AN APPROACH TO THE ANALYTICAL STUDY OF JUNG-SUN PARK’S
CHORAL WORK: *ARIRANG MASS*

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The significance in Jung-Sun Park’s *Arirang Mass* is the discovery of artistic value in folk song and its applicability to art music. By using fragments of the *Arirang* folk songs, or by imitating its musical character, composer could create and develop musical characteristics that are recognizably Korean.

The work exhibits his remarkable compositional style, which shows a relationship between Korean traditional style and Western style. This analysis demonstrates specific examples of the elements of Korean traditional folksong, such as *Sikimsae, Jangdan, Han*, and pentatonic scales which are permeated into this mass setting, and how composer uses fragments of the *Arirang* tune.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF EXAMPLES</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life and Musical Background of the Composer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origin of Arirang</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compositional Background of the Arirang Mass</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ANALYSIS</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form of the Mass</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Arirang Tune</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relation of Traditional Mode and Western Harmony</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PERFORMANCE CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE WESTERN CHOIR DIRECTOR</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Constitutes a Korean “Sound”: Understanding Korean “Han”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Produce the Korean Sound of the Arirang Mass</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics of Korean Traditional Music</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Approach for Rhythm and Timbre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Kinds of Sikimsae ......................................................................................................... 39
Table 2: Kinds of Jangdan ........................................................................................................... 40
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Repetition of text and rhythm, mm. 75-92 and 65-76</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Use of pentatonic notes, mm. 13-22</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Call and response pattern, mm. 18-23 and 41-48</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Three intervals in <em>Arirang</em> tune</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Fragments of <em>Arirang</em> tune in Kyrie, mm. 1-7</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Using two intervals for melodies in Kyrie, mm. 1-14</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Agnus Dei melody, mm. 1</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Intervallic relation, mm. 7-15 and 56-63</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Traditional Korean modes</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Two pieces from <em>Kyounggi</em> and <em>Dongbu Minyo</em></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Elements of traditional modes in Kyrie and Agnus Dei</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Use of Sikimsae in <em>Christe eleison</em>, mm. 39-44</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

During the second half of the nineteenth and early decades of the twentieth centuries, there was a development of national styles outside of central Europe. Nationalism, as a major force in the development of modern music, exerted its greatest influence during this time, and was marked by an emphasis on literary and linguistic traditions, an interest in folklore, patriotism, and a craving for independence and identity.\(^1\) One of the most influential elements in those factors is the discovery of artistic value in folk song and its applicability to art music. By using materials of native folk songs, or by imitating their musical character, composers could create and develop a musical style that reflected their own ethnic identities. For this purpose such composers as Béla Bartók (1881-1945) and Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967) went out into their native Hungarian countryside and made the first comprehensive collections of Eastern European folk music.\(^2\) Bartók developed a style that fused folk elements with highly developed techniques of art music more intimately than ever before.\(^3\) Kodály’s music is based almost exclusively on Hungarian peasant melodies, and his music is steeped in the sounds and contour of colorful and melodious folk song.\(^4\) Also the group of Russian composers known as “The Five,” comprised of Alexander Borodin (1833-1887), Modest Musorgsky (1839-1881), Mily Balakiriev (1837-

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\(^1\) Donald Jay Grout, A History of Western Music (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.,) 5th ed. 665.


\(^3\) Grout, 696.

\(^4\) Bryan R. Simms, Music of the Twentieth Century (New York: Schirmer Music) 244.
1910), César Cui (1835-1918), and Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov (1884-1908), made extensive use of their native folk music materials. Among them, for instance, Balakiriev used folksong melodies effectively in his symphonic poem *Russia* (1887) and Rimsky-Korsakov showed his interest in developing a national musical style by arranging, editing, and incorporating Russian folksongs in many of his compositions. To an even greater extent, the British composer, Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958), drew extensively upon English literature, traditional song, and hymnody in developing his own personal nationalistic style, as in his choral cycle *Folk-Songs of the Four Seasons* (1950).\(^5\)

As in many Western European countries, Korean music of the past century exhibits many signs of nationalistic interest through the incorporation of traditional folk materials. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, many Korean composers have pursued their study of music theory and composition at European and American universities. Consequently Western styles and techniques dominate the output of most Korean composers. The desire, however, to bring a specifically Korean expression to their music has led many of these composers to emulate the nationalistic musical developments of other traditions by drawing upon traditional elements of Korean musical culture to provide a particular national color to their work. Among contemporary Korean composers, Jung-Sun Park (b. 1945), in particular, has risen to prominence.

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\(^5\) Grout, 667, 671, 706-707.
as a composer of choral music that explores the possibilities of a blend of Western compositional forms and genres with traditional Korean folk elements.

The most distinguishing feature of Jung-Sun Park’s music is his ability to create a style with characteristics that are recognizably Korean, that is, music that to native Koreans has an immediately identifiable Korean character or “sound.” He has composed over one hundred choral works. Among them, *Jeong Ub Sa, Jeong Gwa Jeong, Three Flower Songs, Three Choral Pieces on Korean Traditional Tunes for Male Chorus*, and *The Inchon Mass for Mixed Chorus*, which exemplify the special blend of traditional Korean materials and Western idioms that characterize his unique style. Because of his peculiar tone color and attractive compositional style, his choral works are frequently performed outside of Korea by European and American choirs and serve as models for new generations of composition students. Several recent studies have begun to explore the techniques by which Jung-Sun Park has sought to combine Korean and Western elements. In particular Dong-Min Shin, in his dissertation on the Inchon Mass, has examined how traditional elements are incorporated into a setting of the Mass ordinary, analyzing each movement of the work in detail in regard to mode, harmony, rhythm, dynamics and cadences.

