

THE CONCEPT OF “UNITY” IN ISANG YUN’S

KÖNIGLICHES THEMA FÜR VIOLINE SOLO

Songyoung Kim, B.M., M.M.

Dissertation Prepared for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

December 2011

APPROVED:

Philip Lewis, Major Professor

Gene Cho, Minor Professor

Thomas Johnson, Committee Member

John Holt, Chair of the Division of

Instrumental Studies

Lynn Eustis, Director of Graduate Studies of

the College of Music

James C. Scott, Dean of the College of

Music

James D. Meernik, Acting Dean of the

Toulouse Graduate School

Kim, Songyoung. The Concept of “Unity” in Isang Yun’s *Königliches Thema für Violine Solo*. Doctor of Musical Art (Performance), December 2011, 52 pp., 3 figures, 20 musical examples, reference lists, 34 titles.

A Korean-German composer Isang Yun’s life was evenly distributed between two different countries, and his music contains both elements of performance practices of Eastern Asian and Western music. This dissertation presents his ethnic and aesthetic musical roots by an analytic examination of his solo violin piece, *Königliches Thema* (1976).

The dissertation is divided into four chapters. The first chapter contains Isang Yun’s biography and his works of the four periods. The second chapter studies his philosophy in music and compositional techniques such as twelve-tone technique, Taoism, *Hauptton*, *Hauptklang* and the Korean instrumental technique in Western instruments. The third chapter presents a detailed analysis of *Königliches Thema* with his Taoist philosophy. The fourth chapter is solely dedicated to the performance perspectives of *Königliches Thema* in tempo, dynamic and various violin techniques.

Copyright 2011

by

Songyoung Kim

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF FIGURES	v
LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES	vi
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. ISANG YUN'S LIFE AND MUSIC	4
Biographical Sketch of Isang Yun	
Isang Yun's Works in Korea and Germany	
The Early Period in Korea	
The First European Period	
The Second European Period including Imprisonment in Korea	
The Third European Period	
III. ISANG YUN'S PHILOSOPHY IN MUSIC AND COMPOSITIONAL TECHNIQUE	15
Twelve-tone Technique	
Taoism	
<i>Hauptton</i> and <i>Hauptklang</i>	
The Korean Instrumental Technique in Western Instruments	
IV. ANALYSIS OF YUN'S <i>KÖNIGLICHES THEMA</i>	27
Background	
Theme	
Variation 1	
Variation 2	

Variation 3	
Variation 4	
Variation 5	
Variation 6	
Variation 7	
Overall Structure: Unity in <i>Königliches Thema</i>	
Yun's Taoism in <i>Königliches Thema</i>	
V. PERFORMANCE PERSPECTIVE	42
Tempo	
Dynamics	
Violin Techniques	
VI. CONCLUSION.....	47
REFERENCE LIST	49

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1. Yin and yang symbol.....	17
Figure 2. White tiger in <i>Sa-Sin-Do</i> , the murals of four ancient gods, Gang-Seo frescos.....	21
Figure 3. <i>Hauptton</i> in Isang Yun's drawing	21

LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES

	Page
2.1 Yun's <i>Hauptton</i> technique in <i>Etüden für Flöte(n)</i> (1974) V. Allegretto, measures 1-4	21
2.2 <i>Reak</i> (1966), measures 107-110.....	23
2.3 <i>Glissées</i> , Movement I.....	26
2.4 <i>Monolog for Bassoon</i> , measures 46-51.....	26
3.1 The royal theme in <i>Königliches Thema</i>	28
3.2 Variation 1	29
3.3 Variation 1-5	30
3.4 Variation 1-5. The compound melody	30
3.5 Variation 2. Use of the twelve-tone technique.....	31
3.6 Variation 3	32
3.7 Variation 4	33
3.8 Variation 4. Use of trills, tremoli and grace notes	33
3.9 Variation 5. Use of dynamics.....	34
3.10 Variation 6. Rhythmic pattern.....	36
3.11 <i>Chajinmori</i> (A rhythmic cycle of traditional Korean music).....	36
3.12 <i>Jindo Arirang</i>	37
3.13 Transition of Variation 6.....	37
3.14 Transformation of Variation 2 in Variation 6.....	38
3.15 Variation 7. Return of the theme.....	39
3.16 Unity between the structures of theme and variations	40

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Isang Yun is recognized as a Korean-German composer, as his life was evenly distributed between two different countries, and his music contains both elements of performance practices of Eastern Asian and Western music. He is described as an important composer in the avant-garde music scene and a significant music mediator between East and West.¹ Yun's music is unique and imaginative using traditional Korean instrumental techniques applied to Western instruments.

The characteristics of performance techniques are the most important elements in Isang Yun's compositions. He is noted for his selection of certain instruments to imitate the timbre of Korean instruments, such as oboe for *piri*, flute for *daegum*, and violin or cello for *haegum* and *ajaeng*.² In the *Königliches Thema für Violine Solo*, Yun chose the theme of Bach's *Musikalisches Opfer*, as he accommodated the techniques and sounds of Korean string instruments with the traditional violin and maintained the form of the variation.

While Isang Yun was recognized by the South Korean government only after his death for his contributions to music and society, his compositions have been widely performed and highly regarded throughout Asia and Europe since the 1950s. There are many studies of Yun's works in Korea and Germany, but few have been published in the English language. Dissertations were devoted to the study of his Eastern roots and on the possible influence of his ethnic heritage on his compositions.

Sinhyang Yoon pointed out that Christian Martin Schmidt was one of the musicologists

¹ Jeongmee Kim, "The Diasporic Composer: The Fusion of Korean and German Musical Culture in the Works of Isang Yun" (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 1999), 40.

² Sinhyang Yoon, *Isang Yun: Music on the Border* (Pajoo: Hangilsa, 2005), 95.

who best understood Yun's compositions.³ According to Schmidt, Isang Yun not only combined Eastern and Western styles, but included his musical experiences in Korea and ideas of 20th-century music in Europe within his works.⁴ I believe that there are aspects that may have escaped attention or have not been treated in sufficient depth, especially how Yun's Eastern background integrated into Western contemporary styles in the previous studies. It is interesting to point out that even though scholarly study of *Königliches Thema* has received little attention, this piece has been performed more frequently than any other violin composition of Isang Yun.

This dissertation attempts to explore his ethnic and aesthetic musical roots by way of a detailed analytic examination of his *Königliches Thema*. Not only does this study examine Yun's indebtedness to both traditional Korean music and the twentieth-century compositional techniques, but it also explores the composer's "creative vision" that is the foundation of his compositions. This study believes that an answer should be probed in the statements by the composer himself. He believed that his purpose of writing music was not an artificial connection between Western and Eastern music, but rather an attempt at achieving "the unity" of these two elements and seeking the way to realize in music the philosophical tenets of "continuity," "spaciousness" and "limitlessness." These ideas have often been mentioned in connection with the Taoist philosophy and with other ancient Eastern sages.⁵ In essence, this study explores

³ Sinhyang Yoon, *Isang Yun: Music on the Border* (Pajoo: Hangilsa, 2005), 41.

⁴ Christine Martin Schmidt, "Europäische und aussereuropäische Musik-Isang Yun," in *Brennpunkte der Neuen Musik*, Köln, 1977, S.116.

⁵ Bruce Duffie, "An interview with Isang Yun," *Sonus- A Journal of Investigation into Global Musical Possibilities*, 28:2 (Spring 2008): 43-51 available from <http://www.Bruceduffie.com/yun.html>.

Yun's music that may be understood and appreciated as his way of achieving and realizing in his compositions the idea and philosophy of "musical cosmos."⁶

⁶ Ibid.

CHAPTER II

ISANG YUN'S LIFE AND MUSIC

Biographical Study of Isang Yun

Isang Yun was born September 17, 1917 in a small town of the southern part of Korea, Sanchung-goon, Kyungsangnam-do. He was the eldest son of the Korean poet Ki Hyun Yun and grew up in a traditional scholarly family.⁷ When he was three years old the family moved to Tongyeong. At that time, Tongyeong was widely open to Western culture even though all the Korean traditions were kept in many areas, including music. Yun had grown up listening to Korean folk music such as *pansori*,⁸ *namdosori*,⁹ *Tongyoung-okwangdae*¹⁰ and *goot*¹¹ as well as hymns and Western music from church and school.¹²

Growing up in Korea during the Japanese occupation (1910-45), Yun's upbringing was surrounded by political and social unrest.¹³ The Japanese government prohibited formal musical organizations from performing traditional Korean music within Korea. The musical culture was restricted to Japanese-style Western culture. However, Isang Yun's father tried to educate his son in his political ideals and desire for Korean unification. Yun attended a private Chinese school and learned traditional Chinese letters, literature and philosophy from an early age. This Chinese philosophy would later have an important influence on his compositional style.¹⁴ His father

⁷ Jiyeon Byeon, " 'The Wounded Dragon': An annotated translation of 'Der Verwundete Drache', the biography of composer Isang Yun, by Luise Rinser and Isang Yun" (Ph.D. diss., Kent State University, 2003) in Dissertations & Theses: Full Text [database on-line]; available from <http://libproxy.library.unt.edu>: 2176 (publication number AAT 3098513; accessed November 10, 2010).

⁸ *Pansori* is a genre of traditional Korean vocal music accompanied by a barrel drum called *buk*.

⁹ *Namdosori* are traditional Korean folk songs of the southern part of Korea.

¹⁰ *Tongyeong-okwangdae* is a play of five crowns originated in Tongyeong, Korea.

¹¹ *Goot* is a Korean shamanism ceremony involving dance, play and music.

¹² Sinhyang Yoon, *Isang Yun: Music on the Border* (Pajoo: Hangilsa, 2005), 38.

¹³ Laura Hauser, "A Performer's Analysis of Isang Yun's Monolog for Bassoon with an Emphasis on the Role of Traditional Korean Influence" (D.M.A. diss., Louisiana State University, 2009), 3.

¹⁴ Kyung Ha Lee. "A Comparative Study of Selected Violin Works of Isang Yun: *Gasa für Violine und Klavier*

emphasized both a Korean and a Chinese education. Yun learned the differences between the imposed Japanese and traditional Korean cultures.

Even though Yun's professional music studies had not begun, when he was only thirteen he began composing music for the intermissions of silent movies. In his late teens and early twenties Yun pursued the study of music in Seoul, Osaka and Tokyo. He went to the Osaka Conservatory in Japan in 1935 and studied composition, music theory and cello for two years. In 1939, he moved to Tokyo to study composition and counterpoint with Tomijiro Ikenouchi, who had studied at the Paris Conservatoire.

Yun came back to Korea shortly after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941. In 1944, the Japanese authorities imprisoned him for two months due to his underground activities against the Japanese government. After being released from a Japanese prison he returned to Korea and worked as a music teacher in Tongyeong, Pusan and Seoul from 1948 to 1952. In 1950, he married Suja Lee, with the Korean War under way.

