movement, which I analyzed earlier this chapter. This melody was one of the more difficult melodies for me to learn, and as I indicated above, it is highly emotive with a feeling of overflowing and stretching out.

Sonograph 3 (in appendix B) is an example of a technique that causes this stretching out. In the middle of several relatively dense figures articulating the relationship between “D” and “G,” a non-modal tone the downward glide from “F” to “E,” alters the characteristically melancholy kyemyŏnjo, and colors the transition from “G” to “D.” Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn and Chi Sun-ja both play this with two discrete notes. Hwang Pyŏng-ju plays the tone as a relatively
Ji Ae-ri plays it as a straight note with a tail at the end gliding downward. Kim Il-ryun plays the figure differently both times. The first time she makes the tone somewhat rounded and it turns upward again at the end. The second time, it also has this kind of upward turned tail, but the initial note is held longer, and gives it more of a sense of stretching out.

The passage pictured in sonograph 4 (in appendix B) is one of the more dramatic passages in *chinyangjo*, which is already a highly dramatic section. The drama comes from the center of the line, which is a very emotional upward gesture, and an equally emotional release of the tone in the next measure. This is one passage that Kim Il-ryun would nearly always vocalize as she was teaching, and when I would have trouble with making the tone appropriately, she would widen her gestures forward and towards the instrument leaning into the notes. It does not seem that I played this section, in particular, any better or worse than any other part that I learned, but it seems that both times I learned it, my teachers spent a lot of energy to try to help me play it correctly. It is in fact not such a difficult passage. In the whole line, each measure has only one articulation. The “D” is somewhat difficult to reach by pressing the “A” string, and I have knocked over the bridge quite often when I played this passage, and several times the string broke as I pressed upward. Looking at the graphs though, it is clear that the upward bend simply must be leaned into, and sharply. It is not a gradual note, it is dramatic.

The real difficulty, however, is to play the downward sliding note without sounding ghostly. It should sound human, like a human weeping, a human sorrow. Hwang Pyŏng-ju plays this figure as a straight downward trail, but according to my teachers, this is not a good aesthetic for this passage. Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn, Chi Sun-ja, and Chi Ae-ri all play a downward slope that is evenly vibrated as it descends. Kim Il-ryun takes an approach that is between the
two. She vibrates the initial “D” and remains on the note for quite a while comparatively. Then while still vibrating the tone, it develops a tail downward, and the vibrato ceases.

This type of moment gives sanjo its character. These various approaches to the basic material make the material fresh and continuously fascinating. Each player can also be described as having an identity based upon the way that they give a particular style to the same melodic material. For example Kim Kyŏng-hŭi describes Hwang Pyŏng-ju's version saying that it “almost seems that it lacks the dramaticism and the delicacy of a female kayagum player. Hwang's playing is more like the well crafted stone sculpture which is flat and smooth without decorations.”

Ji Ae-ri's is delicate and flower-like, a typical description of Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's sanjo in general. Giving an adjective to Kim Il-ryun's version I would call it wide-hearted, spacious. These adjectives are only looking for something to grasp out of the experience.

An important aspect to remember though is that roughly all of these musicians employ the same technique to the same melody. Even looking at the note in detail on the melograph does not give all of the necessary information to figure out what it is that marks and signs the musician's identity on their work. There are timbral aspects that are simply not possible to visualize in that way, and they are almost impossible to describe verbally as well. Also a musician may have a sound that is characteristically his, just as a vocalist is recognizable by her vocal qualities, but this does not mean that the application of this style is uniform throughout the piece. Much of the purpose in stylizing the melodies in this way is to build many types of interest and pleasure from limited tonal resources, often from the interaction of just two or three tones. If a musician played each vibrato the same and strictly followed the modal rules as they are given in theory books, that wouldn't be music. When Hwang Pyŏng-ju plays the opposite of what the score and the other players indicate, adding vibrato when it is

specifically not to be played or playing a widely vibrated tone austerely, he is adding interest in his own way and in the context that he perceives.

