Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn’s P’ungnyudo and Present-day Hallyu*

Ch’oe Kwangsik**

Introduction

Hwarangdo (花郎徒), an active institution of hwarang (flower boys) during the Silla era, played an important role in the development of Silla society. P’ungnyudo (the principle of p’ungnyu 風流道), the guiding principle of hwarangdo, can be seen as representing the spirit of Silla. While previous research has focused mostly on hwarangdo, there has not been enough research looking at p’ungnyudo, its guiding principle. This article will examine p’ungnyudo through Nallangbisŏ (Preface of the Nallang Stele Inscription 鳥郎碑序) written by Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn (崔致遠), where he mentions Silla’s hwarangdo along with its guiding principle, p’ungnyudo.

In the accounts of King Chinhŭng in The Silla Annals (Silla Pon’gi 新羅本紀) of the History of the Three Kingdoms (Samguk sagi 三國史記), the p’ungnyu of Silla is explained in the context of explaining hwarang through a quote from Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn’s Nallangbisŏ.

Our country has a mysterious principle called p’ungnyu. The origin of this teaching is explained in detail in the history of the hwarang (sŏnsa, 仙

* This is a revised version of the paper “Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn’s P’ungnyudo and Present-day Hallyu” that was presented for the keynote address at the Fourth Koun International Conference held at Yangzhou University, China in October, 2015.

** Professor, Department of Korean History, Korea University.
It includes the three teachings [for hwarang] to teach and transform people. Being filial to your family at home and loyal to the state outside home is the teaching of the Minister of Punishments of Lu [Confucius]. Placing oneself in the state of non-doing and the practice of teaching without words is the principle of the scribe of Zhou [Laozi]. To not commit evildoings and reverentially practice good deeds is the teaching of the Prince of India [Buddha].

The following points can be identified from this quote: there is a mysterious principle called p’ungnyu in Silla, detailed explanation of this principle is listed in the “history of the hwarang,” p’ungnyudo has within it the three teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism, and p’ungnyudo was how hwarang taught and transformed people. The contents of the “history of hwarang” would have provided detailed information; however, since this material is currently not available, I will examine p’ungnyu and hwarang by reconstructing records referencing hwarang, sŏllang (仙郞), kuksŏn (國仙), and sŏnin (仙人).

This will also provide insight into how hwarangdo and p’ungnyudo have changed throughout time and what roles they played in the society during each period. It will be interesting to examine the relationship between p’ungnyu and the culture of Hallyu (Korean Wave 韓流), a trend that has been receiving favorable reviews internationally for the past twenty years.

**P’ungnyudo in Ancient Korea**

Since Nallangbisŏ describes the p’ungnyu of Silla to be “a mysterious
principle (hyŏnmyo chi to, 玄妙之道),” it can be called p’ungnyudo. Although its details are said to be in the “history of the hwarang,” which was available during Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn’s lifetime, this material no longer exists. Thus, in this article, I aim to reconstruct the contents of p’ungnyudo using several pieces of material on p’ungnyu, hwarang, sŏllang, kuksŏn, and sŏnin that are remaining in the historical records of ancient Korea.

The section on King Tongch’ŏn in The Koguryŏ Annals (Koguryŏ Pongi 高句麗本紀) of the History of the Three Kingdoms uses the term sŏnin Wanggŏm (仙人王儉).

In the second month of the twenty-first year, spring, the king was unable to reinstate Hwando (丸都) fortress as the capital due to past disturbances. He built P’yŏngyang (平壤) fortress and relocated the people, the royal ancestral shrines, and the altars to gods of soil and grain there. P’yŏngyang was originally said to be where the sŏnin Wanggŏm lived; others say that the city of the king is Wanggŏm.2

This article reveals that Tan’gun Wanggŏm (檀君王儉), who established the capital at P’yŏngyang, was the aforementioned sŏnin Wanggŏm, proving that sŏnin has an origin that traces far back. The fact that such records remain in The Koguryŏ Annals implies that this tradition existed also in Koguryŏ. In the chronology section of the Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms (Samguk yusa, 三國遺事),3 Tongmyŏng (東明) and Puru (夫婁), descendants of Tan’gun, are listed as brothers. Some argue that Puru became p’ungnyu when it was written into Chinese characters.4

Although it is impossible to define when exactly p’ungnyu began in Sil-

2 Samguk sagi 17 (Tongch’ŏn 21).
4 Ch’oe Namsun, Kosat’ong (Compilation of Old Events) (Kyŏngsŏng: Samjung-dang, 1943).
la, the section on King Chinhŭng in the *History of the Three Kingdoms* includes records of *hwarang* that may prove useful for us.

In the spring of year thirty-seven [576], [the court] honored *wŏnhwa* (源花) for the first time. Earlier the king and his vassals were concerned that they lacked the means of recognizing people of talent. They desired to have many people mingle together in order to observe their conduct and later recommend them for selection. Finally, two beautiful women named Nammo (南毛) and Chunjŏng (俊貞) were chosen along with over three hundred followers. But the two women were jealous of each other’s beauty. Chunjŏng lured Nammo to her private residence and forcefully urged her to drink, then dragged the drunken Nammo to the river and threw her in, killing her. Chunjŏng was executed and the group of followers disintegrated and dispersed.\(^5\)

This record indicates that a female *wŏnhwa* institution existed prior to the *hwarang* institution. It is difficult to know exactly when it existed, although it would have been before these records of King Chinhŭng’s reign. What the section above does tell us is that the *wŏnhwa* had several hundreds of followers, the institution was established to appoint them as officials, and the standard of selection was beauty. Later, the criteria for choosing *hwarang* was also beauty.

After that, they again selected beautiful men, adorned them, called them *hwarang*, and honored them [as leaders]. Followers gathered like clouds. They refined their moral principles together, enjoyed songs together, and there was no place they did not visit to appreciate the mountains and rivers. This made it possible to know whether a person was righteous or deceitful, and those who were good were chosen and recommended to the court.\(^6\)

This record writes that *hwarang* was, like *wŏnhwa*, also chosen based

\(^5\) *Samguk sagi* 4 (Chinhŭng 37).

