

Reading New Music in the Age of Fusion Culture: Focused on Korean Fusion Music (*Gugakfusion*)

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1. Introduction

“Fusion,” (pronounced pyeujeon in Korean) is one of the keywords that read the feature of 21st century culture. Starting from concepts like fusion jazz and fusion food, now we even use the terms like fusion culture and fusion age. In this paper, I will research the musical activities of hybrid style by Korean musicians from Korean traditional musical circles, which began to bloom around the mid-1980s, and try to examine their remaining tasks. The followings are the questions we consider before we get into the matter of Korean fusion music: first, what is Korean fusion music and how is it different from creative Korean music called *changjak-gugak*?; second, what kind of cultural environment has begotten *gugakfusion*?; third, what are the ideas of Korean fusion musicians as the response to their recent musical circumstance? The answer to the third question will be the body of this paper, where I want to scan the activities of four major music groups: Korean chamber music group “*Seulgidung*,” creative percussion group “*Puri*,” *gayageum* ensemble “*Sagye*,” and soliste ensemble “*SangSang*.”

2. The concept and feature of *gugakfusion*

“Fusion,” the noun form of the verb “fuse,” means the merging of different things or thoughts into a union.¹ Then the meaning of “fusion” as cultural term can include all the processes and effects of the interaction between different cultures or genres.

The history of Korean fusion music may go back to the “*Hyangdanggyoju*” (鄉唐交奏)² which refers to the music played by mixed arrangement of Korean and Chinese musical instruments. And the employment of foreign musical instruments like *haegeum* (a kind of fiddle), *janggo* (a kind of drum) and *yanggeum* (a kind of zither) in Korean traditional music called *hyangak* (鄉樂) also shows that the history of Korean music can be partly understood in the respect of interaction with other countries like Chinese, which produced a kind of fusion music.

The term of “fusion music” covers such a wide area, so it can be dubious whether it is a suitable word to refer to a specific type of recent music. This doubt leads to the question, “what is Korean fusion music?” Before we answer this question, we need to think about the following questions. First, if we call “*Hyangdanggyoju*” as fusion music, it means fusion music refers to all kinds of music including mixed elements from diverse cultural environment. Then, what kind of music cannot be referred to as “fusion”? Next, how can we distinguish fusion music from crossover music? Are they identical or not? Is the group performance by Kim Duksu and Red Sun fusion music or crossover music? Finally, is creative Korean music (or new Korean music) called *changjakgugak* that emerged in 1960’s different from *gugakfusion*?³ We need to ask this question, because creative Korean music can be defined as a kind of “fusion” music combining elements of Korean traditional music and Western music. Then can we maintain that *gugakfusion* or *fusiongugak* apart from *gugakchangjak* or *changjakgugak*?

1) The meaning of “fusion”

I defined *Hyangdanggyoju* as fusion style because it is constituted by playing Korean

¹ Yi Hye-Joo, Kim Gye-Yeon, “*Saenghwal hwangyeong e natanan Fusion Culture e Gwanhan yeongu*,” *Chung-Angdaehakgyo Saenghwalgwahaknonjib* (Seoul: Institute of Human Ecology Chung-Ang university, 2002) pp. 166-67.

² “*Botaepyong Hyangdanggyoju*(保太平 鄉唐交奏),” which first appeared in the 5th volume of *Akhagwebeom* (an illustrated text on traditional music), designated a type of arrangement of musical pieces in the former period of Chosun Dynasty, but it changed into a name of a musical piece and was played as an accompaniment to dancing in the later period of Chosun Dynasty. Hwang Joon-Yeon, *Yeongsanhoesang Yeongu* (靈山會相研究) (Seoul: Seoul National University Press, 1999) pp. 106-11.

³ *Fusion-gugak* or *gugak-fusion* can be used to refer to fusion between *gugak* and other kinds of music, but I prefer the term *gugak-fusion* and will make clear the reason in Ch. 2.

musical instruments and Chinese musical instruments by turns, and the two different types of musical instruments were regarded as means expressing heterogeneous musical elements. As time goes by, however, *Hyangdanggyoju* itself became the part of Korean traditional music, and *dangak* (唐樂) experienced the process of conversion into *hyangak* (鄕樂); *dangak ui hyangakhwa* (唐樂의 鄕樂化), so now we consider both *hyangak* and *dangak* as just Korean traditional music. That means, what was fusion music before doesn't have the same meaning in the current viewpoint; What was fusion music before is not fusion music any more now, but just a part of traditional music.

Thus, what we call fusion music now is limited to the merging processes and effects of wholly distinct musical elements. That is, what has become the part of tradition despite its former fusional character is not included in fusion music. The fusion of past becomes today's tradition and today's fusion will become future's tradition. Fusion music, therefore, is a concept referring to contemporary music and cannot be defined apart from contemporaneity of "now and here."

2) Crossover and Fusion

Do crossover and fusion refer to the same thing? Though it has not been scientifically examined, we can define the relationship between them based on the context they are used. Crossover music usually designates pop song performed by classic singer or pop music arranged by classic musical instruments. In the music market, it means that a certain genre of pop music also makes a hit in charts of another genre of pop music. In contrast, fusion music, started from fusion jazz, has been produced by pop artists of creative minds who introduced elements of other genres of music to enlarge their musical style.⁴

To illustrate, crossover is like physical combinations of A and B that makes AB, whereas fusion is like chemical reaction of A and B that makes C. Yet when we estimate each musical performance, it is not simply decided whether the answer is AB or C because each critical view or position will cause relatively different evaluation. So I want to use the term "fusion" not to designate the musical outcome judging whether

⁴ *Dictionary of Popular Terms* (Seoul: Sekwang, 1994) p. 238.

it's AB or C, but to label a wide concept that join crossover and fusion together, esp. paying attention to the process of "musicking."⁵ That is to say, I want to use the term "fusion" to call collectively all ways of producing new sounds from two or more different musical genre, grammar, or arrangement of musical instruments.

3) *Changjakgugak* (newly composed Korean music) and *Fusiongugak* (Korean fusion music)

Before I get into explaining *fusiongugak* in contrast to *changjakgugak*, I want to clarify which is the more proper term, "*fusiongugak*" or "*gugakfusion*". I use the term *gugakfusion* and *gugakchangjak* instead of *fusiongugak* and *changjakgugak*. The reason is like this: these terms, *fusiongugak* and *changjakgugak* are compound words that end with "*gugak*", so they denote the characteristics of Korean music as a genre and works as closed terms. *Gugakfusion* and *gugakchangjak*, however, implying "creation within Korean music," and "fusion of Korean music with other kinds of music," work as opened terms laying more emphasis on the process of making music. While these words, fusion Korean music and creative Korean music, reflects the epistemological attitude of weighing "being" and "thing," *gugakfusion* and *gugakchangjak* are the words reflecting the attitude of "musicking," weighing "becoming" and "activity" as well.

Then what is the difference between *gugakfusion* and *gugakchangjak*? *Haegeam*'s performer, Kang Eun-Il's performance of "*Haegeum Concerto for Bangataryeong*" composed by Yi Joon-Ho with Korean orchestral music is considered as performing the piece of *gugakchangjak*, while the same *haegeum* player's impromptu performance of the theme of *Bangataryeong* with "Shin Kwan-woong Trio" is considered as

⁵ Christopher Small, a musical sociologist, invented the concept of "musicking." To music is "to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance," and it finds the essential nature and the meaning of music not in the object of a musical piece, but in the understanding of human beings who participate in musical activities (Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meaning of Performing and Listening*. Hanover, NH: UP of New England, 1998). Small argues "the essential nature and the meaning of music lies not in the object or certain musical pieces, but in the activities, that is, people's 'doing' music." To understand the nature and the function of music, it is necessary to understand what people are doing in their musical activities. (Small 8) The focus of this paper is not to analyze fusion musical pieces and explain their musical style, but to examine *gugak-fusion* concentrating on *gugak* musicians' musical activities, that is, "what they are doing in what circumstances."

performing of *gugakfusion*.

The example of Kang Eun-Il's two performances gives us two distinguishing factors between *gugakfusion* and *gugakchangjak*. The subject of this *gugakchangjak* is Yi Joon-Ho, the composer, and the object of performing, "*Haegeum* Concerto for *Bangtaryeong*," is an unchanging piece, so the meaning of performance does not change much by the factor whether the *haegeum* player is Kang Eun-Il or not. The subject of this *gugakfusion* is, however, "Kang Eun-Il, the performer" with the members of Shin Kwan-woon Trio. The core of the aesthetic effect in this case is derived from the improvisation of Kang Eun-Il's live performance with Shin Kwan-woong Trio, so it acquires the originality that cannot be replaced by other players' performances.

In this case of Kang Eun-Il's performance with Shin Kwan-woong Trio, it isn't included in the repertoire of *gugakchangjak*, because it ought to have musical construction that can be repeated by other players to be added in the repertoire of *changjakgugak*. It means the discriminating factor between *gugakfusion* and *gugakchangjak* is whether a musical piece exists as a score or a live performance. In some way, while *gugakchangjak* produces "music by the composer," *gugakfusion* produces "music by the performer," or "music uniting performance and composition."

Mostly, *gugakchangjak* refers to the expressions of individualistic musical grammar by modern composers, and performers are required to represent exactly what they are given in the scores, like western classic music performers playing pieces of western classical music. The following performers and groups share the common feature, however: Kang Eun-il's series of performing *haegeum* plus others, "*gugak-jazz*" by Kim Duksu, Ahn Sook-Sun and Redsun, creative percussion group "*Puri*" and "*Gongmyeong*," and soliste ensemble "*SangSang*." The common point is these performers participate in creating and organizing process of music pieces without the aid of composers. When they are using the scores, the scores do not exist as the medium of modern division of labor between composition and performance, but as the assistants used to help the performers remember the process of creating and organizing the musical pieces. In this sense, their "musicking" is postmodern; overcoming the modern musical method developed from the tradition of western

pure art. On the other hand, it also comes in contact with Korean traditional way of performance.

These two kinds of Korean music, moreover, can be distinguished in the respect of sociology of music. While *gugakchangjak* has been produced and received limitedly in the learned circles of Korean traditional music, *gugakfusion* finds its partner of fusion in jazz and Korean pop music influenced by western music, searches its way outside the circles of Korean traditional music and Korean traditional music academia, and embraces more actively the idea of popularization of Korean traditional music. Korean traditional music, being received by a small number of manias, and creation of Korean traditional music, being maintained by the support of *gugak*-academia and national organization, rely much on the protection and preservation of the government system. *Gugakfusion*, however, shows the obvious intention to survive in the market system constituted by cultural industry, so is expected to concentrate its effort on popularizing Korean traditional music.

