A STUDY OF *NORE*, ISANG YUN'S SONG FOR CELLO AND PIANO

by

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To my parents, Suk Hui Jang and Tae Doo Kim, for their unending love and prayers through my journey. I dedicate this dissertation to you.

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Abstract

Isang Yun's turbulent life was filled with times of distress and joy. His pilgrimage from South Korea to West Germany, where he eventually received citizenship was not something that Yun had envisioned. Rather, he took up this move because of unforeseen barriers along his musical journey. Isang Yun had a special affinity for cello. He studied the instrument at a young age, went abroad to Japan to study it, and even carried it with him as he was escaping the Japanese army because it was his only constant companion. Therefore, I believe that Yun's cello works have a greater significance due to this connection. Although Yun's political circumstances and the influence politics had in his career are well documented in the scholarship about him and his music, researchers have not yet covered all of his five solo cello compositions, written in between 1964 and 1993. Through my research, I address which pieces need to be studied in-depth in order to further comprehend the historical and political issues that surrounded them. Then, I narrow my focus to Yun's cello compositions that have been studied in-depth and highlight the need to provide greater detail to Yun's composition, *Nore*. Finally, my research examines how trauma may have impacted Isang Yun, discuss the significance and types of traumas that could have impacted him, and examine how it is reflected in Yun's *Nore* through a comparison to *Glissées pour Violoncelle seul*, which is written after his abduction by the South Korean government.

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Chapter 1: Background of Isang Yun's Life

Isang Yun was born in 1917 in Duksan, South Korea. His father was considered a poet, but was more similar to a scholar who studied Chinese classic literature. At the age of three, Isang Yun moved to Tongyoung, where he spent most of his childhood and began violin lessons with his neighbor. As he studied music, he grew fond of it and desired to study further. However, his father disapproved of Yun's desire to pursue music which caused Yun to eventually run away to Seoul, the capital of South Korea. There, he studied theory with a violinist, and was able to explore the music of Germanic greats like Richard Strauss and Paul Hindemith.[1] Eventually Yun's father allowed him to learn music, but only as a hobby and on the condition that he attend trade school. He left for Japan in 1935 to enroll at Osaka Music Conservatory. There, he studied composition, music theory, and cello for two years. When he returned to Korea, he became a music teacher, but continued to write music and published his first work of songs for children. Only a few years later, due to his desire to further study music, he went back to Japan to study in Tokyo with Japanese composer, Tomojiro Ikenouchi and trained in French music traditions.[2] Because Korea had been occupied by Japan since 1910, while he studied in Japan, Yun became aware of discrimination and injustice against Koreans in Japan. In recalling his time in Japan, Yun recounted,

> "I personally experienced how they treated Koreans. When I went with my friend Choi to study in Tokyo, we were looking for a room. At that time, we saw on many doors signs with the inscription, 'Room for Rent, but no Koreans.' So, we had to hide our Korean identity and finally found a room. Fortunately, the landlord mistook our awkward Japanese accent for the Kyushu Japanese dialect. He was a chief of police. We tried to avoid him as much as possible. One night, he invited us for dinner. We drank a little bit too much and suddenly my friend forgot we were

[1] Jee Yeoun Ko, "Isang Yun and His Selected Cello Works" (PhD diss., Louisiana State University, 2008), 3.
[2] Ibid., 4.

> Kyushu Japanese and spoke a couple sentences to me in Korean. The landlord instantly said, 'Ah you are from over there [Korea]!' The next day, we had to leave the house."[3]

With the bombing at Pearl Harbor and the start of World War II, Yun returned to Korea. Yun participated in anti-Japanese activities during the war and fought against Japan for the freedom of South Korea. Yun's participation in this movement led to imprisonment for two months.[4] Due to the work of brave citizens like Isang Yun, South Korea was liberated in 1945. The liberation did not last long, as the Korean War broke out a few years later. It devastated the two nations, but as fighting concluded, the two nations pursued significantly contrasting political paths. Yun stayed in South Korea and taught at Seoul National University in 1953. His String Quartet No. 1 and Piano Trio received the Seoul City Culture Award in 1956, which made Yun the first composer to receive this esteemed award.[5] Despite his achievements in South Korea and his studies in Japan with European influenced teachers, Isang Yun desired to study Western music more in-depth so that he could later return to Korea and teach these Western techniques to Korean students.

Shortly after his successes in South Korea, leaving his wife and two children behind, Yun set off to Paris in June of 1956 to study composition with Tony Aubin and theory with Pierre Revel. His goal in Europe was to learn the theory and techniques of new music quickly so that in three years, he would return to South Korea to teach what he had absorbed. After a year in Paris, he sought out a new teacher. He went to Boris Blacher in Berlin who was one of the most

[3] Jeongmee Kim, "The Diasporic Composer: The Fusion of Korean and German Musical Cultures in the Works of Isang Yun" (PhD diss., University of California Los Angeles, 1999), 32-33.
[4] Ko, "Isang Yun," 4.
[5] Ibid., 5.

renowned teachers of that time. After taking a glance at Yun's composition, Blacher agreed to take Yun as a student. In the next few years, Yun's composition would debut in Germany and he continued his study with other teachers with the hope to return to South Korea soon. He endured through the hardships for this goal. He recounts his stay in Berlin as a nightmare. "…all corners of the house occupied. The lady could not sleep at night so she listened to the radio very loudly, so it was very painful. Then a tenant started to play on a toy xylophone, and I played the cello in order to drown out all the noise."[6]

This project also necessitates that I discuss the turbulent political situation in South Korea. As the combat of the Korean War waned, South Korea was beginning to establish itself as a Republic. Because of the harsh pushback against communism, anyone with relationships to North Korean and its inhabitants triggered signs of warning within the South Korea government. Everyone was considered a threat unless you showed complete loyalty to the fight against communism.

In 1963, Yun received an invitation to Pyeongyang, North Korea to visit an old friend that he had thought was dead from the war. Without any hesitation, Yun and Su Ja, his wife, went to North Korea to see how the people lived and also because Yun had always wanted to see the ancient mural of the four guardian gods in the tombs called *Shashindo*. These animals depicted in the traditional Korean frescos were known to have protect people from the North, South, East, and West.[7] Yun saw how the people lived, experienced the *Shashindo*, and met the friend, who had changed so much that the conversation lasted only a little while even though they had spent many years apart. Little did Yun and Su Ja know what terror this visit would

[6] Luise Rinser and Isang Yun, *Der Verwundete Drache* (Frankfurt: S. Fischer, 1977), 81.
[7] Saerom Kim, "An Evolution of Isang Yun's Compositional Approach: A Comparative Study of Riul, Piri and Clarinet Concerto," (PhD Diss., University of Hartford, 2020), 10.

cause them, as the South Korean government would use this visit against Yun and his wife and accuse them of being North Korean spies.

Table 1.1 below outlines the key dates and information leading up to the Korean War and the result of the Korean War. [8] Due the reestablishment of the 38th parallel and anticommunist dictatorships in South Korea, any South Koreans who had relationships or connections to North Korea would trigger warning to the South Korean government. One event that occurred due to this severe political tension between North and South Korea was the East Berlin Affair, or East Berlin Incident, where seventeen South Korean intellectuals, guest workers, and students in West Germany, including Isang Yun, were abducted by South Korean government officials due to ties to North Korea.[9] The incident created high political tension between South Korea and West Germany, as this happened on German soil without any prior communication. Therefore, it garnered national attention and the West German government played a crucial part in the eventual release of the South Korean nationals, as this was a national security concern for West Germany as it was noted:

> However, the political archives contain a confidential Note Verbal (July 24, 1967) of the Korean Embassy that the government of the Republic of Korea deeply regret that officials of the Korean authorities acted in the Federal Republic of Germany, without prior consultation with or approval of the Germany authorities in this unfortunate matter. In this Note Verbal, the Korean government also wished to assure the Germany government that this kind of act will not recur in the future.[10]

[8] Hyun Kyong Chang, "Exilic Suffering. Music, Nation, and Protestantism in Cold War South Korea," *Music and Politics* 8, no. 1 (Winter 2014): 3.
[9] Sang Hwan Seong, "An Archive-Based Analysis of the East-Berlin Affair (June 1967 to 1970)," *The SNU Journal of Education Research* 14, no. 1 (July 2005): 2.
[10] Ibid., 11.

Year	Key events
August, 1945	-Korea's independence from Japan, after 35 years of colonial rule (1910-1945). -National sovereignty established following Japan's surrender to the Allied powers.
September, 1945	-The establishment of the Soviet Civil Authority and the Provisional People's Committee in the north. -The establishment of the United States Army Military Government (USAMGIK) in the south.
1946 – 1948	-Persecution of Christians, landowners, and centrists in the north and persecution of communists, socialists, and centrists in the south.
August, 1948	-The establishment of two separate republics in Korea. A U.N.-supervised election in the south led to the foundation of the Republic of Korea (South Korea). -The north rejected this U.N.-initiated proposition, forming its own government, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea). -The formal withdrawal of the Soviet and the American governing forces from North Korea and South Korea.
August, 1948 – June, 1950	-Leaders of South Korea and North Korea (Syngman Rhee and Kim Il-sung) voiced plans to reunify the country through military means. -Heightened persecution of dissidents on both sides. -Conflicts along the 38th parallel.
June, 1950 – July, 1953	-The Korean War, ending in a truce that re-established the pre-War border.
1953 – late 1980s	-South Korea's heavy dependence on U.S. aid (1950s-1960s). -A series of anticommunist dictatorships in South Korea. -A single-party totalitarian dictatorship in North Korea.

Table 1.1. Key Cold War Events in Korea, Taken as Tt Appears on Hyun Kyong Chang's Article.

Chapter 2: Overview of Isang Yun's Cello Compositions

In this chapter, I explore Yun's cello compositions that have been studied in-depth to show how *Nore* can be researched and analyzed while taking the circumstances of its creation into account. Yun composed five solo pieces for cello: *Nore, Glissées für Cello Solo, Konzert für Violoncello und Orchester*, *Espace I* for cello and piano, and *Sieben Etüden für Violoncello Solo*. Scholars have studied in-depth Isang Yun's cello compositions, *Glissées für Cello Solo, Konzert für Violoncello und Orchester*, and *Sieben Etüden für Violoncello Solo*, but have neglected to analyze and study *Nore*. Jee Yeoun Ko, in her dissertation, "Isang Yun and His Selected Cello Works," states, "Regarding this music, there is not much information found unlike his other cello works."[11] However, Ko explains the historical background of *Nore* noting that the piece was "ironically composed almost accidentally."[12] She recounts that Yun, as the leader of the Korean Immigrants Association in Germany, attended a party to welcome President Park Chung-Hee to the Federal Republic of Germany in 1964. One night before the president's arrival, a cellist studying in Cologne approached Yun and he wrote this piece for her in three hours, as he could not let her leave empty-handed.[13] The ironic fact is that this piece was not performed, but was found in his desk drawer while Yun was imprisoned. His friends decided to publish it and it was premiered by cellist Siegfried Palm in May 1968 in Bremen.[14] Despite all of the information she provides, Ko neglects to delve deeper into the historical and political circumstance that should be explored in order to more fully understand this piece.

[11] Jee Yeoun Ko, "Isang Yun and His Selected Cello Works," 32.
[12] Ibid., 32.
[13] Su-ja Yi, *Nae namp'yŏn Yun I-sang* (Seoul: Ch'angjak kwa Pip'yŏngsa, 1998), 259.
[14] Ko, "Isang Yun," 33.

Injung Song's "In-Depth Study of Isang Yun's *Glissées Pour Violoncelle Seul*" studies *Glissées* extensively and surveys Yun's compositions for cello, which will be utilized in the late chapters. The dissertation includes important background information about Yun's music in terms of Western elements, Eastern elements, the *Hauptton* technique, and a complete analysis of *Glissées.* Included in Song's dissertation is a survey of cello compositions Yun wrote, and Song notes that *Nore, Glissées,* and the cello concerto were not written in the conventional way that *Espace I* and *Sieben Etüden* were written.[15] In addition, Song describes *Nore* as "not a nice little song-like piece as the title might suggest; it is rather a compact non-tonal work."[16]

In "The Musical Ideology and Style of Isang Yun, As Reflected in His *Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra*," Chul-Hwa Kim provides the different beliefs and styles incorporated in Yun's music, such as Taoism, Confucianism, Korean traditional music, and the periods of Western influence. Kim then analyzes the concerto in terms of structure, language, and texture. The research on Isang Yun done by Kim and many others divide Yun's compositional life into three periods. Kim suggests that in Period I (1956-1975), "Yun developed his own musical language with dense 'tone compositions' by blending Taoism, Korean traditional music, and Western music."[17] *Nore*, which was composed in 1964, belongs in this period. Kim references two pieces, *Fünf Klavierstük* and *Musik für Sieben Instrumente* which were both written in 1959 and states, "Both compositions employed serial technique, with the consolidation of Korean tradition and contemporary Western techniques. *Musik für Sieben*

[15] Injung Song, "In-Depth Study of Isang Yun's Glissées pour Violoncelle Seul" (PhD diss., Boston University College of Fine Arts, 2008), 50.
[16] Ibid., 51.
[17] Chul-Hwa Kim, "The Musical Ideology and Style of Isang Yun, as Reflected in His Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra" (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, 1997), 51.