During the Korean War (1950-53), Yun participated in the Korean Composers Association and published a song collection, *Dalmoori*, in Pusan.¹⁵ In 1955, he was honored with the Seoul City Culture Award for his String Quartet No.1 and Piano Trio. It was the first time the award had been presented to a composer. Yun felt that he needed to study in Europe, and the Seoul City Award made this aspiration possible.

Yun decided to go to Europe to study Western composition techniques at the Paris Conservatoire in 1956. He studied composition with Tony Aubin and music theory with Pierre Revel. After one year in Paris he went to the Berlin Music Hochschule to study counterpoint with Reinhard Schwarz-Schilling and composition with Boris Blacher whom Yun later recalled

(1963) and *Sonate für Violine und Klavier Nr. 1* (1991)" (D.M.A. diss., Ohio State University, 2009), 5.

¹⁵ Sinhyang Yoon, *Isang Yun: Music on the Border* (Pajoo: Hangilsa, 2005), 283.

as “the best teacher.”¹⁶ Yun was also introduced to the various atonal techniques of the Second Viennese School. He studied twelve-tone technique with Josef Rufer, the former disciple of Schönberg.¹⁷

During the Berlin years, Yun had an opportunity to participate in the course for New Music at Darmstadt directed by Dr. Wolfgang Steinecke in the summer of 1958. The Darmstadt course was considered to be the center of modern music at that time. Yun met such “radical modern” composers as Stockhausen, Boulez, Cage, Maderna and Nono.¹⁸ Most of all, his works began to get attention from the world. Two of his works were selected for public performance in 1959. *Musik für Sieben Instrumente* (Music for seven instruments) was premiered in Darmstadt, and *Fünf Stücke für Klavier* (Five pieces for piano) in Bilthoven, The Netherlands. After such success, Yun decided to stay in Germany to establish his career.

In 1961, his wife came to Germany to live with Yun, and his two children were able to join them in 1964. More of his compositions began to be performed in Europe. His orchestral work, *Bara*, was premiered by the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra in 1962. *Om mani padme hum*, an oratorio with a Buddhist subject, was performed in Hanover in 1965 and *Reak*, an orchestral work, at the Donaueschingen Festival in 1966. Yun went to the United States to give lectures in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, Tanglewood and Aspen in 1966.

Yun’s career was suddenly interrupted by an unexpected political event. On June 17, 1967 Yun was abducted from Germany to Korea by the secret police of South Korea (KCIA). He was charged with spying for North Korea. This accusation was likely generated by the South Korean government because of his visit to North Korea four years prior. Yun denied any

¹⁶Jiyeon Byeon, “The Wounded Dragon,” 105. Yun recalled Blacher as the best teacher because Blacher didn’t force anything but brought out the best from students.

¹⁷ Ibid., 106.

¹⁸ Ibid., 107.

wrongdoing and stated that his trip was purely to meet his old friend and see the frescos, *Sa-Sin-Do*, in the sixth-century ancient tomb located in North Korea. The copy of the grave-frescos in North Korea deeply inspired Yun even prior to his trip to North Korea, and inspired him compose *Symphonic Scene* in 1960.¹⁹ His desire to see the real frescos resulted in false charges, and he was sentenced to life in prison.

Yun's inspiration from the frescos was not given up by imprisonment. He was granted permission to compose in prison and finished two chamber music works including *Image*, in which he used one instrument to express each of four animals in the fresco. He also completed an opera, *The Butterfly's Widow*, which was premiered in the Nürenberg Opera House in West Germany while he was still imprisoned in Korea.

As soon as it became clear that Yun had been kidnapped, musicians, artists and politicians in Europe began action committees. They spread relevant information, corrected media errors and protested to the governments in Bonn, Washington, and Tokyo. Musicians did not only stage free concerts for donations but also boycotted concerts. Pianist Claudio Arrau protested by canceling a performance in Seoul. The mayor of Berlin made a personal appeal to President Park in South Korea.²⁰

In October of 1967, Wilhelm Maler, the president of the Hamburg Academy of the Arts, an organization in which Yun was a member, wrote a petition letter to President Park. The letter was signed by 161 internationally known cultural figures including Wolfgang Fortner, Mauricio Kagel, Rolf Libermann, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Hans Werner Henze, György Ligeti, Ernst Krenek, Earle Brown, Edward Staempfli, and Herbert von Karajan. After 2 years, Yun was

¹⁹ Ibid., 116.

²⁰ Ibid., 209.

released in 1969 due to international pressure.²¹ He was exiled from South Korea and returned to West Berlin. He became a German citizen in 1971.

Following his return to West Berlin he received the Kiel Cultural Prize, and was asked to compose a festival opera for the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich under the slogan “The Unity of All Culture.” “The Unity of All Culture” would have corresponded with Yun’s ideal at that time after he experienced musical and political conflicts of the world. He composed an opera based on the ancient Korean story, *Sim Tjong*, with Buddhist, Taoist and Confucian philosophies.²²

Yun taught at the Hanover Academy of Music for a year from 1970 to 1971 and was a Professor of Composition at the Hochschule der Künste in West Berlin from 1970 to 1985. In the summer of 1973, he was invited to the Aspen Music Festival in Colorado where many of his works were performed.

Yun devoted himself to the international Korean democracy movements throughout the remainder of his life. He became the chair of the European branch of the Association of the Korean Democratic Reunification. He visited North Korea several times after 1979. Since his orchestral work, *Exemplum in Memoriam Kwangju*, was performed in 1982, North Korea had started to hold the Isang Yun Music Festival every year. In the same year the Night of Isang Yun was held for two days in South Korea during the seventh Korea Music Festival. Even though his compositions were welcomed by both North and South Korea he was not allowed to go back to South Korea for the Isang Yun Festival of 1994 due to a conflict with the government.²³

He composed five symphonies, one each year from 1983 to 1987. His first symphony was premiered by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra for its Centennial Anniversary concerts in 1984.

²¹ Laura Hauser, “A Performer’s Analysis of Isang Yun’s Monolog for Bassoon with an Emphasis on the Role of Traditional Korean Influence” (D.M.A. diss., Louisiana State University, 2009), 9.

²² Jiyeon Byeon, “The Wounded Dragon”, 258-97.

²³ Andrew McCredie, “Isang Yun” in *Music of the Twentieth-century Avant-garde: A Biocritical Sourcebook*, ed. Larry Sitsky (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2002), 588.

In 1985, he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Tübingen. The fifth symphony was also premiered by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra on Yun's seventieth birthday in 1987.

Yun's hope and effort to unite two Koreas in music was finally achieved in 1990. The North and South Korea Unification Music Festival was jointly held in the two capital cities, Pyongyang and Seoul. The Seoul Traditional Music Ensemble performed in Pyongyang and the Pyongyang Ensemble performed in Seoul. This was the first true cultural exchange since the Korean peninsula was divided in 1945.

Yun was made an honorary member of the International Society for Contemporary Music in 1991 and received the medal at the Hamburg Academy in 1992. He became a member of both the Berlin and Hamburg Academies of the Arts and of the European Academy of the Arts and Sciences in Salzburg in 1994. He was the recipient of both the Goethe Medal of 1995 from the Goethe Institute in Munich and of the Distinguished Service Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Isang Yun died of pneumonia on November 3, 1995 in Berlin, and he was interred in a grave of honor provided by the Berlin city Senate at the Gatow Cemetery.²⁴ Yun told Luise Rinser in an interview that one day he would go back to Korea and sit there by the seashore where he was born. He was dreaming being buried in the warmth of his native earth.²⁵ Even though his wish did not come true in his lifetime, his music has been performed not only in both North and South Korea but also in many countries of the world.

²⁴ International Isang Yun Society, *Isang Yun Biography*, (Berlin-Wilmersdorf, Germany, accessed November 18, 2010) <http://www.yun-gesellschaft.de/e/index.htm>

²⁵ Jiyeon Byeon, "The Wounded Dragon," 34.

Isang Yun's Works in Korea and Germany

Isang Yun composed various genres of music including 22 orchestral works, 4 operas, 10 concertos, 40 chamber works, and 28 instrumental pieces, among others.²⁶ While the characteristic of his compositional style is known as a fusion of Asian and European tradition, most of his pieces are written for the Western medium and employ the Western orchestra, string quartet, woodwind ensemble and solo instruments.²⁷

The Early Period in Korea

Before Yun's study in Europe he wrote chamber music, songs, orchestral and film music in Korea. The song collections published in 1941 and 1948 were written in tonal harmony with elements of Korean folk song. String Quartet No.1 and Piano Trio were written in 1955 and awarded the Seoul City Culture Prize. However he withdrew the early works from circulation in Europe because he felt that he had not succeeded in the goal of combining elements of traditional and modern music. Even though he thought his point of compositional view was unclear at that time, he began to realize how much musical treasure lay hidden in the traditional music of Korea. This feeling was to grow stronger after he moved to Europe.²⁸

The First European Period

At the age of thirty-nine Yun decided to go to Europe to study modern compositional techniques. Soon his works showed what he learned at the Paris Conservatoire, Berlin Hochschule für Musik and Darmstadt summer courses. *Fünf Stücke für Klavier* (Five pieces for piano) (1958) and *Musik für Sieben Instrumente* (Music for seven instruments) (1959) were

²⁶ Laura Hauser, "A Performer's Analysis of Isang Yun's Monolog for Bassoon with an Emphasis on the Role of Traditional Korean Influence" (D.M.A. diss., Louisiana State University, 2009), 12.

²⁷ Francisco Feliciano, *Four Asian Contemporary Composers: The Influence of Tradition in their Works* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1983), 33.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 33

written based on a strict twelve-tone technique. However he certainly started to establish his own personality in his compositions by presenting “sound memories from old Korean court music.”²⁹ While the first movement of the *Musik für Sieben Instrumente* strictly followed the twelve-tone technique, Yun tried to bring out some colors of Korean music by indicating the playing techniques such as many kinds of vibratos and glissandi for instrumentalists in the second movement.

The Second European Period Including Imprisonment in Korea

After Yun started to present his compositions in Europe, he developed the *Hauptton* (main-tone) technique and used it with other elements he was employing at the time. His *Hauptton* technique gave him international recognition during this period. Yun could solidify his own compositional approach by blending atonal harmonies with the principles of Oriental sound.³⁰

This compositional style was apparent in works such as *Colloïdes Sonores für Streichorchester* (A symbolic reflection of Asian musical instruments) (1961), *Loyang* (1962) and *Fluktuationen* (Fluctuation) (1964), and Yun’s experimental new techniques became successfully mature in *Reak* (1966). *Reak für Großes Orchestra* was premiered by the South German Radio Symphony Orchestra at the Donaueschingen Music Festival and was pronounced a great success. The piece was based on *aak*, traditional Korean court music’s acoustic feature, and received great recognition from audiences as well as composers.

His music career seemed to be interrupted suddenly by his abduction to South Korea in 1967. However Yun’s music publisher, Bote & Bock, appealed to the South Korean government,

²⁹ Jiyeon Byeon, “The Wounded Dragon,” 109.