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In Jung-Sun Park’s recent choral work, the *Arirang Mass for unaccompanied mixed voices* (2003), the composer incorporates elements of the Korean folksong, *Arirang*, into a setting of the Mass ordinary in a manner comparable to the *Inchon Mass*. *Arirang* is without question Korea’s most famous and popular folksong and it is also widely known and frequently sung around the world. Various modifications of the *Arirang* tune form the basis for each movement of the Mass, as its melody, harmony, and rhythm permeate the work, giving it a uniquely Korean sound and texture.

Since the inclusion of these Korean elements presents some challenges to Western choir directors and singers unfamiliar with this particular style, this paper will offer some practical advice regarding the most important considerations in realizing the special character of this music, including methods of training the ensemble to bring out that character most effectively in performance. It is the author’s hope that through this studies the excellent contributions of Korean composers, and in particular the music of Jung-Sun Park, will become more familiar to choir directors throughout the Western world.
CHAPTER 1

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Life and Musical Background of the Composer

Jung Sun Park was born on January 26, 1945 in the small mountain village of Kyoungjang Dong of Wonjoo City, Kwangwon Do, Korea.\(^7\) As the fourth of six children born to his father, Ki-Ho Park and his mother, Chang-Soon Han, he was the only one of their children to study music. His musical talent was apparent from an early age when he played a harmonium at his elementary school, and his teacher noticed that he could memorize many tunes on first hearing and play them back immediately. Many circumstances contributed to the development of his musical ability during his early childhood. Although his parents were not musicians, his father and mother always sang while they were working in the field, so that young Jung-Sun Park could listen to their repertoire of work songs, field songs, and folksongs. Brought up in the Christian faith, he also had ample opportunity to hear at their church anthems and other choral music from the Western tradition.

At first, Jung-Sun’s parents paid little attention to their son’s musical talent; so he was sent to regular school like everyone else. His first inkling that he wanted to become a composer occurred at the age of eleven when he read the biographies and saw pictures of Beethoven and

\(^7\) Jung-Sun Park, interview with the author, 23 June 2002, translated by the author.
Schubert in his music textbook. Jung-Sun Park was a very active member of both his high school and church choirs. Furthermore, when he was only sixteen years old, the Wonjoo Jaeil Presbyterian Church asked him to conduct the choir, as he was the only person who could play and teach the anthems and hymns from the piano. Remarkably, up to this time Jung-Sun Park had received no formal musical training, being entirely self-taught in piano and music theory.

Following high school, Jung-Sun Park attended Choonchun Teacher’s College in Choonchun City, where he studied music education. After graduation he taught for three years at Jangheung and Dongsong Elementary Schools in Chulwon, and Hakseoung Elementary School in Wonjoo. Because of his passion for music, however, he decided to return to school and in his late twenties he entered Hanyang University to study composition. While attending Hanyang University, Jung-Sun Park studied composition with professor Joong-Hoo Park, voice with professor In-Byum Lee, and piano with Professor Chun-Sun Kim.

During this period he composed pieces that won first prize at several competitions, such as the Donga Competition, the Changack Association Competition, and the Seoul Music Competition. Following graduation he taught music theory and composition at Youkminkwan High School in Wonjoo and Sunwha Art High School in Seoul.

Following his studies at Hanyang University, Park traveled to the United States to further his composition studies at the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C.
Subsequently at the Eastman School of Music, he studied with Samuel Adler, whom he credits for having provided him with not only a firm grounding in compositional technique, but also a deep appreciation of the beauty inherent in music.

In 1985 Jung-Sun received the Composer of the Year Award from the Korea Music Association and the 9th Composition Award of Korea from the Department of Culture and Art; from that time forward he has focused on writing principally for the choral medium.

There are several reasons why Jun-Sung Park has devoted his compositional efforts more to choral music than to any other genre. First, as a church choir conductor he had many opportunities to study choral works, and as a result he developed a deep understanding and appreciation for choral music. Secondly, he believes that human emotion is most effectively expressed through singing, without the supportive vehicle of musical instruments. Lastly, he says that singers and audiences can most easily and effectively feel the composer’s intention through choral music.8

The majority of Jung-Sun Park’s choral music is based on themes from nature employing traditional melodies. He said, “The source of my musical inspiration is the mountain environment of my hometown of Kangwon Do.” With this image in mind, it is not surprising

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8 Jung-Sun Park, interview with the author, 23 June 2002, translated by the author.
that sounds of nature frequently occur in his choral works, such as the sound of a flowing stream, the moo of a cow, the sound of wind and rain, or the sound of farmers tilling the soil. He also makes use of traditional material from both folksong and court music to infuse his works with a distinctly Korean character. These characteristics strongly distinguish Jung-Sun Park’s choral work in comparison with the music of other contemporary Korean composers.