\(^6\) Ibid.
on beauty, adorned with makeup, attracted many followers, and was established to select people of talent. The selection for recommendation was done after observing their character as they refined their moral principles together, sang songs, and traveled to splendid mountains and rivers far and wide. Kim Taemun (金大問) also wrote in *Hwarang segi* (Chronicles of Hwarang 花郎世記) that virtuous and loyal subjects were noticeable here and this was where courageous generals and soldiers were nurtured.⁷

According to the account of the twenty-third year of King Chinhŭng in the *History of the Three Kingdoms*, Sadaham’s (斯多含) conquest of Kaya (加耶) is described as follows:

In the ninth month of the twenty-third year, Kaya rebelled. The king ordered Isabu (異斯夫) to suppress them and Sadaham to assist him. Sadaham led five thousand horsemen, rode ahead into Chŏndan Gate (栴檀門), and raised the white flag there. All [the people] in the fortress were fearful and did not know what to do …… ⁸

This record writes of Sadaham defeating Kaya in battle. Looking at the fact that Sadaham is listed as a *hwarang* in the biography of Sadaham (Sadaham yŏlchŏn) of the *History of the Three Kingdoms*, the *hwarang* institution appears to have been established before the twenty-third year of King Chinhŭng at the latest.

People of his time requested that he be honored as a *hwarang* and so he reluctantly consented. His followers reached a thousand people…… King Chinhŭng ordered Ich'an (伊飡) Isabu to attack Kaya. At that time, Sadaham was around fifteen or sixteen years old and requested permission to go to war. [The king] denied his request on the grounds that he was too young, but seeing his determination, he was appointed as the Assistant

---

⁷ Ibid.
⁸ *Samguk sagi* 4 (Chinhŭng 23).
General of Kwidang military garrison (*kwidang pijang*).\(^9\)

From this article, we can see that Sadaham had been a *hwarang* who was fifteen or sixteen years old around that time, that he had a thousand followers, and that they went to war where he distinguished himself in battle. Considering the fact that Silla troops fought in war together with some of the *hwarang* and their followers, along with other soldiers, it is evident that *hwarang* and their followers went to war not as an official unit of warriors but as individuals devoted to the state who fought and distinguished themselves in battle. There were many instances of *hwarang* and their followers distinguishing themselves during war, but we can see that they did not participate in battle as a separate unit of soldiers.\(^10\) The two records above show that Sadaham did not organize his one thousand followers as a unit to fight in the war but led five thousand soldiers into battle where he distinguished himself. That is, Sadaham, as a *hwarang*, did serve in the war as an individual, but the *hwarang* followers did not fight in war as a collective group. Even the *hwarang* Kwanch'ang (宦昌) followed his father to war as a deputy general\(^11\) and not by leading his followers into war as an organized group. It is also worth noting the argument that Sadaham and his followers’ participation in battle could not have assumed the form of “requesting permission to serve in war” if the organization had started out as a unit of soldiers.\(^12\)

The origin of *hwarangdo* in Silla is mentioned in the records of the thirty-seventh year of King Chinhŭng in *The Silla Annals* of the *History of the Three Kingdoms*, but records of the *hwarang* Sadaham already exist in

---

9 *Samguk sagi* 44, Biographies 4, (Sadaham).

10 Ch’oe Kwangsik, “Silla hwarang e taehan singoch’al” (New Studies on Silla *Hwarang*), in *Ch’oe Chaeso kkyosu chŏngnyŏn kinyŏm nonch’ong* (Collection of Essays Commemorating Retirement of Professor Ch’oe Chaesŏk) (Seoul: Ilichisa, 1991).

11 *Samguk sagi* 47, Biographies 47 (Kwanch’ang).

the records of the twenty-third year of King Chinhŭng; thus, the origin of 
hwarang should have been recorded before the twenty-third year at the 
latest. Since it is impossible to pinpoint the exact period, some scholars 
believe that the records were made during the later—thirty-seventh— 
years of King Chinhŭng. On the other hand, some scholars take the posi-
tion that terms pertaining to hwarang such as wŏnhwa, hwarang, and 
kuksŏn gradually appeared over time until the thirty-seventh year of King 
Chinhŭng. I believe, however, that it was probably recorded during 
King Chinhŭng’s reign because of the record of holding p’algwanhoe, the 
Assembly of Eight Prohibitions, during the king’s thirty-third year. 
P’algwanhoe, first held to commemorate those killed in the war, contin-
ued for seven days, and hwarangdo was likely to have played an im-
portant role during this event.

Kim Yusin (金分信), who played a key role in the unification of the 
three kingdoms, was also a hwarang.

He became a hwarang when he was fifteen years old, and people during 
his time sincerely respected him, calling him Dragon Flower Aspirants 
(Yonghwa hyangdo) …… Upon turning seventeen, he was aggrieved and 
indignant when Koguryŏ, Paekche, and the Malgal invaded our borders. 
Determined to defeat the enemies, he went to the Chungak (中嶽) cave 
alone, performed his ablutions, and vowed to the heavens……An old man

13 Chu Podon, “Silla hwarangdo yŏn’gu ŭi hyŏnhwang kwa kwaje” (The Contempo-
rary Historiography of Hwarangdo in Silla Dynasty), Kyemyŏngsahak 8 (2007).
14 Chŏng Unyong, “Silla hwarangje sŏngnip ŭi chŏngch’isa chŏk ŭiŭi” (The Political 
Significance of the Establishment of the Silla Hwarang Institution), in Han’guk 
Hyangt’osa Yo’nguk Hyŏnhwŏk, Hwarang Munhwa ŭi Sinyŏn ’gu (Seoul: 
Mundŏksa, 1996).
15 Samguk sagi 4 (Chinhŭng 33). “三十三年冬十月二十日 爲戰死士卒 設八關延會於 
外寺七日罷”
16 Ch’oe Kwangsik, “Silla ŭi hwarangdo wa p’ungnyudo” (Hwarangdo and 
P’ungnyudo of Silla), Sach’ong 87 (2016).
appeared and spoke while teaching him secret methods.17