4) The Postmodernity of *gugakfusion*

While *gugakchangjak* is one of the products of modernization project in Korean society since the first half of 20th century, *gugakfusion*, which emerged in the mid-1980s and bloomed through 1990s, can be described as the complex product of critical mind of modernity and the postmodern social, cultural background as well. Then, what kind of cultural air did influence *gugakfusion* which is the product of the second half of 20th century? Fusion as a new emerging cultural code since the second half of 20th century is characterized by its birth in the ruling influence of postmodern cultural environment.

Western metaphysics in the modern era grasped the world as to consist of binary oppositions, and drew a clear boundary between them, and gave priority to one certain position. Yet the digital technology of the postmodern era brought numerous changes: boundaries between genres are disturbed; the idea of distinction and separatism in the modern era is not tolerated any more; and given boundaries become extinct, united, or reconstructed.⁶

⁶ Kim Sung-Gon, *Fusion sidae ui saeroun munhwa ilggi* (Seoul: Munhak Sasangsa, 2003) 210-211.

"Fusion Age" is the term that reflects these changes. Today, in postmodern cultural environment, fusion becomes a new cultural code that includes fusion between genre and genre, popular and high art, technology and tradition, east and west, masculinity and femininity. Fusion today is different from fusion of former times: now, it is so prevalent and happening all around the modern society.⁷

These are the examples of Korean fusion music: the first record of "*Eaeobu* (어어부) project" by Jang Young-gyoo, the underground musician, and Won Il, the multifold artist of Korean traditional music; live-electro-acoustic music by Won Il and a computer music composer Yi Don-Eung; including of music pieces by Jang Young-Gyoo, Bach, and Yi Sung-Cheon in the record of *gayageum* chamber music group "*Sagye*"; singer Kim Yong-Woo's series of recordings, blending jazz and western classic music, or techno music and Korean/foreign ballad; the first record of "*Honjasarang*" which means "one-sided love" by composer Yi Kun-Yong, producer Ma Do-Won, and vocalist Jun Kyung-Ok; Kang Eun-Il's joint performance with jazz musicians. The spectrum of Korean fusion music is very wide from experimental and unpopular music to music actively accepting the grammar of popular music. Yet these examples share the common feature of various musical reactions toward fusion culture that makes new styles by disrupting and transcending the customary boundary between genres in modern sense.

3. The Examples of *gugakfusion*

Among the young traditional musicians between their twenties to forties, we will focus on the musical activities of four musical groups, "*Seulgidung*", "*Puri*", "*SangSang*", and "*Sagye*", which have opened the new world through their original musical world.

⁷ The examples of postmodern circumstance can be found in fusion music, fusion space, fusion fine arts, fusion cooking, fusion fashion and fusion movie. They are embodied through various kinds of merging between East and West, reality and ideal, past and future, technology and tradition, high culture and popular culture, and male and female. See Yi Hye-Joo and Kim Gye-Yeon.

1) *Seulgidung*

The first Korean fusion chamber orchestra since the Korean Liberation, "*Seulgidung*" which was started by some young members of KBS *Gugak* Orchestra in 1985 was founded with the motto of popularization of the Korean traditional music. *Seulgidung* is the most popular Korean fusion chamber orchestra as proven by the fact that all seats were booked up in big concerts like "2002 Farewell Year Concert" and "2003 Mid Summer Night Concert."

The main reason it gets the popularity from the young audiences is that the orchestra appealed with the popular way of instrumental organization and musical style. Above all, it created 'fusion sound' combining synthesizer and guitar which were not familiar instruments in live performance except in Kim Young-Dong's album. As a result, it appealed to the public who were used to the pop music. Since this try, the mixture of traditional instruments and electrical sounds of guitar and synthesizer became common among the traditional fusion bands attempting popular musical performance. Secondly, its early repertoires were Kim Young-Dong's "Where Should I go (어디로 갈거나)?" and Chae Chi-Sung's "*Gotbunneya* (꽃분네야)", and these folk-song-like music were "traditional songs to attract popular sense".⁸ The early musical strategy of *Seulgidung* is that it tried to establish a genre of Korean traditional pop song and electrical sounds.

The most popular songs in *Seulgidung*'s early stage are "*Gotbunneya* (꽃분네야)" and "Mountain Bugbear (산도깨비)". Especially, '*Gotbunneya* (꽃분네야)' is an exemplary Korean traditional pop song along with Kim Young-Dong's songs. The main characteristics are 2 division rhythm of 3/4 time of *mori* beat, traditional melody of *gyemyeonjo* or *menari tori* style usually used by traditional melodious instruments,⁹ and triple chord accompaniment of minor key by western musical instruments like guitars or synthesizers. By contrast, "Mountain Bugbear" and "Salt Seller" are cheerful and rhythmical major key pieces using *gyeongtori* melodious march of *gutgeori* style.

⁸ Song Hye-Jin, "*Seulgidung* creates the new image of traditional music," *Seulgidung/From the Till to the Coming Dawn*. Saehan Media, SCO-127TAC, 2001.

⁹ These two pieces are composed based on the six-step scale of Mi-Sol-La-Si-Do-Re and can be interpreted as the mix of *yukjabaegi tori* (Mi-La-Si-Do-Re) and *menari tori* (Mi-Sol-La-Do-Re).

Seulgidung has also tried to popularize folk songs like “*Hanobaengnyeong*” (Five Hundred Years), “Song of Sangju rice-planting (상주모심기 노래)”, “*Sukdaemeori* (쑥대머리)” into Korean traditional pop song style. The main melody is played by traditional instruments and voice, while triple chord accompaniment of functional harmony is played by western instruments (guitar and keyboard). The typical mode of Korean traditional pop song is that it has contrasting aspects of sorrowful and sentimental emotion on the *jungmori* rhythm and *gyemyeon* or *menari* mode, or cheerful emotion on the *gutgeori* or *jajinmori* rhythm with the melody based on *gyeongtori*.¹⁰

Seulgidung's style of instrumental music is classified into two types. The first one is the instrumentalized version of the songs which are dominated by minor mode¹¹ and developed upon slow tempo and slow harmonic rhythm such as “*Arirang*,” “*Hangyeryeong*,” and the instrumentalized version of these song's style such as “From the Evening Tide till the Coming Dawn.” Along with Kim Young-Dong's meditative music, this style of music can be accepted as a Koreanized adaptation of so-called ‘New Age’ style.¹² The second type is what the second period members (Won Il, Kwon Sung-Taek, Min Young-Chi, Huh Yoon-Jung, Kim Yong-Woo) have developed since 1993, and in addition to the former style of melody and chord, it has fortified dynamics with relatively fast tempo, grand volume, and powerful rhythm. The main repertoire is “The Wind”, “The Spirit of Goguryeo”, “*Sinpuri*”, “*Sinbaennori*”. These two trends continued until now even after the third period members joined the orchestra.

Seulgidung has two musical issue now; the first issue is the matter of developing the

¹⁰ Such style of Korean traditional pop song is applied not only to the music of *Seulgidung*, but to the first Korean traditional pop songs by Kim Young-Dong, Chae Chi-Sung, Jo Gwang-Jae, Hwang Ui-Jong, and *Eoullim*. These examples show the pattern of genre of Korean traditional pop song rather than the distinctive grammar of the composer in sound or melody.

¹¹ *Gyemyeon*, *menari* *tori* and the western harmonic minor melody.

¹² The first recording that professed itself for Korean new age music is Jeong Soo-Nyun's “Beautiful Things in Life”(Doremi Media, 2001), and the term “new age” was not used in *gugak-changjak* or *gugak-fusion* before this. When we consider the original meaning and style of new age, however, Korean new age music originates from so-called “light music” and “meditation music” produced by instrumentalization of Korean traditional pop song by Kim Young-Dong. *Seulgidung*'s slow instrumental musical pieces are also classified as Korean new age music, and they share the common feature of minor melody like *gyemyeon* or *menari* on slow harmonic rhythm and tempo.

genre of Korean traditional pop song, and the second issue is how it can maintain the original character of instrumental chamber orchestra. Specifically, the first issue is how *Seulgidung* can overcome the formalized musical convention of traditional pop songs and their instrumentalized versions which are assumed to be the main genre of Kim Young-Dong and early *Seulgidung* members. As for the Korean traditional pop songs, they invariably have typical rhythm pattern like *jungmori* and typical melodic style in *gyemyeon* and *menari* style, and rudimentary chord process, so they don't reveal the composer's originality. Though "*Hangyeryeong*" and "From the Evening Tide till the Coming Dawn," for instance, appealed to the sentimental public taste and gained the popularity, their hackneyed basic triple-chord and maudlin melody contributed to the retrogression of audiences.

As for the lyrics, they are far from obtaining the reality by satirizing the current society or describing contemporary urbanites' desire or routine. As 1930s' *sinminyo* (New Folk Songs) perished after the 1970's because they failed to adjust to the changing times and to acquire the current tension and dynamics, the same seems to be going on with the traditional pop songs.¹³

¹³ *Sinminyo*, which was popular in 1930s, had simple melody and form tinged with that of *chang-ga* though it was based on the melodic and rhythm of traditional popular songs. Both western musical instruments and Korean traditional instruments formed its instrumental organization. Sometimes only western musical instruments playing Korean traditional melody formed its musical organization and, with this organization, its grace notes became simpler and its pitch got nearer to the temperament (Yi Jin-Won, "*Sinminyo Yeongu I*," *Hanguk Eumbanhak* 7, Seoul: Hanguk Goeumban yeonguhoe, 1997, pp. 388-398). *Sinminyo* was widely circulated through the form of phonograph records and the subject matter of its lyrics was mainly about love and parting between man and woman like other popular songs. Yi Young-Mi argues that *sinminyo* could not flourish for the absence of keen consciousness about the contemporary lives in its lyrics, and so declined with the disappearance of the old generation that was familiar with its style (*Hanguk daejung gayosa*, Seoul: Sigongsa, 1998, pp. 78-82).

After its decline in 1960s, *sinminyo* (or *changjakminyo*) is revived in the musical pieces of *gugak-gayo*, which was the major genre worked by Kim Young-Dong in 1970s and fusion chamber groups like "*Seulgidung*" and "*Eoullim*" after the mid of 1980s. Kim Young-Dong's *gugak-gayo* like "Where Should I go? (어디로 갈거나)," "My Sister's Face (누나의 얼굴)," "Croaking of the Frogs (개구리 소리)," with the consciousness of engagement, showed the good examples of how Korean *minyo* can accept the worldwide change from traditional to modern. But *gugak-gayo* after Kim Young-Dong only inherit the formal pattern from his works and does not succeed in inheriting the emotions in them, so now in their declining ways. It is Kim Yong-Woo who tries to break through the present state of *sinminyo* and *gugak-gayo*. His starting point is *hyangtominyo* that is now almost forgotten in

The second issue is to keep the true character of chamber orchestra distinguished from traditional orchestra. The strategy of *Seulgidung* so far is to acquire audiences by combining the musical codes of orient and occident, and by making fusion sound of acoustics and electric sounds. It is worried that the second period members of *Seulgidung* is repeating the sound unbalance of the traditional orchestra by fortifying percussion part and electrical instruments and emulating the powerful sound of pop music band. From chamber orchestra, we expect delicate and independent sound of each part of orchestra and delicate musical communication between parts. However, the main focus of *Seulgidung* lies upon the percussion and wind parts adapting pop music with powerful beat and loud sound with amplification, thus the delicate expression and exquisite musical communication are disturbed.