The Origin of Arirang

The origin of Arirang is obscure. As is often the case with such a widely disseminated song of folk origin, it exists in many different versions, in both text and tune, throughout the various regions of the Korean nation. Several legends attempt to account for the genesis of the song. One of these is that Arirang originated at the time when Hungsun Taewongoon, father of King Kojong, the next to the last king of the Chosun Dynasty (1392-1910), was rebuilding Kyoungbok Palace in 1865. The palace had been destroyed by fire during the Japanese invasion of 1592-1598. According to this legend laborers from across the country were conscripted to work on the construction. One of the songs of consolation they sang as they worked, Arirang, became widely disseminated when the work was finished and the conscripts returned to their homes. Another legend holds that the song has existed since the

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Silla Dynasty more than one thousand years ago, and that the original version used the words

“Aryong Arirang…” in praise of the virtue of Aryong, wife of the founder of this dynasty. Over
time, the words are said to have changed to the present refrain “Arirang, Arirang…”

Of the many existing versions of Arirang, Ponjo is the most popular, widely known even
in many foreign countries.

The text of Arirang tells of a lovesick maiden who hopes that her departing sweetheart
will quickly develop sore feet, so that will be compelled to break off his journey and return to her.

Arirang, arirang, arariyo,   Arirang, arirang, arariyo,
Arirang Kogero naumakanda   Walking over the peak at Arirang
Nareul pauriko kasineun nimeun   You left me behind.
Simnido motkasaw   You will be hurting before you
Palpyoungnanda   have gone two and a half miles.

Though the text outwardly describes a pining maiden, the hidden subtext, which most
Koreans understand and embrace, has deeper and even more emotional significance. During the
Japanese occupation (1910-1945), it represented tears of national indignation as well as the
desire for freedom from foreign domination. In the current political climate, it represents a

Research Society of Korea, 1954), lists other versions such as Miryang Arirang, Kangwon Arirang, Chungsun
Arirang, Jindo Arirang, Shin (new in English) Arirang, and Keen (long) Arirang.
desire for reunification of North and South Korea.

Following the Chosun period (1392-1910), *Arirang* came to be sung as a patriotic song, and in the present day it remains one of Korea’s most popular songs. It has been incorporated widely in such diverse genres as movies, plays, literature, painting, and, above all, music of all styles.\(^{12}\)

**Compositional Background of the Arirang Mass**

In the fall of 2002, the conductor of the Suwon Civic Choir, In-Gi Min, approached the composer Jung-Sun Park with a request for a choral work that would express profound hope for world peace. The composer happily accepted the forthcoming commission and began work in December of that year, finishing the composition in March 2003.\(^{13}\) The *Arirang Mass* was dedicated to the Suwon Civic Choir for its 20\(^{th}\) anniversary concert and received its premiere on May 19, 2003.

What led the composer to choose the form of a Catholic Mass based on the familiar *Arirang* folksong? In an interview with the author, Jung-Sun Park explained some of his thinking about these choices:

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\(^{13}\) Jung-Sun Park, interview with the author, 23 June 2002, translated by the author.
audience. In searching possible sources, I examined many folksongs of the different provinces of Korea, and finally settled on *Arirang*.\(^{14}\)

Most Koreans, in fact, young and old, know and can sing the *Arirang* folksong, and many foreigners who have visited the country associate Korea with this song, whose popularity has been extended beyond the country’s borders through many arrangements sung by choirs around the world.

Jung-Sun Park also wished to express his own personal desire for reunification of North and South Korea, for which *Arirang* provides a powerful symbol.

Although Korea has been separated into North and South for a long time, all Koreans desire a peaceful reunification of the two countries. There is only one song that most citizens of both Koreas know, and that song is *Arirang*.\(^{15}\)

This song is commonly sung at public gatherings, for example at sporting events or concerts. Even though there are numerous versions of the text and tune of *Arirang*, their meaning and feeling share important similarities. The song is a profound expression of Korean national lamentation, grief, and hope.

Regarding the composer’s choice of setting the text of the Catholic Mass, the composer has this to say:

\(^{14}\) Ibid.
\(^{15}\) Ibid.
Among the many genres available to a composer, such as symphony, concerto or opera, I find the Mass to be the ideal vehicle with which to express my own personal faith.\textsuperscript{16}

As a Christian composer, Jung-Sun Park wished to cast this work in the form of a prayer for both the reunification of Korea and for world peace, and in this regard the \textit{Arirang Mass} is both his personal prayer and his \textit{credo}. A further goal, according to the composer, was to further international recognition of the excellence of Korean music. By incorporating traditional elements of Korean folksong within the genre of the Catholic Mass, he has sought to create a work that will be easily accessible to Western musicians, while at the same time expressing the national concerns symbolized by the quintessentially Korean folksong, \textit{Arirang}.

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
CHAPTER 2

ANALYSIS

Form of the Mass

In many ways this setting of the Mass ordinary follows conventions of the traditional *missa brevis* of the late Classical period, sharing many characteristics with the early masses of Haydn and Mozart, although in the present work the Credo movement is omitted. For the most part the form is clear and simple.

**Kyrie**

The Kyrie movement is clearly divided into three sections according to the text: *Kyrie eleison* – *Christe eleison* – *Kyrie eleison*. Two textures predominate in this setting, consisting of relatively ornate melodic lines treated contrapuntally, supported by chordal structures, all derived from the *Arirang* tune which forms the musical foundation of the mass. For the first *Kyrie* Jung-Sun Park places the melodic line mainly in the high voice parts, soprano and tenor, and assigns to the alto and bass parts an ostinato pattern resembling the tenor and contratenor of an isorhythmic motet. The second soprano introduces the *Arirang* melody in fragmented form, ornamented in characteristic folk style [See p.27 example 6] and is carried forth by the first soprano, with free imitation of these ideas in both the soprano and tenor parts. With the
continuous support of the ostinato voices, the range, dynamics and density of the melodic lines increase to a climax in measures 27-30.