In Kim Yusin’s case as well, he becomes a hwarang at the age of fifteen, and he and his followers were called Dragon Flower Aspirants. Although Dragon Flower Aspirants is sometimes thought to be associated with Buddhism as it is related to the Maitreya belief,18 the will to defeat the enemy for one’s country is related to the sense of loyalty in Confucianism, and the act of going into the Chungak cave to vow to the heavens can be seen in relation to a belief in the heavens. Moreover, receiving teachings of secret methods from an old man in the Chungak cave can be regarded in association with Daoism. Thus, as Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn explained in the preface of the inscription on the stele of the hwarang Nallang, the fact that p’ungnyudo was based on native beliefs and contained foreign teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism is already evident in the case of Kim Yusin. In addition, the section on Kim Yusin in the Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms writes that he became a kuksŏn at the age of eighteen, indicating that the court appointed hwarang that excelled among them as kuksŏn.19

However, after the unification war, the status of kuksŏn and hwarang began to change.

In the seventh day of the ninth month in the third year of Tienshou (ch’ŏnsu, 天授), the year of the dragon (692), King Hyoso (孝昭王) made Puyerang (夫禮郞), the son of Taehyon Salch’an, a kuksŏn. He led a thousand followers and among them became close with An Sang (安常). In the fourth year of Tienshou, the year of the snake (693), Puyerang led his fol-

---

17 Samguk sagi 41, Biographies 1, (Kim Yusin I).
lowers to visit Kŭmnan (金蘭), but the party was attacked by a band of Malgal thieves upon reaching Pukmyŏng (北冥), and Puyerang was taken captive. The group of his retainers (mun’gaek, 門客) did not know what to do and returned. Only An Sang followed him. This occurred on the eleventh day of the third month.20

Here, Puyerang, a kuksŏn selected by the state, was taking his followers on an excursion to T’ongch’ŏn in Kangwŏn Province, when he was taken captive by Malgal bandits. The fact that his followers do not run after to rescue him and instead return, while An Sang is the only one to run after him shows how the relationship between hwarang and his followers was no longer as it used to be. Furthermore, the usage of the term “retainer” (mun’gaek, 門客) in lieu of the term followers of hwarang (nangdo, 郎徒) implies that hwarang and his followers were less intimate and somewhat distanced from each other.

Of course, examples of kuksŏn becoming king during the later years of Silla show that the status of kuksŏn and hwarang were upheld up during the Silla era.

The name of the king was Ŭngnyŏm (膺廉), and he became a kuksŏn at the age of eighteen. When he turned twenty, the Great King Hŏnan (憲安) summoned him to a banquet at the palace. The king asked him what extraordinary events he had seen in his travels to many places as a kuksŏn, to which Ŭngnyŏm answered that he had seen three people of good conduct.21

Ŭngnyŏm became King Hŏnan’s son-in-law while he was a kuksŏn and later succeeded to the throne. His position as the son-in-law of a king who had no heir made it possible for him to become the next king, but his status as kuksŏn likely played an important role in this process. We can thus conclude that the status of kuksŏn and hwarang continued to be upheld.

20 Samguk yusa 3, T’apsang 4, (Paengnyulsa).
21 Samguk yusa 2, kii 2, (Kyŏngmunwang).
Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn was born during King Hŏnan’s reign (r. 857-860), went to Tang China and passed the Tang civil service examination, earning the bingong jinshi (k. pin’gong chinsa) during King Kyŏngmun’s reign (景文王, r. 861-874), and returned to Silla during King Hŏn’gang’s reign (憲康王, r. 875-885) to serve as a court official. During King Chŏnggang (定康王, r. 886) and Queen Chinsŏng’s reign (眞聖女王, r. 887-896), he submitted Ten Proposals for Governmental Administration (simu sibyŏjo) and became an ach’an (sixth-degree bureaucratic rank, 阿飡) but was ultimately unable to achieve his ends. He submitted a letter addressed to the Tang court on behalf of the Queen Chinsŏng requesting permission of her abdication from the throne in favor of the next ruler, King Hyogong (孝恭王, r. 897-911) and later retired from public office and spent his remaining life wandering around numerous places.

Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn’s writings show that he perceived King Kyŏngmun and King Hŏn’gang to be ideal rulers. According to the Nallangbisŏ, he saw hwarang as an influential force that led Silla, and emphasizing that their central philosophy p’ungnyudo included native beliefs as well as foreign belief systems such as Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism, noted that they taught this to people. His writings express his hopes, as he watched crises occurring throughout the country including peasant uprisings during Queen Chinsŏng’s reign when he was writing the stele preface, of the revival of Silla that was led by hwarang and kŭksŏn and the restoration of p’ungnyudo, its central principles, and of his desire to embrace the three teachings to teach and transform the people.

The section on King Kyŏngmun in the Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms22 writes that the kŭksŏn Yowŏllang (邀元郞), Yehŭllang (譽昕郞), Kyewŏn (桂元), and Sukchongnang (淑宗郞) roamed T’ongch’ŏn in Kangwŏn Province, where they discreetly composed three songs containing their desires to honor the king and devote themselves to the country, and sent them to the monk Taegu 大矩和尚. When the songs Hyŏn’gŭm’p’ogok (玄琴抱曲), Taedogok (大道曲), and Mun’gu’n’gok (問群曲) were presented

22 Ibid.
to the king, the king was delighted, praising and bestowing rewards upon them. In this anecdote, we see that the king, *kuksŏn*, and *hwarang* participated together in ruling the country while maintaining a good relationship among each other. The titles of the songs such as *Taedogok* (literally, song of the great Way) and *Mun’gun’gok* (literally, song of asking the people) reflected political ideals, and it is evident that the *hwarang* camp and King Kyŏngmun maintained an intimate relationship, based on the fact that King Kyŏngmun was highly pleased upon receiving the songs.  