Instrumente employed a thematic twelve-tone row which was designed to represent the potential of expressing the oriental trends using the in form of dodecaphony."[18] As I will show in my project, *Nore* can be analyzed in a similar way.

Yun's affinity for cello was apparent in his chamber works. Not only did he write five solo works for cello, but also a majority of his chamber works include cello. In total, he wrote approximately twenty-seven chamber pieces that include cello. This number only included works that showcase one cello, as all orchestral pieces would include cello. Even though he learned to play the cello, it was not always that he wrote well for the cello. He recounts this incident with the musicians rehearsing his piece *Colloïdes Sonores* written in 1961, one of his first pieces written in Germany:

> When I arrived at the rehearsal, none of the musicians showed up. I took a seat and waited. Eventually, they showed. However, many were disgruntled, especially to rehearse my piece. I was so distraught that I couldn't get up from my seat. As the rehearsal commenced, one cellist yelled out that this *pizzicato* and glissando cannot be done and that it is technically impossible. When I heard this, I got up and told them that I would show them how it is technically possible. One cellist reluctantly gave up their cello and I showed them. Seeing that I could actually execute the technique written in my piece, the musicians received some sort of inspiration to at least try to play the piece.[19]

After the performance of this piece, realizing the negative reactions from the performers, he told himself that he would try to write parts that would not be as complicated and difficult.

[18] Ibid., 52.
[19] Rinser, *Der Verwundete Drache*, 104.

Chapter 3: Western Influence in *Nore* and *Glissées*

In this chapter, I investigate how Western influence impacted Isang Yun and provide a brief analysis of *Nore* and *Glissées*. Jeongmee Kim, the author of the dissertation, "The Diasporic Composer: The Fusion of Korean and German Musical Cultures in the Works of Isang Yun," stated, "They taught him to study the works of Beethoven and Wagner, and drilled him in difficult counterpoint, even though the mastery of these techniques was not his main goal in Europe."[20] Yun's goal was to return to Korea to introduce modern Western techniques to his students. When Yun attended the *Kurse für Neue Musik* in Darmstadt in 1958, he met avant-garde composers like Stockhausen, Nono, Boulez, Maderna, and Cage. Kim states that Yun began to question his own artistic identity and goals. Yun says, "I was fascinated by their experiments. An immense spectrum of new possibilities. Should I compose as radically as these others in order to secure a place for myself in the avant-garde? Or should I go my own way following my Asian musical heritage? It was an important decision for me."[21]

Of Yun's music, he states that the origin is from the East and to illicit the images of Korean sounds, he borrows Western techniques. When asked if he writes Eastern or Western music, he simply says he writes the music of Isang Yun. He truly felt that he was a blend of the two cultures, which is very apparent all throughout his music. Yun states,

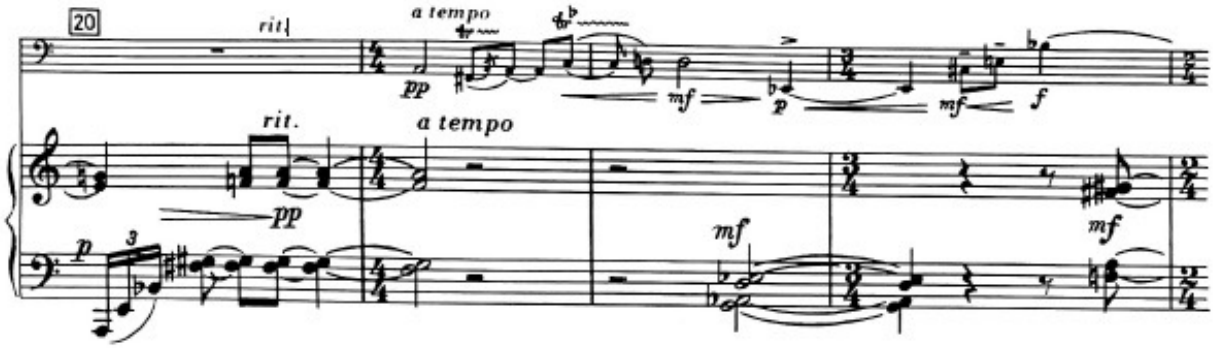
> Audiences can hear that my music has Eastern and Western influences, but also somewhere in between. The fact that they can do this shows them my place. I am traditionally Eastern, but very much influenced by European ways. My body left home and adapted to a Western culture. I restarted my musical studies when I arrived in Europe. I did not think that you become a Western composer if you learn their techniques. You have to become a blank page and discard of your heritage to do so. I had to fight this. Only when I realized that I am of true Eastern descent, I was able to express my Eastern-self into Western musical language.[22]

[20] Ibid., 36.
[21] Ibid., 37.
[22] Rinser, *Der Verwundete Drache*, 254.

In this section, I will analyze *Nore* with a focus on twelve-tone technique and how Isang Yun synthesizes the Western techniques he learned with his inherent Eastern-ness. In addition, I will discuss the relationship between the cello and piano and how the two function together and separately. It is not always obvious that the twelve-tone technique is utilized throughout the piece, as Yun integrates Eastern modal ideas through the use of *glissandi*, pitch-bending, trills, and microtonality. However, this exact reason is what gives the work its distinct character. Twelve-tone technique is what gives the piece its harmonic and thematic structural framework. The prime row (P0) that Yun utilizes in *Nore* contains the notes B-flat, E, F-sharp, D, C, B, C-sharp, A, D-sharp, G, E-flat, and F. The prime row is then manipulated using its various forms, including inversion where the intervals of the row are flipped, retrograde where the row is played backward, and retrograde inversion where the row is inverted and then played backward.

Nore is divided into sections where the twelve-tone row and its transformations are interwoven between free improvisatory elements. The cello and piano, with twelve-tone technique as its structural backbone, weave in and out of traditional twelve-tone counterpoint and parts that are more organically developed. The tone row is spread between both the cello and piano parts, never solely focused on one instrument. In addition, it is not always fully formed. Sometimes, only fragments of the row are displayed. However, the overall organization of the twelve-tone technique is that the piano is an integral part of presenting the harmonic aspects of the row's intervals and overall tone, often outlining the row in intervals or as broken chords whereas the cello is less literal. The cello plays fragments of the row or deconstructs the row into intervals that are elongated, which Yun utilizes to bring out the expressive aspects of the twelve-tone technique.

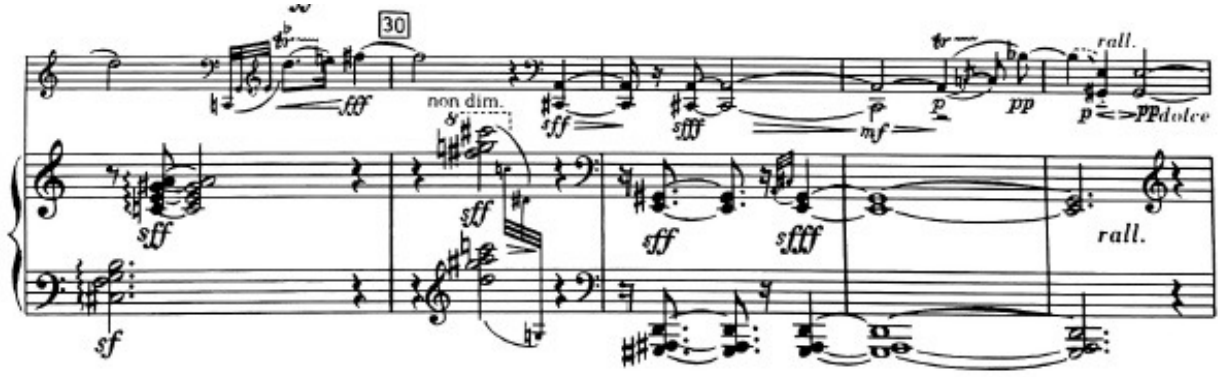
The intervals often employed in the row are major seconds and minor sixths. The very first two notes of the piece played by the cello is a minor sixth, B-flat to E. The third and fourth notes (F-sharp to D), the 7th and 8th notes (C-sharp to A), and the 10th and 11th notes (G to E-flat) of the row create the minor sixth interval. The second and third note of the piece create a major second, E to F-sharp. In addition, you get the major second intervals in the row between B to C-sharp and also from the E-flat to F. Throughout the composition, these intervals are repeated, but not in the traditional manner that is presented in the original row. The cello interacts with the row through dynamic phrasing, articulation, and extended techniques, such as *glissandi*, harmonics, and pitch bending, which bring out the traditional Korean music sounds. In the cello part, the major second interval is presented melodically, but hardly in the traditional way. If we take a look at the last beat of measure 21 tied into the first beat of measure 22 in Example 3.1, you can see that Yun presents this interval between the C and D. However, there is a trill that the cello plays with a D-flat before the D natural comes in first as an eighth note, then as a half note.



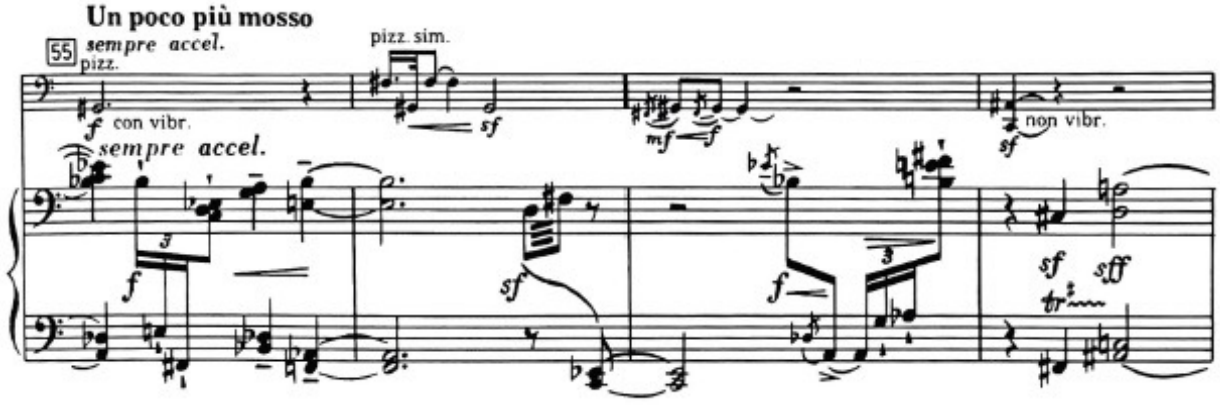
Example 3.1. *Nore*: measures 20-23.

In measure 29, shown in example 3.2, a similar variance of the interval is shown. The cello in the third beat is playing D and E, but trills between the two notes on a D-flat. Throughout the piece, Yun utilizes trills to mask an obvious interval in the row that emulate traditional Korean

instruments. In measure 57, the major second interval is presented in a different way. Yun utilizes *glissandi* to portray the interval while the cellist *pizzicatos* from F-sharp to G-sharp.

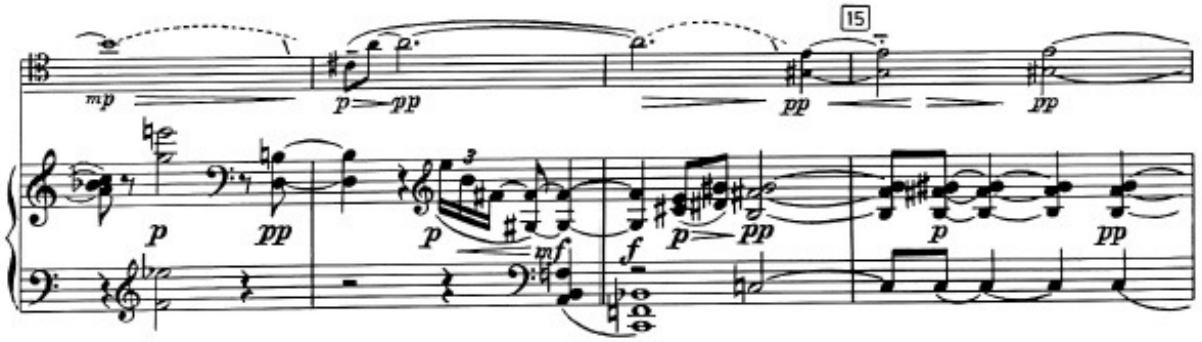


Example 3.2. *Nore*: measures 29-33.