³⁰ Jison Choi, “The Merging of Korean Traditional Music and Western Instrumentation as Exemplified in four Chamber Works for Piano Composed by Isang Yun” (D.M.A. Diss., University of Miami, 2007), 21.

and he was granted permission to compose in prison.³¹ During this time he composed the opera *Die Witwe des Schmetterlings* (The butterfly's widow) (1968), as well as two chamber works, *Riul* for clarinet and piano and *Images* for flute, oboe, violin and cello (1968).

Most of Yun's compositions written in the 1960s include Asian or Korean related titles such as *Bara* (1960), *Royang* (1962), *Gasa* (1963), *Garak* (1963), *Om Mani Padme Hum* (1964), *Shao Yang Yin* (1966), *Réak* (1966) and *Riul* (1968). The titles express the meaning and characters of the words, but the works are not necessarily programmatic.³²

Yun also used Asian folk tales or religious text corresponding to the titles of his vocal compositions during this period. *Om Mani Padme Hum* (1964) is an oratorio written for soprano, baritone, chorus and orchestra with a title of Buddhist prayer meaning "greeting to the jewel in the lotus flower." Though he used German text, except the prayer, the five movements of this oratorio depict the journey to nirvana. *Der Traum des Liu-Tung* (The dream of Liu-Tung) (1965) and *Ein Schmetterlingstraum* (The dream of butterfly) (1968) were composed with Taoist stories of the fourteenth-century Yuan Dynasty Chinese writer, Ma Chi-yuan.

The Third European Period

During this period Isang Yun was composing more accessible music. His atonal writing had been changed toward the fulfillment of the tonal main-note. He recreated the genres of traditional Western music such as concerto, symphony and string quartet working on more instrumental music than vocal compositions. Before 1970, Yun's compositional style had already changed to show some characteristics of the transitional period. His interest in bringing out distinctive tone colors of each instrument in his compositions was apparent since *Images* for flute, oboe, violin and cello (1968). He also tried to compose more solo works such as *Glissees* for

³¹ Jiyeon Byeon, "The Wounded Dragon," 231.

³² Sinhyang Yoon, *Isang Yun: Music on the Border* (Pajoo: Hangilsa, 2005), 99.

cello (1970), *Piri* for oboe (1971), *Etüde* for flute (1974), and *Königliches Thema* for violin (1976).³³

Most of all, his personal experience from kidnapping to imprisonment (1967-69) made a significant change to his compositions. His musical works became the perfect medium for Yun to translate his personal and political experiences.³⁴ In order to put his personal stories in compositions, he mostly used traditional Western genres such as concertos, symphonies and cantatas.

Yun's works started to express the relationship between society and the individual, especially through the genre of concerto. He wrote thirteen concertos between 1975 and 1992. The solo instrument represented the individual's "struggle" and the orchestra embodied "destiny."³⁵ For example, the Cello Concerto doesn't depict only the "wounded dragon" in his mom's dream before the birth of Yun, but it is also his physical and spiritual imprisonment. In Korea, if a pregnant woman dreams of a dragon, Korean people believe that her child has a special fate. The dragon of his mom's dream could not fly high into heaven because it was wounded. At the end of the Cello Concerto, the trumpet of the orchestra plays the octave leaping to the A while the cello cannot reach it. Later Yun explained in the interview with Louise Rinser that the leaping meant the "desire and demand for freedom, purity and absoluteness," and the cello never got to the A and finally gave up to the "endless and inconceivable" authority.³⁶

³³ Ibid., 99.

³⁴ Bruce Duffie, "An interview with Isang Yun" *Sonus- A Journal of Investigation into Global Musical Possibilities*, 28:2 (Spring 2008) Available from <http://www.Bruceduffie.com/yun.html>

³⁵ Youngwhan Kim, *Isang Yun's Study* (Seoul: Sigong Sa, 2001), 273-78.

³⁶ Jiyeon Byeon, "The Wounded Dragon", 33-34.

Through the genre of symphony, Yun tried to express his opposition to violence and conveyed a strong message of world peace and love for all mankind.³⁷ He composed five symphonies interrelated under the motto “Appealing to mankind for love and humanity” each year between 1982 and 1987. Although the symphonies were varied in formal structure as well as musical content, his attempt to bond his music world through the five symphonies was apparent. The Symphonies I and II presented “admonition, appeal and impressions,” and the one-movement Symphony III developed the ideas with the subtitle of *Philosophical*.³⁸ The two-movement Symphony IV, *Singing in the Dark*, contained the pain of all Asian women. Finally, Yun concluded the series composing Symphony V for baritone and orchestra with the text by German poet Nelly Sachs and applied the title *Peace*. The composer became a representative of peace through his compositions.

Yun’s other works expressed more direct reactions to political events. An orchestral work, *Exemplum in Memoriam Kwangju* (1981), was a memorial to the massacre that happened in Kwangju, South Korea following the assassination of President Park. It was premiered in Köln and also performed in Pyongyang, North Korea in 1982. Since the performance of this cantata, North Korea has held the Isang Yun Music Festival every year. In 1994, Yun composed a cantata *Engel in Flammen* in memory of a suicidal death of a South Korean college student who was asking for his country’s democracy. Yun’s life-long concern with his native country continued until the composer’s death and strongly influenced his works.

³⁷ Young-Hwan Kim, *Study of Isang Yun I* (Seoul: Korean Arts Institute, Sigong Sa, 2001), 44.

³⁸ Soonjung Suh, “Taoistic Influences on the Music of Isang Yun: A Study of Etüden für Flöte(n) solo and Reak” (DMA diss., Manhattan School of Music, 2007), 20.

CHAPTER III

ISANG YUN'S PHILOSOPHY IN MUSIC AND COMPOSITIONAL STYLE

Twelve-tone Technique

Isang Yun moved to Berlin after completing his study at the Paris Conservatoire. In Berlin, Yun studied with Josef Rufer whose book, *The Composition with Twelve Tones Related Only to One Another*, Yun had already read. Rufer was a former assistant to Schönberg, the inventor of the twelve-tone technique. Yun's participation in the summer course for New Music at Darmstadt (1958) also provided him with twelve-tone techniques and included working with serial composers like Stockhausen, Messiaen and Boulez.

Eventually, the twelve-tone technique dominated the beginning of Yun's career in Europe. He believed that he could become a more widely recognized composer by writing twelve-tone music.³⁹ However, he used the strict twelve-tone technique for only a few pieces including *Fünf Stücke für Klavier* (Five pieces for piano) (1958) and *Musik für Sieben Instrumente* (Music for seven instruments) (1959). As already stated, the second movement of the latter was written with irregular use of tone rows. He already started to find a way to express his individual musical ideas influenced by the music of the Far East.⁴⁰

As Feliciano suggests, Yun soon changed his approach of twelve-tone technique to a "free-quasi twelve-tone system" in his tonal language.⁴¹ He did not limit himself by the strict twelve-tone techniques. He used inversions and variations of the tone row and specific groups of

³⁹ Jison Choi, "The Merging of Korean Traditional Music and Western Instrumentation as Exemplified in four Chamber Works for Piano Composed by Isang Yun" (D.M.A. Diss., University of Miami, 2007), 36.

⁴⁰ Jiyeon Byeon, "The Wounded Dragon," 11.

⁴¹ Francisco Feliciano, *Four Asian Contemporary Composers: The Influence of Tradition in their Works* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1983), 34.

sound through repetitions. For example, in *Gasa für Violin und Klavier* (1963), Yun used a free twelve-tone system where specific tones were presented with more emphasis.

Yun often used his free twelve-tone technique combined with the *Hauptton* technique. He chose a tone row and reused the notes for *Hauptton* surrounded by ornaments and melismas. *Gasa für Violin und Klavier* shows that the twelve-tone materials of the opening become *Hauptton* to develop his ideas throughout. He employed twelve-tone technique to introduce the main-notes (*Hauptton*) at the beginning of the piece and decorated those with embellishments in his other compositions including *Garak für Flute und Klavier* (1963) and *Königliches Thema* (1976).

Finally, Yun used the twelve-tone technique to support the framework of his structure ignoring the rows once he felt that they restricted his imagination.⁴² He explained that he used a freer twelve-tone technique to induce a natural flow in his works, and developing his ideas by individual notes was more important to convey to an audience than the simple recognition of a tone row.⁴³ Even though twelve-tone technique was a significant part of Yun's compositional vocabulary the use of twelve-tone technique was one of his Western approaches to composition.

Taoism

Feliciano explained that Yun's music is radically different from that of his Western colleagues using the same medium because of his spiritual attitude and artistic disposition rooted in Eastern philosophy.⁴⁴ Even though the Eastern religion and philosophy including Buddhism, Confucianism and shamanism influenced his compositional style, Taoism is the most significant philosophy that is embedded in Yun's music.

⁴²Ibid., 34.

⁴³Jiyeon Byeon, "The Wounded Dragon," 133-34.

⁴⁴Francisco Feliciano, *Four Asian Contemporary Composers*, 66.

“Tao” is commonly translated as the “way” or “path.” However, the word “Tao” has manifold meanings in which the creation should proceed. The “Tao” is an infinite existence that transcends time and space to complete creation.⁴⁵ The key to understand Taoist philosophy is the concept of yin and yang. The Taoist visual symbol is the yin-yang symbol, which consists of a circle divided into two teardrop-shaped black and white halves with the smaller circles inside of each.



Figure 1. Yin and yang symbol.

The black and white halves within the circle mean yin and yang. Yin and yang refer to feminine and masculine energies. Yin embodies passive, negative, weak and dark, and yang represents active, positive, strong and bright.⁴⁶ The curves and circles of the yin-yang symbol imply a constant changing movement. The implied movement indicates that yin and yang are arising and transforming one into the other in a mutual relationship. One could not exist without the other. The smaller circles inside each half mean the independent nature of the black and white-opposites.

⁴⁵Jison Choi, “The Merging of Korean Traditional Music and Western Instrumentation as Exemplified in four Chamber Works for Piano Composed by Isang Yun” (D.M.A. Diss., University of Miami, 2007), 27.

⁴⁶ Keith Howard, “Korean Tradition in Isang Yun’s Compositional Style,” *Ssi-ol: Almanach der Internationalen Isang Yun Gesellschaft* (1998/99): 86.

In Yun's composition *Shao Yang Yin* for cembalo (1966), the concept of yin-yang was depicted as the title, "light" yang-yin, indicated. He presented the forces of yin and yang dynamically. He wrote *ff-fff* dynamics in the low and middle registers contrasted with *p-mp* in the high register. The contrast between dynamics became one of his characteristic compositional styles. However, as the doctrine of yin-yang teaches, the contrasting dynamics complement each other and make a "harmonious relationship."⁴⁷

Yun also explained his intention to musically depict the Taoist philosophy in the interview with Rinser. In the North Korea grave chamber he visited in 1963, there are murals of four ancient Asian gods (*Sa-Sin-Do*) in the images of mythical animals such as a tiger, dragon, phoenix and tortoise. The four ancient gods are located on the west, east, south and north sides according to their natural characteristics. In the dark grave it depends on where you are standing to see a single animal of four, but soon you will see that a whole thing moves together.⁴⁸ Yun infused the concept of unity of four different characters into his work *Images* (1968), written in prison. He coordinated the flute for the black tortoise, the oboe for the blue dragon, the violin for the red phoenix, and the cello for the white tiger. As the colors of each animal on the fresco blend with the others, each instrument of four is part of the whole and expresses the "individuality" and "unity" interchangeably. Four is one, and one is four.⁴⁹

Yun's Taoist philosophy was depicted more extensively in his compositions. In the interview with Bruce Duffie (1987), he expressed that his music does not have a beginning or end since he could combine the elements from one piece to another piece.⁵⁰ His five symphonies

⁴⁷ Francisco Feliciano, *Four Asian Contemporary Composers: The Influence of Tradition in their Works* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1983), 58.