Seulgidung, as the first generation of Korean chamber orchestral music, has walked on the most successful way of popularity. It can be the balanced model between artistic authenticity and popularity when it offers elaborate performance of fusion chamber music by pursuing more delicate and open dialogue between each musical instrument.

2) *Puri*: toward a fusion sound band from a creative percussion group

“*Puri*” as a creative percussion group (*changjak taek* group) has developed their music through their first (1993-1995), second (1995-2001), and third period (2002-). The first period concentrated on improvising performance: members like Kim Yong-Woo, Kwon Seong-Taek, and Won Il tried to deconstruct any existing rhythm at performances of foreign countries, especially in Japan. Then, in the second period, Won Il settled as a musical leader and Min Young-Chi, Kim Woong-Shik, and Jang Jae-Hyo joined to accumulate percussion music repertoires that were planned, created and produced, rather than improvised. In their third period, two new faces joined: Han Seung-Seok “*Pansori*” singer, and Jeong Jae-il, base-guitarist and keyboard-player

people’s memories. Using *hyangtominyo* and *yuhaengminyo* like *Gunbamtaryeong* and *Jangtaryeong* as the main texts, he merges the grammars of western music and Korean traditional music, and mixes its outcomes with the musical styles of traditional *jeongga*, *gyeong* · *seodominyo* and *namdominyo*. He has established his own style with temperament pitch and *gayo* style, and it has produced young manias for “Kim Yong-Woo style” beside the few manias for *gugak*.

in popular music field. With these new members, the current music of *Puri* is on its way of metamorphosis: from a “creative percussion group” toward a “fusion sound band”.¹⁴

The identity of “*Puri*” lies in the fact that this group is both a successor of *samulnori* and the first generation of post-*samulnori* group. The musical source of *Puri* is related to the musical context of *samulnori* in 1970s: *Puri* started from traditional rhythm and percussion instruments as *samulnori* did, but *Puri* reconstruct those to contemporary cultural, which appeals to the contemporary young generation. However, *Puri* is differentiated from *samulnori* in its attitude toward traditional rhythm, its performance style, and its musical contents. In the viewpoint of *Puri*, “playing a music to be appreciated on a stage with traditional instruments” does not have the experimental significance that *samulnori* achieved in their first trial any more. Rather, the audience is already accustomed to that kind of performance which cannot be more than natural. Thus, *Puri* cannot just follow *samulnori* in order to secure their supportive audience, namely the young generation in late 90s. The solution they found is to construct a new identity of *Puri*: not ‘another *samulnori* group’ but a ‘creative percussion group’.

Samulnori does reconstruct the outline of music in the upper structure so that it changes the order of rhythms, or introduces melodies from diverse regions and merges them into one musical work (e.g. *Samdo suljanggo* melody), but in the lower structure, the aesthetic order of traditional rhythm, so called traditional logic of rhythm development and respiration, is still untouched. On the other hand, *Puri* tries more radical change such as a new rhythmic pattern and new elements of musical sound in the lower structure as much as in the upper structure. The traditional rhythm, therefore, is an object for deconstruction and reconstruction for *Puri* since it is the material for creation.¹⁵ First of all, *Puri* deconstructs and reconstructs the map of musical instruments and their sound of *samulnori*. While *samulnori* aims at the harmony of “*Eum* and *Yang*,” made up of metallic sound of *gong*, and leather sound of drum and, *Puri* is not based on four instruments. On the contrary, *Puri* uses many of

¹⁴ This is mentioned during the interview with Won Il.

¹⁵ Lee, So-Young. “*Puri* and *Samulnori*”, *Romantic Music* (Seoul: Romantic Music Press, 1999), pp. 246.

each instrument like four drums and four *gongs*, and develops a new way of percussion (*Dadeuri* 1, *Dadeuri* 2, *Chaenori*) and moves toward more radical sound experiments. Moreover, foreign traditional percussion instruments such as Hawaiian woodblocks, Indian bells, and shakers appeared (*Saenuri*, *Gilgunak*, *Mun*). *Puri* has already deconstructed the traditional rhythmic structure called *jangdan* into a numeric “rhythm”. In doing so, traditional instruments became free from the traditional aesthetic ideas, and generalized as a percussion instrument to do sound experiments freely with any other percussion instrument. Of course, *samulnori* also tried a kind of fusion performance with other percussion instruments (mostly, drum sets), mainly those trials were Jazz or crossover music. That is, *samulnori* forms a secondary relation with drums in a co-performance with foreign melodic instruments such as a saxophone, it is literally a physical “co-performance,” not a kind of chemical combination in the first stage of planning.

In addition, *Puri* deconstructs and reconstructs the rhythmic pattern of traditional rhythm that *samulnori* expresses. Works of “Three-Two” is a good example that shows how they rely on tradition but at the same time how they move toward a new way of creation. The title “Three-Two” refers to the construction principle: based on five-beat of $3 + 2$, this five-beat is either long (three) or short (two), so that Three-Two is literally “long (*jang*) and short (*dan*),” rhythm. *Samulnori* does not change the conventional rhythmic pattern of three-, four- and five-beat for a certain time within one music. On the contrary, *Puri*’s Three-Two introduces quite a different rhythmic pattern, which shows diverse creation of new rhythmic patterns within a basic frame of five-beat although the tempo undergoes a gradual change from slow to fast.

Also, a consistent principle of rhythmic pattern through *Dadeuri* 1 and 2 is to create a more modern tension structure than that of *samulnori*: an artificial space for rhythm is created, where specific rhythm is distributed to each instrument in order to get an intentional syncopation. *Chaenori* found its motif from shamanism in the east coast area, which uses two to four *gongs* at the same time. Based on *Puneori*, *Chaenori* introduces western rhythm, especially the concept of “beat,” and four *gongs* play each rhythm in turn to construct a new musical space rather dynamically with some elements of performance. In the interview with Won Il, it is said that the principle of rhythm-development of *Puri* is to establish a much stronger structure of tense and

laxity than that of *samulnori*, and that the principle of form-construction is not to combine traditional rhythms such as *jungjungmori*, *jajinmori*, and *eonmori*, but to use the western concept of 'section'.¹⁶

Finally, *Puri* creates a new performance style that is different from *samulnori*. The move on the stage of *samulnori* is based on "virtuoso" performance style. *Puri* also has the element of "virtuoso" performance that shows difficult techniques, but on the other hand, it has live performance style of pop music that attracts young audience. The live performance style of pop-musicians is natural to *Puri* to some extent. This means that *Puri*'s own performance shows the performance style of pop-music as well as the performance with some underground pop-music bands such as "Next" and "Eoeobu project".

For *Puri*, the arrangement of instruments and the move of players are as important elements as musical elements. While *samul* of *anjeunban* (sitting style) made audience's eyes fixed and the audience concentrated on the musical sound itself, *Puri* composes the spatial move on a stage intentionally and dynamically. The performances of the second period of *Puri* sometimes display a traditional dancing of *seonban* (standing style), which is also a stage direction in the concept of intended performance. The gesture of *seonban* is a material on the way to a new performance: you can find a gesture of a drummer in the performance of Stomp, pounding big tins, or that of Won Il playing several Books. And also, they cross the whole stage, left and right, front and back, and sometimes they are aggressive with a strong rhythm, and sometimes they throw boyish gestures and facial expressions full of wit and humor, and sometimes they are both like machos found in *samulnori* or Rock music and gender-neutral image of "cute guys" like idol stars. This enables the young audience to applause and cheer at *Puri*'s musical wit or at star-ish gestures (although it's not a climax of the music), while *samulnori* evokes applauses with its strict musical tension and climax and

¹⁶ Interview with Won Il: "In general, traditional music is said to have enough tense-lax structure, but this was originally attained at *madang* or *pan*. When it is moved to a stage, it should be transformed to another form of music that is proper for stage performance. *Samulnori* was also constructed. However, more distinctive tense-lax structure is required to be performed on a stage. So, I tried to import the western concept of "section" to separate assembling, disassembling and adlib for Korean rhythm. The result is Three-Two." "Won Il's Musical World," *National Music and Modernity*. 155.

fantasy. The audience is interested in *Puri*'s various rhythm and sound, and their combination and experiments. Furthermore, *Puri* uses the direction of performance to maximize 'playing' aspect that is transformed to modern taste and 'star-ish' aspect that is easily found in pop-musicians' stage. *Puri* is active in importing various stage conventions and performance styles of pop culture.¹⁷ This performance style can never be found in listening to their album at home — possible only in front of their stage.

So far, the performance style of the second period of *Puri* has been discussed. Now *Puri* enters into a new phase in the year 2002 and 2003, with Han Seung-Seok, a professional *Pansori* singer, and Jeong Jae-il, a base-guitarist, instead of Min Young-Chi and Jang Jae-Hyo, the members of the second period. In addition to percussion, songs of traditional singing and the tune of synthesizer and guitar are strengthened on the way of transformation from percussion group to fusion sound (*pyeujeonsori*) band. Since Han and Jeong cover percussion parts as well as melody parts, of course, the character of 2nd period *Puri* is still remaining. However, on top of it, traditional songs of Korea and pop-music sound of the West are combined to include melodic fusion as well as rhythmic fusion. Thus, the members of the team may focus on 'sori band' where rhythmic instruments and melodic instruments coexist, rather than intensive creative percussion music of the second period *Puri*. The bottom line of *Puri*'s innovation is how to accumulate creative musical repertoires with traditional *Pansori* singing and percussion and electric sounds, which differentiate *Puri* from *Seulgidung*, a complex band of wind, string, percussion music and electric music or other chamber music groups.

4) *Sagye* and *SangSang*

"*Sagye*" and "*SangSang*" are traditional chamber string music group, whose members are all female. They fall on 'post-*Sanjo*' generation as players in their mid twenties and thirties. *Sanjo* generation refers to the generation that produced and developed *sanjo* such as Kim Jook-Pa style, Sung Kum-Yeon style in *gayageum* field, Shin Kwae-Dong and Han Gap-Deuk style in *gummongo* field, Ji Young-Hee style,

¹⁷ Lee, So-Young, pp. 66-67.