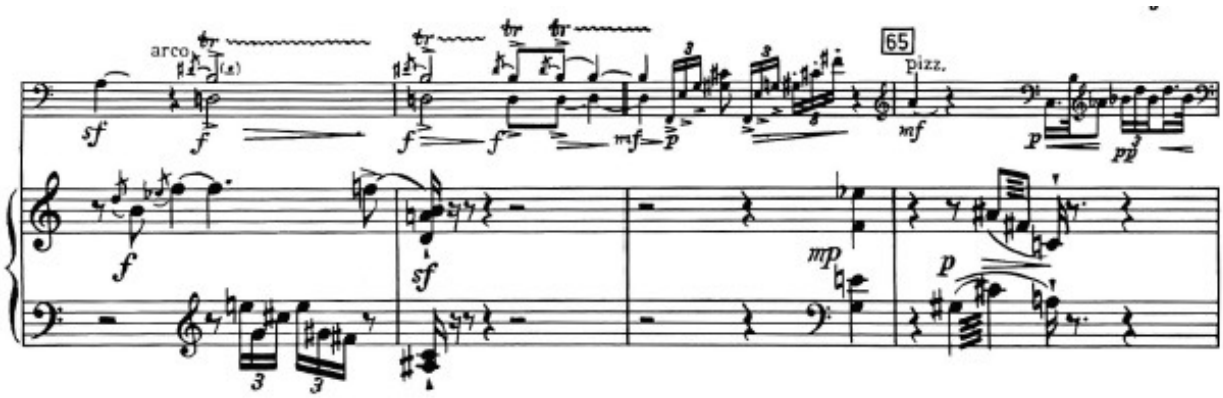
Example 3.3. *Nore*: measures 55-58.

Minor sixths are less commonly used with extended techniques, but are often presented in the cello melody as a double-stop, which is when the cellist plays two notes at once. It shows that the interval is the base for harmonic structure rather than melodic, as it is presented in a pianistic way. For example, if you look at the last beat of measure 14 going into the first two beats of measure 15 in example 3.4, the minor sixth is played in the cello line, but as a double-stop.



Example 3.4. *Nore*: measures 12-15.

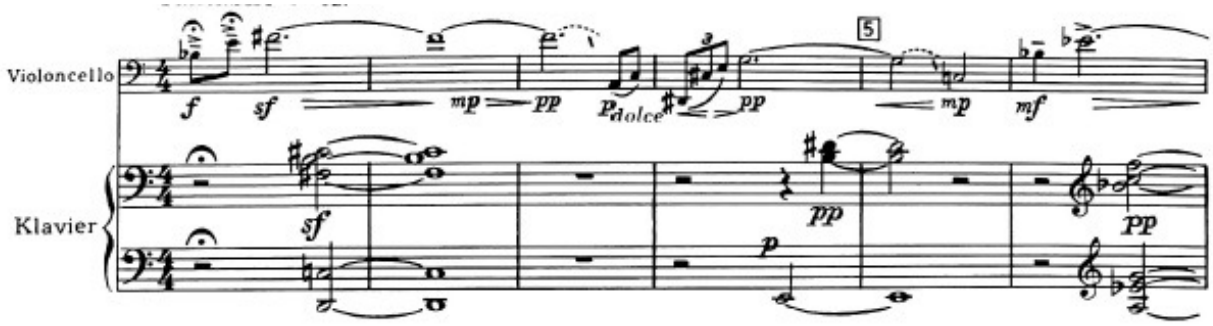
On the last beat of measure 30 and going into measures 31 and 32 shown in example 3.2, the minor sixth interval is presented in the cello part in the same fashion. However, when we look at measure 62 and 63, there is a slight change to how the interval is presented. The minor sixth interval is played on a trill from a D-sharp to B, but as the minor sixth interval is being trilled, the cellist is also playing a D natural as a double-stop.



Example 3.5. *Nore*: measures 62-65.

Yun takes the traditional way of presenting the interval in the cello as a double-stop, but the actual interval of a minor sixth is not in the double-stop, but in the trill. Because the interval is presented in the trill, but with a double-stop, one has to look closely at the relationship of the notes to realize that Yun portrays the row.

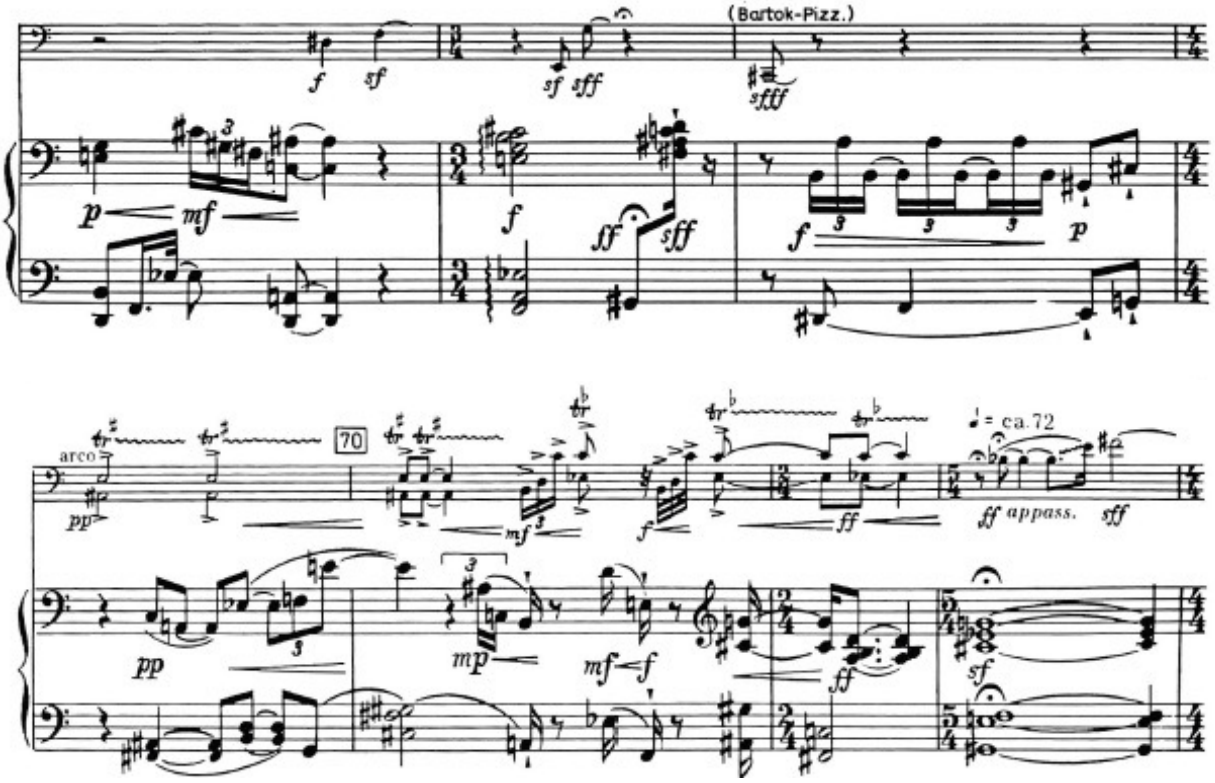
Another interval to discuss is the tritone, or what is also known as the devil's tone. It creates such a dissonance that it was given this nickname. Surprisingly, the first two notes of the piece create this dissonance. There is an accent and *fermata* on both of the notes. With this musical notation, a cellist would be sure to emphasize those two notes to a great degree. In measure 6 shown below, a very close set of notes from the first two notes appear. Yun writes B-flat and E-flat, which create a perfect fourth.



Example 3.6. *Nore*: measures 1-6

Yet, the notation is such that the B-flat has a dash and the E-flat is accented with a *diminuendo*. Throughout the piece, whenever the tritone is used, the dynamics are such that the interval is always emphasized. In measure 23 shown in example 3.1, the cellist plays an E and B-flat, which is a tritone. However, the dynamic is such that there is a *crescendo* from the E, which also has a tenuto, to the B-flat that is in forte. In measures 67 to 68 shown in example 3.7, the cello plays a G and then a C-sharp. The notation is such that the cellist *pizz* the two notes, with the C-sharp being a Bartok *pizz*. The tritone interval is greatly emphasized and highlighted by this fact and the dynamic used. Finally, in measure 72, the main theme stated at the beginning of the piece returns. This time, the B-flat is elongated by more than just one note, as the first eighth note has a *fermata* on it, but is tied to a quarter note and a dotted eighth note. Yun then asks the cellist to *glissando* up to the E, which requires the cellist to play this solely on the A string. By forcing the

cellist to play on the A string with the *glissando*, Yun fully comprehends that the sound will be more intense and brighter. The dynamic associated with this measure is *fortissimo appassionato*.



Example 3.7. *Nore*: measures 66-72.

Isang Yun utilizes a broad range of dynamics, often being very precise with each note of the measure. As shown in example 3.6, the dynamics for the cello line in the first five measures of the piece is precisely dictated. Not only is this applicable for the first few measures of the piece, but also throughout the whole piece. The precise notation of dynamics allows for the cellist to know clearly the intentions of the composer and because Yun was a cellist, he knew exactly the capabilities of the cello. The dynamics for the piano part are also distinctly notated, but not to the level of the cello part. This relationship and the precise notation create a very effective contrast between the two parts, with the cello line being very expressive against the piano that is consistent and steady. The piano part allows for the cello to distinctly express its dynamics because the piano is either holding a chord or not playing. Rarely in the piece are both

parts very active in changing dynamics and being expressive together. This compositional style allows for the dialogue between cello and piano to be heard clearly.

The interplay between the cello and piano evokes a sense of Eastern and Western practices only Yun could highlight. It is as if Yun himself is the cello, evoking a sense of Eastern-ness with the use of microtonal intervals, *glissandi*, trills, and very precise dynamics. However, at the core of the composition is the twelve-tone technique, which is clearly laid out in the foundations of the piano part. Within the solidity of the Western practice of twelve-tone technique, Yun incorporates extended techniques that evoke Korean traditional instruments, like the *gayageum* with the *pizzicato* and *glissandi*. Throughout the entire piece, Yun utilizes a small *glissando* at the ends of notes that evokes a sense of sighing. It is not a complete *glissando* to a different note, but a slight backwards slide from the current note.

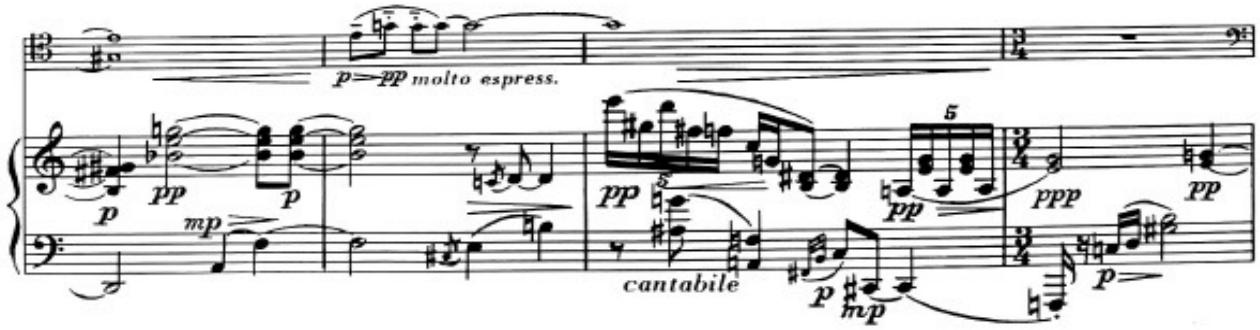
Because of its Korean title, *Nore*, which in Korean means song, has an inherent Korean-ness to the music and although there are no lyrics associated with this music, it possesses a singing quality that resembles a traditional Korean one-person operatic song form, *P'ansori*. *P'ansori* is explained as a traditional genre of Korean narrative song, typically performed dramatically by a vocalist accompanied by a *buk* (double-headed barrel drum). Built from the word pan, meaning "open space," and *sori*, meaning "singing" or "sound," the term *P'ansori* itself is a reference to the markets, public squares, and other such open venues where performances originally took place.[23] The tradition of *P'ansori* is not notated and only orally passed down. Jeongmee Kim, in her dissertation, discusses *P'ansori* in relation to Yun's opera, *Sim Tjong*, a famous *P'ansori*. She explains that *P'ansori* possesses four crucial elements: *sori*,

[23] *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, s.v. "Pansori," accessed February 2, 2025, https://www.britannica.com/art/pansori

aniri, *pallim*, *ch'uimsae*. Of that, *ch'uimsae*, which is similar to an interjection, is a crucial part of the *P'ansori* provided by the *Kosu* (drummer) and the audience. They shout either "*Chota*" or "*Ulssigu*," that is literally translated as "great" or "nice" that gives energy to the singer and the crowd. In addition, the interjections are used to fill in the space between the sounds.[24]

In analyzing *Nore*, although there are no lyrics to be conveyed, as it is a composition for cello and piano, a plethora of similarities exist between *P'ansori* and *Nore*. The title itself suggests a song. The dialogue between the solo cello and the piano resembles the dialogue that is heard in a *P'ansori* between the singer and the *Kosu* (drummer). The piano part is structurally sound in rhythm and harmony and supports the solo cello with interjections that either fill in the space or supports the melody. Chul-Hwa Kim states, "What Westerners usually think of as musical embellishment, or 'ornamentation' is actually the essential material of *P'ansori*, with its rapid timbral and rhythmic changes, falling and rising glissandos, large variety of articulate shadings, fluctuating tremolos, and wide vibratos. The singer's voice must be good but in order to create the perfect *P'ansori*, the *Puk* player must be just as good. This means that the *Puk* player not only feels the rhythm, but just like an opera's orchestra, he creates a musical and theatrical atmosphere while accompanying the singer"[25] In addition, there is a vocal quality to *Nore*, as shown here in measure 17.