⁴⁸ Jiyeon Byeon, "The Wounded Dragon", 149.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 117.

⁵⁰ Bruce Duffie, "An interview with Isang Yun" *Sonus- A Journal of Investigation into Global Musical Possibilities*, 28:2 (Spring 2008), 47. Available from <http://www.Bruceduffie.com/yun.html>

(1982-87) were composed interrelated under the motto of “Appealing to mankind for love and humanity.” Keith Howard pointed out that each of the symphonies has an arch form on many levels, and the five symphonies form a gigantic arch if they are played in sequence.⁵¹ As Yun explained, his music flows in a cosmos and is always continuous like “clouds that are always the same but are never alike one to another.”⁵²

Most of all, Isang Yun developed the yin-yang doctrine to his compositional technique, *Hauptton*. *Hauptton* technique can be described as the “main-tone” surrounded with embellishments such as melismas, dynamics, grace notes and modifications of main- tones. Jeongmee Kim stated that the dualism of Taoist philosophy transferred from yang into the long-sustained note and from yin to the surrounding materials.⁵³ However, the two opposite elements, yin and yang, do not only create contrasts but also harmony. More details of *Hauptton* technique are discussed below.

Hauptton and Hauptklang

Isang Yun used Taoist philosophy in his musical expression through *Hauptton* technique. He created *Hauptton* technique to express his perspectives of Korean elements. In her book *Music on the Border*, Sinhyang Yoon stated that the image of *Hauptton* Isang Yun drew in the interview with Nishimura Akira was similar to the shape of a white tiger in *Sa-Sin-Do*, the murals of the ancient fresco, as he was inspired by the murals of four ancient gods.⁵⁴ It does not mean that he imitated the image of the murals for his new technique, but the traditional Korean

⁵¹ Keith Howard, *Korean Music Volume 2: Creating Korean Music: Tradition, Innovation and the Discourse of Identity* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006), 132.

⁵² Bruce Duffie, “An interview with Isang Yun” *Sonus- A Journal of Investigation into Global Musical Possibilities*, 28:2 (Spring 2008), 47.

⁵³ Jeongmee Kim, “Musical Syncretism in Isang Yun’s Gasa,” in *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, eds. Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau (Middletown, Conn: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 185.

⁵⁴ Sinhyang Yoon, *Isang Yun: Music on the Border* (Pajoo: Hangilsa, 2005), 175.

sound has been recognized in his mind as images, and he transferred the image into *Hauptton* technique⁵⁵ (Figures 2 & 3).

To understand the concept of *Hauptton* technique one must know the basic concept of the single tone in Asian music. Isang Yun often explained the difference in the concepts of tone between Europe and Asia. He mentioned that the tone of the West is like a “linear pencil” while one of the East is like a “stroke of a brush” which is flexible: A single note in Western music has to be connected to a form horizontally and vertically to have its meaning, however in the East the single note is the “musical phenomenon” and has its own life.⁵⁶

Traditional Korean music uses main-tone and ornamentation within a monophonic structure, and the goal of ornamentations in Korean music is melodic development without harmonic support.⁵⁷ Thus, the techniques of ornamentation in traditional Korean music have been varied in vocal and instrumental music.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Ibid., 177.

⁵⁶ Translated by Jiyeon Byeon in “Wounded Dragon,” 12.

Isang Yun, “Über meine Musik,” Der Komponist Isang Yun, eds. Hanns-Werner Heister and Walter Wolfgang Sparrer, 2nd ed. (Munich: edition text+ kritik, 1997), 297.

⁵⁷ Laura Hauser, “A Performer’s Analysis of Isang Yun’s Monolog for Bassoon with an Emphasis on the Role of Traditional Korean Influence” (D.M.A. diss., Louisiana State University, 2009), 50.

⁵⁸ Discussed in Chapter III. The Korean Instrumental Techniques in Western Instruments.



Figure 2. White tiger in *Sa-Sin-Do*, the murals of four gods, Gang-Seo frescos.

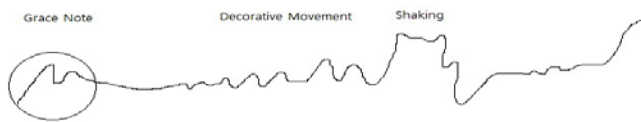


Figure 3. *Hauptton* in Isang Yun's drawing.⁵⁹

Example 2.1. Yun's *Hauptton* technique in *Etüden für Flöte(n)* (1974) V. Allegretto, measures 2-5.



Etüden für Flöte(n) Solo
 © Copyright 1974 by Bote & Bock Musik- Und Bühnenverlag GMBH & Co.
 Reprinted by permission.

⁵⁹ Nishmura Akira, "At the End of an Endless Universe," in *The Musical World of Isang Yun*, eds. Songman Choi and Eunmi Hong (Seoul: Hangil-sa, 1991), 158.

For example, the *shikimsae* in traditional Korean vocal and instrumental music starts with an appoggiatura and employs wide and narrow vibrato and microtonal shading: sliding up and down. The traditional Korean instrumental technique *nonghyun* is similar to vibrato or trill in Western music.⁶⁰ Without any indication in music these techniques are used by performers to add an expressive touch on specific notes, and the notes become “alive.”

Inspired by traditional Korean sounds, Isang Yun established a base of main-tones anticipated by grace notes and colored by ornamentations, vibratos, accents and glissandi and called this *Hauptton* technique. The musicologist Schmidt suggested the term *Toneinheit*. Yun’s *Hauptton* technique could be described as a “sound unit” which consists of a main-note as the principal element with embellishments as part of the unit. Not only a main-note but also the ornamentations must be considered as an essential part of the sound unit.⁶¹ Laura Hauser also supported Schmidt’s suggestion that Yun used the *Hauptton* technique to structure phrases in his music.⁶² In Yun’s music, phrases are structured around a single tone with all other tones, which are considered different forms of ornaments. Most of the embellished *Hauptton* is as long as the length of a breath, and the ornamentations often encircle and lead to the main tone. Isang Yun focused on a single tone to develop the phrases rather than motives as in Western music.⁶³

When *Hauptton* techniques are applied to a chamber ensemble or orchestra they result in the *Hauptklang* (sound complex). Isang Yun multiplied the *Hauptton* in parts sounding simultaneously, and each *Hauptton* is articulated and modified in timbre with different

⁶⁰ Jison Choi, “The Merging of Korean Traditional Music and Western Instrumentation as Exemplified in four Chamber Works for Piano Composed by Isang Yun” (D.M.A. Diss., University of Miami, 2007), 45

⁶¹ Francisco Feliciano, *Four Asian Contemporary Composers: The Influence of Tradition in their Works* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1983), 41.

⁶² Laura Hauser, “A Performer’s Analysis of Isang Yun’s Monolog for Bassoon with an Emphasis on the Role of Traditional Korean Influence” (D.M.A. diss., Louisiana State University, 2009), 43.

⁶³ Garrett Mellon, *Isang Yun*. (accessed December 11, 2010); available from http://humanitiescenter.nysyu.edu.tw/engvision/webplan_person34.php

graduation in pitch and intensity.⁶⁴ In the interview with Rinser he explained this phenomenon as creating “a bundle of single tones” related to the *Hauptton* technique.⁶⁵

His first attempt to use the *Hauptton* technique appeared in the second movement of *Musik für Sieben Instrumente* (1959) written during his first European period. His *Hauptton* technique had been cumulating in his orchestral work, *Reak* (1966).⁶⁶ Yun’s application of main-tones to multiple parts can be found in measures 107-110. He employed main-tones, b-a#-g, for each of three trumpets. Each main-tone is articulated in the same manner of rhythm and dynamic for two bars and then develops in different gradation independently (Example 2.2)

Example 2.2. *Reak* (1966), measures 107-110.

The image shows a musical score for three trumpets in 4/4 time, measures 107-110. The score is written in three staves. Each staff contains notes with dynamic markings and articulation marks. The dynamics include *mp*, *f*, *p*, *mf*, and *fp*. The notes are often beamed together and have slurs or accents above them. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4.

© Reak by Isang Yun
 Copyright 1966 by Bote & Bock GMBH & Co., Berlin
 Reprinted by permission

The most interesting point of Yun’s *Hauptton* technique is how it appeals to the ears of listeners. Since his music is composed on notes rather than motives it might become boring and

⁶⁴ Francisco Feliciano, *Four Asian Contemporary Composers: The Influence of Tradition in their Works* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1983), 48.

⁶⁵ Jiyeon Byeon, “The Wounded Dragon,” 139.

⁶⁶ Sinhyang Yoon, *Isang Yun: Music on the Border* (Pajoo: Hangilsa, 2005), 97.

“monotonous,” yet it actually gives more spaces for the imagination of the listeners.⁶⁷ Listeners will identify the *Hauptton* at ease even though a great amount of activity in ornamentations could visually hide the presentation of the main-tones in sections of the score. Yun’s music produces a special connection between the performer and the listener. As he mentioned in the interview with Bruce Duffie the listener has “total freedom as to how he wishes to approach a piece of music.”⁶⁸

The Korean Instrument Techniques in Western Instruments

As stated above, Isang Yun had grown up in the southern part of Korea near the ocean where traditional Korean folk music flourished. Only after he left Korea for his study in Europe did he realize there were hidden musical treasures in the traditional music of Korea.⁶⁹ As his music career was established in Europe, he discovered musical ideas from the sounds of his native country and adapted the techniques of Korean instruments to his works.

Keith Howard stated that traditional Korean music sounded to Isang Yun as a “mixture of sound blocks” such as “soft strings, brash and thrusting brass, and flickering and uneasy woodwinds.”⁷⁰ Yun translated the “sound blocks” to instrumentations of the Western orchestra. In most of his works, he did not use traditional Korean instruments except for a few percussion instruments, yet reproduced the sound of Korean instruments employing Western instruments. He experimented with the range of the sound that can be expressed by Western instruments to achieve the Korean sound quality.

⁶⁷ Garrett Mellon, “Isang Yun,” http://humanitiescenter.nsysu.edu.tw/engvision/webplan_person34.php (accessed December 11, 2010).

⁶⁸ Bruce Duffie, “Composer Isang Yun.” <http://www.Bruceduffie.com/yun.html> (accessed December 12, 2010)

⁶⁹ Francisco Feliciano, *Four Asian Contemporary Composers: The Influence of Tradition in their Works* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1983), 33.

⁷⁰ Keith Howard, “Perceptions of Traditional Music and Western Music in Korea,” *The World of Music* 39 (1997): 63.