The section on *sajŏlyut’aek* (Locales of Pleasure for Each of the Four Seasons, 四節遊宅) in the *Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms* writes that during King Hŏn’gang’s reign as the forty-ninth king, there were no thatched roof houses to be seen, houses stood in rows within the city walls, and singing and the sound of the pipes playing filled the streets day and night. In other words, it describes the halcyon days of the era.  

Tŭgogok (得烏谷) composed the song *Mo Chukchirangga* (Ode to Chukchirang, 慕竹旨郞歌) for Chukchirang,  

The old man composed *Hŏnhwaga* (Song of Offering Flowers, 献花歌) for Lady Suro (水路夫人),  

and Ch’ungdamsa (忠談師) composed *Anmin’ga* (Song of Peaceful Reign, 安民歌) and Ch’an Kip’arangga (Song in Praise of Kip’arang 讚耆婆郞歌), demonstrating that *hyangga* (native songs, 鄉歌) originated from *p’ungnyu* related to *hwarang*. In the section on Wŏlmyŏngsa’s (月明師) song *Tosolga* (Song of Tu ita Heaven, 兜率歌) in the *Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms*, King Kyŏngdŏk (景德王) summons Wŏlmyŏngsa and has him compose a prayer when two suns appear in the sky and remain for ten days. According to this account, Wŏlmyŏngsa composes Tosolga, saying he is a *kuksŏn* unversed in Buddhist music who knows

---

24 *Samguk yusa* 1, kii 1, (Sajŏlyut’aek).
25 *Samguk yusa* 2, kii 2, (Hyosowang dae Chukchirang).
26 *Samguk yusa* 2, kii 2, (Suro puin).
27 *Samguk yusa* 2, kii 2, (Kyŏngdŏgwang Ch’ungdamsa P’yohundaeduk).
28 *Samguk yusa* 5, kamt’ong 7, (Wŏlmyŏngsa Tosolga).
only hyangga. Also, in the account of Yungch’ŏnsa’s (融天師) Hyesŏngga (Song of the Comet, 彗星歌) in the section of King Chinp’yŏng (眞平王) in the Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms, the fifth hwarang Kŏyŏllang (居烈郎), the sixth hwarang Silch’ŏrang (實處郞), and the seventh hwarang Podongnang (寶同郞) decide to go an excursion to P’ungak (楓岳) (Mt. Kŭmgang) when a comet is seen in the constellation called Simtaesŏng (心大星). They discontinue their journey out of a sense of foreboding. At this moment, Yungch’ŏnsa composes and sings a song, upon which the strange phenomenon disappears and the invading troops of Japan return to their own country, the misfortune bringing forth a blessing instead.

In this way, kuksŏn and hwarang during the Silla period expressed their sincere caring and concern for their country and dealt with changes in natural phenomena in a graceful and elegant way; in other words, we might even say that they had p’ungnyu. In addition, Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn left poems describing how dance also accompanied song in Hyangak chabyŏng (Five Poems of Various Musical Performances, 鄉樂雜詠). The five lyric poems in Hyangak chabyŏng that were written by Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn after he attended the singing and dancing then are recorded in the music section (akchi) of the miscellaneous articles (chapji) of the History of the Three Kingdoms. The five performances described in these poems are Kŭmhwan (金丸), Wŏlchŏn (月顚), Taemyŏn (大面), Soktok (束毒), and Sanye (狻猊).

Kŭmhwan: Turning the body, shaking the arms, juggling the golden bells
The moon spins and stars float around in the eyes
Would the talents of Yi Liao (宜僚) be any better
The waves of the rough sea quiet down

Kŭmhwan is a performance where several bilboquets are tossed into the

29 Samguk yusa 5, kamt’ong 7, (Yungch’ŏnsa Hyesŏngga).
30 Samguk sagi 32, Chi 1, (Akchi).
air and caught. The expression that the performance is comparable to the talents of Yi Liao, the famous Chinese performer of juggling balls, means that although it is originally from China, the performance by Silla people is just as good.\textsuperscript{31}

\begin{tabular}{l}
Wŏlchŏn: Shoulders lifted, neck hunched, the hair stiffly erect \\
Dwarfish men with rolled-up sleeves exchange drinks \\
Bursting into laughter together upon hearing singing \\
The flag put up in the evening hurries the dawn
\end{tabular}

The reaction of the onlookers described in this poem implies that Wŏlchŏn is a comical show. Yi Ik wrote in \textit{Sŏngho sasŏl} (Essays of Sŏngho, 星湖僿說) that Wŏlchŏn was probably a show ridiculing scholars of Confucianism.\textsuperscript{32} Yi Tuhyŏn saw Wŏlchŏn as originating from Ujŏn’guk (于闐國) (now Hot’an) that used to be in the Tarim basin. He argued that it was a humorous play, a comedy where actors wearing masks of barbarians made people laugh.\textsuperscript{33}

\begin{tabular}{l}
Taemyŏn: It is he, the face wearing a golden mask \\
A whip of beads in his hand to tame the ghosts \\
Running quickly and walking slowly, the graceful dancing is \\
A swaying, like a phoenix flying over
\end{tabular}

This description of a dance wearing a golden mask and holding a whip made with beads in their hands can be seen as a type of dance to dispel ghosts. Yi Tuhyŏn saw Taemyŏn of Unified Silla to be a mask dance and exorcism dance comparable with Taemyŏnhŭi (大面戲), one of the five

\textsuperscript{31} Chŏn, Kyŏnguk, \textit{Han’guk ūi chŏnt’ong yŏnhŭi} (Traditional Performances of Korea), (Seoul: Hakkojae, 2004).

\textsuperscript{32} Yi Ik, \textit{Sŏngho sasŏl} 4.