The *Christe eleison* employs similar textures, although the ostinato component, while utilizing the same pitches, is assigned exclusively to the male voices and takes the form of rhythmically repeated chordal patterns with diminished note values. The fragmented melodic figures, now in the women’s parts, assume an even denser polyphonic texture.

The second *Kyrie* amalgamates both of these elements in a predominantly chordal texture in which individual vocal lines are alternately embellished by melodic fragments drawn from the previous sections. The concluding melodic statement in the soprano alone, supported in the lower voices by an open fifth then fourth, recalls the very opening, establishing a grand textural arch for the entire movement.

Gloria

There can be no argument about the brevity of this Gloria, although the movement contains more internal divisions than are customary in the classical *missa brevis*. Most such settings of the Gloria are divided into three parts – *Gloria, Qui tollis* (or sometimes *Gratias agimus tibi*), and *Quoniam tu solus sanctus* – in a fast-slow-fast relationship. Jung-Sun Park’s setting of the *Gloria* text is more intricately divided: fast (in three subsections)-slow/fast-
slow/fast. In addition, most unconventional here is the change to a quick tempo for the *Qui sedes*, which is traditionally given a slower, more expressive treatment to set the repeated statements of the supplication *miserere nobis*. The composer clearly distinguishes each section by various ideas, such as meter, tempo, dynamic, and rhythmic changes. The individual sections are distinguished by the alternation of triple and duple meter, as well as by double bar indications in the score.

*Gloria in excelsis Deo* (mm.1-14): This section, in a fast $\frac{3}{4}$ meter, emphasizes the text *in excelsis Deo* with the full eight-voice texture and the hemiola figure in measures 11-14.

*Et in terra pax* (mm. 15-32): By contrast, this next section is in 4/4 meter, in the same tempo, but with vocal parts in unison, and piano. Continuing the full-voiced homophonic texture, the composer emphasizes at the text, *propter magnam Gloria tuam* with strong syncopation patterns at measures 26-32.

*Domine Deus* (mm. 33-74): This section returns to 3/4 meter, now with imitative entries in all parts. Returning to the initial rhythmic motive of the Gloria (dotted quarter, eighth, and quarter), the composer makes effective use of strong dynamic contrast to emphasize particular words of the text (e.g. “omnipotens” and “Jesu Christe.”)

*Qui tollis peccata mundi* (mm. 75-92): Befitting the more personal nature of the *Qui tollis* text, the composer reduces the texture to two solo voices, in a distinctly slower tempo, and
with a subdued and prayerful response from the full ensemble. The rhythmic/melodic patterns associated with the words "Qui" and "peccata" introduce an element of traditional Korean folk singing style, the sikimsae, which will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.

*Qui sedes* (mm. 93-107): Returning to the opening tempo, Park intensifies the prayer “have mercy on us” in a manner that evokes the fervency of communal prayer as frequently practiced among Korean Christians, especially when the prayer includes a plea for national reunification.

*Quoniam* (mm. 108-124): The composer reserves the strongest fortissimo, highest tessitura, and the impact of choral unison for the climax of this movement, to the text “thou alone are most high, Jesus Christ.”

*Cum Sancto* (mm. 125-143): Rather than a more traditional fugal treatment, the composer begins the final section of the Gloria again at the original faster tempo, with hushed, rapid repetitions of the *cum sancto* text, culminating in a grand crescendo and finishing with a vigorously syncopated *amen*.

Sanctus and Benedictus

In the Sanctus and Benedictus movements, the composer adopts a technique of text setting which establishes a distinctive, syllabic, rhythmic pattern that is repeated sequentially for
cumulative effect. This same technique can be found in a number of his other choral works as well, the *Inchon Mass, Three Flower Songs, and Three Choral Pieces on Korean Traditional Tunes*. In the Sanctus movement, he repeats the text, *Hosanna in excelsis*, with one rhythmic pattern in measures 68 to 74, and again with a more accelerated and sharply syncopated pattern over and over from measures 75 to 92. Also, in the *Benedictus* movement, from measures 65 to 76, the same obvious compositional technique appears. (Ex. 1)

Example 1: Repetition of text and rhythm, mm. 75-92 and 65-76.
These two movements are basically written in a predominantly homophonic texture, and both are sectionalized by different motivic ideas as in the Gloria. The Sanctus consists of four sections:

_Sanctus I and II (mm.1-40):_ Unconventionally Mr. Park sets the Sanctus in two contrasting sections, the first a more traditional slow, expansive, homophonic statement, the second more rhythmically driven in a faster tempo. The slower section utilizes a more Western harmonic context, including augmented seventh and ninth chords on F for the second syllable of “Sanctus” in measures 2 and 4, and measure 8, which contrast strongly with the many pentatonic derived harmonies found elsewhere in the work.

_Domine Deus (mm.40-67):_ In this section, the composer reuses the same melodic figure from the previous section (mm.21-22, 25-26 of soprano and mm.29-30 of tenor) for the soprano and baritone solo. In an angelic high register, the soprano repeats the motive three times, the last time _pianissimo_, with the support of a most unusual and mysterious bi-chord of women’s voices (A-C#-F) and men’s voices (A-F-C) which makes a diminuendo almost to inaudibility.