Han Bum-Su style in *haegeum* field: they formed characteristic schools from late 19C when *gayageum sanjo* was formed till mid 20C. The offsprings of *sanjo* generation since late 20th century did not form a new school any more: they were educated at universities and got used to playing traditional Korean music with the western five-line notes. These musicians made post-*sanjo* generation. That is, instead of making a new school of *sanjo*, post-*sanjo* generation has used the instrumental pieces of *changjakgugak* written by modernised composers to extend it's repertoires.¹⁸

The musicians in the Post-*sanjo* generation face the task of popularization and modernization of Korean music, and they strive to construct their own music with a different music style from *sanjo*. Post-*sanjo* generation can be classified into two: one group thoroughly divide the role of composers and players classic, which is similar with the western system of classical music, and they limit themselves as players so that they ask composers to create and extend the repertoires. In the other group, players themselves try to create a new genre, following the conventional system of Korean traditional music. Except for Byoung-Ki Hwang and Young-dong Kim, most musicians in the post-*sanjo* generation have worked in the modern western style of the separation of players and composers. Judging from what they've done so far, *gayageum* ensemble "*Sagye*" separates composition and performance, while soloist ensemble "*SagnSang*" prefers the improvised performance of players so that *SangSang* does both composition and performance. Therefore, *Sagye* can be regarded as a successor of previous chamber music group such as "*Seoul Saeul Gayageum*", *gayageum* trio, while *SangSang* do both composition and performance like *Puri*. *Sangang* is

¹⁸ Kim Hae-Sook, Baek Dae-woong, Choi Tae-hyun. *Intoduction to Traditional Music* (Seoul: Uhoolim Press, 1997). divides four generations as to *gayageum sanjo*: I named the first three generations as '*Sanjo* generation' and the fourth as 'post-*sanjo* generation.' The third generation is made up of female maestros, born in 1910s and 1920s. They started learned kayagum through *kwon Beon* (female entertainer's society) Kim Jook-Pa (1911-1989), (1917-1994), and Sung Gum-Yeon (1923-1986) inherited the *sanjo* melody from the second generation to which they inserted their own melodies to reach a new school. The fourth generation experienced not only traditional but also systemized and modernised school education to learn *gayageum sanjo*. They are expected to create a different *sanjo* from traditional one that was formed in one century. Ibid., pp. 140-142. I regard the current professors in music schools and their students as post-*sanjo* generation. Considering that a new school has not yet appeared externally, they are characterized as playing inherited *sanjo* and the pieces of *changjakgugak*, not making a new school of *sanjo* for themselves.

differentiate from *Puri* because of focusing on improvisation of string instruments.

① *Sagye*

Born in 1999, "*Sagye*" is a *gayageum* chamber music group of four *gayageum* players in one team. Ensemble group "*Sagye*" tries to extend the limit of *gayageum* that has been settled as an instrument for solo or orchestra, representing Korean music instruments in 20C. As "100 lines" symbolizes, they use 25-line *gayageum*, extended from 12-line *sanjogayageum*, with magnified range and depth of sound. Not one, but four improved *gayageum* and their new tone and color of sound make a big difference from previous *sanjo gayageum*'s music paradigm. The players must have a totally different desire since four 25-line *gayageum* requires musical imagination on various sound tones and colorful texture, which again brings a motivation to create. The improved *gayageum* has brought a totally different music world from that of previous *sanjo gayageum* or its extended 17-line *gayageum*.¹⁹

The difference between 17-line *gayageum* and 25-line *gayageum* lies whether to play heptachord easily or not. Straightforwardly, *Sagye* group's mascot, The performance of Vivaldi's Four seasons and Bach's Synphonia in *gyeonganbeob* style can be the criteria to differentiate the two instruments.²⁰ This shows the possibility to go beyond the limit of traditional *gayageum*, playing western musical idiom without hindrance.

So far, *Sagye* has tried various style of music:: the arrangement of a Korean folk song (ex: Bird song), a piece of *changjakgugak* (ex: Legend of Far Future-composed by Lee Seong-Cheon), the transcription of western or world music (ex: Piazzola's Oblivion, Bach's, and Vivaldi's), and co-work with Jang Young-Kyoo, a composer in the field of popular music and film music (ex: 'One Day', OST in "Fashion Show"), and a sort of

¹⁹ Lee So-Young. "What Remains to the Post-Sanjo Generation: *Sagye* and *SangSang*," *National Art* (Seoul: Association of Korea National Artists, 2003 Jan).

²⁰ The phrase "Bach's music and *gyeonganbeob* style ensemble" requires further explanation on "*Seoul Saeul gayageum*", Korean music *gayageum* trio. "*Seoul Saeul Gayageum* trio" already played Pachelbel's Canon before *Sagye* (Recording Korean Traditional Music *Seoul Saeul Gayageum* trio Korean Traditional Music Vol XV. Ye-Jun Media. Recorded in 1992). Thus *Sagye* is not the first group that tried transcription of western music with *gayageum*. "*Seoul Saeul*" and "*Sagye*," however, are different in that "*Seoul Saeul*" played Canon with 5-note scale *gayageum* and *sagye* used 7-note scale *gayageum*. Using 5-note scale *gayageum*, you should press the string (with *yeokan* technique): for example, with strings of sol-la-do-re-mi scale, ti note comes out of the string la by pressing it with *yeokan* technique. 7-note scale *gayageum* does not require pressing a string since there is a string for it.

gayageumbyeongchang (playing *gayageum* and singing by one player) in modern style (ex: Kim Soon-Nam's lullaby, Kim Hwal-Seong's "Fallen Petal").

Following their founding resolution, they have covered past (古), present (今), art (雅), and popularity (俗). In their repertoire, creative Korean Music is getting more and more important after the second periodic concert "Four Colors and Four Thoughts (四色四索)."²¹ Most of their repertoires are played with 25-line *gayageums*. The musical ideas of 25-line *gayageum* is similar to that of Piano or string quartet in modern western music: especially, *Sagye* has rich harmony and sound quantity, 7-note scale music where modulation and transposition is rather convenient, vertical and polyphonic texture of four *gayageums'* ensemble, which look like the conditions of modern western music.

However, 25-line *gayageum* that can replace a piano or a harp does not represent the music world of "*Sagye*." As *Sagye* itself admits,²² "The Line" (composed by Lee Tae-Won) is considered the best, which uses traditional *nonghyeon* techniques a lot and focuses on microtone effect in the intentional polyphonic texture with four pieces of *sanjo gayageum*. This means that the possibility of modern ensemble based on traditional music is open in front of them, and we will watch over their struggle.

② *SangSang*

Soliste ensemble "*SangSang*", made by Heo Yunjeong (*geomungo*), Kang Eun-Il (*haegeum*), Yoo Kyung-Hwa (*cheolhyeongeum* and percussion) in the year of 2000, is different from *gayageum* ensemble "*Sagye*" in that each soliste contributes his/her characteristic to make an ensemble. "*SangSang*" starts from a peculiar part like a small universe of each soliste's characteristic or each instrument itself so that *SangSang* is a transformed traditional Korean chamber ensemble while "*Sagye*," using four same instruments, *gayageum*, accepts the ideas of the homogeneous arrangement like western string quartet. Also, "*SangSang*" thinks much of the spontaneity: players themselves create and construct and improvise as in the traditional *samhyeonjukgak* way. Nevertheless, *SangSang* has their own personality that cannot be seen from the

²¹ December 3, 2002, it was performed at Hoam Art Center.

²² The leader of *Sagye*, Koh Ji-Youn mentioned that she thought the most ideal result of *Sagye* so far was "The Line" in the interview (July, 15, 2003).

same point of pre-modern traditional musicians, since *SangSang* is located at the point of post-*sanjo* (or post-tradition) and post-*gugakchangjak*.

Through the last century, musicians, who acquired traditional music as their mother tongue systemized *sanjo*, which became a genre with tremendous artistic achievement. *sanjo* is the flower of people's music style as a result of various techniques that were developed after the transition from *gyeonganbeob* to *yeokanbeob*.²³ *sanjo* is the limit itself of *yeokanbeob* because it includes all the techniques that *yeokanbeob* allows. Moreover, *sanjo* is the last traditional art genre where performance and composition are unified in that players construct music and play it. This is the portrait of *sanjo* between late 19C and mid 20C.

Then, how is post-*sanjo* generation after late 20C? Post-*sanjo* is different from *sanjo* in two aspects: first, performance and composition is separated into hierarchical divisions. Second, they have distinctive music style and techniques. The separation of performers and composers is one of the important changes on the way from *sanjo* to *changjakgugak*. This means a transition to a composition-performance relation where a composer completes a music text on five-line notes and a player re-presents it. The establishment of modern composers brings a different music style and technique, which means, in terms of string instruments, *gyeonganbeob* is introduced for speedy passage and harmonic progression in addition to traditional techniques such as *yeokanbeob*. These two conventions of post-*sanjo* music signify a western modernization of Korean traditional music since mid 20th century. On the other hand, it means that traditional music as an object of modernization has been embraced into conventions and systems of *gugakchangjak*.²⁴

However, "*SangSang*" started from the question on the paradigm that the first generation of post-*sanjo* took as an alternative. They saw that traditional way of composition-performance unification turned into a half creation of composition only, separated from performance. In doing so, performers cannot keep up their domain in deciding musical text and their subjectivity could not help being confined. *SangSang* faced this problem and struggled to overcome it.

²³ Lee So-Young. "Sagye (四季) and Sagye (四界)", *Romantic Music* (Serial No. 45, 1999, Winter), 209-210.

²⁴ Lee So-Young. "What Remains to the Post-*sanjo* Generation II," *National Art*. 2003. March, 71.

Thus, “*SangSang*” was post-*sanjo* in that they didn’t confine their music world in what they learned from their teachers, but pursued their own world as modern musicians did. At the same time, “*SangSang*” try to overcome the hierarchical divided structure of composition-performance and to recover the unified system of performance and composition. Therefore, they are post-*gugakchangjak*.

In this sense, “*SangSang*” goes the same way with other examples of *gugakfusion*. What makes “*SangSang*” distinguished from other post-*gugakchangjak* generation groups, however, is that the spontaneity of their performance is the most important part. In unifying performance and creation, impromptu plays the most important role, resulting in “free music”. Each member of *SangSang* was influenced by co-work with free jazz musicians such as Kang Tae-Hwan and Kim Dae-Hwan. And *SangSang* directed lots of concerts with them for the first one year or two. Consequently, their main tendency so far was to combine the improvising music style and experimental and a-tonal free jazz style.

However, two repertoires recently performed by *SangSang* predict the way they are heading.²⁵ One is the musical piece, “*Yunhoe* (transmigration)”, which tries the fusion within Korean traditional music such as folk music, Buddhist music, and *jeongak*. This piece showed that recently they are more focused on the redemption of impromptu of folk music that has almost failed in being inherited.²⁶ The other music piece is

²⁵ July 30, 2003. Open Korean Music Stage “Sound Sympathy at Holiday Afternoon”(sponsored by The National Center for Korean Traditional Performing Arts and KFM), It was performed at *Byulmajiteo*, the outside stage of NCKTPA.