\textsuperscript{33} Yi Tuhyŏn, \textit{Han’guk yŏn’gŭksa} (The History of Theater of Korea), (Seoul: Hagyŏnsa, 2000).
plays of the Tang dynasty, and Nallŭngwang (蘭陵王), Tang music that accompanied the dance and spread to Japan.\(^{34}\)

Soktok: Messy hair and dark blue faces, such strange people
   Into the courtyard they flock together and dance like the legendary bird
   The boom boom of the drum and the rustle of the wind
   Running here and soaring there, never stopping

Yi Tuhyŏn regarded Soktok to be a type of dance for physical well-being originating from Sogdia in Central Asia. That is, it can be seen as a dance to train the body for health. In his view, the pronunciation of Soktok was borrowed and written as Shodoku in Japanese music books. The poem describes many people dancing as a group and jumping as they dance, possibly referring to how hwarang and their followers danced together to train their bodies. Hwarang dancing like the legendary bird may be Nallang.\(^ {35}\)

Sanye: From the long journey across the faraway desert
   The fur is worn and covered with dust
   Shaking the head and wagging the tail, taming with benevolence
   No other beast can compare to this brilliance

Sanye, a lion dance performed by wearing lion masks, is expressed here as traveling across an ocean of sand, implying that it is a form of the dance from the western regions of China. Yi Tuhyŏn argues that the lion dance was a unique dance of India that was performed wearing animal costumes. It became widely popular across many countries, both east and west, and traces of it still survive in Korea, China, and Japan. According

\(^{34}\) Yi, Han’guk yŏn’gŭksa.
\(^{35}\) Ch’oe Kwangsik, “Silla ūi hwarangdo wa p’ungnyudo” (Hwarangdo and P’ungnyudo of Silla), Sach’ong 87 (2016).
to Yi, the lion dance of Silla was influenced by a type of Xi Liang (西凉) style performance originating from Kucha (龜茲國). 36

Although the five performances depicted in Hyangak chabyŏng are all termed hyangak (native music, 鄕樂), they were influenced by the western regions of Chinas. Hyangak was a term encompassing music that existed in Silla before Tang music was newly introduced and was used in order to distinguish it from the latter. It included not only native elements of Silla music but also foreign music such as those from the western regions of China and of Buddhism. 37 I believe hwarang and their followers participated in the rehearsals of these five performances, similar to the case of hyangga. Nallang, the name of the hwarang in Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn’s Nallangbisŏ, seems to have been derived from the legendary bird; thus, it is possible that hwarang performed the dance of the legendary bird in Soktok. Writing that the performance is comparable to the talents of Yi Liao was Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn’s way of saying that although the dances had come to Silla from China, the performers’ talents were just as remarkable.

P’ungnyu in the Middle Ages of Korea

The custom of sŏllang participating and dancing in the p’algwanhoe continued during the early half of Koryŏ. Records in P’ahanchip (Collection of Writings to Breakup Idleness, 破閑集) tell us that T’aejo (太祖) Wanggŏn (王建), desiring to continue the custom of Silla, selected four children from respectable families to dress up and dance in the palace. 38 We can see that among them, the four sŏllang (四仙門) flourished the most, and hwarang and their followers lined up to dance in groups. This shows how the Silla tradition of hwarang and their followers dancing in groups, as Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn described in Soktok in Hyangak chabyŏng,

36 Yi, Han’guk yŏn’gṳksa.
37 Chŏn, Han’guk ü chŏnt’ong yŏnhŭi.
38 P’ahanchip kwŏn ha
was still carried out.

In addition, T’aegyo of Koryŏ had respect for the customs handed down from Silla, and the paalgwanhoe was held in a grand manner. The records about hwarangdo of Silla also describe the close relationship between hwarangdo and the paalgwanhoe. As I have mentioned before, the reason that the notes on hwarangdo were recorded during King Chinhŭng’s reign likely has to do with the records of holding the paalgwanhoe during his thirty-third year.³⁹

According to Koryŏsa (History of Koryŏ, 高麗史), in the twelfth year (993) of King Sŏngjong (成宗), Yi Chibaek (李知白) suggested that the king “continue to hold the lantern festival, p’algwanhoe, and sŏllang, such as the late king did, and not resort to the use of foreign proprieties, in order to preserve the state and achieve peace.” ⁴⁰ Yi Chibaek said this because the king at the time tended to emulate the customs of China, causing unhappiness among the people.⁴¹

The envoy Xu Jing (徐兢) of the Song Dynasty who came to Koryŏ during King Injong’s reign writes in his work Gaoli tujing (Illustrated Account of Koryŏ Dynasty, 高麗圖經) that they called the children of respectable households sŏllang.⁴²

According to “P’algwanhoe sŏllang hap’yo” (Congratulatory Address to Celebrate the Sŏllang of the Assembly of Eight Prohibitions, 八關會仙郞賀表) written by Kwak Tongsun (郭東珣) during King Injong’s reign, sŏllang participated and danced in the p’algwanhoe.⁴³ We can see similar

---

³⁹ Samguk sagi 4, (Chinhŭng 33). “三十三年冬十月二十日 爲戰死士卒 設八關延會於外寺七日罷”

⁴⁰ Koryŏsa 94, yŏlchŏn 7, (Sŏ Hŭi).


⁴² Gaoli tujing 21, (Zao Li).

⁴³ Kwak Tongsun, “P’algwanhoe sŏllang hap’yo” (Congratulatory Address to Cele
examples in instructions issued by King Ŭijong (毅宗) during his twenty-second year of reign (1168).

Ever since the time of our ancestors, we have long revered the custom of sŏn (sŏnp’ung). Recently, p’algwanhoe of both Kaegyŏng and Sŏgyŏng (南 京) are increasingly unobservant of formalities and deteriorating in tradition. From now on, for the p’algwanhoe, select those who are yangban with sufficient household assets, and designate them as sŏn’ga (households of sŏllang) in advance. Proceed according to the old customs so that the people and the heavens will all delight.44

The Koryŏ court honored sŏnp’ung and had sŏllang participate in p’algwanhoe, but this account shows that it was decreasing in decorum and traditional formalities. Also, it appears that although there was a desire to better observe proprieties, the emphasis was less on delighting the people and the heavens than on its recreational aspects.