[24] Kim, "The Diasporic Composer," 125.
[25] Chul-Hwa Kim, "The Musical Ideology," 38



Example 3.8. *Nore*: measures 16-19.

The cello plays two sets of eighth notes under the slur, but each note has either a *tenuto* or a *tenuto* and *staccato*. In order to execute this, the cellist must enunciate each note on the same bow, creating four separate sounds. The repetitive trills that occur throughout the piece emulate a vocal vibrato with wide pitch changes. Yun states, "When I was in Korea, I enjoyed and listened to our rich Korean musical traditions for entertainment. But I realized the hidden treasures of Korean traditional music for the first time only after I came to Europe."[26] There are many works written by Yun that have a Korean title and portray the traits of its title.[27]

Bara (1960): a percussive instrument used in Buddhist dances

Colloïdes Sonores (1961): (I: *Hogung*, II: *Gomungo*, III: *Yanggum*)

Gasa (1963): song lyrics, or a genre of Korean traditional narrative art song

Garak (1963): the meaning of melody or melodic pattern

Nore (1964): the meaning of a song

Réak (1966): the festive music in Korean rites

Riul (1968): rule or rhythm

P'iri ((1971): a Korean traditional woodwind instrument, which is similar to the oboe

[26] Ibid., 45.
[27] Ibid., 78-79.

Gagok (1972): Korean traditional lyric song

Muak (1978): dance music

Gong-Hu (1984): the name of the vertical angular harp of ancient Korea

Mugung-dong (1986): invocation

Sori (1988): sound or melody

Silla (1992): the Korean ancient kingdom which was initially in the southeastern part of the Korean peninsula, but later unified the whole peninsula

In this section, I discuss Isang Yun's *Glissées* utilizing Injung Song's dissertation "In-Depth Study of Isang Yun's *Glissées pour Violoncelle seul*" as a guide. Yun composed *Glissées* in 1970, only a few years removed from his exile from Korea. It is one of the most commonly performed cello works written by an Eastern composer. Written for good friend and cellist Siegfried Palm, Yun takes the sound of two traditional instruments, *Komungo* and *Haegum*, and applies that to the cello. In a talk with Wolfgang Winkler, Yun states that he did not compose for Asian instruments.[28] He took the sounds of traditional instruments and applied it to Western instruments with Western compositional techniques to manifest a unique Isang Yun sound.

Komungo is a six-stringed instrument that originates from the Chinese instrument *qin*. Wang San-ak, a musician during the ancient period of Korea, took the *qin*, reshaped and reworked it to create the Korean instrument, *Komungo*. The performer sits cross-legged and the instrument is placed on their right knee. To create the *Komungo* sound, the instrument is plucked with the right hand using a *sultae* or *shi*, made from bamboo. Because the *sultae* purposefully strikes the soundboard, the Komungo creates a deep and masculine sound that is percussive, yet

[28] Rainer Sachtleben and Wolfgang Winkler, "Gesprach mit Isang Yun," ed. Hanns-Werner Heister and Walter-Wolfgang Sparrer, *Der Komponist Isang Yun* (Munich: Edition Text, 1987), 296.

melodic.[29] The Haegum is a Korean fiddle that has two strings and is played with a bow. The two silk strings, sustained by a bridge, are tuned in fifths. The two strings are wound together using a thin cord at the neck. The instrument lacks a fingerboard, so the performer, sitting cross-legged, places the bottom of the instrument on their left knee and produces pitches in mid-air. The right hand holds the bow, similar to Western instruments, and the performer varies the pitch based on the location of the left hand. The *Haegum* is notorious for its nasal sound and the difficulty of playing.[30]

In order to emulate the traditional Korean sounds, the *glissando* technique is constantly employed throughout *Glissées*, hence giving its title a literal meaning. However, *glissando* is not the only technique used for the piece. Included in the assortment of techniques are *glissando*, *pizzicato*, trills, tremolo, harmonics, notated sections of vibrato and non-vibrato, and most significantly, *plectrum pizzicato*. As a performance guide, Yun states, "Almost every *glissando*, which is not stressed by crescendo must connect the tones lightly; this particularly applies to the decrescendo phrase to make the breath die away."[31] He also includes 10 specific notations that is explained in detail and shown below English translation.[32]

[29] Song, "In-depth Study," 26.
[30] Ibid., 27.
[31] Isang Yun, *Glissées pour Violoncelle seul*, (Berlin: Bote&Bock, 1970), 2.
[32] Song, "In-depth Study," 57.

 : Leave a finger not to be pressed firmly as playing the half-harmonics. It could thereby create a soft harmonics sound that could be heard

 : *Bartok pizzicato,* which means plucking the string with upper motion so that the string snaps back audibly against the fingerboard

 : approximate pitch

 : play microtone lower or higher (applies only to the indicated note)

 : *glissando* towards the written direction with indeterminate interval

 : make *glissando* using only one finger

 : short *glissando*-line, to make *glissando* easier between big intervals

(a.) *arco*: play the string with a bow

(p.) *pizzicato*: pluck the string with one finger

(c.l.) *col legno tratto*: play the string with the wooden part of the bow

Glissées is composed in four movements and each movement is to be connected without pause. Yun purposefully omits general tempo markings and provides specific metronome markings per movement. In giving specific metronome markings rather than a tempo marking like *andante*, which could be interpreted by the performer, it forces the performer to conform to Yun's exact tempo. The piece contains no bar lines and no time signature. Therefore, there is no strict organization. Yet, the compositional structure is very clearly based on twelve-tone technique. The prime row is F-sharp, D, F, E-flat, C, C-sharp, G, G-sharp, B, A, and B-flat. Overall, the work is divided into four movements. However, in the first movement, there is a

tempo change from quarter note equals ca. 60 to ca. 78, which then divides the composition into five parts, rather than four. In each movement, Yun incorporates a new technique as shown in table 3.1.[33]

Page Number	Tempo	Movement	String Techniques
3	ca. 60	1	*Pizz.*
3	ca. 78	1	*Pizz.* + *arco* + *col legno*
5	ca. 60	2	*Arco* (*pizz.* + *col legno*)
7	ca. 46	3	*mit Plektrum gezupft*
9	ca. 60	4	*Col legno* + *arco* (*pizz.*)

Table 3.1. Movement Organization and Techniques Employed in *Glissées.*

The first movement of *Glissées* contains mostly glissandi on a single note or between notes. The first section before the tempo change is all *pizzicato* except the very last note, which changes to *arco*. The most common intervallic relationship in the first movement is dyads and Yun often incorporates *glissandi* between the dyads. The first movement concludes and the second movement starts immediately, an *attaca*. In addition, the prime row continues from the end of the first movement to the second movement. The tempo relaxes back to the original tempo of ca. 60. Yun introduces some new techniques in the second movement, of which the use of approximate pitch is most innovative. The use of approximate pitch ensures that each performance of this piece is unalike. In the last part of the second movement, the solo cello plays two parts, but the dynamics for the top line and bottom line are contrasting. As the top line *diminuendos* to a *piano*, the bottom-line *crescendos* to a *forte*. The movement ends with a powerful *pizzicato*, which can be seen as a foreshadow to the third movement, as the last chord

[33] Ibid., 59.

of the second movement is the exact chord that starts the third movement, linking the two movements. The third movement is entirely *plectrum pizzicato* besides two notes. Song writes, "*Plectrum* refers to materials such as horn, tortoise shell, plastic, quill, or ivory used to pluck a stringed instrument. A *Plectrum* is used on the mandolin, zither, and guitar."[34] As explained earlier, the Korean traditional instrument, *Komungo*, is plucked by a *sultae*, a bamboo stick. The incorporation of a *Plectrum* is to convey the sound of a *Komungo* on the cello. The tempo for this movement is the slowest of all movements and often stays in the lower register, which creates a heavy atmosphere. The fourth and final movement of the piece seems to be the culmination of the traditional Korean sounds that Yun envisions on the cello, as even more new sounds are introduced. The fourth movement is a representation of the *Haegum*, the two-stringed Korean instrument that is bowed. The entire movement is played with a mute, which can be seen as an emulation of the *Haegum*'s small volume. To create even softer sounds, Yun writes *diminuendo* and *morendo* to extreme dynamics like triple *piano* (ppp) or even quadruple *piano* (pppp). Song argues that the combination of *col legno* and fast *glissandi* between wide intervals help imitate the nasal sound that the *Haegum* produces.[35]

[34] Song, "In-Depth Study," 87.
[35] Ibid., 92.

Chapter 4: Isang Yun's Trauma

In this chapter, I discuss the traumatic events that Yun endured, first through the Japanese colonialism, then through his own people during the Korean War, and lastly through the South Korean government under the false accusation as a North Korean spy. Isang Yun states, "From the Japanese colonial period to the continuing tragic division of the Korean peninsula, our Korean people's agony and hope have dominated my art."[36] From a young age, Yun was unintentionally politically involved. Although his father was unpolitical, he saw that his father wanted nothing to do with the Japanese even at the expense of the family going into poverty. He recounts, "Naturally, the Koreans were anti-Japanese, including the people who collaborated with the Japanese, even the police and later on the military. The old people in Korea were almost all anti-Japanese, because they had experienced first-hand how the Japanese began colonial sovereignty, and they had gone through the Freedom Revolt of 1919 which the Japanese suppressed very violently."[37]

The freedom revolt is an uprising against the Japanese more commonly known as *Samil Independence Movement*, which translates to March First Independence Movement. It was a revolt against the Japanese that lasted for about twelve months. Approximately two million Koreans participated in this revolt, calling for Korean independence against the suppressed anti-Japanese sentiment. It is estimated that about 7,000 people were killed by the Japanese police and soldiers, and 16,000 were wounded; 715 private houses, 47 churches, and 2 school buildings were destroyed by fire. Approximately 46,000 people were arrested, of whom some 10,000 were

[36] Kim, "The Diasporic Composer," 7.
[37] Byeon, "The Wounded Dragon," 65.

tried and convicted.[38] Although Isang Yun was only a child when this uprising occurred, he remembers the cemeteries and the encounters with the Japanese police erasing the inscription on the tombstones that said, "…this dead person had been a brave freedom fighter and had been murdered by the Japanese."[39] Only taking into consideration the result of this revolt, it seemed to have been a failure, as it seemed that the Japanese regime suppressed the uprising. However, this garnered global attention and the people and nation of Korea strengthened in unity. Yun proclaims, "During this time, I learned to passionately love my country."[40]

As World War II raged on, the Koreans had no doubt that it would impact them. They saw the Japanese build bases wherever they went and were closely watching the Koreans. The people of Korea were preparing for battle. One person owned an island a little off-shore from Tongyong. The people, including Yun, secretly gathered there and built guns, ammunition, and small bombs. They were prepared to fight for their country and created an underground group. Unfortunately, one member who was already being carefully watched by the Japanese had his mail intercepted and the plan ultimately failed. They were all arrested.[41]

Not all Korean men were enlisted to the army, as the Japanese could only enlist the ones they trusted in fear that if all men were trained, another revolt would come. Therefore, Yun was not enlisted as a fighting soldier but was stationed at a rice storage facility where he had to force farmers to deliver rice. During one of the raids that the Japanese conducted, Yun was arrested by because they found a Korean song that he had composed. The Japanese had forbidden all things Korean, so for a song to be found written in Korean was in clear violation. Due to the rice

[38] *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, s.v. "March First Movement," accessed February 2, 2025, https://www.britannica.com/event/March-First-Movement.
[39] Byeon, "The Wounded Dragon," 66.
[40] Rinser, *Der Verwundete Drache*, 46.
[41] Ibid., 54.

storage facility situated on an island, he was imprisoned for two full days at a jail with atrocious conditions that in the dark, Yun mistook white maggots on the ground for rice.[42]

For two months, Yun was imprisoned without a trial. He and the other prisoners sat completely still on the wooden floor for hours. His legs got numb. Although he could not bear it any longer, he forced himself to sit even more still to not give into their ways. He had the mental desire to overcome their tactics. Finally, he was put on trial to determine whether or not he was part of the underground group. He denied all accusations. Then, the torture began. They threw him to the ground and beat his legs with a stick. The more he denied the accusations, the worse the torture. The next phase was to roll him over with a log. The torturer stood on the log and rolled over Yun's legs repeatedly. He screamed in agony, but continued to deny the accusations. The worst part of the torture was that he could hear everyone else scream in pain. After he was thrown back into his cell, he learned that his friends were water boarded, had small bits of bamboo sticks slid under their nails, and were constantly poked by a stick as they tried to get rest. This continued for three, four, five consecutive days. In the evenings, they would hear the sounds of air raids and sirens, not knowing what would happen to them next.[43]

After the two months of imprisonment, Yun was freed because the Japanese manager of the rice storage facility he was based in testified for his innocence. He went home, but was heavily watched and therefore had to move around to different locations. He had formed another underground group. One night, a Korean military policeman came to him and told him about a plot to arrest him. This police officer was a former student of his.[44] Yun knew he could only escape through the window because the exit door was guarded. Yet, he did not want to leave his

[42] Ibid., 55.
[43] Ibid., 56.
[44] Ibid., 58.

cello behind, so his only option was to plainly confess to the guard. Fortunately, the guard complied and Yun escaped. The guard even went out of his way to warn him of the potential traps. The next morning, he escaped to catch the first train out. However, there were police checks during all the stops and Yun had to hide himself in the bathroom numerous times. Eventually, he made it to Seoul.