_Hosanna in excelsis (mm.68-98):_ Syncopation dominates the numerous repetitions of _Hosanna_ that close this movement, first in the chorus in half and quarter notes, which is continued in the Soprano and Tenor solo while the choir, in even quicker eighth note syncopations, drives to the conclusion.
One striking and consistent pattern among all these sections is the strongly contrasted dynamic shading from **fortissimo (forte)** to **piano (pianissimo)**, as if the cries of **Sanctus** and **Hosanna** were resounding in a great void; only the final **fortissimo** statement disrupts the pattern.

The Benedictus movement is divided into two large parts. The first part (mm.1-48) can be described as ternary in form (ABA’). For the A and A’ sections, the composer uses same rhythm and melody with minor changes. Especially striking is the contrasting B section, where closely spaced tri-chords in the soprano provide the foundation for the reintroduction of pentatonic melodies, ornamented with Korean folk-song patterns, which predominate in the tenor and bass. (Ex. 2)

Example 2: Use of pentatonic notes, mm. 13-22.

With the Benedictus being conceived in such a contrasting style to the Sanctus, it would be impossible for the composer to return to the Hosanna setting that concluded the previous
section, as a conventional setting of the *Mass* might call for. Instead, the composer recomposes the text anew, using similar techniques of extended repetition of sharply defined rhythmic motives, but with an intensity and rapidity that ultimately breaks down the integrity of the word, deconstructing it, so to speak, in a frenzy of minimalistic activity that leaves only pure sound.

**Agnus Dei**

In contrast to the Sanctus/Benedictus movements, the Agnus Dei reflects a much stronger influence of folk singing tradition with its reference to Nodong Yo (working songs), which make use of a call and response pattern that can be found in many folk traditions around the world. Here the soloist presents the melody, which the chorus repeats, both at the beginning, and further in measures 18-23 and 41-48 (Ex. 3)
Example 3: Call and response pattern, mm. 18-23 and 41-48.

This movement is divided into four sections. In the first section (mm.1-17), the composer causes a gradual increase of textual density by adding voices successively. At the outset the soprano sings the unbarred melody freely, as if this is represents Park’s own personal cry for peace. The soprano and tenor repeat this melody, now measured and in strict tempo, as
an extension of this prayer. The following text, *miserere nobis*, is emphasized by alternate rhythmic patterns with added voices in a three-fold statement growing from *piano* to *forte*.

The second section (mm.18-40) begins with a style of Nodong Yo (mentioned above) for the measures 18-23, constructed solely from the notes of the pentatonic scale (D, E, G, A, B). The solo melody from the beginning, slightly modified with additional pitches, reappears in the alto part at measures 25-40. The soprano/tenor and alto/bass pairs are written almost entirely in the intervals of the perfect fourth and fifth, which become the most important harmonic intervals in the Agnus Dei.

The aspect of national prayer so important to the composer in the work as a whole, and particularly in the Agnus Dei, emerges again in the third section (mm. 41-55), with the alternating pairs of unison high and low voices providing perhaps another metaphor for unification of a divided people.

With the final soprano solo (mm. 56-63, 68-71), marked as Korean, (earnestly), Jung-Sun Park gives full expression to his earnest desire for world peace. The first solo is accompanied by sustained notes, which are all pentatonic notes with humming sounds, but the second solo sings alone. From measure 74 to 93, the composer emphasizes his final statement, *Dona nobis pacem*, in various ways, beginning in one voice, *piano*, and increasing to six voices, *forte*. A cry for peace is heard once more in the soprano and tenor at measure 85, bringing the
work to a conclusion with a peaceful E major *Amen*.

**Use of the *Arirang* Tune**

Because of its widespread popularity and great significance in the culture, many Korean composers have incorporated the *Arirang* melody in their works. In most cases the composer’s intent is to present the tune in an easily recognizable form; in Jung-Sun Park’s *Arirang Mass*, however, the instances where the melody is utilized are less readily identifiable, because he uses only fragments of the tune. The entire melody, based on the pentatonic scale, is comprised of three basic intervals, and it is from these that the composer derives all of the motivic ideas upon which the work is based (Ex. 4). In the musical example, three intervals are identified as X (major second), Y (minor third), and Z (perfect fourth).

Example 4: Three intervals in *Arirang* tune.
Although these intervals appear throughout the work, these figure as motivic elements most prominently in the Kyrie and Agnus Dei movements. In the Kyrie the two prominent intervals of a major second, derived from the first phrase of the melody, form the basis of the Alto/Bass ostinato (Alto F-G-F, Bass D-C-D). The fragments of the *Arirang* tune are sung by the first alto (marked as *A*) and the second bass (marked as *B*). Both A and B are derived from the first measure, *a-ri-rang*, and the third measure, *a-ra-ri*, of the folksong. Both intervals are sustained in long note values and sustained throughout the first Kyrie (Ex. 5).

Example 5: Fragments of *Arirang* tune in Kyrie, mm. 1-7

Another manner in which this movement reflects the substance of the *Arirang* melody is
that the most prominent tones of the Alto, Bass and second Soprano parts clearly outline the triad
defined by the first phrase of the tune (F-Bb-D). The entrance of the high soprano in measure 8
extends the triad into the full octave, which parallels the third phrase of the folksong, so that the
substance of the melody is entirely represented in the first eleven measures of Kyrie, but in a
very fragmented way.