Yi Kyubo (李奎報, 1168-1241) also understood sŏnp’ung as a unique culture of Silla which had not existed during the Zhou and Han or the Tang and Song periods. His book, Tongguk Isanggukchip (Collected Works of Yi Kyubo, 東國李相國集), writes that the virtuous monk Konggong (空空上人) Kyŏngjo (景照) adored Pak Sonyŏn (朴少年), who had the looks of a sŏllang.45

There are records on kuksŏn and sŏllang during the latter half of Koryŏ as well. The History of Koryŏ writes that Minjŏk (闵頔) became a kuksŏn during the reign of King Ch’ungnyŏl (忠烈王, r. 1275-1308).

According to the custom, the youth were to follow the guidance of the monks to learn to read and write. Those with beautiful features were venerated by all monks and were called sŏllang, and hundreds to thousands of

44 Koryŏsa 18, sega 18, (Ŭijong 22) 45 Tongguk Isanggukchip, hujip 9. “次韻空空上人贈朴少年五十韻”
followers would gather.\footnote{Koryōsa 108, yolchon 21, (Minjok).}

This account tells us how Silla customs of 
\textit{kuksôn} and \textit{hwarang} continued into Koryŏ. There were several attempts throughout Koryŏ to revitalize the \textit{sŏnp’ung} of Silla, and examples of \textit{sŏllang} participating in events do exist. However, despite such efforts, the \textit{sŏllang} of Koryŏ appear as recreational elements such as participating in the \textit{p’algwanhoe} as child dancers.

In Chosŏn, the \textit{p’algwanhoe} was officially abolished. Only some of the music and dances that had been performed during the \textit{p’algwanhoe}, such as the P’ogurak (拋毬樂) and Sasŏnmu (四仙舞), were passed on to palace ceremonies of Chosŏn. There were \textit{chaeinch’ŏng} (office overseeing entertainers, 才人廳) in Kyŏnggi, Ch’ungch’ŏng, and Chŏllado provinces in Chosŏn; \textit{chaeinch’ŏng} was also called \textit{shinch’ŏng} (office overseeing shamans 神廳), \textit{aksach’ŏng} (office overseeing musicians, 樂師廳), \textit{kwangdaech’ŏng} (office overseeing clowns, 廣大廳), \textit{hwarangch’ŏng} (office overseeing \textit{hwarang}, 花郞廳). They were comprised mainly of hereditary male shamans (\textit{mubu}), but also included \textit{hwarang} who played shaman music, entertainers who performed acrobatics such as tightrope walking and headstands while also playing instruments, and clowns who were entertainers that sang and danced and also played instruments.\footnote{Chŏn, \textit{Han’guk ū ch’ŏnt’ong yŏnhŭi}.}

In the article on prohibitions in the penal code (\textit{hyŏngjŏn}) of the Updated Great Code of 1865 (\textit{Taejŏnhoet’ong}, 大典會通),\footnote{\textit{Taejŏnhoet’ong} 5, hyŏngjŏn, kŭmje.} \textit{hwarang}, prostitutes, and shamans could not live within the gates of the capital, as it was stated that they would be punished if they abided within the city walls. Consequently, they could not enter Seoul, and instead hereditary male shaman musicians (\textit{hwaraengi}) accompanied performances, as observed in Yangju pyŏlsandae play or Songp’a sandae play.\footnote{Chŏn, \textit{Han’guk ū ch’ŏnt’ong yŏnhŭi}.}
Thus, a hwarang during the Chosŏn period was perceived as a male shaman and fell to the ranks of the eight despised social groups not unlike clowns. In Kangwŏn province, male shamans are still called hwarangi.50

On the other hand, various journal entries left by Chosŏn scholars give us a glimpse into p’ungnyu during Chosŏn. Yi Hŭip’yŏng’s (李羲平) Hwasŏng ilgi (Hwasŏng Diaries, 華城日記), written during King Chŏngjo’s (正祖) reign, includes references to p’ungnyu.51 The Tae p’ungnyu (大風流) in this article refers to the way of arranging three string instruments and six wind instruments (samhyŏn yukkak); that the Yŏnhwadae (a type of dance originating from the Tang court) and Hangmu (crane dance) was performed with the music means that the court dance (chŏngjae) was performed. P’ungnyu during this period was used in association with music as the arrangement of samhyŏn yukkak.

Also, the writings left by Chosŏn scholars describe their indulgence in poetry, prose, music, and alcohol in their everyday lives and of traveling to scenic sites, treasuring nature, which are expressed as having p’ungnyu. In this sense, we might say that the tradition of Silla’s hwarang and kuksŏn of enjoying the pleasures of singing and dancing together and wandering around to appreciate the mountains and rivers of continued as the sŏnbŏ’s p’ungnyu, whereas the tradition of refining their moral principles together did not; hence, the p’ungnyu of the middle ages would be more aptly described as p’ungnyu instead of p’ungnyudo.

**P’ungnyu in Contemporary Korea: Hallyu**

Beginning from the mid-1990s, Korean popular culture such as Korean dramas and Korean pop (hereafter K-pop) music has gained popularity in

51 Yi Hŭip’yŏng, Hwasŏng ilgi.
many Asian countries, and since 2010, it has become sensationaly pop-
ular in many places around the world including Europe and the Americas.
Accordingly, there have been efforts to describe this phenomenon in
terms of the enjoyment, talent, excitement, and style of Korean people
and connect them with *p’ungnyu* from traditional times.

*Hallyu* started in Asia around the mid-1990s with dramas. The drama
*Sarangi mwŏgillaе* (What is Love) was broadcasted in 1997 by the
CCTV (China Central Television) in China. After the Beijing magazine
*Qingnian Bao* (China Youth Daily, 靑年報) used the term “*Hallyu*” (韓
流) in 1999, *Hallyu* has come to represent the spread of Korean culture
overseas. A careful examination of this process will reveal how the flow
of *Hallyu* has evolved since then.