Seoul was not the promised land. Yun arrived, but he had nowhere to stay. He found himself a cheap hotel, but there were police searches each day. He had to continually hide himself. Because of his status as an underground member, he had no identity, which meant that he could not obtain a meal card. Yun confesses, "Everything was painful. I was hungry, always waiting, in fear, and constantly fleeing."[45] In order to survive, he had to make money. He worked at a printing press for a man who he later found out was also a part of the underground community. The man had been arrested, tortured, and imprisoned for three years. He reassured Yun, "Relax, it is safe here."[46]

Although his safety was somewhat guaranteed, his health was deteriorating. After a visit to the hospital, Yun was diagnosed with tuberculosis. For three weeks, he laid on the hospital bed. One day, he heard through the loudspeakers in the hospital that the Japanese had surrendered. Upon hearing this news, Yun was in disbelief but overjoyed. "I ran out of the hospital to the street. I pulled off my nametag and ran. People joined me. We ran and shouted loudly with joy through the city."[47] The Koreans finally celebrated freedom after more than

[45] Ibid., 60.
[46] Ibid., 61.
[47] Byeon, "The Wounded Dragon," 85.

thirty years of suppression. Yun was not worried about his health. “I left the hospital. I was willing to work, to help to rebuild our country.”[48]

In order to help rebuild the country, Yun had to navigate through the political situation. Liberation meant that Korea had to stand on its own with political parties resurfacing after years of suppression. The immense joy of liberation was short-lived, as a mere five years later, the Korean War broke out that divided Korea in every aspect. Because the South had not prepared for war, the North advanced very quickly, destroying many cities along the way. The South did all it could to slow down the Northern forces. Young men sacrificed themselves in front of tanks with grenades in hand. Yun admits that he was afraid to join the military. He hid when police came to recruit men for the military. He states, “I would always join the war against the Japanese invasion, yes, but not a civil war. I could not believe that the conflict could not be resolved peacefully. I did not understand this dreadful assassination of our own people.”[49]

To make matters worse, in the first few months of the war, with no money and home, Yun’s wife, Su Ja, started to have labor pains. Hospitals were filled with injured soldiers so no one could take them in. If it came down to it, Yun was ready with scissors in-hand. When the time came, Su Ja’s aunt heard of their situation and brought her mother, midwife, and rice. Thankfully, Yun’s daughter was born safely.

With the conclusion of the war, Yun was able to resume his musical career. After moving abroad to Europe, Yun received his first contact from North Korea through a server in Darmstadt.[50] The server, who was from East Germany, asked Yun where he was from. Upon hearing Yun’s response of Korea, she asked whether he was from the North or the South because

[48] Ibid., 85.
[49] Ibid., 95.
[50] Byeon, “The Wounded Dragon,” 164.

she had North Korean friends in East Germany. When the Korean War ended, the North Korean government sent numerous war-orphans to Eastern Europe, where most of them studied technology.[51] Immediately, Yun thought of his childhood friend Choi, a radical communist that remained in North Korea after the Korean War. He left behind his wife and children in the South that Yun and friends helped financially. After speaking to the server, Yun was determined to communicate to his friend.

Because direct mail to North Korea was prohibited, mail had to be sent in a roundabout way through a foreign land. However, in order to send and receive a letter from North Korea, Yun had to travel to East Germany. A few times, North Korean friends would ask him to mail to South Korea and Yun had no reservations in doing so because he was adamant that this was not about politics. He states, "I did not perceive any political affair in it, to visit the North Korean. I do not acknowledge the justice of the division between North and South Korea. For me this North Korean is a compatriot. I went to him, therefore, and took delivery of the letter of my friend to his wife."[52]

While living in Germany, Yun visited his friend Choi in North Korea that elicited heavy investigation by the South Korea government, later known as the East Berlin Affair. Yun was called by an unknown Korean man, who stated that he had a very personal letter from President Park. Yun had no reservations about this meeting. However, when he went to meet this man, other men appeared who were much bigger. Something felt ominous. Soon after, a group of men suggested that Yun was a spy for the North Korean government, and he was captured and locked in a room. These men, later found to be a part of the KCIA, turned on the radio very loudly and

[51] Ibid., 164.
[52] Ibid., 165.

kept turning up the sound regardless of whether Yun asked to turn it down. The guards fed him a meal and the next day, continued their investigation, asking Yun about his interactions with the North Korean government. He was told he would fly to Seoul because an ambassador wanted to speak to him about this situation. When Yun did not comply, he was taken up to his room and the loud radio noises began again. He knew he was not himself. Whether it was from drugs or starvation, Yun had no will of his own. Three times a day, for three straight days, he was brought down for questioning. During it, he could not eat, wash, or even brush his hair. After this initial stage of torture, he was taken from Germany, through Japan, and to South Korea, where he had dreamed of a grand homecoming after his successes abroad. However, eleven years after his departure from South Korea, his arrival was but a mere pity. "Eleven long years abroad, but my heart never left Korea that if I ever achieved fame, it would be for the pride of Korea."[53] The unfortunate reality was that he had no identification, no glory, and no honor in this return.

Yun was tortured beyond measure after arriving in Korea. At first, he was not even allowed to sit in a chair because the guards would hit him until he was on the ground. After some beating, they would bring a pen and paper so that he could write down all of his wrongdoings. If he did not—and Yun did not—the real torture began. They tied him to a log, put a cloth on his face, and sprayed water on it, which would stick to his nose and mouth to suffocate him. Yun frequently lost consciousness, which prompted the guards to call the doctor. The doctor would inject him with something that brought him back to life. Over and over again, Yun was told to write down what he did wrong or face the same torture. Even worse, Yun was able to hear the other prisoners being tortured. Yun realized that all prisoners suffered unless he confessed.[54]

[53] Rinser, *Der Verwundete Drache*, 152.
[54] Ibid., 179.

Finally, after about a week of this repeated torture, Yun finally gave in and wrote that he was a North Korean spy. The guards tried to force him to write about others, but he resisted. With this written confession, he was now a real prisoner.

Yun could not bear it anymore. The physical, emotional, and mental pain was so immense, he tried to commit suicide. He found a heavy glass ash tray and began to hit himself on the back of the head. He felt pain, but had enough mental capacity to write down a will with the blood that fell from his head. He wrote on the wall addressed to his children that he is not a spy and Choi is not guilty.[55] He was found bleeding in his cell and was taken to a nearby hospital to be administered.

Yun was first deemed a death sentence, but after his first trial, his death sentence was dropped to a life sentence. The charges were then dropped to a fifteen-year sentence at the second trial and at the third trial, it was dropped to a ten-year sentence. However, his abduction and imprisonment led to protests from musicians all around Europe. Under the direction of Herbert von Karajan and Igor Stravinsky, over 200 contemporary musicians, including Stockhausen, Carter, and Ligeti, signed petitions asking for Yun's release.[56] Two years into his imprisonment, he was released and deported. With the aid of the German government, he returned to Germany where he earned citizenship in 1971.

[55] Su-ja Yi, *Nae namp'yŏn Yun I-sang* (Seoul: Ch'angjak kwa Pip'yŏngsa, 1998), 274.
[56] Byeon, "The Wounded Dragon," 208.

Chapter 5: Application of Trauma Theory

In this chapter, I apply aspects of trauma theory to the experiences that Yun endured. More specifically, I discuss cultural trauma, trauma of war, sound trauma, and PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) in relation to Yun's life during the Japanese colonialism, Korean War, and his abduction and exile that was discussed in the previous chapter.

In Jeffrey Alexander's book, *Trauma, A Social Theory*, he states, "Cultural trauma occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways."[57] He also points out that although inexplicable pain is shared, the death of many do not guarantee a shared cultural trauma. Cultural trauma requires people to feel that the deaths of many were worthless or polluted in that they did not die for a cause, but that they were victims to innate evil. Cultural interpretation of the deaths is shared to create cultural trauma. In addition, Alexander argues that events do not create collective trauma. "For traumas to emerge at the level of the collectivity, social crises must become cultural crises. Trauma is not the result of a group experiencing pain. It is the result of this acute discomfort entering into the core of the collectivity's sense of its own identity."[58]

When the Japanese occupation began in Korea in the early 1900s, the goal for the Japanese was to eradicate Korean identity. During this time, schools were not allowed to teach Korean history, culture, or language. Rather than their Korean names, they were forced into owning Japanese names and to worship at the Shinto shrines, further disowning their heritage.[59]

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[57] Jeffrey Alexander, *Trauma, A Social Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012) 6.
[58] Ibid., 15.
[59] David Hundt and Roland Bleiker, "Reconciling Colonial Memories in Korean and Japan," *Asian Perspective* 31, no. 1 (2007): 66.

Even now, diplomatic friction occurs from the way Japanese history textbooks portray the actions of the imperial army in Korea. David Hundt and Roland Bleiker state:

> Strong disagreements have emerged between South Korea and Japan on how to represent this colonial period, and how to teach the respective "facts" to future generations. Korea regularly accuses Japan of painting a far too benevolent picture of the past—a picture that does not adequately recognize the pain and trauma inflicted by Japan's aggression and subsequent occupation of the peninsula. From a Korean perspective, Japanese leaders frequently exacerbate the situation by playing down the extent of the imperial army's responsibility for initiating and conducting war.[60]

In recent years, horrifying stories regarding "comfort women" have surfaced, with survivors and scholars recounting the events that unfolded during the Japanese colonialism. Leo T. S. Ching tells us:

> Although the exact number is still in dispute, it is estimated that tens or hundreds of thousands of young women from various countries (but 80-90 percent from Korea) were abducted, raped, mobilized by the Japanese Imperial Army to serve as sexual slaves at various "comfort stations" within the empire from 1932 to 1945. The women's testimony and historical documents have shown that, during their internment, they suffered multiple incidences of psychological and physical torture and abuse. They were expected to "service" between ten and twenty men a day without compensation or proper medical care.[61]

Even as more survivors bravely come forward to share their testimony, the Japanese government to this day has denied all wrongdoing and has yet to apologize for their actions. This further solidifies the collective trauma Koreans faced then and still face to this day.

The series of events that unfolded in Yun's early life during the Japanese colonialism, referenced in chapter 4, directly relates to the way Alexander describes cultural trauma. Social crises that each Korean faced became a collective, cultural crisis. The fact that Yun, while studying in Japan, had to hide his Korean nationality to secure a room and pretend to be of

[60] Ibid., 62.
[61] Leo T. S. Ching, *Anti-Japan: The Politics of Sentiment in Postcolonial East Asia* (Duke University Press, 2019), 59-60.

Japanese descent could not have felt right. After World War II began and Yun returned to Korea, the people of Korea had no sense of identity. They were forced to wear name-tags with Japanese names, could not read, write, or speak their native language, and forced into labor. Yun experienced the trauma of the Korean language, as he confesses, "I was ashamed to have converted my name into Japanese."[62] In order to create a sense of identity, they formed underground groups because they could not publicly unify as they would be subject to death if discovered. Yun even has recollections of the time he walked by graveyards full of brave Korean citizens who fought for their freedom have their name be erased and the inscriptions be wiped off by the Japanese.[63] This is exactly how cultural trauma is created. The people of Korea, including Isang Yun from a young age, had this acute discomfort that entered the core of the collectivity's sense of Korea's identity.

This explains why the sentiment that Yun felt when he heard in the hospital that the Japanese had surrendered was so visceral.[64] It did not matter that he could have died or had complications from tuberculosis. He shares his sentiment of ripping off the Japanese name-tag and running out into the streets, yelling for joy in their liberation. To him, it was much bigger than a victory in war, but a renewed sense of a nation. It meant that there was no more fear, no more hiding, and no more pain.

The shouts of joy for liberation were so short-lived as the Korean War, a civil war between people of Korea, broke out. Yun saw and heard young men from the South sacrifice their lives to slow down the tanks from the North to no avail. He lost friends, whether it was through the war or through separation.

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[62] Rinser, *Der Verwundete Drache*, 59.
[63] See Chapter 4, page 25.
[64] See Chapter 4, page 27.

The trauma of war has been well documented, as terms like shell-shock and PTSD have developed into common, accepted symptoms. When the term shell-shock was first introduced to the public during World War I, it was seen as men becoming weak, as there were reports of soldiers freezing, screaming, weeping uncontrollably, mute, unresponsive, losing memory, and unable to feel. According to one estimation, mental breakdowns caused 40 percent of British battle casualties.[65] The first method of treatment was to shame these soldiers and as if that was not enough, some received electrocution to try and revive their mental system. However, what physician WHR Rivers found was that first, even the bravest succumbed to overwhelming fear. And second, the way to treat these soldiers into overcoming their fears was remembering their love for each other. It was not their collective hatred toward the enemy, complicated principles, or patriotism—it was knowing that their comrade was fighting out there.