While I have tried to give an idea of what aesthetic listening to sanjo might include, I do not mean to indicate that it is best listened to following a transcription or comparing the minute details of a certain musician's decorations with computer imaging. Rather without transcriptions, note names, and computer images it is too minute and too ephemeral to discuss. Looking at the music this way, examining the way that the melodies work, and some possible ways that a musician would approach these melodies can show some important generalizations about sanjo. Sanjo is a work of contrasts. It is at times restrained and austere, and at other times excessive, passionate, and overflowing. Its melodies are formed from the permutations of figures, either by linear development, or by repetition and contraction or expansion. There are signs that indicate certain things about the melody, such as starting points and cadence tones. Finally, the music is best heard by focusing on the way that the minute details of execution affect the feeling of the melody.
Conclusions

During the course of my engagement with kayagŭm sanjo, I have been faced with two large problems: How do I listen to this music as student who is learning to play the music, and how do I listen to the work of the great masters of this genre as works of art? In order to explain these two types of listening, and the processes involved, I have attempted to construct a theoretical model that could produce knowledge about both types of listening, and would prove useful, not just for the purposes of this paper, but would contribute to the literature of ethnomusicology's interaction with cultural studies.

This paper not only seeks to reveal the process of signification in Korean music, but to examine how this process can be understood and apprehended in a cross-cultural educational environment. I claim, along with Lochhead, that movement is creative and meaningful, and provides an excellent insight, one that, while not entirely overlooked in ethnomusicology, has not achieved the recognition that it deserves based upon its pragmatic value in unearthing new aesthetic insights. Some of the insights that I have gained from using this method, and by situating the narrative from the perspective of the learner who is in the process of grasping both bodily techniques and auditory aesthetics, shows that in kayagum sanjo, there is a unity of action, aesthetics, and signification. The theoretical section, in the second chapter, of the thesis provides a vocabulary with which to talk about this issue conceptually, and intends to show the interdisciplinary implications of ethnomusicological research. In particular by applying a theoretical discussion of signification to both the contextual information of the first chapter and the “lived experience” and performative communication analyzed in the third and fourth chapters, it reveals the connection between the three areas.

If there is anything to be gained from listening to music as an ethnomusicologist, it is to suspend the need for music to have a commercial or cultural relevance directly for the
listener. One option that the ethnomusicologist has is to situate the music within the culture, showing how it contributes to society, what institutions it is a part of, and what the meaning of the music is within that context. Another option is to take the issue of context for granted and to attempt a detailed analysis of smaller parts of this context. I have chosen not to focus on the larger context of *kayagŭm sanjo*, primarily because there are many other sources that do an excellent analysis of this context. I have summarized and interpreted these sources to give a sufficient background and to make up for the limited nature of my own perspective. There are more or less universally acknowledged contexts for this music: the instrument that it is played on, the connections that it has to other genres of music and to the larger category of Korean traditional music, and the social context that supports the production of *kayagŭm sanjo*.

Rather than to take the contextual path to understanding *kayagŭm sanjo*’s meaning, I have taken the aesthetic path. I have chosen this methodology because I felt that in most discussions of Korean music not enough credit was given to artistry of individual musicians. I do not mean to downplay the role of context and politics in shaping the nature of this artistry, rather I intend to show through this thesis the involved and detailed attention given to individual techniques that have an aesthetic effect. I have situated the discussion in terms of a cross-cultural education where I learn to reproduce to a certain level a certain amount of this aesthetic.

It is my hope that this research will provoke ethnomusicologists to look at music not just in terms of the forms of them music and its social context, but also to look at the agency of individual musicians in contributing to the general aesthetic context. This agency is not only created by social and political negotiation, but is also created by the minute attention that they give to their art. In certain contexts – North American jazz, European classical music,
and in this case Korean *kayagŭm sanjo* come to mind – this artistry is a tool of social and political agency. This artistry is also a tool that musicians can use to make bridges to international audiences. In light of this, when presenting *kayagŭm sanjo* to international audiences, it would be extremely beneficial to not only discuss the historical context of the music, but to discuss the technical and aesthetic aspects of the performance before the concert begins. This will help audiences to appreciate the music and the artistry of the individual performer, rather than seeing them only as cultural representatives.

The analysis in this paper is a record of my particular and limited engagement with this context. The context of this situation – a university setting, my own interest in nearly all the genres of Korean traditional music, learning from a combination of printed notation and personal instruction – is in many ways similar to what other Korean students experience. In many ways it is also different.

In one sense this type of analysis is necessary for the study of music to move forward. Now that scholars of Korean music have been able to establish basic theoretical generalizations for concepts such as regional music characteristics, modes, and rhythmic characteristics, it is important to return to the human aspects of the music. The human aspects of the music are made of the struggle to reproduce the music stylistically and the impact that the music makes on the listeners emotions.