Howard also pointed out the characteristic of traditional Korean instruments is flexibility in terms of pitch because of their physical structures.⁷¹ For example, the *geomungo*, a 6-string long zither with three movable bridges plucked by a pencil-size bamboo stick, has a wide gap between the bridge and the soundboard, and the performers need to move their hands more widely and more freely up and down. The use of a freer left hand is able to produce flexible changes in the pitch as well as in the tone color and quality.⁷² The *piri*, a double-reed recorder with a bamboo body, is also flexible to modify pitch and tone because of the minimal embouchure adjustment.⁷³ Owing to the flexibility, the instruments are able to produce the “Korean sound,” which is not steady but embellished by pitch changes, grace notes, wide vibrato and microtones.

In traditional Korean music until the 1960s, performance techniques were taught only by oral sources.⁷⁴ The traditional system of ornamentations such as *shikimsae* and *nonghyun* was unwritten but passed from teachers to students by demonstrating the techniques. *Shikimsae* is the primary device that creates delicate shading and nuances of a tone using vibrations and pitch sliding.⁷⁵ *Nonghyun* also refers to the left-hand ornament patterns for string instruments. It is similar to vibrato yet the width of vibration within a single note is bigger. It often involves pitch changes by a major second or minor third. In traditional Korean music, performers used wider vibrato for folk music such as *minyo* and narrower vibrato for ritual or court music like *ahak*.⁷⁶

⁷¹ Keith Howard, “Korean Tradition in Isang Yun’s Compositional Style,” *Ssi-ol: Almanach der Internationalen Isang Yun Gesellschaft* (1998/99): 87.

⁷² Injung Song, “*In-Depth Study of Isang Yun’s Glissees Pour Violoncelle Seul*” (DMA diss., Boston University, 2008), 29.

⁷³ Keith Howard, “Korean Tradition,” 87.

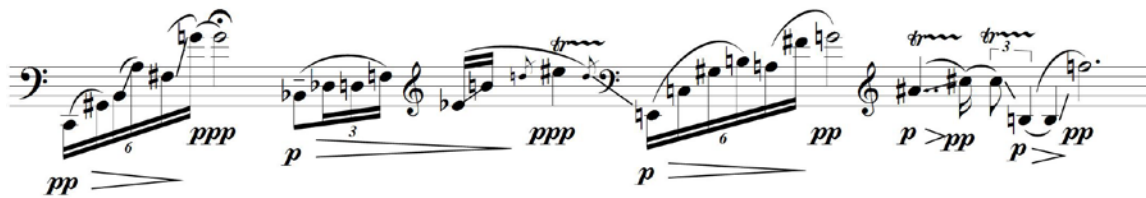
⁷⁴ Laura Hauser, “A Performer’s Analysis of Isang Yun’s Monolog for Bassoon with an Emphasis on the Role of Traditional Korean Influence” (D.M.A. diss., Louisiana State University, 2009), 31.

⁷⁵ Chul-Hwa Kim, “The Musical Ideology and Style of Isang Yun, as Reflected in His Concerto for violoncello and orchestra (1975/76),” (DMA diss., Univ. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1997), 46.

⁷⁶ Sinhyang Yoon, *Isang Yun: Music on the Border* (Pajoo: Hangilsa, 2005), 74.

Yun attempted to transform the traditional Korean sound into Western instruments through his compositions. He used a variety of ornaments such as grace notes, glissandos, trills and *tremoli* to produce the similar effects of *shikimsae* and *nonghyun*. For instance, he applied these techniques to *Glissées* for solo cello (1970) to express traditional Korean instrumental sound in detail. (Example 2.3) In *Monolog for Bassoon*, he also used pitch bending for rise or fall by a quarter tone in combination with other ornaments to imitate the flexible nature of traditional Korean instruments such as the *piri*. (Example 2.4)

Example 2.3. *Glissées*, Movement 1.



Glissées by Isang Yun
 © Copyright 1970 by Bote & Bock Musik- Und Buhnenverlag GMBH & Co.
 Reprinted by permission.

Example 2.4. *Monolog for Bassoon*, measures 46-51.



- ◡ Raised by a quarter tone
- ◣ Lowered by a quarter tone

Monolog for Bassoon by Isang Yun
 © Copyright 1983/84 by Bote & Bock Musik- Und Buhnenverlag GMBH & Co.
 Reprinted by permission.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF YUN'S *KÖNIGLICHES THEMA*

Background

It is obvious that Isang Yun tried to express his musical roots in traditional Korean sound through most of his compositions. Yet he had never forgotten the aspects of traditions of Western music that he had lived with for half of his life. After 1970, Yun consciously accommodated and recreated the genres of traditional Western music composing 5 symphonies, 8 concertos and 6 string quartets. He especially worked on instrumental pieces rather than vocal compositions in his late period. He composed three violin concertos between 1981 and 1993, and three violin solo pieces such as *Königliches Thema* (1976), *Li-Na im Garten* (1985) and *Kontraste* (1987).

Among Yun's violin pieces his respect of Western music heritage prompted him to compose *Königliches Thema* on the theme that J. S. Bach used for one of his collections of canons and fugues, *Musikalisches Opfer*.⁷⁷ *Königliches Thema* was dedicated to a German violinist, Klaus Peter Diller, and Diller premiered it in Düsseldorf-Benrath on April 1, 1977. Yun wrote out seven variations without measures after the theme was introduced but distinguished each variation by double bar lines.

Theme

In the *Königliches Thema*, Isang Yun presented the theme in C minor as it is in Bach's *Musikalisches Opfer*. Yun created a strong entrance by forte in 2/2 bringing out each individual note and concluded the theme with four Cs in diminuendo. Especially he repeated the C three

⁷⁷ In 1747, Frederic II of Prussia gave a theme and asked J. S. Bach to compose fugues on it. Bach wrote out *Thema Regium* (Theme of the King) for *Musikalisches Opfer* (BWV 1079). The theme is so-called the royal theme and rearranged by many composers such as Anton Webern.

times employing *pizzicati*. It invokes the sound of a gong, an Asian percussion instrument used as a signal for the beginning or end of an event.

The theme consists of ascending and descending contours of C minor. The initial three pitches (C, E flat, G) {1, 2, 3}, delineate a C minor chord and rise up to A flat {4} creating an interval minor sixth above the C. The A flat leaps down to the B natural {5} in an interval of a Major sixth. Between measure 3 and 7, the descending motion moves from G4 to G3 {6-15} involving a chromatic scale until B {14}. The descending motion changes its direction by the Perfect fourths between G and C/ C and F {15-17}, and again the F moves to the tonic C in a diatonic descending motion {17-20} (Example 3.1). The twenty notes in the order of the theme are retained for the seven variations and become haupttons in Variations 2 through 7.⁷⁸

Example 3.1. The royal theme in *Königliches Thema*.

Königliches Thema by Isang Yun
 © Copyright 1976 by Bote & Bock Musik- Und Bühnenverlag GMBH & Co.
 Reprinted by permission.

Variation 1

In Variation 1, the theme is repeated five times and developed each time from a simple to a complicated version. At the beginning Yun tried to stick to a simple rhythmic variation on the theme employing eighth notes (Ex.3.2 Variation 1-1), and manipulated the theme alternating the registers by putting E natural⁷⁹, E flat, D flat {8, 10, 12} an octave higher (Ex.3.2 Variation 1-2).

⁷⁸ Since Isang Yun utilized the notes of the theme as a frame to develop his variations, and most pitches are presented more than once in the theme, I applied a number on each note of the theme for better understanding.

⁷⁹ E natural is written in the edition of Bote & Bock. It could be regarded as F natural {8} since Yun was strictly keeping the theme at this point of variation.

Next time he transferred the whole theme an octave higher and again alternated the register for F sharp, E, D, C {7, 9, 11, 13} an octave higher (Ex.3.2 Variation 1-3). For the fourth time, the theme comes back in an inversion (Ex 3.2 Variation 1-4).

Example 3.2. Variation 1.

Variation 1-1. Theme in eighth notes.



Variation 1-2. Theme with register alternation.



Variation 1-3. Theme an octave higher with register alternation.



Variation 1-4. Inversion.

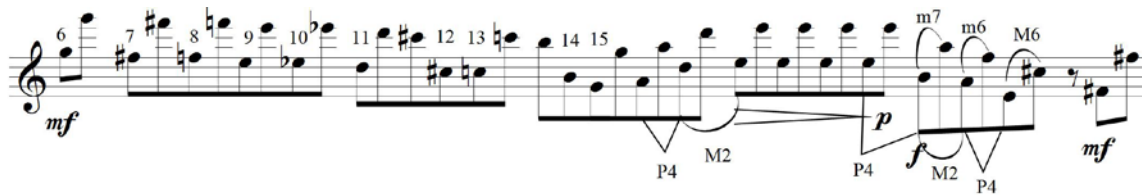


Königliches Thema by Isang Yun
 © Copyright 1976 by Bote & Bock Musik- Und Buhnenverlag GMBH & Co.
 Reprinted by permission

As Yun brought back the theme a fifth time, he not only added notes in the octave but also used intervallic relationships between the notes of the theme to develop his ideas. First, he added notes an octave higher and changed the direction of the octave movement for C sharp {12}

and B {14}. Instead of the presentation of C {16}, he arranged an interval Perfect fourth leap (A4-A5-D5-D6), and the octave movement of E6 –E7, a major second above the D, is repeated four times. Again, the Perfect fourth and major second interval relationships are observed in the descending motion (E5-B4-A4-E4), but the added notes are varied as in minor seventh, minor sixth, and Major sixth rather than an octave (Example 3.3).

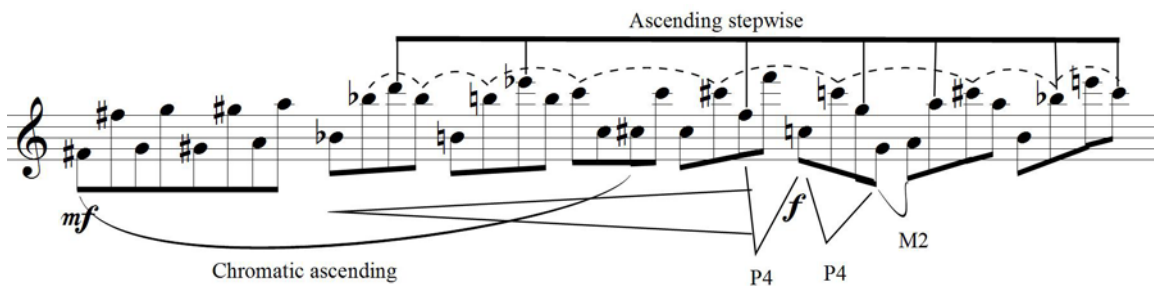
Example 3.3. Variation 1-5.



Königliches Thema by Isang Yun
 © Copyright 1976 by Bote & Bock Musik- Und Buhnenverlag GMBH & Co.
 Reprinted by permission

Even though it is hard to recognize the frame notes of the theme later in Variation I-5 it is apparent that the theme still influences how Yun’s ideas are applied and developed. He employed a chromatic ascending motion from F sharp 4 to C sharp 5 embellished by octave movements, and it becomes a part of the compound melody. While the top part of the compound melody ascends stepwise, the middle part is neighboring around B flat, B, C and C sharp. Perfect fourths (F-C/ C-G) and a Major second (G-A) are created as well (Example 3.4).