In the original Arirang melody, two intervals (major second and minor third) are
prominent. Jung-Sun Park makes a tune by freely using these two intervals in his Mass. It is
mainly shown in the Kyrie movement (Ex. 6). The prominent pitches that frame these melodies
are ornamented by sixteenth notes before them with the relationship of the major second and the
minor third.
Example 6: Using two intervals for melodies in Kyrie, mm. 1-14

The melody of the solo part at the beginning of the Agnus Dei is constructed in a similar manner, built entirely out of the X and Y intervals. In the original folksong (Ex. 4), an interval of the first note and the last note is the perfect fourth, and an octave relation appears between the first note and the middle note (9th measure). Jung-Sun Park applies the same intervallic range to
the Agnus Dei melody. It begins with note E and it reaches an octave higher at the middle point; and it ends on the note A, which is perfect fourth from the E (Ex. 7). While *Arirang* begins with the first note of the pentatonic scale, this melody begins with the second. Both the Kyrie and Agnus Dei use the same pentatonic scale, but in different transpositions (on F and D respectively).

Example 7: Agnus Dei melody, mm. 1

Like the parallel motion of the minor third interval in the Kyrie, the use of perfect fourth interval is prominent in many places of the Agnus Dei. For instance, at measures 7-15 and 56-63, this intervalllic relation is well defined. (Ex. 8)
Example 8: Intervallic relation, mm.7-15 and 56-63

All notes of the original *Arirang* folksong come from a pentatonic scale, which Jung-Sun Park treats as a basic element for his mass. For example, he composes the entire Kyrie movement using only the pentatonic scale (F-G-Bb-C-D), except for a few instances (mm. 65, 67)
and 78) where he introduces F# and A. He uses various groups of pentatonic notes in each movement. For the Kyrie, he uses F pentatonic scale (F-G-Bb-C-D); In the Gloria, F pentatonic scale and Bb pentatonic scale (Bb-C-Eb-F-G) are used, and D pentatonic scale (D-E-G-A-B) is used for the Benedictus and Agnus Dei. The Sanctus is the only movement that does not use a complete pentatonic scale.

Relation of Traditional Korean Modes and Western Harmony

There are four song types in Korean folk music, all of them based on pentatonic scales - Kyounggi Minyo, Namdo Minyo, Seodo Minyo, and Dongbu Minyo. They are distinguished from each other principally by the structure of pentatonic scale.17

Kyounggi Minyo normally uses all pentatonic notes equally; the intervals which occur most frequently in melodies of this type are the major second and minor third (D-E-G-A-B-D). Namdo Minyo emphasizes mainly the perfect fourth and major second (E-g-A-B-d-E), while Seodo Minyo stresses the perfect fifth and minor third (D-e-g-A-C), and in Dongbu Minyo the perfect fourth and minor third (D-g-A-C-d) are prominent.18 (Ex. 9)

17 The notes with special prominence in the each of the modes are indicated with upper case letters in the following examples.
18 Woo-Hyun Kim, The Principal and Education of the Traditional Music (Seoul Korea: Doseo Chulpan, Hankookeumak Kyoyouck Younguhoe) 164
Example 9: Traditional Korean modes.

It is sometimes difficult to determine which of these song types the composer uses in a given passage, but he appears to favor the *Kyounggi Minyo* and *Dongbu Minyo* types. Here are two excerpts from Korean folksongs, *Kwangwondo Arirang* and *Doraji Tahryoung*, which presents one of the *Kyounggi Minyo* and *Dongbu Minyo*. (Ex. 10)
Example 10: Two pieces from *Kyounggi* and *Dongbu Minyo*.

Both folksongs show that most of melody lines move within the interval of a fifth. We see this clearly in the soprano melody of the Kyrie as well as the soprano solo of the Agnus Dei (Ex.11).
Example 11: Elements of traditional modes in Kyrie and Agnus Dei.

Jung-Sun Park applies several elements of these traditional folk song singing styles in constructing the melodies and harmonies of the *Arirang Mass*. The melodic shapes of the *Kyrie* and *Agnus Dei* movements in particular reflect the strong emphasis on the major second and minor third intervals prominent in the *Arirang* tune.
In addition, ornamental figures of the *sikimsae* (See below, p.45-46) are used to give special emphasis to the most prominent tones of the melody. The Gloria and Sanctus movements, on the other hand, show considerably less infusion of these traditional Korean elements, with the exception of two brief portions of the Gloria (mm. 75-80 and 84-88). By contrast these movements are strongly based on vertical triadic sonorities, and the individual parts tend more to outline melodic triads rather than pentatonic scale patterns. The composer’s concept of harmony is not limited to the Western tonal system, for he mixes freely both Eastern and Western modes. In the Mass, he writes accompaniment parts that do form harmonies, and while those harmonies resemble those common in Western music, they are not used in the same ways. We see these elements clearly in the movements of the Kyrie and Gloria.

In the first Kyrie; for instance, Jung-Sun Park doesn’t follow a conventional harmonic progression such like I-IV-V-I pattern in Western music. He instead uses simple harmonic alternation pattern with using two different chords, C-D-F-G-(Bb) and Gm 7th chord, which is always written as a type of second inversion. These two chords are directly drawn from a group of pentatonic notes (Bb, C, D, F, G). Just as the original *Arirang* tune is made up only of notes of the pentatonic scale, Jung-Sun Park constructs the melodies and harmonies of the Kyrie using only these two chords.