The first stage, or “the era of *Hallyu* 1.0,” is the period from the mid to
late 1990s to the mid-2000s when Korean visual contents such as drama
and film were popular. The second stage after this, or “the era of *Hallyu*
2.0,” refers to the mid-2000s to around 2011 when the popularity of K-
pop spread to France and other Western societies in addition to Asia.52

The way *Hallyu* has evolved shows that communicating through Kore-
an culture with people not just in Asia but all around the world is no long-
er a foreign phenomenon. The period after 2012 can be termed “the era of
*Hallyu* 3.0” in that Korean culture in general—i.e., Korean traditional
culture and arts in addition to popular culture such as drama and music—
is increasingly appreciated by people internationally. It is not just K-pop
and K-drama but K-culture, a term encompassing film, classical music,
Korean language, sports (T’aekwŏndo), medicine, legislation, education,
and industry, that is being accepted throughout the world.53

In this era of *Hallyu* 3.0, Korean traditional culture may well be the cul-
ture of Korea that people around the world can enjoy together. In fact,

52 Ch’oe Kwangsik, *Hallyu rodu: chŏnt'ong kwa hyŏndaе ŭ ch'angjojok yunghwa*
(The Hallyu Road: The Creative Fusion of the Traditional and the Modern),
(Kyŏnggido, P’aju-si: Nanam, 2013).
53 Ch’oe, *Hallyu rodu: chŏnt'ong kwa hyŏndaе ŭ ch'angjojok yunghwa.*
even the most seemingly modern K-pop carry elements of traditional culture. In order to be a member of a girl or boy idol group, the person must be at least 10 years of age, possess attractive features, and apply makeup. This is the same criteria for selecting wŏnhwa and hwarang. They also learn to sing and dance together starting from when they are around 10 years old. The names of boy groups such as Tong Bang Shin Gi (東方神起), G.O.D. evoke god (神); those of girl groups such as Wonder Girls and So Nyŏ Si Dae (Girls’ Generation, 少女時代) evoke wŏnhwa.

But more importantly, these idol groups characteristically sing and dance together enthusiastically. In the West, there is a separate lead performer who sings while dancers dance in background—hence, the term backup or background dancer. However, Korean idol groups alternate between singing and dancing, distinctive in the way they perform singing and dancing together. Such aspects can also be found in the rituals for worshipping the heavens of the Korean people. In Dongyi chuan (Volume of the Eastern Barbarians, 東夷傳) of Weizhi (Book of Wei, 魏志) of Sanguo zhi (Records of the Three Kingdoms, 三國志), there are records of yŏnggo (迎鼓) of Puyŏ (夫餘), tongmaeng (東盟) of Koguryŏ, much’ĕn (舞天) of Tongye (東濊), and rituals for worshipping the heavens of the Three Han Kingdoms. Although when and how such rituals were performed differed depending on the state, they commonly involved the form of a large statewide festival of eating, drinking, singing, and dancing for several days in succession. In particular, records of men and women singing and dancing in groups tell us of the tradition of group dancing as well as dancing and singing together. Pop music came from the West, but K-pop differs from Western pop music in that the performers dance in groups and sing and dance together without separating the two, a characteristic evident in these records. Note that the section on Soktok in Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn’s Hyangak chabyŏng also refers to group dancing and jump dancing, as mentioned before.

Records of the Three Han Kingdoms also include detailed descriptions

---

54 Sanguo zhi, Weizhi, Dongyi chuan.
of how people danced. \(^{55}\) They tell us how dozens of people followed each other’s lead, stepping on the ground, bending down then raising their bodies up, touching their feet with their hands. Such accounts of singing and dancing together as a group and the descriptions of the dance during which hands and legs meet or of stamping and jumping in place recall the group dancing and jumping of idol groups we are familiar with. For ancient people, having one’s hands and feet come into contact meant that the heaven and the earth were meeting. The Chinese characters in the word *tomu* (jump dancing, 跳舞) is shaped as the image of a person jumping to connect the heaven and the earth, from which the character *mu* (巫) derives. This jump dancing is the most important characteristic of K-pop, and the audience watching it starts to move their shoulders up and down, finally putting their arms around each other’s shoulders and jumping, almost reaching a state of ecstasy. Psy’s “Gangnam Style” is the maximization of this jump dancing. It is a form of singing and dancing that was loved by people around the world. Although “Gangnam Style” is a song, people remember only the “horse dance” without really understanding the lyrics.

A while ago, there was a story in the news about how Korean indie bands had put on a good performance during a North American rock festival and were well-received by the people there. During the interview of a musician of the Korean indie band, he said that the way Americans danced and enjoyed themselves like Asians seemed to imply the fact that despite rock music having come from America, it felt Korean when played by Koreans. Until now, our common perception of traditional culture was as something unfamiliar and irrelevant to us living in the present-day and difficult for people around the world to appreciate. But as the example of K-pop demonstrates, it is evident that traditional culture of

\(^{55}\) *Sanguo zhi*, Weizhi, Dongyi chuan, Han chuan. “常以五月下種訖 祭鬼神 群聚歌舞 飲酒晝夜歌舞無休 其舞數十人俱起相隨 踏地低昂 手足相應 筝箏有似鐸舞 十月農功畢 亦復如之”
Korea still exists within many realms, even as we are unaware of it.\(^{56}\)

Cho Chihun once said, “Tradition is the material and the means to create anew; tradition is the subject and the value of creation.”\(^{57}\) This goes for *Hallyu* as well. For Korean culture to be shared all around the world, it needs to possess both particularity and universality. Such originality does not suddenly appear; it must be sought from tradition to create modern values. In this sense, one of our tasks would be to revive the open and accepting principle of the *p’ungnyudo* mentioned in Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn’s *Nallangbisŏ* in its incorporation of foreign religions based on native beliefs. That the performers of a dance originating from China could be comparable to the best performer of China, as written in *Hyangak chabyŏng*, calls into mind the K-pop idol groups, who are just as entertaining as the best performers in western countries.

In the way Korea has conversed with many countries and civilizations including China by way of the Silk Road during the premodern ages, the task today is to continue the exchange of culture with many countries through *Hallyu*.

**Conclusion**

*P’ungnyudo*, originating from the ancient times, was based on a belief in the heavens and native beliefs, but it was also open to and accepting of the teachings of foreign religions such as Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism. In the process of teaching this to and transforming the people, it became the central principle of ancient Korea. The *hwang* and *kuksŏn*, who modeled themselves on this guiding ideology, were the leading forces of Silla and the key figures in the unification of the three kingdoms of

\(^{56}\) Ch’oe Kwangsik, *Silk’ūrodu wa Han’guk munhwa* (The Silk Road and Korean Culture), (Kyŏnggido P’aju: Nanam, 2013).