Post-traumatic symptoms have been well researched by psychologists and psychiatrists in the 20th century. Judith Herman explains that symptoms of PTSD fall into three major categories: hyperarousal, intrusion, and constriction. She states, "Hyperarousal reflects the persistent expectation of danger; intrusion reflects the indelible imprint of the traumatic moment; constriction reflects the numbing response of surrender."[66] Dr. Van der Kolk, the author of *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*, speaks about a patient named Tom, who had fought in the Vietnam War and his battles with PTSD. After a few sessions, he was prescribed medication that could have improved his symptoms. As the sessions continued, Van der Kolk realized that the symptoms were not improving to which Tom admitted that he had not been taking the prescribed medication. When asked why he refused, he stated, "I

[65] Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery* (New York: Basic Books, 1992), 20.
[66] Ibid., 35.

realized that if I take the pills and the nightmares go away, I will have abandoned my friends, and their deaths will have been in vain. I need to be a living memorial to my friends who died in Vietnam."[67] JW Appel and GW Beebe, two American psychiatrist, claims that 200-240 days in combat would break even the strongest soldier that you cannot "get used to combat."[68] Although Yun was never directly in combat during the Japanese colonialism and the Korean War, he saw and experienced the killings, and fought in ways that undoubtedly subjected him to the traumas of war.

After Yun's visit to North Korea and the South Korean government first lured him, he was not aware that he was being abducted. However, as detailed in chapter 4, he quickly came to the realization of the reality. He knew when the radios were turned on loudly, that was the first step in torture, noise torture. A plethora of accounts exist that detail the use of sound as torture that creates trauma. As noted extensively in Suzanne Cusick's "You are in a Place that is Out of the World," sound torture is usually the first step in getting detainees or prisoners frightened and confessing the truth. She recounts:

> One detainee, known only as M.Z., reported that he had been held for four weeks in an underground cell "where there was loud music playing continuously," before he was "interrogated in a room with a strobe light, and shackled to a ring on the floor." Another, Ethiopian-born Londoner Benyam Mohammad, claimed he had been "hung up" in a lightless cell for days at a time, as his legs swelled and his hands and wrists became numb. He said that loud music and "horrible ghost laughter" was blasted into the cell.[69]

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[67] Bessel A. van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma* (New York: Penguin Group, 2014), 10.
[68] Herman, "Trauma and Recovery," 25.
[69] Suzanne Cusick, "'You Are in a Place that is Out of the World...': Music in the Detention Camps of the "Global War on Terror," *Journal of the Society for American Music* 2, no. 1 (2008): 2.

In addition, she references the story of Moazzam Begg, who was held at Kandahar, Bagram, and Guantanamo. Begg speaks about his experience in Bagram, where it was once silent but turned "raucous with the use of highly intensified music, to break down and disorientate the new prisoners."[70] These sounds were so intense that guards had to scream at each other to be heard even standing thirty feet away. However, Begg recounts that the "most frightening of all was the sound of screaming…of detainees during interrogation, detainees in what was obviously excruciating pain."[71]

Yun, on his second night in prison, heard a familiar voice, the voice of his friend Choi, being tortured in a nearby room. When they spoke to the guards during interrogation, they were forced to speak loudly so that other detainees would hear whether or not one confessed. It was a two-way torture used to influence the prisoners. If the most frightening sound was to hear the screaming of other detainees, how much more terrified would it be to recognize the voice of the scream? All of this eventually led up to Yun succumbing to the desires of the investigators to be a true convict.

After enduring the brutal torture, admitting his false guilt, and even attempting suicide, Isang Yun woke up, not knowing whether or not he was dead or alive. Due to the torture and traumatic incidents, he heard sounds outside the hospital and thought there was an execution waiting for him and the people of the town all came by to see it. In order to avoid his execution, he searched for a tool to commit suicide again, but his suspicious eyes caught the attention of the nearby doctor who removed the sharp objects away from him. It was later discussed that there was an outdoor market near the hospital that caused the commotion.[72]

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[70] Ibid., 6.
[71] Ibid., 6.
[72] Yi, *Nae namp'yŏn*, 274.

How was it then that Yun was able to cope with these traumas, including being banished from his home country he so dearly loved, to still be a successful composer, especially when he would have been dramatically traumatized by the sounds he had heard? Martin Daughtry in his book, *Listening to War,* states, "To witness war is, in large part, to hear it. And to survive it is, among other things, to have listened to it. Or better: to have listened *through* it."[73] In addition, the many tortures Yun endured through and survived would have no doubt caused PTSD. Yun admits in his interview with Rinser that he still dreams about the abduction and torture. Rinser asks, "The nightmare was over for you, but do you still dream about it?" To this, Yun responds, "Yes, of course. To be questioned, tortured, watched, I dream about those scary encounters. Even though it is only a dream, it is still very painful."[74]

Van der Kolk states, "Trauma results in a fundamental reorganization of the way mind and brain manage perceptions. It changes not only how we think and what we think about, but also our very capacity to think."[75] Yet, Yun even composed in prison with what little he had. He composed *Butterfly Widow*, *Riul for Clarinet and Piano*, and *Images for Flute, Oboe, Violin, and Violoncello.*[76]

Van der Kolk teaches us that there are three avenues for survivors to return to their lives. First is top down, which occurs by talking and connecting with others, allowing ourselves to know and understand what is going on with us, while processing the memories of the trauma. Second is by taking medicine, and third is bottom up, which is allowing the body to have

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[73] Martin Daughtry, *Listening to War: Sound, Music, Trauma and Survival in Wartime Iraq* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 33.
[74] Rinser, *Der Verwundete*, 215.
[75] Van der Kolk, *The Body*, 21.
[76] Wooyuk Choi, "The Opening Section of Isang Yun's "My Land My People": A Cross-Section of Korean and Western Musical Features," (PhD diss., University of North Texas, 2006), 4.

experiences that deeply and viscerally contradict the helplessness, rage, or collapse that result from trauma. He states that most patients require a combination.[77] Yun had no access to any medication nor were any available at that time. Using Van der Kolk's method, Yun coped with his traumas through top down and bottom up. His music was his language to cope with trauma. He had others to speak to about his traumatic experiences, especially shared traumatic experiences with his wife. Yun's wife was also abducted and imprisoned for six months.[78] Yun spoke in great detail with Luise Rinser about his life and through other avenues regarding the experiences he had. However, Yun allowed his body to have experiences that at times viscerally contradict what he must have felt from trauma, whether it was cello or composition. In chapter 1 you read that Yun overcame the noise of the toy xylophone by playing the cello. He allowed his body to be calm even though the experience was the complete opposite. In his jail cell, when he was alone and had nothing, he tried to end his life. Yet, as soon as he was given a paper, pencil, and eraser, his hope was restored. Yun admits, "Although I was imprisoned, my heart was not. This is the truth. I was sometimes really happy. I was always hearing the music within me."[79] Through composition, he was able to imagine life that viscerally contradicted his current situation and after his deportation.

Van der Kolk states, "Imagination is absolutely critical to the quality of our lives. Without imagination there is no hope, no chance to envision a better future, no place to go, no goal to reach."[80] This statement is the epitome of how Yun expressed his trauma and how he was able to connect his Eastern self to the Western composition methods. Regardless of his status,

[77] Van der Kolk, *The Body*, 3.
[78] Su-ja Yi, *Nae namp'yŏn*, 206.
[79] Rinser, *Der Verwundete*, 204.
[80] Van der Kolk, *The Body*, 17.

how brutally he was treated by the government, and enduring through traumas of war, torture, and colonialism, Yun always longed to be back in Korea, because of the connection he had with the people of Korea. He fought with and for the people of Korea and through the lens of trauma studies, it is clear that the camaraderie he felt is exactly why he yearned for the eventual return to Korea. During his imprisonment, when he was given precious minutes to be outside, Yun confessed that the Korean sky was so blue that it gave him hope and comfort. It was the sky that he missed and longed for. After his banishment, he was very vocal and politically active in attempts to reunify the two Koreas, as he always felt the two should be one. Yun states:

> I always have wanted to see my home country, as a free man. It is not the people of South Korea that imprisoned me and tortured me. Even if I have become a citizen of Germany, I am still a citizen of South Korea, loved and still love the country.[81]

[81] Rinser, *Der Verwundete*, 258.

Chapter 6: Comparison of *Nore* and *Glissées* from a Trauma Theory Perspective

In this chapter, I will compare *Nore* and *Glissées* from the perspective of trauma studies and how the two differ, as Yun suffered differing traumatic events. *Nore* was written in 1964 as he was preparing for a meeting with the South Korean President, Park Chung Hee. It had been over 10 years since the Korean war and far removed from the Japanese colonialism. However, the experiences he had during those times would surely have remained with him. Maria Cizmic tells us,

> Art, literature, film, and music can construct an even as a "cultural trauma," identifying the nature of suffering, describing the significance of the painful event, and addressing issues of responsibility and social change. And because the memory of trauma—both personal and historical—frequently creates a site of contention in which differing groups battle over social meaning, aesthetic works that deal with suffering frequently speak to discourse of power.[82]

Even though it was not written for the President, because Yun was there to meet the President, there would have been political implications associated with the composition. *Glissées* was written in 1970, only a few years ahead of *Nore*, but with a completely different view of the world. He was no longer a Korean citizen. He was banished from the country he loved. And he was forever forced to live with the nightmares of torture.

Trauma is often associated with fragmented or disrupted sense of self and time. One of the biggest differences between positive memory and traumatic memory is the organization of the event. In a traumatic event, the memory is often disorganized, fragmented, and although

[82] Maria Cizmic, *Performing Pain: Music and Trauma in Eastern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 16.

some details may be remembered, important parts are left out.[83] Although both compositions are based on this sense of fragmentation and a disrupted sense of self, it is presented slightly differently in the music. In *Nore,* the fragmentation and dissonance appear through irregular rhythms, but within the confined bars and measures whereas in *Glissées*, although there are irregular rhythms and dissonance, the whole composition has no bar lines and the four movements are to be played continuously. The violent and turbulent times that Yun endured through during the Korean War and Japanese colonialism would have caused flashbacks and PTSD, but a collective sense is ensured through the exact measures and bar lines in *Nore.* There are no boundaries in *Glissées*. Even though the piece is in four, possibly five movements, all the movements are continuous, without any bar lines. It shows that there is a lack of clarity in the structure and that the memory is not fully processed.

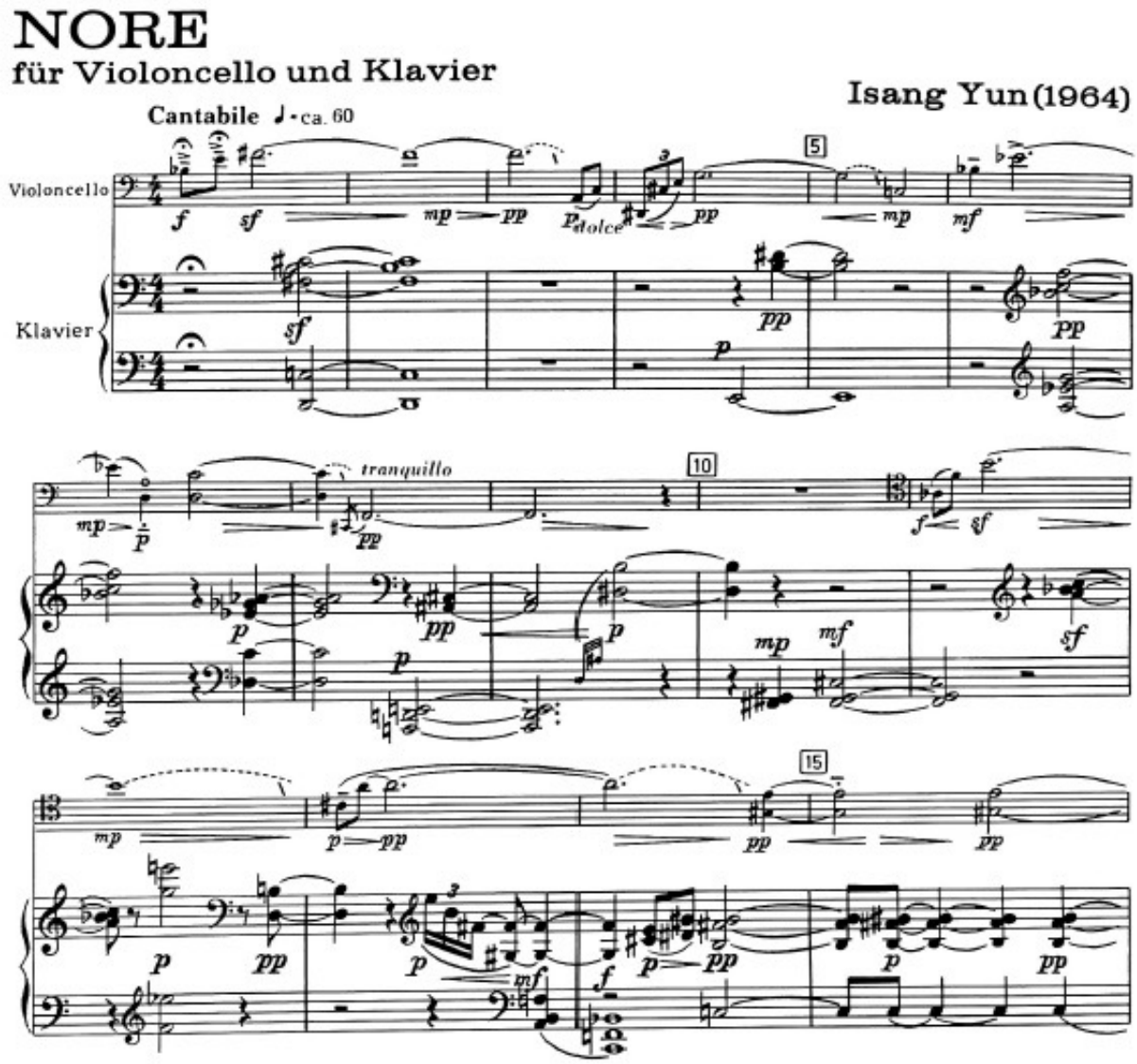
Both compositions also utilize *glissandi*, but in a very different fashion. In *Nore*, although *glissandi* are used throughout the piece, the most prevalent *glissandi* technique is the short, backwards slide. There is no specific destination for this *glissando* and presents a sighing gesture. Although there is a clear starting note, an ending note is absent. It is at the discretion of the performer where the note fades away. Through this, Yun portrays his sorrow for the country he loves that is now divided. Because there is no exact destination for this *glissando*, it mirrors Yun's traumatic experience of constantly running away from the Japanese soldiers without a secure destination. The *glissandi* gesture also symbolizes his sentiment for the country he loves, which seems lost in that Yun did not know when he would return even though his initial plan was to learn the Western techniques in the first few years and return to Korea as soon as possible.