²⁶ “Transmigration (輪廻) — a Buddhist ideology that everything with life must be born again and the life is repeated. In 2001, first performed at Buam Art Hall. At that time, it was 30-minute long performance, and in addition to *SangSang*’s *haegeum*, *geomungo*, *cheolhyeongeum*, percussion, singing and *daegeum* played together (The duration and players can be changed.). It had the intention to extend the *Sinawi* confined to *namdogyemyeonjo* to many traditional genres. *jeongak* (*Yeongsanhoesang*, aria.), ballads (*Menari*, *Kyeonggi*, *Namdo*.), *Pansori*, *Sinawi*, Religious music, Buddhist invocations were all covered and impromptu was tried. In the end, they wanted to show that all the music is related and there is something that goes through all the music (In fact, when the idea came, there was only a rough guess that there might be something like that, but while creating the music, all the music were actually related and unified.). This shows what *SangSang* pursues, namely the inheritance of traditional impromptu, and the length of 30 minutes (which is also the characteristic of traditional music) harmonizes solo and ensemble without break.” from *SangSang* composition idea note (not published).

"*Sangsangjaju* (Imagination — freedom)". This tries free and unexpected melody and rhythm through discovery of a new tone and technique of Korean musical instrument and through impromptu. "*Sangsangjaju* shows that *SangSang* will continue the avant-garde musical experiments of free music."²⁷

"*SangSang*"s music is able to be called "modern *Shinawi*" in that they have developed experimental sound tone and technique and that they have recovered the tradition of impromptu which was almost forgotten among post-*sanjo* generation. The task in front of *SangSang* is to overcome the potential mannerism that lies in the defective construction and the repetition of similar performances. And also, they have to combine the concept of impromptu and composition, and attain the coexistence of traditional and modern style in their music world without losing balance.

4. Conclusion

"*Seulgidung*," "*Puri*," "*Sagye*," and "*SangSang*" are the groups showing a wide spectrum of musical traits in the field of *gugakfusion*. The popular music by "*Seulgidung*" and the avantgardian music by "*SangSang*" seem to be at the opposite extreme of the spectrum. They are on the same spectrum, however, if we look at them paying attention to the motive driving their musical performance, not to the results like each group's different musical grammar. They are the groups of performers, not the groups of composers. When we take a look at *gugakfusion*, the objects of the discourse are always composers and their musical works. Yet the subject of *gugakfusion* is performers. Sometimes they need co-working and guidance of composers, but the critical point is "musicking" of "*Sagye*" or "*Puri*" and the musical piece of each composer only have its meaning on the map of their musicking. "Musicking," referring to all their performances, musical works, relationship between composers and audiences, can be substituted by the word "musical activity."

They are post-*sanjo* generation in common, too. Post-*sanjo* generation refers to the

²⁷ mentioned in the interview with the member of *SangSang*, Huh Yoon-Jung (*geomungo* player). July 28, 2003.

generation born after the Korean Liberation and educated in the modern music school, so familiar with western music that was already dominant in Korean society at that time. Post-*sanjo* generation can be divided again into two groups: the first and the second generation. The first post-*sanjo* generation consists of primary performers and composers at their fifties to sixties who have led the creative Korean music after 1960s. The second post-*sanjo* generation consists of new performers at their thirties to forties who try to open a new way of *gugakchangjak* free from the habitual practice of their former generation. They were pupils of the first generation when *gugakchangjak* started to become the part of tradition like *jeongak* and *sanjo*. They were showered with westernized Korean popular music at their adolescent ages and stood in the middle of movement for democracy at their youth ages in 1980s. They think more freely, less authoritatively and also they are more familiar with postmodern cultural environment. They are trying to do new “musicking” of post-*gugakchangjak* instead of *gugakchangjak* to open a new way of doing music in their own words and in their own way.

Their musical styles vary through popular to experimental and strict composition to free impromptu, but they are common to search for new musicking activities and new musical grammar, breaking away from the legacy of their former generation like *sanjo*, *changjakgugak*, and *samulnori*. They unite Korean traditional musical grammar, western musical grammar, and various musical elements growing to be “world music,” laying their central axis on chamber music. They can be estimated as more genuine fusion musicians than Kim Duk-Su and Red Sun, because they dissolve the traditional musical grammar on the basis and reconstruct new musical grammar through the chemical combination with other musical elements. Their works are heading for new-fangled creation and experiment beyond the level of arrangement and adaptation, then we may expect that one day the term “fusion” does not mean anything much, because each creative result of each performing group does not want to be confined in the frame of “fusion.” Thus I am expecting that the term “*gugakfusion*” will be used temporarily, because “fusion” has no more meaning when the new creation begins to be recognized its existence and is not called by the name of “the third” creature derived from the first and the second creature. At that time the goal of music won’t be the idea like modernization or popularization of tradition, but

each musician's pursuit of his or her own creativity. Such tendency starts to be perceived already.

Then, how should we look at the development of Korean fusion music? As once fusion jazz was blamed as degradation of jazz and folk rock was condemned as degradation of folk, some people may criticize *fusiongugak* as deterioration or distortion of Korean traditional music. A few years ago, I disapproved of the performance of Beatle's "O Bladi, O Blada" and Korean children's song "Orchard Road" by KBS Korean Traditional Music Orchestra as a "liger,"²⁸ and also condemned the so called "Korean New Age Music" as the outcome of "commercial Orientalism."²⁹ It is true, however, that there are many musicians that can never be labeled as a liger or commercial Orientalist, who makes new achievement with creative aspiration and earnest experiment. Now we need to have discerning eyes to assess the "musicking" of rapidly increasing new fusion music groups by young artists mostly in their twenties to thirties.

First, we have to ask these questions: Does fusion music rely on eclecticism to produce music half fresh and half sweet to ears of audience? Isn't it making a deformed and lifeless "liger" that is no better than a tiger and a lion? And, moreover, doesn't it using the liger as commercial means? That is, we have to endeavor to discriminate between popularization of Korean traditional music and commercialism, and the major standard of judgment is not the popularity, but the artistic value and creativity of fusion music. Second, because the weakening of Korean traditional music comes from compulsory situation under the rule of Japanese and Western Imperialism rather than from the inner causes, we cannot consider Korean fusion music with the same view toward western fusion jazz. Our historical background of fusion with foreign music is totally different from western historical background. Our tradition has been protected consciously because its existence has been often threatened by cultural plunder of Japanese and Western Imperialism lasting almost for one century. The history of our tradition has not been made in the process of

²⁸ Lee So-Young. "Some Issues on Commercialization of Traditional Music," *Romantic Music* 1998. Fall.

²⁹ Lee So-Young. "Popularization of Korean Traditional Music and Commercial Orientalism." *Romantic Music* 15 (Seoul: Romantic Music Press, 2003).

autonomous modernization since Japanese colonial period. If the musical grammar and aesthetic order of traditional music is chosen superficially to suite to westernized public taste under the name of fusion, it is worried that one day, after the fusion music becomes the new part of tradition, our next generation cannot relish the rich material of real Korean traditional music. We need to discover, therefore, more various musical resources like shaman rhythms or local ballads beside a few famous rhythms and melodic pattern of traditional music.

Gugakfusion has adopted the idea of contemporaneity and popularity to escape from the "old and conservative" images of Korean traditional music. Now, Korean fusion musicians should bear in mind that the creative attitude going beyond eclecticism and the will to discover rich musical resources of Korean traditional music are the basic attitude needed for the development of Korean music.

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퓨전시대의 새로운 음악 읽기: 국악퓨전을 중심으로

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1. 국악퓨전의 범주 및 특징

퓨전(fusion)이란 fuse라는 영어 동사의 명사형으로 ‘융합’, 또는 ‘융해’의 뜻을 가진 일반 명사로서 서로 떨어져 있는 사물, 생각이나 무리 등이 함께 조합되는 것을 의미한다.¹ 퓨전이란 용어는 20세기 중반에서야 등장한 것이지만 서로 다른 요소들이 접목되고 상호작용하는 현상은 오래 전부터 있어 왔다.

한국음악의 예만 보더라도 역사적 연원은 향악기와 당악기의 혼합편성인 ‘향당교주’²까지 거슬러 올라 갈 수 있으며 해금, 장고, 양금 등 수많은 외래 악기들이 들어와 향악에 사용되고 그 과정에서 음악 역시 향악화되는 등 한국음악의 역사를 보면 중국을 비롯한 여러 지역과 민족의 영향을 받으면서 이를 기존의 것과 융합시켜 새로운 악곡 및 악기 편성 등을 정착시킨 것을 발견할 수 있을 것이다.

퓨전이란 용어가 한정하는 대상이 이렇게 광범위해진다면 굳이 오늘날의 어떤 특정한 문화적·음악적 현상을 설명하기 위해 퓨전음악이란 용어가 과연 독자적인 의미를 형성할 수 있는가라는 질문이 떠오르게 된다. 그리고 이러한 질문은 결국

¹ 이해주, 김계연, “생활 환경에 나타난 퓨전문화(Fusion Culture)에 관한 연구”, 『중앙대학교 생활과학논집』(서울: 중앙대학교 생활과학연구소, 2001) pp. 166-167 참조.

² 악학궤범, 제5권에 “보태평(保太平) 향당교주(鄕唐交奏)”란 말이 처음 등장하는데(이해구역주, 신역 악학궤범, 국립국악원, 2001, 307쪽 재인용) 조선 전기에는 이 용어가 악곡의 편성 형태를 지칭하는 것이었으나 조선 후기에 오면 악곡명으로 사용되어 보허자 정음등과 함께 당시의 정재(무용)반주음악으로 자주 사용되었다고 한다. 황준연, 『영산회상연구(靈山會相研究)』(서울: 서울대학교 출판부, 1999) pp. 106-111 참조.

이 글에서 논하려고 하는 국악퓨전의 대상과 범주는 무엇인가라는 질문과 연결된다.

1) 퓨전의 의미

악학궤범에 기록되었던 '향당교주'에서 향악기와 당악기는 토착악기와 외래악기로서 서로 다르게 간주되었고 이질적인 음악적 요소를 각각 담고 있는 매개체로 인식되었기 때문에 이 둘 간의 '교주'(交奏)란 그때 당시의 관점에서는 서로 '떨어져 있는 두 사물이 서로 만나고 섞이는' 퓨전 행위에 해당하는 것이다. 그러나 오랜 세월을 거치면서 향당교주 자체가 하나의 전통으로 고착되었고 당악이 향악화되면서 현재적 관점에서는 두가지 요소가 다 국악(혹은 한국 전통음악)이라는 하나의 범주와 대상으로 인식되는 과거로부터 전해오는 재래음악이기 때문에 현재적 관점에서 퓨전이란 의미발생이 일어나는 것은 아니다. 과거에는 퓨전이었던 것이 현재에 와서는 더 이상 퓨전이 아니게 된 것이다.