Example 3.4. Variation 1-5. The compound melody.



Königliches Thema by Isang Yun
 © Copyright 1976 by Bote & Bock Musik- Und Buhnenverlag GMBH & Co.
 Reprinted by permission

Variation 2

The mood of Variation 2 is busy with sixteenth-note movements grouped in triplets to septuplets. It consists of two sections: a theme in C and an inversion of the theme in G. In Variation 2, Yun applied twelve-tone technique to the theme. He presented the notes of the theme as a beginning note of each group with accent and filled others by twelve pitches that he chose. As Example 3.5 shows, he did not use the strict twelve-tone technique and omitted or doubled notes of the row. In the second section of Variation 2, the theme is presented in the same manner as in the first section yet inverted starting with G and concluding on B flat.

Example 3.5. Variation 2. Use of the twelve-tone technique.⁸⁰ Omit 4 and double 8



Königliches Thema by Isang Yun
© Copyright 1976 by Bote & Bock Musik- Und Bühnenverlag GMBH & Co.
Reprinted by permission

Variation 3

In Variation 3, the theme starts with E flat in the dominant relationship of the last pitch, B flat in Variation 2 and a minor tenth above the middle C of the theme. For this variation Yun presented the theme via his *Hauptton* technique. The notes of the theme become main-notes and make sustained sound as long tones with accent and *f*. While *hauptton* is held in the lower part of the double stop it is embellished by sixteenth-notes in the top part. As a result it shows a new character from Variation 2. Yun employed the high register of the violin and created a busy and scattered mood by sudden register changes (Example 3.6).

⁸⁰ The numbers indicated in this example are supposed to be distinguished from the number written for the theme.

Example 3.6. Variation 3.



Königliches Thema by Isang Yun
© Copyright 1976 by Bote & Bock Musik- Und Bühnenverlag GMBH & Co.
Reprinted by permission

Moreover an inspiration for the figures of sustained long *hauptton* by embellished sixteenths may originate in Yun's tie to the style of Chaconne of the Baroque era. It could be understood as Yun attempting to accommodate the ideal solo violin piece, Bach's Chaconne of Partita in D minor for his *Königliches Thema*. Instead of the use of ground bass, Yun utilized *hauptton* that offers variations, decorations and inventions as the ground bass does in Chaconne.

Variation 4

Variation 4 starts with B flat in the dominant relationship to the E flat of Variation 3. Yun changed the tempo from $\downarrow ca = 88$ of the previous variations to $\downarrow ca = 66$ since he started to use more sixteenths and thirty-seconds for embellishments on the main-notes. In Variation 4, Yun again employed *Hauptton* technique but this time in the great variety of dynamics, melodic ideas and ornaments (Example 3.7).

Example 3.7. Variation 4.

Königliches Thema by Isang Yun
 © Copyright 1976 by Bote & Bock Musik- Und Buhnenverlag GMBH & Co.
 Reprinted by permission

As with Yun’s compositions, traditional Korean music utilizes main-tone and ornaments within a monophonic structure.⁸¹ Hauser pointed out that trills and *tremoli* in Korean music serve as melodic expansion.⁸² In Variation 4 of *Königliches Thema*, Yun employed trills and tremolos for intensifying the melody that intertwines the main-note rather than simply decorating it. Especially, the trills and *tremoli* between a minor and major third create the similar effect to wide vibrato of traditional Korean instruments.⁸³ He also employed grace notes always preceding a main-note as in Korean music. It gives gravity to a main-note and helps the *hauptton* be presented to our ears clearly (Example 3.8).

Example 3.8. Variation 4. Use of trills, *tremoli* and grace notes

Königliches Thema by Isang Yun
 © Copyright 1976 by Bote & Bock Musik- Und Buhnenverlag GMBH & Co.
 Reprinted by permission

⁸¹ Laura Hauser, “A Performer’s Analysis of Isang Yun’s Monolog for Bassoon with an Emphasis on the Role of Traditional Korean Influence” (D.M.A. diss., Louisiana State University, 2009), 50.

⁸² Ibid. 50.

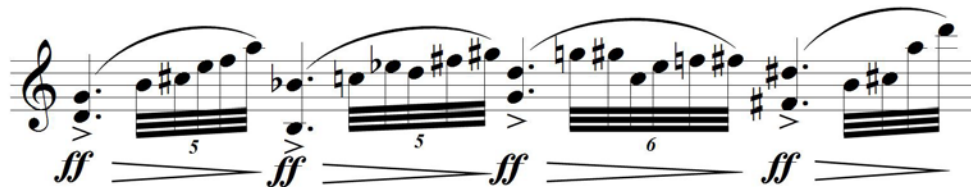
⁸³ See Chapter III. The Korean instrument technique in Western instrument.

The phrases of Variation 4 are so enriched by harmonics, *pizzicati* and staccatos along with written crescendos, diminuendos and accents that they provide more dramatic character than the previous variations. Both the unstable fluctuation from the ornaments and stillness of the *Hauptton* are observed in each phrase related to yin and yang of Taoism. They express two opposite elements in harmonic relationship. It will be discussed more in ‘Yun’s Taoism in *Königliches Thema*.’

Variation 5

Yun employed double stops for the main-notes in Variation 5 and created two voice movements simultaneously. It results in *Hauptklang*. While the upper part is written out in the theme on G the lower part presents an inverted theme on D. As a result a dominant note (G) of the Royal theme returns in the upper part, and the lower part is written in a dominant relationship to the upper part and a Major second above the tonic of the theme (C).

Example 3.9. Variation 5. Use of dynamics.



Königliches Thema by Isang Yun
 © Copyright 1976 by Bote & Bock Musik- Und Buhnenverlag GMBH & Co.
 Reprinted by permission

Variation 5 mostly consists of main-notes embellished by triplet to quintuplet thirty-seconds. Yun constantly used *ff* for the main-notes and decrescendo within the thirty-seconds. Eventually the main-note becomes a point of departure and the focal point of each group, so-called ‘sound unit’⁸⁴(Example 3.9).

⁸⁴ ‘Sound unit’ is a term suggested by musicologist Schmidt for Isang Yun’s *Hauptton* technique.

Variation 6

Variation 6 is the longest and most melodically diverse variation of the *Königliches Thema*. It contains two variations connected by a cadenza-like transition with the variety of melodic and rhythmic ideas. Yun also used a great variety of violin techniques such as *glissandi*, trills, harmonics and *pizzicati*.

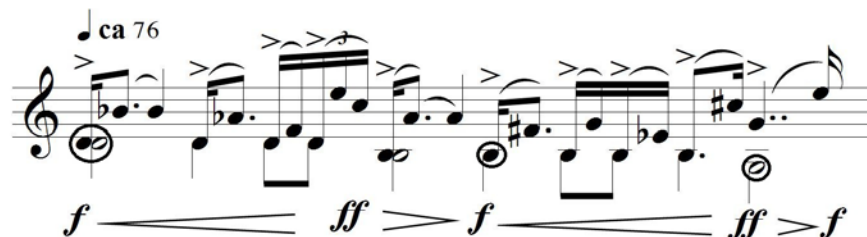
Yun wrote out Variation 6 on D in an inversion of the theme corresponding with the lower part of the double stops in Variation 5. Since the main-notes are presented exactly in the same order, Variation 5 sounds as a preparation and anticipation for Variation 6. Yet he extended the length of hauptton and also repeated haupttons with accent in Variation 6. Eventually the main-notes are clearly audible and identifiable.

In Variation 6 the rhythmic patterns of ‘short-long’ and ‘long-short’ are repeated with an embellishing upper part on a sustained lower part of double stops (Example 3.10). Keith Howard explains that the key to understanding traditional Korean music is rhythm.⁸⁵ Most traditional Korean music has repeated rhythm patterns called *changdan* underneath it, and the *changdan* consists of a strong down beat and accents. The short-long and long-short rhythms are dominated in the rhythmic cycle of *changdan* such as *Chajinmori* (Example 3.11).

Please see Chapter III. *Hauptton and Hautklang*.

⁸⁵ Keith Howard, “Korean Music.” World Music Centre. <http://www.worldmusiccentre.com/uploads/cdime/howard> (accessed July 7, 2011).

Example 3.10. Variation 6. Rhythmic pattern.



Königliches Thema by Isang Yun
 © Copyright 1976 by Bote & Bock Musik- Und Bühnenverlag GMBH & Co.
 Reprinted by permission

Example 3.11. *Chajinmori* (A rhythmic cycle of traditional Korean music)⁸⁶



In addition, Yun invoked the idea of Korean folk music, *minyo*, by combining short-long or long-short pairs and sustained haupttons. Especially in Southern provincial *minyo*, there are three different kinds of singing styles: *Peongem* (Singing straight without vibration or decoration), *Thununem* (Singing with vibrato) and *Guknunem* (Singing with a grace note).⁸⁷ As seen in Example 3.12, performers of *Jindo Arirang* sing E straight and plain, B with vibrato and F sharp with a grace note. In Yun's Variation 6, the hauptton of the lower part sustains as either *Peongem* or *Thununem* while the upper part keeps the pattern of short-long rhythm in the similar effect of *Guknunem*.

⁸⁶ Keith Howard, "Lessons for Schools: 2 Korea." <http://www.soas.ac.uk/music/schools/lessons-for-schools-2-korea.html> (accessed July 7, 2011).

⁸⁷ National Gugak Center, "*Namdominyo*." <http://www.gugak.go.kr/data/education/dictionary> (accessed June 27, 2011).

