

Creating Ethnic Music for Decolonization -- History of *Zainichi* Korean Activities for the Ethnic Music during the Liberation, Division and the Cold War

Rihwa KIM

1. Outline of the dissertation

This doctoral dissertation discusses the three difficulties of ethnic music activities that *Zainichi* Koreans (the Resident Koreans in Japan) confronted after the liberation from the Japanese colonial rule: the oppressive and exclusionary social structure of Japanese society, the political environment of the division of the Korean Peninsula, and the cultural task of establishing their own ethnic music.

The purpose of this study is to examine how the socio-political situation in East Asia influenced the ethnic music activities of *Zainichi* Koreans from 1945 to 1980.

2. The ethnic music activities by *Zainichi* Koreans

After liberation, ethnic music activities by *Zainichi* Koreans who had to stay in Japan even after the ending of Japan's colonial rule, were formed in the context of Korean ethnic movements in Japanese society. During the colonial period, many Koreans hummed songs such as "Living in a Different Country" and "Mokpo's Tears." Most of them are songs that express the sorrows of the colonial era and have melodies which have Japanese sound composition, that are fundamentally different rhythms from the vernacular rhythms of Korean music, *Jangdan*. In this way, people who had been deprived of their own cultural experience under colonial cultural policy, especially after the liberation of Japan, began to reject such colonial music and create a new kind of folk music. This is how ethnic music activities of *Zainichi* Koreans started.

This activity that people living in the former suzerain attempted to reconstruct the culture of ethnic groups that was destroyed by colonial rule. This activity shows peculiar

aspects of recreation of minority culture, that is probably unprecedented in the world. Minority culture is generally recognized as a way for people who have left their home countries for a variety of reasons to bring home cultural experiences and reproduce them in their migration destinations or combine them with the culture of their residing countries. On the other hand, *Zainichi* Koreans had to start by creating their ethnic culture itself because their original cultural experience in homeland was transformed or destroyed by colonial rule.

Furthermore, the U.S. military government in South Korea hindered the establishment of a unified state, and the 38th parallel of the U.S.-Soviet occupation led to the division of the two Koreas and the Korean War. This must have made it even more difficult for *Zainichi* Koreans to create ethnic music activities.

In this way, ethnic music activities by *Zainichi* Koreans were firstly unstable conditions of stay in the former suzerain and continued to be overwhelmingly influenced by culture of postwar Japan. Secondly, the activity itself is conditioned by the North-South Divide and Cold War structure. Thirdly, the activity had to start a practice of establishing the brand-new ethnic music within the newly developed *Zainichi* Korean community.

3. Structure of the dissertation

Based on the above-mentioned awareness of the three difficulties of ethnic music activities, this study mainly focuses on artistic activities, musical activities in living places, and music education in Joseon schools. The thesis is composed as follows.

The first chapter introduces the cultural activities of ethnic groups in relation to the cultural activities of *Zainichi Koreans*, which are newly established after liberation. The period from 1945 to 1955 when the Central Art Troupe, which specializes in ethnic art, was established after liberation, revealed the three difficulties of defining ethnic music activities of Koreans in Japan.

Chapter 2 focuses on the development of ethnic art activities as a process of reception. It explains the process of accepting socialist ethnic art in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (hereinafter referred to as the Republic of Korea). In particular, amid the difficulties of ethnic music activities of Koreans living in Japan, the situation of "recreation of ethnic music" has played a significant role in the formation of the Central Art Troupe.

Thus, the socialist ethnic art of the Republic was introduced to Korean artists living in Japan, and they gradually spread to various ethnic music activities. The process of diffusion is illustrated in Chapters 3, 4 and 5, respectively. Chapter 3 focuses on ethnic

music activities in the living environment, and examines the changes in the form of music activities due to the significant changes in the Cold War structure in East Asia. Chapter 4 revealed that an activity of "recreation of folk music" through education played a role in the process of forming music education in Joseon schools. Chapter 5 examines the performance of large-scale epic musical (大音樂舞踏叙事詩) performed from 1966 to 1970 as a comprehensive movement of art activities, musical activities in daily life, music education at Chosun School, and folk music activities. Since the establishment of the 1965 system, the division of the Korean Peninsula and the intensification of the Cold War increased a political pressure on the *Zainichi* Korean community, but at the same time the situation helped to hold the epic musical performances that lead to outcomes of establishing styles of ethnic music and training programs of performers.

However, it was also true that ethnic music activities were strongly influenced and conditioned by the Cold War conflicts. In contrast, Chapter 6 focuses on the movement of recreating ethnic music based on a sense of daily lives of *Zainichi* Koreans since the late 1970s, which was different from the music culture prescribed in the Cold War. As a process of succession to accept the re-created new folk music, the educational practice of Joseon schools was reviewed again.

In this dissertation, the formation and development of ethnic music activities by Koreans living in Japan after liberation is re-considered as the process of "creative overcoming" of postcolonial conditions in Japan. Through the examination of the state of music practice in each chapter, it was found that the practice of creation was indispensable for the development of ethnic music activities of Koreans living in Japan under postcolonial conditions. In fact, the characteristics of folk music are not limited to the case of Koreans living in Japan, but can also be considered to represent the characteristics of music in various postcolonial situations. This perspective provides important clues to the wider and deeper study of postcolonial issues in world music. Thus the achievement and significance of this study is to present such a perspective.