그러므로 퓨전이란 과거화 되지 않은 현재 진행형에 해당하는 것이고 과거의 퓨전이 오늘의 (전래된)전통이 되듯이 오늘의 퓨전이 정착되면 내일의 전통이 되는 것이다. 이런 의미에서 퓨전이란 용어와 개념은 '오늘·여기'라는 현재적 시공간과 분리해서 정의될 수 없다는 특성을 갖는다.

2) 크로스오버(cross over)와 퓨전(fusion)

다음으로, 크로스오버와 퓨전은 같은 대상을 가리키는 것인가. 그간 흔히 크로스오버 음악이라고 하면 클래식 가수가 팝송을 부르거나 팝뮤직을 클래식 악기로 편곡한 것 등을 지칭하여왔고 음반시장에서는 대중음악계의 이쪽 장르 음악이 다른 쪽 장르 음반 순위에서 동시다발적으로 히트를 치는 것을 의미한 것으로 알려져 있다. 이에 비하여 퓨전이란 것은 퓨전 재즈를 시발(始發)로 하여 대중음악계의 아티스트(artist)들이 자신의 스타일 확장을 위해 타 장르 요소를 도입하여 기존의 것과 혼합하는 창작적 마인드와 연결된 것이라고 할 수 있다.³

또한 음악 결과물을 놓고 볼 때 크로스오버를 $A+B=AB$ 라는 물리적 결합에, 퓨전을 $A+B=C$ 의 화학적 결합으로 구별지을 수도 있다. 그러나 여기서는 퓨전이란 용어를 C냐, AB냐라는 결과적 측면에 주목하지 않고 $A+B$ 라는 과정적 측면에

³ [파퐁러음악용어대사전](Dictionary of Popular Musical Terms), 서울: 세광음악출판사, 1994, 238쪽 참조.

한정하여 음악하기(musicking)⁴란 측면에서 좁은 의미의 크로스오버와 퓨전을 모두 아우르는 넓은 의미의 개념으로 사용하고자 한다. 즉 음악가들이 두개 이상의 기존 장르 및 어법, 또한 기존 장르의 악기 편성을 해체하고 새로운 악기 편성을 이루어 새로운 음향을 만들어내는 모든 ‘섞는’ 행위를 총칭하는 의미에서 넓은 의미의 퓨전이란 개념을 사용하겠다는 것이다.

3) 국악창작과 국악퓨전

국악창작과 국악퓨전은 어떻게 다른가. 예컨대 해금 연주자 강은일이 이준호 작곡의 “방아타령을 위한 해금협주곡”을 국악 관현악과 협연하는 것은 창작국악곡을 연주하는 것이고 같은 연주자가 신관웅 재즈 밴드와 방아타령을 주제로 하여 즉흥 연주를 하는 것은 창작국악곡을 연주하는 것이 아니라 그냥 퓨전이라고 생각하는 것이 현재 우리의 통념이다.⁵ 앞의 예가 시사하는 국악창작과 국악퓨전의 변별점은 다음의 두가지 요소이다. 첫째 국악창작의 주체는 해금 연주자 강은일이 아닌 작곡가 이준호이고 “방아타령을 주제로 한 해금협주곡”이라는 연주 대상은 악보로 고정되어 있는 불변적 요소로 작용하기 때문에 연주에 있어서 강은일이 아닌 다른 어떤 해금 연주가 되어도 의미가 크게 달라지지 않는다. 그러나 국악퓨전의 주체는 ‘연주하는 강은일’이고 강은일의 “신관웅 트리오”와의 협연은 라이브 연주의 현장성과 즉흥성이 미학적 핵심을 이루기 때문에 다른 누구의 연주로 대체될 수 없는

⁴ 이 글에서는 ‘퓨전-국악’이란 용어 대신 ‘국악-퓨전’이란 용어를 사용하고자 하는데 그 이유는 다음과 같다. 창작국악이란 용어는 ‘퓨전+국악’과 ‘창작+국악’의 합성어로서 ‘퓨전’이나 창작과 같은 동사의 명사형을 수식어로 갖고 있는 음악작품을 뜻하는 것이다. 이것은 어떤 ‘것’(thing)이란 사물적 특성을 염두에 둔 것이고 이것이 음악에 적용될 때 닫힌 개념으로서의 장르적 특성을 염두에 둔 말이 된다. 그러나 국악창작, 혹은 국악퓨전이란 것은 ‘국악으로 창작하기’, ‘국악을 가지고 어떤 것과 융합하기’ 등으로 풀이되는 것으로서 합성어의 뒷말이 동사의 명사형인 만큼 이는 열린 개념으로서 과정적, 행위적 측면에 더 큰 비중을 두는 개념이 될 수 있다. 퓨전국악이나 창작국악이 ‘있음’과 ‘물(物)’ 즉 being과 thing을 중심에 두는 인식적 태도를 반영하는 것이라면 국악창작과 국악퓨전은 ‘되어감’과 ‘행위’ 즉 becoming과 activity에 중심을 두는 ‘음악하기(musicking)’의 인식적 태도를 반영한 용어이다. “음악하기” 개념은 크리스토퍼 소몰(Christopher Small)의 『Musicking』 참조할 것(The Meaning of Performing and Listening, Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1998).

⁵ 이준호 작곡, 경기도립국악단과 강은일 협연의 “방아타령을 주제로 한 해금 협주곡”은 음반 [경기도립국악단](경기도립국악단 · 기획/한누리 · 제조/(주)SKC HNR-T001, 1997)에 실려 있고 강은일이 재즈밴드 신관웅 트리오와 협연한 “해금과 재즈-방아타령방아타령”은 음반, [오늘, 한국의 젊은 국악 Sounds of Korea, Today](Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Korea, 1999)에 실려 있다.

고유성을 갖는다. 그런 의미에서 방아타령이라는 기존 재료를 똑같이 사용하면서도 이 둘이 구별되는 이유는 악곡의 존재 방식이 악보를 통해서 구현되는가, 혹은 라이브 연주를 통해서 구현되는가의 차이에 있다. 요컨대 국악창작이 '작곡가의 음악'을 양산하는 것이라면 국악퓨전은 '연주가의 음악', 혹은 '연주와 작곡이 합일된 음악'을 양산하는 것이라고도 변별할 수 있을 것이다.

음악사회학적 측면에서도 국악 창작과 국악퓨전사이에는 일정한 변별점을 형성한다. 국악창작의 생산과 수용이 국악대학과 국악계라는 제도권 학계 내에서 제한적으로 이루어졌던 반면 국악퓨전은 퓨전의 파트너를 서양 클래식 음악보다는 재즈나 서구음악에 영향 받은 한국 대중음악으로 설정하면서 '국악계' 혹은 '국악 아카데미(academia)' 밖으로의 진출을 꾀하고 국악의 대중화라는 이념을 국악창작보다 훨씬 더 적극적으로 부여안게 된다. 국악퓨전은 대중음악계의 관행 및 마인드를 받아들여 동시대의 대중을 구매 청중으로 창출하겠다는 것으로, 문화산업이 조성하는 시장논리와 경쟁 구조에 뛰어들겠다는 분명한 의지를 갖는다는 의미에서 국악의 대중음악화를 꾀하는 활동에 주력한다고 볼 수 있는 것이다.

4) 국악퓨전의 탈근대적 성격

국악창작이 20세기 전반기(前半期)부터 한국사회 전체에 관통해온 서구식 근대화 프로젝트에 대응한 국악활동의 산물 중 하나라면 국악퓨전은 1980년대 중반에 시작되어 1990년대를 거치면서 융성하기 시작한 것인 만큼 시기적으로도 반세기 뒤늦게 나타난 것으로서 90년대 이후 나타나는 한국사회의 탈근대적(postmodern)인 사회·문화 환경과도 직, 간접적으로 연관된 음악적 대응으로 조명 될 수 있다.

페더스톤(Featherstone)에 의하면 모더니즘의 주된 특성 중 하나가 미학적 자의식과 반성이라면 포스트모더니즘은 예술과 일상 생활 사이의 경계를 허물고 고분문화와 대중문화 사이의 계급적 구분이 붕괴되었고 예술적 생산자의 독창성/천재성과 반복될 수 있다는 가정을 거부하는 것이라고 하였다.⁶ 여기서 주목할 만한 것은 모더니즘이 고급문화와 대중문화에 엄격한 분리의 선을 긋는 반면, 포스트모더니즘에서는 고급문화와 대중문화의 경계가 모호해지면서 예술과 일상생활의 경계도 허물어진다는 것이다. 모더니즘 시대의 서구 형이상학은 모든 것을 대립항으로

⁶ Featherstone, M. 1988: In Pursuit of the Postmodern: an introduction. *Theory, Culture and Society*, Brian Longhurst, 1995: *Popular Music and Society*(브라이언 롱허스트, 이호준 역, 『대중음악과 사회』, 서울: 예영 커뮤니케이션, 1999) 187쪽 재인용.

파악하고 그 둘사이에 대한 분명한 경계를 그어놓은 다음 어느 한쪽에만 특권을 주었다. 그러나 포스트 모던시대의 디지털 테크놀로지가 가져다 준 변화 중 하나는 기존의 경계선과 장르의 해체 및 초월이 일어나면서 모더니즘 시대의 차별주의나 분리주의가 더 이상 용납되지 않으며 기존의 경계는 소멸되고 통합되며 재구성되는 방향으로 나간다는 것이다.⁷

이러한 변화를 담고 있는 용어가 바로 ‘퓨전시대’라고 할 수 있는데 오늘날의 퓨전은 포스트모던한 문화 환경속에서 장르와 장르의 퓨전, 대중예술과 고급예술의 퓨전, 테크놀로지와 전통의 퓨전, 동양과 서양의 퓨전, 전통과 현대의 퓨전, 남성성과 여성성의 퓨전에 이르기까지 현대 사회의 전방위에 걸쳐 하나의 새로운 문화적 코드(code)로 자리 잡아 나가고 있다는 것이 국지적이고 부수적으로 이루어진 과거시대의 퓨전과 다른 점일 것이다.⁸

대중음악계의 언더그라운드 음악가로 잘 알려진 장영규와 국악계의 ‘멀티폴 아티스트(multiful artist)’로 불리는 원일이 참여한 “어어부 프로젝트”의 음반 1집, 원일과 컴퓨터음악 작곡가 이돈웅의 ‘라이브 일렉트로어쿠스틱 뮤직’(live-electro-acoustic music), 가야금 실내악단 “사계” 음반에 장영규와 바흐와 이성천의 음악이 수록된 것, 소리꾼 김용우의 일련의 음반(재즈와 서양 클래식, 테크노 뮤직과 전통 민요, 외국 민요 등의 접목), 작곡가 이진용과 프로듀서 마도원, 성악가 전경옥의 공동작업 산물이라고 할 수 있는 음반 <혼자사랑> 1집, 강은일의 재즈 뮤지션과의 협연 등은 실험적이고 비대중적인 음악에서부터 대중음악의 음악어법을 전격적으로 수용한 음악에 이르기까지 다양한 스펙트럼을 가지고 있으나 공통적인 것은 이들이 근대적 의미에서 관습적으로 고착된 장르와 경계를 해체하고 초월하여 새로운 스타일을 만들어가는 퓨전문화에 대한 음악적 반응의 다양한 예들이라는 것이다.