Example 3.12. *Jindo Arirang*

♩ = 72-108

~~~~~ Thununem  
\* Guknunem

As seen in Example 13.12, in *Jindo Arirang*, the pitches of a phrase keep returning to the main-note, E, and circling around it. Yun used the same idea employing the rhythmic gesture over the main-notes D, B and G (Example 3.10) even though his haupttons are ever changing.

Yun put more embellishments between the haupttons as the variation develops, and the distance between the haupttons gets further. After the presentation of the last hauptton, D, he wrote out a cadenza-like transition with sixteenths played *staccatissimo*. The sustained haupttons embellished by melisma in the previous section are suddenly interrupted by rapid and straight sixteenths in *ff* (Example 3.13).

Example 3.13. Transition of Variation 6.

♩ = ca. 88

simile

Königliches Thema by Isang Yun  
© Copyright 1976 by Bote & Bock Musik- Und Bühnenverlag GMBH & Co.  
Reprinted by permission

The transition quickly drove the mood to the next section that consists of the identical idea as in Variation 2. Yun added some changes like slurs, *pizzicati* and arco employing thirty-

second notes along sixteenths rather than strict sixteenths only in Variation 2 (Example 3.14). It creates more flowing melody lines than in Variation 2 and continues smoothly to the conclusion of the piece.

Example 3.14. Transformation of Variation 2 in Variation 6.



Königliches Thema by Isang Yun  
 © Copyright 1976 by Bote & Bock Musik- Und Bühnenverlag GMBH & Co.  
 Reprinted by permission

Even though there are two different variations in Variation 6, I followed the composer's intention that he connected them by a transition and employed no double bar line between any of those. To understand his idea to combine the variations two possibilities are suggested. First, as Variation 6 starts with a prolongation of Variation 5 (in D) in the tonal plan of the whole piece, the gravity toward the tonic introduces the theme on 'C' prior to the next variation. Second, for the balance of the whole structure, he presented the same idea of Variation 2 for the second variation of Var. 6 and also treated it as part of Variation 6 since it could be heard as a cadenza with a variety of violin techniques continued from the transition.

#### Variation 7

The royal theme returns in an octave-high augmentation for Variation 7. Yun employed a time signature of 2/2 along a tempo marking, a half note equal to 66, and bar lines for the first time since the royal theme. The notes of the theme are sustained much longer than in the previous variations and occasionally preceded by grace notes without embellished melisma. He presented a few embellished notes between F and E ♭ {17 and 18} and short cadenza-like

arpeggios toward the C {20}. Yun created a meditative atmosphere by making dynamic levels to *ppp* with consistent use of decrescendo (Example 3.15). He concluded the piece by three Cs with *pizzicati* as in the theme, but this time *pp*, *f* and *ppp*.

Example 3.15. Variation 7. Return of the theme.

Königliches Thema by Isang Yun  
 © Copyright 1976 by Bote & Bock Musik- Und Buhnenverlag GMBH & Co.  
 Reprinted by permission

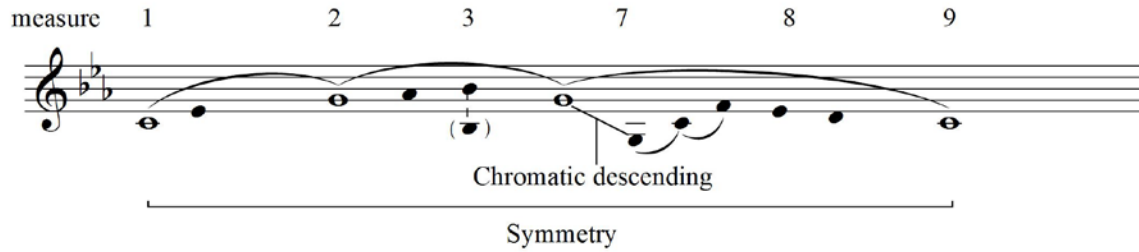
#### Overall Structure: Unity in *Königliches Thema*

While Yun employed *Hauptton* and twelve-tone techniques throughout the variations, the royal theme was his main idea to develop the whole piece. Not only the appearance of the theme itself but also the interval relationships and characteristics of the Royal theme are observed in the developing variations of *Königliches Thema*. Yun certainly utilized the interval motives such as a Perfect fourth and Major second and the melody contours such as chromatic and diatonic descending from the theme (Example 3.4).

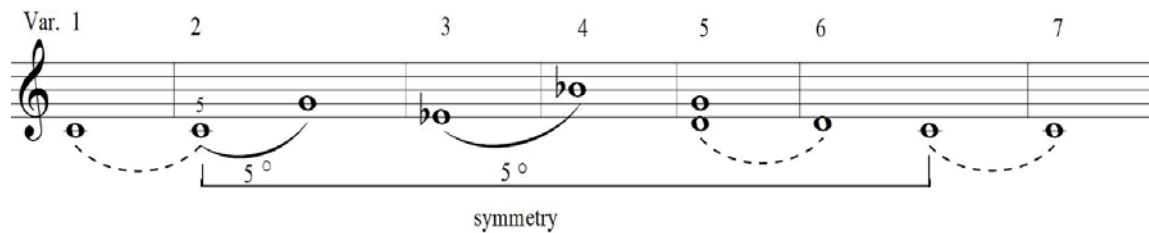
Moreover the theme is related to the variations in the manner of tonal structure. The theme itself is constructed in a mirror image [C-G-G-C], and the structure of the variations creates symmetry in a C minor tonal frame [C-G-(B $\flat$ )-G-C] (Example 3.16). Since Yun utilized the same material as in Variation 2 for Variation 6, the palindrome formation within variations creates balance, which is his Taoist philosophy.

Example 3.16. Unity between the structures of theme and variations.

Tonal structure of the theme:



Whole structure of the variations:



#### Yun's Taoism in *Königliches Thema*

As explained in Variation 3, Yun's *Hauptton* technique in *Königliches Thema* expresses the concept of yin and yang. Yun attempted to employ dynamic levels to present the dualism of *hauptton* and embellishment materials. The *hauptton*s represent strong and stable elements of yang. Yun used the dynamic level of *ff* or *f* with accent on the *hauptton*s, and the *hauptton*s clearly stand out from modifications, embellishments and melisma. Especially his consistent use of crescendo or decrescendo for embellishment notes toward *hauptton*s helps the presentation of *hauptton*s that interact with unstable surroundings of yin.

Jin Sun Choi pointed out that the principle of *Jung-Joong-Dong* in Taoism is observed in Yun's compositions.<sup>88</sup> In the principle of *Jung-Joong-Dong* movement always exists, but because everything returns, matter in motion can be perceived to be fixed or motionless. Yun's

<sup>88</sup> Jison Choi, "The Merging of Korean Traditional Music and Western Instrumentation as Exemplified in four Chamber Works for Piano Composed by Isang Yun" (D.M.A. Diss., University of Miami, 2007), 32.

tonal plan of *Königliches Thema* corresponds with the *Jung-Joong-Dong*. It starts on a ‘C’ in the royal theme and returns to the ‘C’ in the last variation. In Variation 7, the theme comes back in the augmentation to present a prominent return ending with three *pizzicati* that were used in the introductory theme.

As mentioned in ‘Overall structure’ the symmetry in *Königliches Thema* establishes balance, a central principle of Taoist philosophy. In front of the ancient frescos, *Sa-Sin-Do*, Yun expressed that the colors of four gods arose clearly within harmony, which is ‘full of balanced tension.’<sup>89</sup> As the four different ancient gods blend in harmony, each variation of the piece is developed in symmetry for unity.

In the interview with Bruce Duffie (1987) Yun said that he could combine elements from one piece to another piece since his Taoist philosophy lies in his music.<sup>90</sup> As mentioned in Chapter III. ‘Taoism’, his five symphonies are correlated in unity. Another example is the use of the middle movement of the Clarinet Concerto (1983) as the basis for an expanded work, *Monolog for Bassoon* (1983/4).<sup>91</sup> Yun did not limit this philosophy only to his works but expanded it by employing a theme that J.S. Bach used. As Yun explained, his music flows in a cosmos, and his job was to organize and form it through his own thought.<sup>92</sup>

---

<sup>89</sup> Luise Rinser, “*Der Verwundete Drache* (The wounded dragon)” trans. Injung Song in “*In-Depth Study of Isang Yun’s Glissees Pour Violoncelle Seul*” (DMA diss., Boston University, 2008), 23.

<sup>90</sup> Bruce Duffie, “Composer Isang Yun.”

<sup>91</sup> Laura Hauser, “A Performer’s Analysis of Isang Yun’s *Monolog for Bassoon* with an Emphasis on the Role of Traditional Korean Influence,” 38.

<sup>92</sup> Bruce Duffie, “Composer Isang Yun.”



## CHAPTER V

### PERFROMANCE PERSPECTIVE

*Königliches Thema* places technical demands upon the performer. Even though it starts with simple melody contours of the theme, it gets more complicated as the variations continue and develop. Yun used a full range of violin with leaps that require frequent shiftings and unusual fingerings, and a great variety of techniques such as left-hand *pizzicati*, trills, *tremoli*, harmonics, *glissandi*, multiple stops and various kinds of bowings. He also applied no measures for Variation 1 through Variation 6, except the double bar lines for the distinction of each variation. Thus, performers need careful investigation and extreme concentration to understand and play *Königliches Thema*.

#### Tempo

Yun did not indicate any tempo marking on the introduction of the theme. Yet as he brought back the theme for Variation 7 with a half note equal to 66, I suggest the same tempo for the theme as well. After the theme, performers should watch the metronome marking changes in the course of  $\text{♩} = 88$  (Var. 1-3), 66 (Var. 4-5), 76 (Var. 6-1) and 88 (Transition of Var. 6).

At the beginning of Variation 2, he also indicated that a sixteenth note of Variation 2 has the same value as in Variation 1. As Variation 1 consists of only eighth notes, and sixteenth notes are introduced in Variation 2 for the first time, performers need to be aware of Yun's indication.

For Variation 4, the tempo slows down from  $\text{♩} = 88$  to 66. Since Yun employed more melismas that include a variety of performance techniques, the tempo eventually needs to be slower than previous variations. However, it certainly requires a quasi-free style performance

due to the technical demanding melisma. Therefore, the tempo could be even slower than what Yun indicated (Examples 3.7 & 3.8).

In Variation 6, Yun indicated a faster tempo ( $\text{♩} = 76$ ) than the previous variation, and performers need to prepare enough to fit all thirty-second notes in the tempo. Yun employed an even faster tempo for the running sixteenth-note figure in the transition ( $\text{♩} = 88$ ). He grouped all the sixteenths as in one and put *staccatissimo* for each, and it creates a quick flowing motion with the busy sixteenths (Example 3.13). As the characteristic of the transition requires a cadenza-like performance, I suggest that performers play it with *poco a poco accelerando* during the course of the transition and end with *poco ritardando* and *diminuendo*. The second variation of Var. 6 needs to be played in the tempo that was given at the beginning of Variation 6 as ‘a tempo’ comes back after the performance of the cadenza (Example 3.14).

When the theme returns in Variation 7, the tempo returns as well. Yun indicated the time signature  $2/2$  with a metronome marking that a half note equals 66. For the conclusion, he employed a long *ritardando* and fermatas.

### Dynamics

The use of dynamics is one of the significant compositional techniques of Yun. In the score of *Königliches Thema*, a phrase appears visually due to all the dynamics, which are decorating and fluctuating around the main-note. Yun employed a consistent use of forte, mezzo forte and crescendo for each phrase in Variation 1 (Example 3.2). I recommend that performers play out the pattern of dynamics so that each phrase could be clearly presented to the listeners, and they could recognize how the theme is varied each time.

Yun also utilized crescendos and decrescendos toward each presentation of a hauptton for Variations 3 through 6. It could be hard for performers to play a diminuendo for an ascending

melisma, especially when it requires a sudden shifting. Yet performers need to be very careful not to cover up the presentation of haupttons and follow the composer's indications.

Moreover, Yun employed an accent for each hauptton. In Variation 2, performers play the accents with vibrato on the haupttons, and the haupttons are heard as a series of notes of the theme from the other sixteenths (Example 3.5). In Variation 6, playing an accent will aid the short-long rhythm as well as the haupttons appearing clearly (Example 3.10).