To make a tone-cluster effect, he places four pentatonic notes (D, F, G, Bb) vertically at
every second syllable “-ri-” above the low bass C. The melodies assigned to the high vocal parts, soprano and tenor, are likewise comprised of these same notes. By using pentatonic notes melodically and harmonically, the composer creates much more traditional sound in the first Kyrie than other movements.

In the Gloria, on the other hand, the composer’s treatment of melody and harmony are quite different, where the diatonic notes of the key of C minor and its relative major Eb predominate. Here we encounter harmonic patterns more characteristic of Western style, even to the appearance of several cadential patterns such as V–I (i) and vi–I. However, it appears that he is still focusing more on chordal contrast than on chord progression. Measures from 1 to 14, for example, contain only three chords - C minor, B diminished, and C-D-F-G chord. Moreover, in many places a chord is repeated several times, but in different inversions, for instance, in measures 41 to 48 and 70 to 74, only a C minor chord is used and repeated as vi 4/3, vi 6/4, and vi. These examples show that, despite superficial resemblances to Western harmonic practice, Jung-Sun Park’s harmonic approach is quite distinct.

As a consequence of this approach to harmonic organization in this movement, the bass line does not function, as it often does in Western practice, as a strong foundation and generator of the harmony. As result there are a number of difficult intonation problems, which can be addressed in the following manner. Since the Gloria movement is written with the key signature
of E-flat major (or C-minor), it is best to begin by reading with the moveable ‘Do’ system to establish first a firm sense of the tonality. For the more difficult intervals that occur, such as the seventh and the tritone, relating these pitches to neighboring notes in other parts can help the singer fix these intervals and correct the intonation. For instance, the sopranos in measures 27 to 29 can relate their pitches to the preceding ‘G’ in the bass, and the basses in measure 29 to 30 should hear the ‘D’ not as a seventh down but rather as the leading tone to the following E-flat. Most intonation problems will be solved when all the singers have developed a thorough understanding of the harmonic context of the whole.

The Gloria and Sanctus movements have a much more Western orientation in their use of established key centers and tonal organization (The Gloria is clearly in the keys of C minor and Eb major, while the Sanctus is solidly in D minor), while the Kyrie and Agnus Dei movements, almost devoid of any sense of conventional harmonic progression, are based more obviously and pervasively on the pentatonic models of the Korean folksong, producing a very different feeling of tonality and tonal center.
CHAPTER 3
PERFORMANCE CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE WESTERN CHOIR DIRECTOR

What Constitutes a Korean “Sound”: Understanding Korean “Han”

Western choir directors unfamiliar with traditional Korean folk singing styles are at a disadvantage when it comes to interpreting the Arirang Mass, because the composer has incorporated some of these elements in his composition with the expectation that singers will apply these styles to their performance, to make a characteristic and identifiable Korean “sound.”

To understand what is involved in achieving this “sound,” one needs first to become familiar with the concept embodied by the Korean word “Han.” It can mean many things: love, caring, and the emotions that lie deep in the heart and which stir the soul. Expressed as love “Han” can be regarded from two aspects: love for the individual, at a personal level, and love for one’s country and its people in common.

Individual “Han” can be exemplified by the feelings of a widow for her departed husband (in traditional Korean society widows were not allowed to remarry, making her yearnings extended and unremitting). National “Han” is the product of five thousand years of Korean history, during which time the country was invaded and occupied by foreign powers literally hundreds of times. During wartime the families waiting at home for their men in the battlefield would express both individual “Han” for their loved ones, and national “Han” in their earnest
desire for the liberation from oppression and recovery of their national sovereignty. For Koreans of today the strongest memory of such domination is of the thirty-six year Japanese occupation (1909 – 1945), characterized by particularly brutal and inhumane treatment. In both these aspects, “Han” has a strong element of sadness and sympathy – it is a deep, somber and heartfelt emotion, serious and profound, rather than light and joyous. To express these emotions at times of stress and conflict, Koreans turned to folk songs, like *Arirang*, and it is these qualities of sadness, grief, lamentation, passion, and sympathy that contribute heavily to the Korean character that Jung-Sun Park is trying to evoke in this Mass.

How to Produce the Korean Sound of the *Arirang* Mass

*Characteristics of Korean Traditional Music*

In order to interpret the elements of Korean folk singing style which the composer has incorporated into the *Arirang Mass*, it is necessary to understand some important characteristics of Korean traditional music. The manner in which a number of pentatonic modes have been employed in the composition has already been discussed in the previous chapter. Next we need to identify the three basic singing formats, *Sunhoochang* ( ), *Kyowhanchang* ( ), and *Jaechang* ( ). *Sunhoochang* is the most popular of these formats – one person sings first and the rest follow. A lead singer usually sings different texts or stanzas with
various rhythm patterns, which are repeated exactly by the other singers.  

*Kyowhanchang* (literally “exchanging songs”) is a format, in which two separate groups alternate stanzas of the song.  *Jaechang* is a format in which one person or an entire group sings the melody from beginning to end of the song.  Among these singing methods, *Sunhoochang* and *Kyowhanchang* appear in the Benedictus and Agnus Dei.

Another very important characteristic of traditional Korean music is *Sikimsae*, which resembles some types of ornamentation familiar to certain periods of Western music, but which has its own distinct and characteristic sound.  There are five types of *sikimsae*, which are

*Chunsung* ( ), *Pyoungsung* ( ), *Toesung* ( ), *Yosung* ( ), and *Gulim* ( ).  *Chunsung* calls for a markedly slow and wide vibrato, accompanied by a shaking of the head.  *Pyoungsung* calls for no vibrato along with considerable tension in the tone.  *Toesung* requires the singer to approach a main note either from above or below with a very rapid *portamento*.  *Yosung* calls for a very fast and narrow vibrato.  Finally, *Gulim* is similar to one or more grace notes preceding a main note.\(^{19}\)

\(^{19}\) Woo-Hyun, 177
Table 1: Kinds of Sikimsae.