2. 국악 퓨전의 제 양상

여기서는 현재 20~40대의 젊은 국악인의 활동 중에서 고유한 음악세계를 통해 제3의 길을 개척했다고 간주되는 “슬기둥”, “푸리”, “상상”, “사계” 등 4개 그룹의

⁷ 김성곤, 『퓨전시대의 새로운 문화읽기』, 서울: 문학사상사, 2003, 210-211쪽.

⁸ 이혜주, 김계연, 위의 글 참조.

음악활동에 초점을 맞추기로 한다.

1) 슬기둥

해방 이후 최초의 퓨전 국악실내악단으로 불리는 “슬기둥”이 청소년들과 젊은 층의 일반 대중들에게 호응을 얻었던 데에는 악기 편성 및 음악 양식의 대중적 감각에 기인한 바가 크다. 첫째, 그들은 당시까지만 해도 김영동의 음반을 제외하고는 라이브(live) 연주에서 일반화되지 않았던 신서사이저와 기타를 국악기와 함께 편성하는 ‘퓨전 사운드’를 만들어냄으로써 대중음악에 익숙해 있는 일반사람들에게 보다 친숙한 음향으로 다가갈 수 있게 하였다. 이를 계기로 기타와 신서사이저 등의 전자 음향과 국악기의 혼성 연주는 대중적인 음악 연주를 시도하는 국악퓨전 밴드에서 일반화 된 양식으로 정착되었다. 두 번째 요인은 이들의 초기 주요 레퍼토리가 김영동 작곡의 “어디로 갈꺼냐”와 채치성 작곡의 “꽃분네야” 등 새로 작곡된 민요풍의 노래로서 “대중의 감성에 어울리는 국악적인 노래”⁹ 즉 ‘국악가요’라는 장르를 촉발시킨 음악들이었다는 점이다. 그러므로 국악의 대중화·생활화에 대한 슬기둥의 초기 음악전략으로는 대중음악적인 전자 음향 사운드와 국악가요라는 음악장르를 정착시킨데 있다고 할 수 있다.

한편 중기 이후 발전하고 있는 슬기둥의 기악음악 스타일은 두가지로 분화되어 전개되고 있다. 첫째는 국악가요 중에서 템포 및 ‘화성적 리듬’의 느린 진행위에 전개되는 넓은 의미의 단조 선법¹⁰의 노래 선율을 기악음악화 한 스타일로서 이는 김영동의 명상음악과 함께 소위 ‘뉴에이지’ 스타일의 한국적 적용이라고도 할 수 있다. 둘째, 1993년 이후 2기 멤버가 가져온 변화로서 선율과 화성 전개는 앞의 양식과 비슷하나 비교적 빠른 템포 및 웅장한 음량과 강한 리듬을 동반하는 타악적 역동성이 강화되어 현대적 ‘신명’을 띠고 있다.

국악 실내악단의 대표적인 1세대로서 대중성 확보에 있어서 가장 성공적인 행보를 걸어온 “슬기둥”이, 우선 실내악단이 갖는 고유한 특성, 즉 보다 섬세하고 자유로운 방식의 악기간의 대화 및 합주를 추구하는 방향 속에서 전통과 현대, 양악과 국악을 융합시켜서 정교한 퓨전 실내악 합주를 펼친다면 예술성과 대중성을 조화롭게 공존시키는 모델이 될 수 있을 것이다.

⁹ 송혜진, “전통음악의 새로운 이미지를 창출하는 슬기둥”, 앨범 Seulgidoong/From The Till The Coming Dawn(슬기둥 그 저녘무렵부터 새벽이 오기까지) Saehan media, SCO-127TAC, 2001.

¹⁰ 계면 및 메나리토리와 서양의 화성 단음계 선율

2) 푸리: 창작 타악그룹에서 퓨전 소리밴드로

창작타악그룹을 표방해 온 “푸리”는 현재 1기(1993~1995), 2기(1995~2001), 3기(2002~현재)로 나뉘어 음악 활동이 변해왔다. 1기가 일본을 중심으로 기존 장단을 해체하는 의미에서 즉흥적 연주에 주력하였다면 2기는 즉흥연주보다는 사전에 구성되고 창작되어 작품화시킨 창작 타악곡의 레퍼토리가 축적된 시기이다. 3기는 판소리꾼 한승석과 대중음악계에서 베이스기타와 건반 주자로 활동하고 있는 정재일이 들어오면서 ‘창작타악그룹’에서 ‘퓨전소리밴드’로의 변신을 꾀하고 있는 과정 중에 있다.¹¹

“푸리”의 정체성은 사물놀이의 후예이면서도 ‘탈(脫)사물놀이’의 최초의 그룹이라는 점에 있다. 사물놀이는 상부구조 차원에서 장단의 순서를 바꾼다거나 여러 지역의 가락을 하나의 음악작품으로 엮는 등(예: 삼도 설장고가락) 음악의 윤곽을 재구성하는 작업을 하지만 하부구조 차원에서는 장단의 전통적 전개 논리 및 호흡이라 일컬어지는 전통 장단의 미적 질서를 끝까지 고수한다. 이에 비해 푸리는 상부구조의 변형만큼이나 하부구조에도 새로운 리듬 패턴을 만들거나 새로운 음색적 요소를 도입하는 등 과감한 변형을 꾀하고 있다. 그러므로 푸리에게 있어 전통 장단은 새로운 창작을 위한 기존 재료로서 작용하기 때문에 일정한 해체와 재구성의 대상이다.¹² 또한 푸리에서 추구하는 리듬 전개원리는 사물놀이 혹은 전통리듬안에 있는 긴장과 이완의 구조보다 훨씬 강력한 긴장과 이완의 구조를 인위적으로 구성해내는 것이고 형식의 구성원리는 중중모리-자진모리-엇모리 등의 전통 장단의 조합으로 형식을 구성하는 것이 아니라 서구식의 section 개념에 있다.¹³

이제 “푸리”는 2002년도와 2003년도에 들어서서 2기 멤버였던 민영치와 장재효 대신에 판소리 전공자인 한승석과 베이스 기타리스트 정재일을 영입함으로써 새로운 국면을 맞이하고 있다. 팀 구성상 2기 때 보여준 밀도높은 창작 타악 작품보다는 리듬악기와 선율 악기 및 소리가 공존하는 ‘소리밴드’로서의 전환에 무게가 실릴 것으로 예상되는데 관·현·타악 및 전자악기의 종합 밴드인 슬기둥이나 여타의 실내악그룹과 구별되는 전통적인 판소리 양식의 노래부르기와 타악 및 전자음향의 혼합이 밀도 높은 리듬 창작에 집중하였던 2기 때와 같이 창작음악의 레퍼토

¹¹ 원일과의 인터뷰에서 확인(2003. 7. 14)

¹² 이소영, “푸리와 사물놀이”, 『낭만음악』(서울: 낭만음악사, 1999년) 여름호, 이소영 비평집, 『나는 다르게 듣는다』(서울: 예술, 1999)에 재수록, pp.55-70까지 참조.

¹³ 이소영과 원일의 대담, “원일의 음악세계”, 『민족음악과 근대성』(서울: 민족음악연구회, 1999), 155쪽 참조.

리를 어떻게 풍부하게 축적해 나갈지가 푸리의 변신에 주목되는 측면이다.

3) 사계와 상상

“사계”와 “상상”은 여성 주자들로 이루어진 국악현악 실내악단이다. 이들은 현재 20~30대 중반의 기악 연주자들로써 ‘산조 이후’ 세대 즉 포스트 산조(혹은 탈(脫)산조) 세대에 해당하는 그룹이다. 가야금에서 김죽파류, 성금연류 등과 같이 서로 다른 음악적 특징을 갖는 유파를 형성시켰던 세대를 산조세대라 한다면 그 제자들 세대부터는 더 이상의 새로운 유파가 형성되지 않는 대신에 대학교육을 받고 서양식 오선보로 작곡되는 창작 국악의 연주에 익숙하기 때문에 이들을 포스트산조 세대라 분류할 수 있다. 즉 산조의 새로운 유파 형성 대신 창작기악곡이 레퍼토리 확장에 주를 이루게 된 세대가 포스트 산조 세대인 것이다.¹⁴

포스트산조 세대의 특징을 간략히 보자면 국악의 대중화와 현대화를 자기 세대의 과제로 가지고 있으며 산조로 만개했던 전통어법을 넘어서서 산조어법과는 다른 새로운 음악어법으로 자신의 고유한 음악세계를 만들려한다는 점이다. 포스트산조 세대는 다시 두 부류로 나눌 수 있는데 연주가들이 철저히 작곡가와 서구식 분업 관계를 유지하면서 창작을 작곡가에게 의뢰하여 연주 레퍼토리를 넓히려는 그룹과 전통음악의 관습을 이어 연주가들 스스로가 새로운 음악을 만들려는 그룹이 그것이다. 그간 포스트 산조 세대의 대다수는 황병기, 김영동 등 몇 명을 제외하면 작곡 따로, 연주 따로라는 서구식의 근대적 분업체계 속에 편입되었다고 할 수 있는데, 지금까지의 행보만을 보면 가야금 앙상블 “사계”는 작곡과 연주가 분리된 분업체계 속에 있는 반면 솔리스트 앙상블 “상상”은 연주가들의 즉흥연주와 구성을 기반으로 창작과 연주를 겸하는 쪽에 속한다고 할 수 있다.

¹⁴ 김해숙·백대웅·최태현 공저, 『전통음악개론』(서울: 도서출판 어울림, 1997)에서는 가야금 산조에 대하여 세대별 구분을 하고 있는데 현재까지 제 4세대로 구별하고 있다. 필자는 이중 제3세대까지를 산조 세대로 제4세대부터를 포스트 산조 세대로 이름붙이고자 한다. 제3세대는 1910년대와 20년대에 출생한 여자 명인들이 대부분이며 동기(童妓)로 출발하여 권번을 통해 가야금을 배웠고 2세대로부터 전승받은 산조 가락에 자신의 가락을 부분적으로 삼십시켜 유파로의 완성을 꾀한 김죽파(1911~1989), 함동정월(1917~1994), 성금연(1923~1986) 등이다. 제4세대는 전통적 방법과 제도화된 학교 교육의 두가지 방법을 통해 가야금 산조를 배울 사람들로서 약 1세기에 걸쳐서 이루어진 전통적 산조와는 양식을 달리하는 새로운 산조를 만들어낼 세대들로 전망되고 있다. 위의 책, pp. 140-142. 필자는 현재 음악대학 국악과의 교수로 활동하는 대부분의 4세대들과 그 제자들을 포스트 산조 세대로 보고자 하며 이들의 특징은 아직까지 새로운 유파가 가시화되지 않은 것을 감안해 볼때 새로운 레퍼토리 확장을 새로운 유파를 스스로 만드는 것이 아니라 창작 국악의 연주로 대신할 것으로 보고 있다.