As was indicated in the first chapter, most students of this music play it with the goal of passing their exams. Professional musicians perform the music to present their unique artistic vision and to move audiences. I can neither rise to the level of the professional, nor do I have the pressures faced by Korean music students. I have been able to focus solely on the aesthetic and human aspects of this music. By using the limited perspective of a participant observer to my advantage I have been able to make positive use of my positionality.
The contributions that this positionality allows are two fold: First of all, I am able to analyze the learner's perspective at a level of detail that traditional kayagŭm student and teachers do not have the inclination or time to do. Secondly, by articulating my experiences from my positionality, I hope to open an intercultural dialog on the way that Korean music can be apprehended by non-natives, either students who wish to learn Korean instruments or those who look to the music for aesthetic enjoyment and emotional satisfaction. This thesis is not only directed at non-natives looking to understand the aesthetic factors in kayagŭm sanjo, it is also directed at Korean educators and cultural authorities who are curious about the way that American students might approach and perceive their music. Admittedly my perspective is overly optimistic in that I personally find Korean music captivating at a level that other American students might not.

The test of my theoretical model was whether it was able to generate ideas about my experience that would apply to the two sides of my perspective. My theoretical model was a hybrid model, taking the useful parts of three distinct movements. The first part was classical semiotics as created by C. S. Peirce and applied to ethnomusicology by Thomas Turino. The second was the poststructural interpretation of semiotics in the role of subject formation. The third was the recent movement away from these language based models towards a materialist theory of affects. I have chosen to use these three areas, which are rhetorically opposed to one another, because they all had unique insights to contribute.

My position as a student in a country where I did not at first understand the language very well, did not have a detailed understanding of all of the social conventions, and did not have an understanding of the aesthetics of the music that I was trying to study, made me acutely sensitive to the pragmatic value of learning to interpret a wide variety of signs. Of course the analysis in this paper does not directly record the way that I learned to understand
these signs. Instead I have been able to use Peircian semiotics as a way to organize the insights into the signs of Korean music that I personally gathered piecemeal and haphazardly. Peircian semiotics proved useful, not only in interpreting my own experience, but also in interpreting the discourse of *kayagŭm sanjo* and Korean music in general.

Secondly, the notion of the body in relation to music making and in listening to music has proved important to this analysis. This is a type of semiotics that is vital to understanding the way that music is situated in a human context. It also provides a tool to discuss the relationship of a cultural aesthetics to musicians individual aesthetic choices, which have a particular range in each specific context. In the case of *kayagŭm sanjo* the range of choices is defined by the melodic framework, but although the melody may be the same, the approach to decoration, particularly to vibrating and bending notes with the left hand is highly individual. Kristeva's outline of the process of semiotic subject formation is roughly analogous to the process whereby a musician gains competency in their performances. The initial stage of undefined and unstructured drives is the initial relationship of the body to the instrument. This relationship is full of potential, most of which has little aesthetic value. The stasis that forms as the drives are disciplined corresponds to the stage where a student is educated enough to read the signs of the music, their instrument, and their teacher, and to orient their body in this direction. There is very little room for individuality in this stage. The final stage is a dialectical synthesis where the drives overflow and produce non-functioning elements in the act of communication. This stage corresponds to the stage at which a master allows themselves the freedom to make the music their own. They allow their emotions, passions, and body to transfer a unique and dramatic effect, which produces an aesthetic sensation in the audience.

The master musician also makes use of their unique aesthetic approach as they teach
other musicians. Kim Il-ryun, my instructor for the duration of my research, taught me using her individual approach to the music. Thus part of my analysis of kayagŭm sanjo is an analysis of how she attempted to shape the way that I played the music by expressing her unique approach to the music. The notion of affectivity proved useful in analyzing this encounter. One of the benefits of using an affective model at this point is that it bypasses the insider-outsider dilemma that is inherent in the linguistic model of intercultural communication. Of course I was socially an outsider during my research, and I have only been able to provide an analysis from my position, but in analyzing the affective nature of the pedagogical environment, this is not a positive or negative aspect. My teacher would follow a variety of strategies until it produced the desired effect. I then was able to analyze these strategies and draw some conclusions about learning kayagŭm sanjo.