A third important consideration in understanding and classifying traditional Korean melodies is the *Jangdan* (literally “short-long”), the group of rhythmic patterns from which the folksongs are derived. Five types of rhythmic patterns are used for folksongs. They are *Saemachi, Gutgauri, Joongmori, Jajinmori*, and *Danmori*. This *Arirang* is written with *Saemachi*.

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20 Woo-Hyun, 194
Table 2: Kinds of Jangdan

**Jangdan**

(1) 세마치 장단  
*Saemachi*

(2) 곳거리 장단  
*Gutgauri*

(3) 중모리 장단  
*Joongmori*

(4) 자전모리 장단  
*Jaajumori*

(5) 단모리 장단  
*Danmori*

*Practical Approach for Rhythm and Timbre*

To interpret properly the Korean elements in the *Arirang Mass*, it is necessary to understand the characteristics and subtle nuances of the Jangdan and Sikimsae.

In the Kyrie movement, the principal melodies use many elements of the traditional style. In the following melodies taken from the Kyrie, the instances of the use of sikimsae are outlined with square brackets. (Ex. 12)
Example 12: Use of Sikimsae in *Christe eleison*, mm. 39-44.

While these examples appear at first glance to be similar to either grace notes or appoggiaturas familiar to Western musicians, their actual execution in this mass should be quite different. If the choir singers were to perform these figures precisely as notated, the music would lack some important features that are vital in evoking the traditional Korean style of the original folksong. For instance in example 11, the long note values on the syllable “Ky-” correspond to a combination of *Pyoungsung* and *Chunsung*. Therefore, when the choir sings “Ky-”, they should begin without vibrato like *Pyoungsung* and then add a bit of vibrato like *Chunsung*. In many cases, the composer uses a crescendo marking to indicate this effect. For the sixteenth and dotted eighth note figure (marked as A), which corresponds to *Toesung*, first sixteenth note should be slightly stressed and the following dotted eighth note sung more softly. Also, two figures, which are marked as B and C, correspond to *Gulim*, and consequently stress should be
placed on the first note, while the remaining notes are slightly softened.

In addition, especially for the Kyrie and Agnus Dei movements, a much darker sound is appropriate, consistent with the many closed vowels and extended voiced consonants of the Korean language; this approach is desirable, even though the text of the Mass is in Latin.

While melodic figures of traditional Korean folk song dominate the Kyrie and Agnus Dei, the other movements are organized around more abstract rhythmic patterns. Saemachi, the most often used pattern in traditional folk songs (see table 2), and which is used to express happiness and joyous feeling, is similar in pattern to 9/8 or 3/4 meter of Western music. Therefore, when singing the 3/4 meter sections of the Gloria, Sanctus, and Benedictus, the choir director should feel the saemachi pattern in his mind. The most important thing is to combine personal emotion with these traditional elements, such as sikimsae and saemachi, and to infuse the music with “Han”, that most important element of the Korean heart and soul.

Questions

In the rhythmically articulated passages, there are many instances in which normally unaccented syllables receive heavy musical accents, as for example in mm. 26-32 of the Gloria with the text “propter magnam gloriam tuam.” One might ask how this characteristic might relate to Korean choral tradition and Korean folk music, but in the author’s opinion there is no
direct relation. Possibly the composer is less concerned about the coincidence of Latin syllabic stress with rhythmic accent since the Korean language itself, no doubt a strong formative element in the composer’s personal style, lacks syllabic stress. Even though Korean composers try to place important syllables on strong or accented beat, the stress patterns of Latin text do not always correspond with rhythmic accents. For example, the word, ‘God’, ‘Deo’, or ‘Gott’ can be set on a strong beat in one or two notes, but the corresponding Korean word, (Ha-na-nim), cannot be set on a single note, requiring three or more notes. Here the composer is probably more concerned with a rhythmic or melodic idea per se than with a precise rendering of the Latin text accents.

Why, then, if the composer was striving to write a work with the intent of expressing his own, personal faith, did he chose Latin over Korean? Certainly, given the aforementioned disparity in syllable count between the Latin Mass and its Korean counterpart, the resulting composition would have been quite different in character. More important, though, is the composer’s stated desire that his message be heard and understood beyond his own country and culture, and to this end the choice of the Latin Mass, known and understood by choral musicians and audiences throughout the world, was for Jung-Sun Park the ideal vehicle.

Jung-Sun Park, in keeping with his stated desire to produce a work which would have strong appeal for both Korean and non-Korean listeners, has combined some of the most
traditional materials from both Korean and Western musical cultures. In order to evoke a particularly Korean character or tone color, he has employed pentatonic modes, which figure prominently in the construction of many of the melodies and harmonies of the Mass. He further intensifies this Korean “sound” by using traditional folk elements, such as group singing formats, ornamentation (sikimsae), and rhythm (saemachi). Finally, by combining elements of the Arirang folksong with the text of the Catholic Mass, he expresses not only his personal faith as a Christian and his patriotism as a Korean, but shares with the world his own personal “Han.”
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