① 사계

1999년에 창단된 “사계”는 가야금 4명의 주자가 한 팀으로 이루어진 가야금 실내악단이다. 앙상블 그룹 ‘사계’의 음악적 방향은 20세기 한국악기를 대표하는 독주 혹은 협주 악기로 자리잡아온 가야금의 음악한계를 어디까지 넓힐 수 있을 것인가에 대한 모색이라 할 수 있다.

그 동안 사계는 전통음악 편곡(새타령), 창작국악(먼훗날의 전설 — 이성천 작곡), 서양음악 트랜스크립션(transcription: 피아졸라의 Oblivion, 바흐나 비발디 작품), 대중음악 작곡가 장영규와의 작업(‘하루’, 패션쇼 배경음악 등), 현대판 가야금 병창(김순남의 ‘자장가’, 김활성의 ‘꽃잎은 떨어지고’) 등 그들의 창작 취지대로 <古·今·雅·俗>을 아우르는 다양한 활동을 전개하여 왔다. 사계의 레퍼토리는 제2회의 정기연주회 “사색사색(四色四索)”¹⁵을 거치면서 창작국악의 비중이 점점 커지고 있는데 그들이 개발한 레퍼토리 중 대부분이 25현 가야금 4대로 연주한 것에 해당한다. 그런데 25현 개량 가야금이 태생적으로 갖는 음악 이념은 서구 근대음악이 피아노나 현악 4중주 등에 의해 꽃을 피운 것과 비슷한 이념이라 할 수 있다. 즉 근대적 극장 무대에 걸맞는 부드럽고도 풍부한 음색과 볼륨 있는 음량, 평균율과 같은 정률적인 음고에 기대어 전조, 이조가 보다 용이한 7음계 연주, 4대의 합주로 자유롭게 구사되는 수직적이고 다성적인 짜임새 등의 조건들이 서구 근대 음악의 물질적 조건과 흡사하다는 것이다. 그런 까닭에 전통음악적 본질에 바탕을 둔 현대적 앙상블이 어떻게 가능한지를 모색하는 것이 “사계”의 당면한 과제일 것이다.

② 상상

솔리스트 앙상블 “상상”은 솔리스트의 개성 혹은 악기 하나 하나의 개체가 이루는 소우주가 합주의 출발이기 때문에 「상상」은 단쟁이로 구성되는 한국 전통 실내악 합주의 변형이다.

“상상”은 선생으로부터 전수 받은 산조만을 그들의 음악세계로 한정하지 않고 근대적 음악가들이 그러했듯이 탈전통을 통한 자기만의 개성적 음악세계를 추구하려했다는 점에서 탈산조적이었지만 그렇다고 해서 탈산조 세대가 자의든 타의든 산조 이후의 대안으로 받아들였던 국악창작의 패러다임 속에서만 자신의 음악활동을 펼치려고 하지 않고 국악창작의 패러다임이 펼쳐놓은 작곡-연주의 위계적 분업

¹⁵ 2002. 12. 3 호암아트홀에서 연주되었다.

구조에 또다시 대항하면서 연주와 창작의 과정을 다시 하나의 전일적 체계 속에 결합시켜내려 했다는 점에서 ‘탈-국악창작’이다.

그런 의미에서 “상상”은 국악퓨전의 여러 예들과 궤를 같이 하고 있다. 그러나, “상상”이 여타의 탈국악창작 세대의 그룹들과 구별되는 것은 현장에서의 즉흥성이 그들의 음악행위에서 가장 중요한 부분을 차지하기 때문이다. “상상”이 다른 퓨전 그룹과 구별되는 지점은 연주와 창작의 결합에서 즉흥연주가 가장 중요한 요소로 작용하고 있고 이것이 ‘프리(free)뮤직’으로 결과된다는 것이다. 이제까지의 활동으로 미루어볼 때 “상상”의 음악적 특징은 각 주자들이 강태환과 같은 프리재즈 뮤지션과의 음악 작업에서 많은 영향을 받음으로 해서 그들이 구사한 즉흥성의 음악 어법이 실험적이고 무조적인 프리재즈의 그것과 인접한 것이 그간의 경향이였다.

그런데 최근에 연주된 “상상”의 두가지 레퍼토리는 상상이 가고자 하는 두가지 방향을 예시하고 있다.¹⁶ 하나는 “윤희”라는 작품으로서 한국의 민속악, 불교음악, 정악 등 전통음악적 재료에 바탕한 전통음악 내부에서의 퓨전을 시도함으로써 “상상”이 소수만을 위한 아방가르드 그룹이 아니라 현재 거의 전승이 끊어진 민속악적 즉흥성 회복에도 중점을 두겠다는 의도를 보여주고 있다. 다른 하나는 “상상-자유”라는 곡이 국악기에 대한 새로운 음색 및 주법의 발견과 즉흥성을 통한 자유롭고 예기치 않은 선율과 장단의 놀음을 시도하고 있는 곡으로서 프리뮤직의 실험적 아방가르드적 음악실험을 지속할 것을 보여주는 작품이다.¹⁷

상상은 프리뮤직이 갖기 쉬운 구성력의 결핍과 작품화 되지 않은 비슷한 연주들이 연주 현장마다 반복됨으로써 빠지기 쉬운 매너리즘을 극복하기 위해서 즉흥과 작곡의 개념을 적절히 결합하고 전통적 어법과 현대적 어법을 그들의 음악세계에서 균형감있게 공존시켜내야 한다는 과제를 안고 있다.

4. 맺음말

위에서 언급한 “슬기둥”, “푸리”, “사계”, “상상”은 작곡가그룹이 아니라 연주자 그룹이다. 산조 이후 개발된 장르였던 창작국악을 조명할 때 언제나 연술대상은 작곡가와 작곡가의 작품이었다. 그런데 국악퓨전의 주체들은 연주자들이다. 이들이

¹⁶ 2003. 7. 20. 일요일 열린 국악무대 “휴일 오후의 소리공감” (국립국악원 · 국악방송 주최), 국립국악원 야외무대 별맞이터에서 연주.

¹⁷ 상상의 멤버, 허운정(거문고 주자)와의 인터뷰에서 확인, 2003년 7월 28일.

때에 따라서는 작곡가의 손을 빌리기도 하지만 전체의 흐름은 “사계”나 “푸리”의 전체적인 ‘음악하기’ (Musicking)에 있고 개별 작곡가의 작품은 이들의 ‘음악하기’라는 전체 행위적 과정 안에서 의미를 지닌다.

이들은 또한, ‘탈(脫)산조(혹은 post 산조)’ 세대라는 공통점을 가진다. 탈산조세대는 해방이후 태어난 세대로서 우리사회에 이미 지배적인 서양음악을 모국어처럼 접하면서 근대적인 음악 전문학교에 들어가서 전통음악을 습득한 세대이기 때문에 서양음악적 환경에 익숙한 사람들이다. 그런데 포스트 산조 세대는 현재 1세대와 2세대로 다시 나뉘어질 수 있다. 1세대가 60년대 이후 창작국악을 주도해온 현재 50~60대의 중견 연주가 및 작곡가들이라면 2세대는 창작국악의 여러 관행에서 벗어나 새로운 길을 개척하려는 현재 30~40대가 주축이 되는 연주가들이 이에 해당한다. 이들은 포스트 산조 1세대들의 제자 세대로서 창작국악곡이 정악 및 산조와 함께 기존세대로부터 물려받은 또 하나의 전통이 되었고 서양음악 특히 대중음악의 전면적 세례를 받고 자란 후 1980년대 민주화운동이 한창인 시절에 청년 시절을 보낸 소위 386세대로서 윗세대들에 비해 훨씬 탈권위, 탈중심적인 사고와 90년대 이후의 탈근대적인 특징 중 하나인 탈장르적 문화환경에 익숙한 세대들이다. 이러한 문화적 배경 속에서 이들은 자기 세대에 맞는 새로운 돌파구를 열기 위해 기존의 창작국악의 관습과는 다른 ‘음악하기’를 시도하고 있는 것이다.

이제 우후죽순으로 젊은 음악가들을 중심으로 생겨나는 퓨전 그룹들의 ‘음악하기’에 대하여 욕석을 가리는 두가지의 시선이 필요하다. 첫째, 익숙한 어떤 것과 또다른 어떤 것을 섞었을 때 적당히 신선하면서도 생소하지 않은 절충주의, 즉 퓨전의 평균적 수준에 머물거나 혹은 기존의 두개가 만나서 원래 기존의 것보다 못한 것들로 결과되는, 즉 타이거와 라이온의 교배 결과로서 기형적이면서 생명력없는 ‘라이거’를 만들고 있는 것은 아닌가, 나아가 그 라이거를 상업적으로 이용하고 있는 않은가 등 국악의 대중화와 상업주의를 구별하고자 하는 비평적 토론이 국악계 안에서 공론화(公論化)되어야 한다.

둘째, 한국 전통음악의 약세화가 내부적 요인보다 일제 강점기 및 서구중심의 제국주의적 문화질서 속에 강제된 측면이 있다면 우리는 서양의 퓨전재즈와는 다른 입장에서 국악퓨전을 바라보아야 한다. 우리에게서 전통은 근 100여 년 동안 일본 및 서양 열강의 제국주의의 문화 침탈 속에서 살아남기 위해 목적의식적으로 보존되고 항상 생존의 위기를 체감해왔던 것으로서 우리 스스로의 자율적인 근대화를 겪으면서 전통음악의 제반에 대해 자유롭게 취사선택하는 과정에서 변모되어온 것이 아니었다. 이런 상황에서 전통적 음악어법 및 미적 질서 등이 퓨전이라는 이름

으로 이미 서양음악화 되어버린 대중의 감성에 맞게 표피적으로만 취사선택될 여지가 크다. 그러므로 이미 익숙해져 있는 몇 개의 장단과 민요토리 외에 수많은 무속의 장단이나 향토민요 등 국악퓨전에서 퓨전의 재료로 사용될 전통음악에 보다 천착하여 새로 발굴할 필요성이 제기된다.

국악퓨전이 ‘동시대성’과 ‘대중성’이란 기존의 이념과 함께 새롭게 부여안아야 할 것은 이것과 저것의 절충을 넘어서서 진정한 융합을 통하여 창조적인 제3의 결과를 만들어냄으로써 국악의 음악적 내용을 더욱 넓혀내겠다는 마음과, 퓨전의 음악자원 찾기를 전통음악 어법의 천착에서부터 시작하겠다는 의지가 필요하다는 것이다.