[83] Van der Kolk, *The Body*, 193.

The *glissandi* employed constantly throughout *Glissées* creates a continuous shifting of sound landscape. The traumatic memory is present, but cannot be wholly grasped and it slips away or warps. The repetition of *glissandi* is a trait of a traumatized victim. Maria Cizmic states, "On the one hand, psychological descriptions of trauma and PTSD emphasize the vagaries of memory—gaps, fragments, and repetition."[84] In addition, the *glissandi* technique symbolizes an unresolved reality of trauma, as there is no clear middle, but a blend of the past and present. The sense of longing and the sentiment of being lost represented by the backwards *glissandi* is no longer present in *Glissées.* The *glissandi* have a clear starting note and an ending note, which symbolizes he is no longer lost, as he was banished from the country.

In chapter 3, I discussed that the piano part represented Western characters and the cello solo represented Yun and the Eastern traits. In viewing the composition from the trauma studies perspective, Yun and the people of Korea are represented by the cello solo. However, the steady and constant piano part embodies the traumatic experiences during the Japanese colonialism, as the regime was ever-present and a constant threat. Throughout the entire composition, there is not one time the cello and piano enter together. Their parts overlap through slurs and held beats, but the initial articulations always miss each other. This is not to say that the cellist performs alone, but rather that the two are very independent of one another, unlike a typical sonata or duo for cello and piano. As shown below in the first twelve measures of the piece, the cello and piano enter at different times, separated usually by one quarter note. It depicts the constant threat of the Japanese soldiers and often close calls that could have resulted in death, but never aligns. The two parts are intertwined, but not agreeing, as when the cello is holding a long note, the piano moves and when the piano sustains a note, the cello moves.

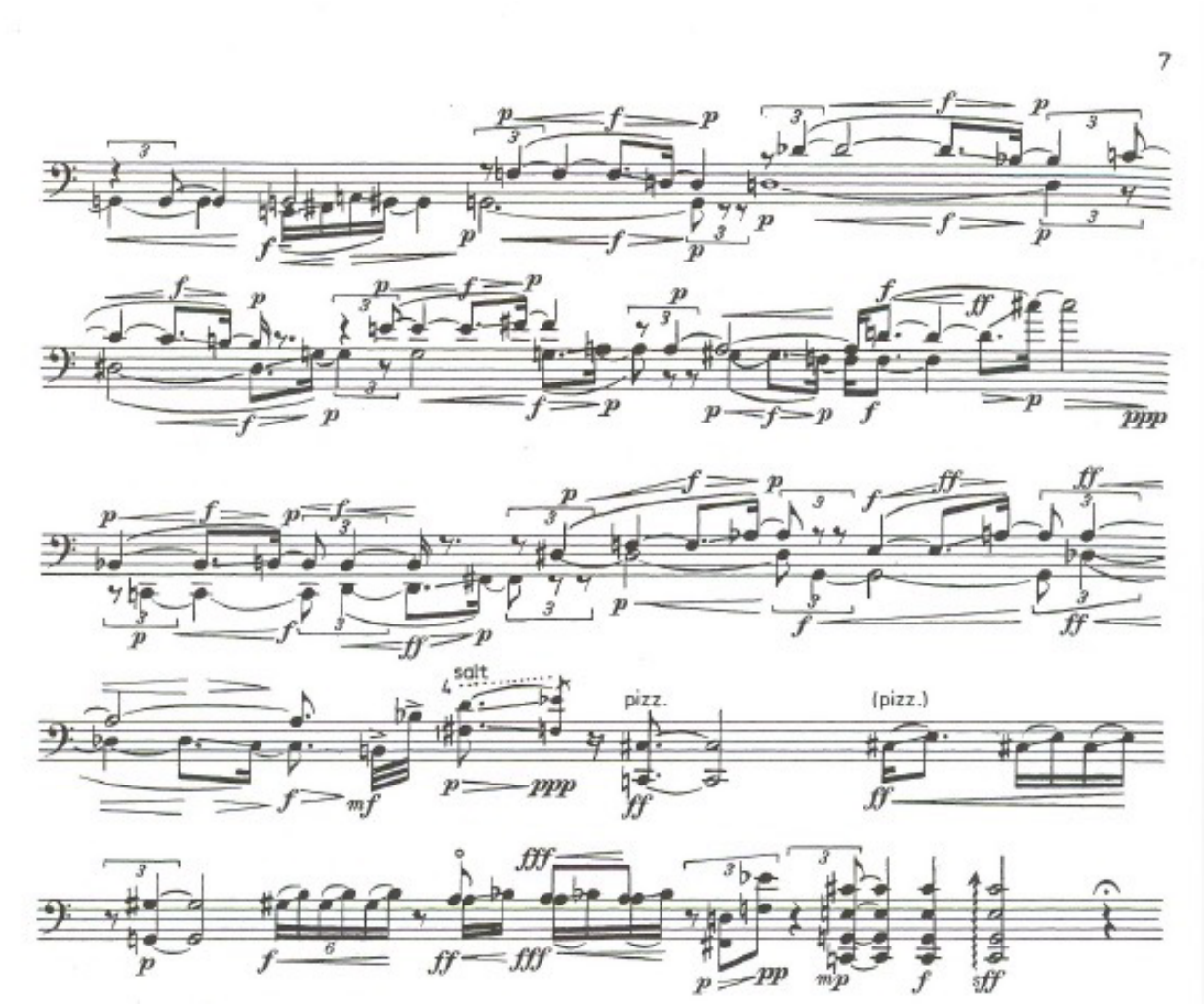
[84] Cizmic, *Performing Pain*, 17.



Example 6.1. *Nore*: measures 1-15.

Yun rarely utilized long held notes in *Glissées*. The longest note in the whole piece is a dotted half note. The attitude between the two pieces changed from collective and cultural trauma in *Nore* to a personal trauma in *Glissées*. Therefore, the sense of longing through long held notes and the solemnness that is portrayed through that is not shown. In addition, *Glissées* is written for solo cello, which symbolized singularity and thus, differing traits of the piano and cello parts cannot be depicted. However, Yun, knowing the cello very well as a monophonic

instrument, projects two characters with one sound. Yun employs this technique starting from the second movement. There are instances shown in the example below where the cellist is playing a double stop, but the dynamics change at different times for the different register. This extended technique first of all is very difficult to execute, but more important, show the multiple personas that a PTSD patient would show when triggered, especially through flashbacks.

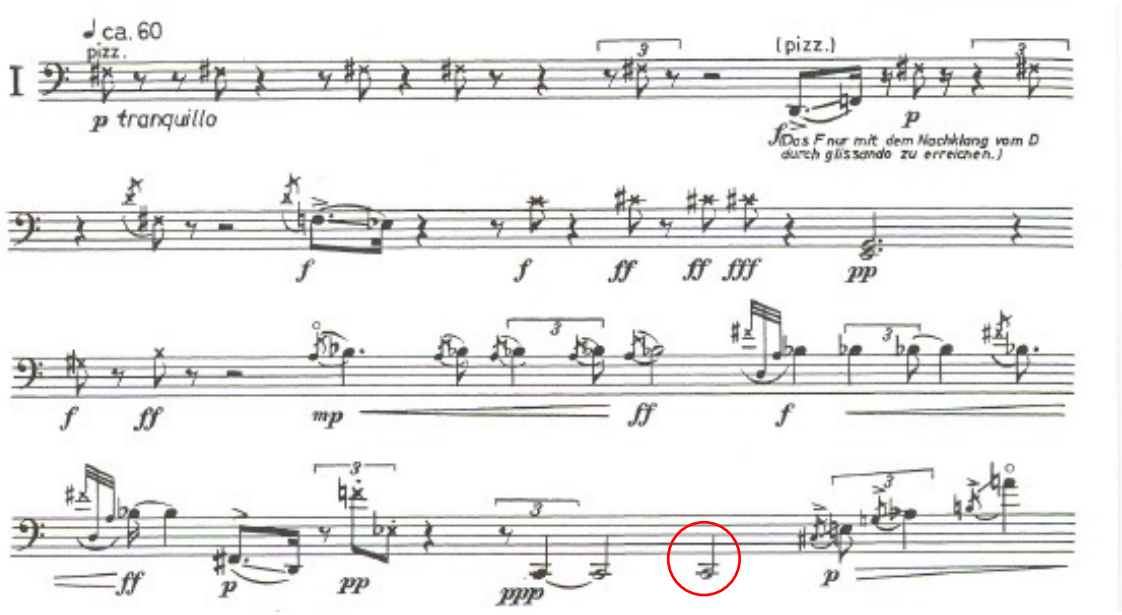


Example 6.2. *Glissées*, Second Movement, last 5 lines.

Van der Kolk shares this story from a patient named Nancy, who suffered through a terrifying experience of waking up during a surgery and having to live the rest of her life with this blurred recollection of surgeons laughing and the sensations of the procedure.

> I want to tell you what a flashback is like. It is as if time is folded or warped, so that the past and present merge, as if I were physically transported into the past. Symbols related to the original trauma, however benign in reality, are thoroughly contaminated and so become objects to be hated, feared, destroyed if possible, avoided if not. There are so many pieces of the 45 minutes of my life that remain unknown. My memories are still incomplete and fragmented, but I no longer think that I need to know everything in order to understand what happened.[85]

Glissées is full of fragmentation of ideas that leads to a constant changing of the sound landscape. Different extended techniques are employed almost simultaneously and dynamics changes occur rapidly and drastically. Except for a C half note circled on the fourth line in example 6.3 from movement one, each note seemingly has an instruction, whether it is a dynamic change, a technique change, *fermata*, vibrato, accent, or some marking.

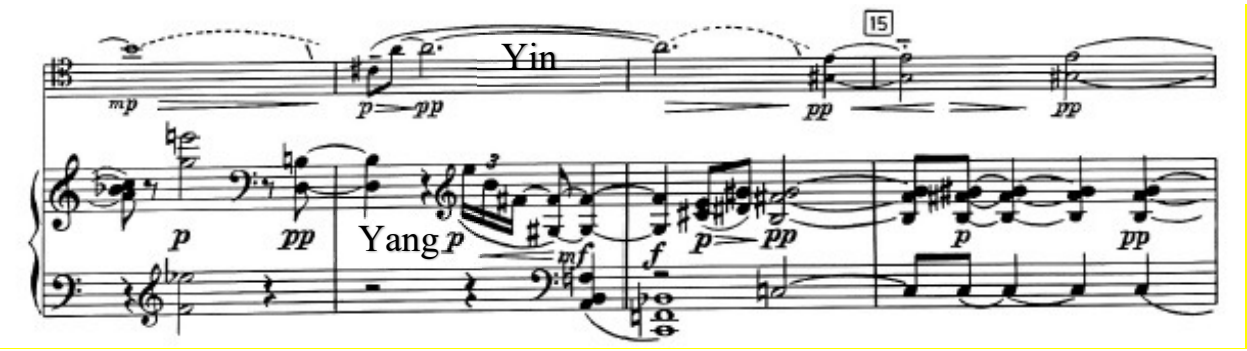


Example 6.3. *Glissées*, First Movement, lines 1-4.