Yun barely used the dynamic level of *p* or *pp* in *Königliches Thema*. He only used them intensively in Variation 7. The variation starts with *mf* yet remains in *mp* through *ppp*. The mood of Variation 7, peaceful and meditative, contrasts to the active previous variations. Even though the variation needs to be played in *dolce* and continuous diminuendo, performers need to focus on the quality of sound that projects the return of the theme to play firm fingers with loose bowings. He suddenly put *f* on the middle of the three *pizzicati* of the C, as it confirms the solid conclusion, but soon echoes back in *ppp* after a fermata. I recommend performers play out the C in *f* with a lot of vibrato and have a long enough fermata before the last note. Most of all, the key to perform this piece successfully is to try the dynamics as the composer indicated, and it will certainly aid the presentation of haupttons and musical flow of the piece.

#### Violin Techniques

Variation 1 consists of eighth notes only while Variation 2 is composed of sixteenth notes. I suggest that performers play *détaché* on the eighths and sixteenths,<sup>93</sup> as they need to play smooth and even bow strokes. Performers could associate the bowings with those in *Double* of Bach's Partita No. 1.

---

<sup>93</sup> *Détaché*: A separate bow is taken for each note, and the stroke is smooth and even throughout with no variation of pressure.

As following Yun's indications of slurs, performers occasionally separate a slur into two as the hauptton and long melisma continue with a fluctuation of dynamics in one slur. Yun employed a number of staccato and staccatissimo either in separate bowings or slurs. Most of them are suggested to be played by *spiccato*<sup>94</sup> even though performers could play *sautillé*<sup>95</sup> for separate-bow staccato or *ricochet*<sup>96</sup> for slurred staccato. For example, in the transition of Variation 6, the *staccatissimo* on eighth notes starts with spiccato, and as it moves forward in the accelerando the performer will play *sautillé* (Example 3.13).

Yun utilized left-hand *pizzicati* as well as right-hand *pizzicati* in this piece. As stated in Chapter III, the three *pizzicati* of the theme represent the Asian percussion instrument gong to signal the beginning or ending of an event. Performers play the *pizzicati* by a firm finger with vibratos for the effect of a ringing gong sound. For left-hand *pizzicati*, except in a few occasions, performers will not face difficulty to play them since most of them are associated with open strings. For other cases, performers also would be fine to play left-hand *pizzicato* followed by *arco* if they relax the left hand and have strength on the fingertip (Example 3.14).

One of the most challenging techniques violinists would face in this piece is left-hand movement such as a sudden shifting in running melisma figures and stretching fingers for double stops that exceed the interval tenth. For the shifting, performers need to look for the best fingerings to fit all the notes of melisma ornaments smoothly. In Variation 3, Yun put embellished notes on each hauptton for double stops, and it occasionally creates a large interval that requires a stretching between the first and fourth fingers (Example 3.6). Performers have two possibilities on this occasion: In high positions, performers can reach the interval by stretching

---

<sup>94</sup> *Spiccato*: A technique of playing fast staccato on stringed instrument in which the bow is allowed to bounce on the string.

<sup>95</sup> *Sautillé*: Another jumping bowing which is distinguished by the fact there is no individual lifting and dropping of the bow for each note.

<sup>96</sup> *Ricochet*: Bow rebounds on several notes in the same bow.

two fingers. Or performers play the hauptton with tenuto and vibrato and do not hold the finger while the embellished notes are played in the manner of how violinists play such techniques for Bach's Chaconne.

As stated in Chapter III, Yun's use of *tremoli* and trills represents *nonghyun*, which is similar to wide vibrato. Performers with an understanding of this traditional Korean instrument technique could play *tremoli* or trills adding an expressive touch. For instance, they can start a trill slowly and play it gradually faster as the note becomes alive.

Most of all, this piece deeply expresses Yun's Taoist philosophy such as *Jung-Joong-Dong* and yin and yang dualism. I recommend performers understand this background and play the piece in quasi-free style rather than in a strict and limited manner. In the interview with Duffie, he said that he had never tried out ideas with an instrument, but always with his imagination.<sup>97</sup> He also expressed his music flows in a cosmos,<sup>98</sup> and performers have responsibilities to play his music as he intended.

---

<sup>97</sup> Bruce Duffie, "Composer Isang Yun."

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

Even though Yun's links with contemporary Western music are apparent in his works, his interest and respect toward the traditions of Western music are what most previous scholarly studies have missed. In his late European period, he deliberately avoided composing modern avant-garde music but wanted to recreate traditional genres of Western music to express his musical personality through 'Humanism.'<sup>99</sup> In his *Königliches Thema*, he presented traditions of Western music through structure, motives, form, developing ideas as well as the theme itself. Within these characteristics, traditional Korean sounds blend in the balance. His Taoist philosophy also is shown in the symmetrical balance of the piece, not only in terms of structure but also in two different music worlds.

He once said that he had two experiences in the practice of Asian and European music, and his purpose of composition is not an artificial connection but he is naturally convinced of the unity of the two elements.<sup>100</sup> It might not be necessary to categorize his music either as European or Asian as he stated.<sup>101</sup> His music is unique since it contains his personal experiences and histories. His life both in Korea and Europe made his music express his suffering, dignity and hope in unity.

Isang Yun had never given up hope of the unification of North and South Korea in his lifetime. He was curious of the cultural heritages that North Korea had kept for generations, and attempted to connect two separated Koreas in the medium of music since his imprisonment in South Korea.

---

<sup>99</sup> Sinhyang Yoon, *Isang Yun: Music on the Border* (Pajoo: Hangilsa, 2005), 240.

<sup>100</sup> Bruce Duffie, "Composer Isang Yun."

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

He said that today our world is in desperate need for music that brings us together.<sup>102</sup> It might also express his ideal in music that he composed festival opera for the 1970 Olympic Games in Munich under the slogan “The Unity of All Culture.” Whether his hope for political issues becomes true or not, it is amazing he can unify the world in his music.

---

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

## REFERENCE LIST

### Books

- Choi, Sung Man, and Eun Mee Hong., eds. *The Musical World of Isang Yun*. Seoul: Han Gil Sa, 1991.
- Feliciano, Francisco F. *Four Asian Contemporary Composers: The Influence of Tradition in Their Works*. Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1983.
- Howard, Keith. *Isang Yun: Contemporary Composers*. eds. Brian Morton and Pamela Collins. New York: St James Press, 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Korean Music Volume 2: Creating Korean Music: Tradition, Innovation and the Discourse of Identity*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006.
- Kim, Jeongmee. "Musical Syncretism in Isang Yun's Gasa," in *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, eds. Yoyoi Uno Everett and Frederic Lau, 168-192. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 2004.
- Kim, Yong-Whan. *Study of Isang Yun I & II*. Seoul: Korea Arts Institute, Sigong Sa, 2001.
- McCredie, Andrew. "Isang Yun" in *Music of the Twentieth-century Avant-garde: A Biocritical Sourcebook*. eds. Larry Sitsky. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2002.
- Rinser, Louise. *Der Verwundete Drache, Isang Yun*. Korean edition. tran. Sung Man Choi. Seoul: Han Kil Sa, 1991.
- Schmidt, Christine Martin. "Europäische und Aussereuropäische Musik-Isang Yun", in *Brennpunkte der Neuen Musik*, Köln, 1977.



Yoon, Sinhyang. *Isang Yun, Music on the border*. Pajoo: Hangilsa, 2005.

Articles and Dissertations

Byeon, Jiyeon. "The Wounded Dragon: An annotated translation of "Der *Verwundete Drache*", the biography of composer Isang Yun, by Luise Rinser and Isang Yun." Ph.D. diss., Kent State University, 2003.

Choi, Jison. "The Merging of Korean Traditional Music Western Instrumentations as Exemplified four Chamber Works for Piano Composed by Isang Yun." D.M.A. Diss., University of Miami, 2007.

Duffie, Bruce. "An Interview with Isang Yun." *Sonus- A Journal of Investigations into Global Musical Possibilities*, 28:2 (Spring 2008): 43-51.

Hauser, Laura. "A Performer's Analysis of Isang Yun's Monolog for Bassoon with an Emphasis on the Role of Traditional Korean Influence." D.M.A. diss., Louisiana State University, 2009.

Howard, Keith. "Different Spheres: Perceptions of Traditional Music and Western Music in Korea." *The World of Music*, 39 (1997): 61-65.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Korean Tradition in Isang Yun's Compositional Style," *Ssi-ol: Almanach der International Isang Yun Gesellschaft* (1998/99): 86.

Hur, Dae-Sik. "A Combination of Asian Language with Foundations of Western Music: An Analysis of Isang Yun's Salomo for Flute Solo or Alto Flute Solo." D.M.A. diss., University of North Texas, 2005.

Kim, Chul-Hwa. "The Musical Ideology and Style of Isang Yun, As Reflected in His Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra (1975/76)." Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1997.

Kim, Jeongmee. "The Diasporic Composer: The Fusion of Korean and German Musical Cultures in the work of Isang Yun." Ph.D. diss., University of California, 1999.

Lee, Kyung Ha. "A Comparative Study of Selected Violin Works of Isang Yun: *Gasa für Violine und Klavier* Nr.1 (1991)." D.M.A. diss., The Ohio State University, 2009.

Song, Injung. "In Depth Study of Isang Yun's *Glissées pour Violoncelle seul*." D.M.A. diss., Boston University, 2008.

Suh, Soonjung. "Taoistic Influence on the Music of Isang Yun: A Study of *Etüden für Flöte(n) solo and Reak*." D.M.A. diss., Manhattan School of Music, 2007.

Arnby, John. "Obituary: Isang Yun." *Musical Opinions*, 117 (Winter 1995):184.

#### Scores

Yun, Isang. Etüde for flute: Boosey & Hawkes, 1974.

\_\_\_\_\_. Glissées for Cello Solo: Boosey & Hawkes, 1970.

\_\_\_\_\_. Königliches Thema für Violine Solo. Berlin: Boosey & Hawkes, 1976.

\_\_\_\_\_. Monolog for Bassoon: Boosey & Hawkes, 1983 /1984.

\_\_\_\_\_. Réak: Boosey & Hawkes, 1966.

#### Electronic Resources

Duffie, Bruce. "Composer, Isang Yun: A Conversation with Bruce Duffie."(1987)

<http://www.Bruceduffie.com/yun.html> (accessed November 11, 2010).

Howard, Keith. "Korean Music." World Music Centre.

<http://www.worldmusiccentre.com/uploads/cdime/howard> (accessed July 7, 2011)

\_\_\_\_\_. "Lessons for Schools: 2 Korea"

<http://www.soas.ac.uk/music/schools/lessons-for-schools-2-korea.html> (accessed July 7, 2011).

International Isang Yun Society. "Isang Yun Biography."

<http://www.yun-gesellschaft.de/e/index.htm> (accessed November 18, 2010).

Mellon, Garrett. "Isang Yun."

[http://humanitiescenter.nsysu.edu.tw/engvision/webplan\\_person34.php](http://humanitiescenter.nsysu.edu.tw/engvision/webplan_person34.php) (accessed December 11, 2010).

National Gugak Center, "*Namdominyo*."

<http://www.gugak.go.kr/data/education/dictionary> (accessed June 27, 2011).