In general, learning kayagŭm sanjo involved chains and cycles of affects, the example that I return to is the process where I would play a passage, one that required me to vibrate and press the string with my left hand. I could not accomplish this in the right way which produced a sign for my teacher to respond. She would vocalize the passage with some amount of energy and dramatism, and I would then need to transfer this affect to my hands, which would be met with the affective response of the instrument, which would then affect my approach to the instrument. The pedagogical process is made of many such moments where affects are continually being produced. Learning meant being open to being affected. This perspective allowed me to be objective about my own abilities and about my situation.

My theoretical model allowed be to analyze the pedagogical process, but it also allowed me to develop a theory of aesthetic listening for kayagŭm sanjo. I began by imagining the way that the melodies, from the evidence of their development over time, might have been composed from Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn's improvisations to create the complex and
fully realized movements that make up the *chinyangjo* section. In this analysis the notion of affects, signs, and the semiotic of the body also proved useful. I take several melodies that have variations of “germinal” development, that is, they proceed by varying a small elemental fragment, to highlight three processes in the melodies that show the influence of the body on the music. The first type of development works by adding surrounding decorative tones to complicate a simple figure. The second type develops the melody by expanding the tonal range of a figure around a central tone, heightening the emotional development through time. The third repeats the same melodic fragment in ever greater compressed units, building tension until an emotional release leads the melody to resolution. In all three examples the left hand modulates the sound created as the right hand articulates the string, giving one more layer of sound that may be creatively manipulated by the musician. Rather than the “grain of the voice,” the “grain” of the left hand can stand for the *sanjo* musician's use of the body to add unique and individual elements to a musical text that *sanjo* musicians hold commonly.

The notion of the body producing the dialectic synthesis between the semiotic and the symbolic was also useful in describing the way that individual players leave their mark on the melodies. I analyzed examples from recordings of five different musicians to show that, while the melodies are identical, every player modifies the execution of the melodies by varying the technique used in the left hand.

This thesis commenced with a discussion of three paradoxes in the contemporary definitions of *kayagŭm sanjo*. *Kayagŭm sanjo* is both an improvised music, and a music that is performed verbatim from memory or notation. *Kayagŭm sanjo* is a music that is learned both through oral direct transmission and through the use of technology, primarily Western staff notation. Lastly, *Kayagŭm sanjo* is a music that is a record of the performer and the composer's emotional life, as well as a music with many formal and stylistic generalities.
Thoughout this paper I have attempted to move the definition of *kayagŭm sanjo* beyond these debates by accepting the validity of both sides of the paradox.

In terms of the signs that a *sanjo* performer creates when she presents this music, there are often processes that have an iconic relationship with *sanjo*'s historical definition as *ch'ŭkhŭng ŭmak*. At the same time, the performer emits dicent signs that show that the music is an authentic piece of Korean cultural heritage by giving a direct rendition of the music of a past master. Similarly a student who is learning this *kayagŭm sanjo* will become an apprentice of a variety of indexical signs that produce an energetic interpretant. The student will first master the notation as a written record of past oral instruction. They will then allow themselves to open to the affective environment where the transmission of affects will create an internal index of the music in the student's memory, which she will use to reproduce the events and movements that she has heard, seen, and felt. Lastly, I have tried to analyze the melodies of *sanjo* to show that they are not just manifestations of formal structures such as mode and rhythmic cycle, they are also iconic signs of both personal and collective emotional life. This is most clearly seen by examining *sanjo*'s similarity to other types of Korean music, particularly the shared symbolic language used in *p'ansori*, *namdo minyo*, and *sinawi*. When heard from this perspective the formal devices that define *sanjo* are not ends in themselves but gateways to deepening the understanding of *sanjo*'s human dimensions. An experienced listener will be able to listen to all of these layers in a performance, whether the intent is to reproduce these signs in one's own performance, or to live through these signs a deeper aesthetic inner life.
Melodic Transcription 1. 2\textsuperscript{nd} Melody. Showing progressive development from repetition of a basic anchor motive.
Melodic Transcription 2. 7th Melody. Showing alternation of repetitive and non repetitive development and the incorporation of a wide variety of figures in kyemyŏnjo mode.

[Sonograph images for comparison between different performers]
Sonograph Comparison 3. *Kag 61.* Comparing the approach to the slide from “F” to “E.”

- **Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn**  
  80-82 BPM

- **Hwang Pyŏng-ju**  
  72 BPM

- **Ji Ae-ni**  
  75-76 BPM

- **Chi Sun-ja**  
  69-70 BPM

- **Kim Il-ryun**  
  74 BPM
Sonograph Comparison 4. Kag 64. Comparing the approach to the highly emotional figure in the 3rd bar and the following descending tone in the 4th.