Silla, Koguryŏ, and Paekche. During the later years of Silla, however, they underwent some changes. In Koryŏ, there were efforts to revitalize sŏnp’ung; however, only the recreational aspects were emphasized. It continued as the p’ungnyu of music and poetic music of the sŏnbi in Chosŏn, with hwarang deteriorating into one of the eight despised social groups as a male shaman.

Since the mid-1990s, Hallyu in the form of Korean drama and K-pop started to garner popularity, Korean pop culture has been receiving international attention. There has been a renewed interest in Korean enjoyment, talent, and style, as well as in the traditional culture of Korea.

P’ungnyudo, mentioned early on by Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn in Nallangbisŏ, grounded itself on traditional culture while at the same time being open and accepting of foreign culture. Hallyu should be developed in the same way. Korea accepted culture from China and its western regions as well as from the West through the Silk Road and further developed it anew. In the same way, it will be possible to revitalize p’ungnyudo by being open minded and accepting of one another and maintaining a spirit of harmony and mutual prosperity.

Through Nallangbisŏ, Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn presented p’ungnyu and the possibility of harmony between the three teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism, handing down the tradition of Korean thought to his future generations. Also, by describing the songs and dances of ancient Korea in detail in Hyangak chabyŏng, he left with us the true form of p’ungnyudo that encompasses both intelligence and sensibility. Furthermore, the way he named the songs and music coming from the western regions through China hyangak and not tangak (Tang music, 唐樂), is in line with how we call pop music coming from the West K-pop.

References

1. Sanguo zhi 三國志 (Records of the Three Kingdoms).
2. Samguk sagi 三國史記 (History of the Three Kingdoms).
3. *Samguk yusa* 三國遺事 (Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms).
5. *Gaoli tujing* 高麗圖經 (Illustrated Account of Koryŏ Dynasty).
6. *Tongguk isanggukchip* 東國李相國集 (Collected Works of Yi Kyubo)
7. *P’ahanjip* 破閑集 (Collection of Writings to Breakup Idleness)
8. *Tongmunsŏn* 東文選 (Selections of Eastern Writing)
10. *Sŏngho sasŏl* 星湖僿說 (Essays of Sŏngho)
11. *Hwasŏng ilgi* 華城日記 (Hwasŏng Diaries)
21. Iryŏn. Ch’oe, Kwangsik and Pak, Taejae trans., *Yŏkchu samguk
Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn’s *P’ungnyudo* and Present-day *Hallyu*

*Ch’oe Kwangsik*

*P’ungnyudo*, originating from the ancient societies, was based on belief in the heavens and native beliefs, but it was also open to and accepting of the teachings of foreign religions such as Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism. In the process of teaching this to and transforming the people, it became the central principle of ancient Korea. The *hwarang* and *kuksŏn*, who modeled themselves on this guiding ideology, were the leading forces of Silla and the key figures in the unification of the three kingdoms of Silla, Kokuryŏ, and Paekche. During the later years of Silla, however, they underwent some changes. In Koryŏ, there were efforts to revitalize *sŏnp’ung*; however, only the recreational aspects were emphasized. It continued as the *p’ungnyu* of music and poetic music of the *sŏnbi* in Chosŏn, with *hwarang* deteriorating into one of the eight despised social groups as a male shaman.

Since the mid-1990s as *Hallyu* such as Korean drama and K-pop started to garner popularity, Korean pop culture has been receiving international attention. There has been a renewed interest in Korean enjoyment, talent, and style, as well as in traditional culture of Korea.

*P’ungnyudo*, mentioned early on by Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn in *Nallangbisŏ*, grounded itself on traditional culture at the same time it was open and accepting towards foreign culture. *Hallyu* should be developed in the same way. Korea accepted culture from China and its western regions as well as from the West through the Silk Road and further developed it anew. In the same way, it will be possible to revitalize *p’ungnyudo* by being open minded and accepting of one another and maintaining a spirit of harmony and mutual prosperity.

**Keywords:** *P’ungnyudo, Hyanga, Hyangak, P’ungnyu, Hallyu, K-pop*
최치원의 ‘풍류도’와 현대의 한류

최광식 (고려대학교 한국사학과 교수)

고대사회에서 비롯한 풍류도는 天神信仰 등 固有信仰을 기반으로 하면서 외래 종교인 유교와 불교 및 도교의 종지를 포함하는 개방성과 포용성을 보이고, 이를 대중들에게 교화함으로써 한국 고대의 중심이념이 되었다. 이를 지도이념으로 익히고 닦은 화랑과 국선들은 신라의 주도세력이 되어 삼국통일의 주역이 되었으나 하대 이후 다소 변화를 겪게 되었다. 고려시대에 들어와 선풍을 다시 일으키려는 노력을 하였으나 놀이적 부분만 유지되었으며, 조선시대에는 선비들의 음악과 시가의 풍류로 이어지고 화랑은巫夫로서 八賤의 하나로서 전락하였다.

1990년대 중반 이후 드라마와 K-pop등 한류가 인기를 끌면서 한국의 대중문화가 세계인들의 주목을 받고 있다. 이를 통해 다시금 우리의 신명과 힘, 홍과 멋에 관심을 가지면서 전통문화에 대한 관심이 되살아나고 있다.

최치원선생이 일찍이 <鸞郞碑序>에서 언급한 풍류도가 전통문화를 기반으로 하면서 외래문화를 포함하는 開放性과 容包性을 아우르듯 한류를 발전시켜나가야 할 것이다. 우리가 실크로드를 통해 중국과 서역 및 서양의 문화를 받아들여 더욱 새롭게 발전시켰듯이 상호교류의 열린 자세와 융복합적인 相生과 調和의 정신을 견지한다면 風流을 되살릴 수 있을 것이다.

주제어: 풍류도, 향가, 향악, 풍류, 한류, K-pop