Sŏng Kŭm-yŏn
80-82 BPM

Hwang Pyŏng-ju
72 BPM

Ji Ae-ri
75-76 BPM

Chi Sun-ja
69-70 BPM

Kim Il-ryun
74 BPM
Anjok are the movable wooden bridges that hold up the kayagŭm's silk strings.

Changdan is the term that refers to the numerous rhythmic cycles used in Korean traditional music.

Chinyangjo is the rhythmic pattern or changdan that sanjo begins with. It is a common link between sanjo, p'ansori, sinawi, and Namdo minyo. The following notation gives the basic frame of this pattern, the low and high tones do not refer to exact pitch. The “X” is a closed stroke if the pattern is played.

Ch’ŏngak is a term that refers to aristocratic chamber music. It literally means correct music.

Chŏlla-namdo is the southwestern province in Korea known for its artistry, particularly its distinctive folk songs, p'ansori, and sanjo.

Chŏnsŏng, or kurŭnŭn ŭm refers to a tone that is articulated by the right hand while the left hand rapidly and deeply applies pressure raising the pitch.

Ch’ŭkhŭng ŭmak is the Korean term used to refer to improvised music.

Hyŏnch ’im is the end piece and anchor that the right hand rests on while the performer moves between strings.

Kag refers to the division of chyinyangjo into four equal parts that have a similar emphasis at the beginning of each kag. This makes it easier to keep one's place when playing. Theorists also specify a specific character to each kag: rise, hang, bind, loosen.
Kayagŭm is a half tube zither from Korea. Traditionally it consisted of a wooden body with twelve strings held up by wooden moveable bridges, although there are modern versions with additional strings which may be made out of nylon.

Kisaeng is a term that refers to a traditional occupation as a female entertainer in Korea.

Kkognunmok meaning the broken voice is a characteristic sound in kyemyŏnjo where a tone slightly lower than a “B flat” descends to an “A.”

Kuŭm is a mnemonic device that attaches syllables to the strings of a kayagŭm.

Kyemyŏnjo is the mode that most closely relates sanjo to the music of the southwest province. It is debated whether it should be considered as a four or three tone mode since “B flat” may be considered to be always part of the “A” articulation. This mode is considered to be poignant or sorrowful because of the relationship between the “B flat” and the “A.”

Kyŏngdŭrŭm is the mode typical of the province surrounding Seoul. In p'ansori it gives a feeling and often is used to speak for noble characters. It contains the same tones as p'yŏngjo (see below), but has a distinctive upward melodic pathway.

Kyŏnggido is the province surrounding Seoul.

Minyo is a generic term that refers to folk songs in Korea.

Nonghyŏn is a vibrato decoration typical of kayagŭm sanjo performance.

P'ansori is a musical dramatic performance genre often called operatic, where typically one singer and one drummer relate through movement, narration, and song one of five archetypal morality tales that are each characterized by a type of virtue: Duty toward one's husband (Ch'unhyangga), duty towards one's father (Sim Ch'ŏngga), duty towards one's brother (Hŭngboga), duty towards one's king (Sugungga) and relationships between friends (Chŏkpyŏkka).

P'ungnyu kayagŭm is a type of kayagŭm used to perform elegant chamber music. It has a wider body than a sanjo kayagŭm, necessitating a slower playing style.

P'yŏngjo is a mode that is supposed to create a feeling of peacefulness. It contains a very light vibrato on the “D.” In sanjo it acts a bridge between ujo and kyemyŏnjo.
Sinawi is a performance genre derived from shamanistic rituals. It consists of group improvisation on stock melodies over rhythmic patterns that incrementally increase in tempo.

T'oesŏng is a technique in kayagŭm sanjo where the performer releases the pressure on a string that has been depressed, lowing the pitch gradually until the tone naturally fades out, approaching the next lower pitch in the mode but not reaching it.

Ujo is the mode that begins the chinyangjo movement of sanjo. It is supposed to be bright, strong, and the tones are supposed to be relatively stable, as opposed to kyemyŏnjo.

Yukchabaegitorî is a term often used interchangeably with kyemyŏnjo (see above). It is named from the most famous song that uses this mode “Yukchabaegi,” although it is common to many southwestern folk songs.
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**Recordings**