[85] Van der Kolk, *The Body*, 198.

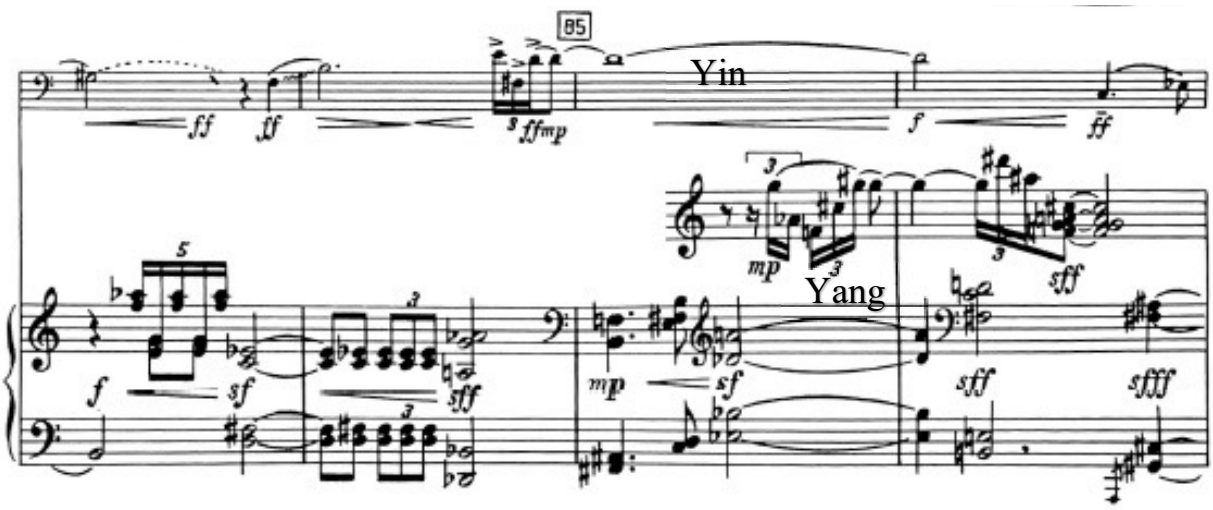
The combination of all these rapidly occurring changes is exactly what anthropologist Allan Young explains regarding trauma that "fragmented memories return unintentionally through flashbacks and nightmares and blur the distinction between past and present."[86]

Prevalent in Isang Yun's compositions are portrayals of the yin-yang principles. Ray Billington describes the yin-yang theory as "neither can be without the other, since wholeness is contained in duality: the one is in fact two, and this is the yin and the yang."[87] This concept describes the relationship like female-male, moon-sun, water-fire, passive-active and other contrasting ideas. Many scholars that have studied Yun's music point out this contrasting relationship, including Chul-Hwa Kim, who describes sustained notes, softer dynamics, tension, flat (b) note, non-vibrato, *pizzicato*, lower pitch, unbalance and dissonance as yin and movement, ornamentation, louder dynamics, relaxation, sharp (#) note, *vibrato*, *glissando*, higher pitch, balance, and consonance as yang.[88] In both *Nore* and *Glissées*, Yun utilizes the concept of yin and yang throughout the compositions as shown in the examples below.

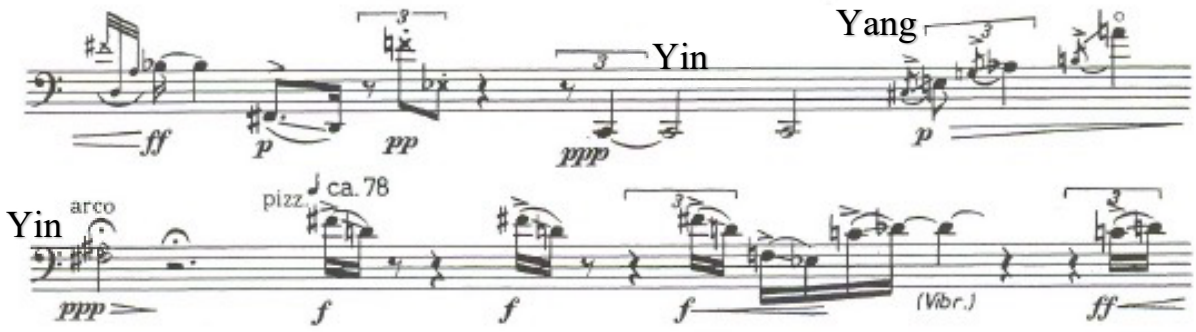


Example 6.4. *Nore*, measures 12-15.

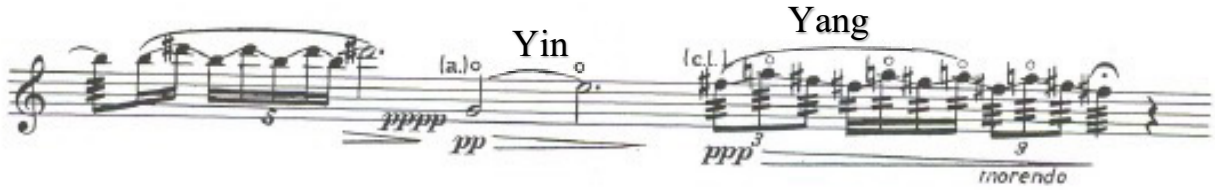
[86] Cizmic, *Performing Pain*, 13.
[87] Ray Billington, *Understanding Eastern Philosophy* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1997), 109.
[88] Chul-Hwa Kim, "The Musical Ideology and style of Isang Yun," 19.



Example 6.5. *Nore*, measures 83-86.



Example 6.6. *Glissées*, First Movement, lines 4-5.



Example 6.7. *Glissées*, Fourth Movement, line 4.

Chul Hwa Kim points out that the most important characteristic of Korean music is a smooth, flowing, melodic line.[89] This idea is prevalent throughout *Nore*, as the cello line mainly represents the yin. Because Yun has used the cello to represent himself, as he states in his

[89] Ibid., 41.

interview with Rinser regarding his cello concerto, the cello line, the yin, in *Nore* represents himself and his country. The cultural trauma built up within him through the Japanese colonialism and the Korean War is presented through the smooth, flowing, melodic lines of the cello. Paul Fussell comments, "One of the cruxes of war…is the collision between events and the language available—or thought appropriate to describe them…. Logically, there is no reason why the English language could not perfectly well render the actuality of warfare."[90] Because Yun could not express into words, or rather felt music better expressed his sentiments, *Nore*, along with many other compositions with Korean titles reflect his attitude towards his country and the experiences he had during the traumatic times. *Nore* is no different in that it depicts traditional Korean *P'ansori* that only he would have known and how the title, "Song," represented in this piece illustrates the sorrow, longing, and yearning he felt for his home country. This pride and representation of his country through his music cannot be from sheer patriotism. It has to derive from somewhere deeper in Isang Yun. Emily Abrams Ansari, in her article "Music Helps Us Remember Who We Are and How We Belong During Difficult and Traumatic Times," states this:

> In a time when many are confronting both increased solitude and increased anxiety, familiar music provides reassurance because it reminds us who we are as people. Music allows us to create an emotional narrative between the past and present when we struggle to articulate such a narrative in words. Music helps to reconnect us to our identities. It also helps us, as all the arts do, to pursue an otherwise inexpressible search for meaning. In doing so, it helps bolster our resilience in the face of difficulty. Subsistence farmers, who fled government oppression for refugee camps in Honduras, have told me they considered music essential to their psychological survival. Songs thus provided both a means to maintain identity and an emotional narrative for traumatic events that were hard to describe in words. Trauma scholars believe that for some people, familiar cultural practices may actually be more

[90] Van der Kolk, *The Body*, 243.

> effective than psychiatric treatment in helping people deal with potentially traumatic events.[91]

Yun's performance direction for *Glissées* is that the *glissandi*, not under a *crescendo*, must connect the tones lightly and that this applies more to the *decrescendo* phrase to make the breath die away.[92] *Glissées* portrays the yin and the yang relationships, along with literal representations of Korean traditional instruments performed on the cello as discussed in the earlier chapters. The representation of the cello differs in *Glissées* from *Nore* in that rather than embodying the cello as himself, the cello became a second persona. Rather than a longing, yearning sentiment of Korea, the attitude in sound, tone, and compositional style has shifted completely. This is not to suggest that his love for his country dissipated, but that he knew he no longer could yearn for a country that has banished him. Unless there was dramatic change, he realized he could no longer return to the country he loved on his own accord.

Unbeknownst to Yun, he had performed in his mind what Albert Pesso showed Dr. Van der Kolk in a session where he was told to portray his family with physical objects and arrange them around the room, exactly where they belong in relation to him. The protagonist always knew where to station each item exactly and he states, "Projecting your inner world into the three-dimensional space of a structure enables you to see what's happening in the theater of your mind and gives you a much clearer perspective on your reactions to people and events in the past."[93] With the past torture and trauma Yun suffered to the point that he attempted suicide undoubtedly changed his compositional style from *Nore* as the traumatic experience shifted from a collective, cultural trauma to a deeply personal trauma where Yun was the target. Alexander

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[91] Emily Abrams Ansari, "Music Helps Us Remember Who We Are and How We Belong During Difficult and Traumatic Times," The Conversation, May 7, 2020.
[92] Isang Yun, *Glissées pour Violoncelle seul*, 2.
[93] Van der Kolk, *The Body*, 299.

explains that experiencing trauma means a victim is established, responsibility is attributed, and the ideal and material consequences are distributed.[94] Even though Yun knew that his abduction and torture was due to political repercussions, the theater of his musical mind has now displaced the country he loves.

[94] Alexander, *Trauma, A Social Theory*, 26.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Understanding how trauma affects someone and attributing the study of trauma to Isang Yun's compositions, *Nore* and *Glissées*, the pieces should carry a deeper meaning in the heart of all musicians, but especially South Korean musicians. Although generations have passed, there still exists a collective culture in the Korean society, as the nation celebrates an international achievement by a South Korean, like the whole nation praising Han Kang obtaining the first Nobel Prize by a Korean in literature, or being proud of the appointment of Ban Ki-moon as United Nations Secretary General. The people of South Korea have an inherent pride in their country. Most believe that this inherent pride is based on the homogeneity of the country in ethnicity and language. A study showed that in 2011, the population of South Korea was 49.78 million people and 97.25 percent of the population were ethnically Korean.[95] Despite this, I have never experienced this pride in Yun through other Korean musicians, or the media. The Isang Yun Competition held in Tongyong, Yun's hometown, carries merit among soloists, but it is more for the fame of the competition rather than Isang Yun himself. If anything, Yun is studied and revered more amongst German-speaking musicians and musicologists for his innovative approach to synthesizing the Eastern and Western aspects of music.

This dissertation does not mean to confine Yun's music and experiences into only trauma studies, and dismiss the myriad researches on how he portrays Eastern-ness in his music. Rather, it intends to add a layer of consideration to the fact that trauma studies should be taken into account when discussing music, and also in the study of healing trauma. In Cusick's article, she speaks about Vance, a detainee who knew how to resist the music blared at him each day. Even

[95] Seow Jing Yin, "South Korea and Korean Nationalism," *Institute of Strategic and International Studies* 8, (August, 2013): 4.

still, he admitted, "It's devastating. I don't even know the words to use to describe it."[96] Even the one who knew how to resist sound torture suffered tremendously from it. How was it then that Yun was banished to Germany but was still able to begin a new chapter of innovative composition? How was it that Yun was able to live a "normal" life when thousands of soldiers, brave men, and others could barely hold it together? Ultimately, the only fitting answer to this question is Yun's resilience and reliance on the only thing he knew, music. When asked about composing his comic opera in prison, Yun states:

> Then as I actually lived again in the musical fantasy, I forgot pain and despair, and I felt free. Really, I could fly in the air, I could exist anywhere I wanted. In fact, I was often happy in those days…. What drove me to work was the work itself. And also, I wanted to show in this way that one can lock up a free spirit, of course, but not kill it. But I was really quite miserable, physically, and often my sick heart caused problems, and I thought I would die soon. But I worked more and more.[97]

Although there are other factors, like Yun's belief in Taoism and other external circumstances that helped Yun overcome the extreme circumstances, the study on trauma clearly dictates that treatment would have been required for someone with such diverse and dramatic traumatic sufferings. Yet, through music and composition, Yun was able to recount these events, which ultimately allowed him to cope with it. He states that these events did not expand his art because he believes that art is independent and that he does not need to be locked up to produce great art. However, Rinser recounts this from Yun at the premiere of his cello concerto:

> When you hear this piece, you must know that it says much of me. You know that the cello is my favorite instrument. In this piece it is my voice, the voice of my soul. You must imagine that it is the night after a long, imprisoned day, and finally one plays taps to the lined-up prisoners in the yard. After taps, begins the great stillness. I am alone in my cell. I know that the death sentence is demanded. I am waiting for death. I do not want to die. I want to live and work. I feel so much music in me, which I would like to write. I rail against death, but I surrender. I bewail, but I accept death. In these nights I hear the sound of the wooden temple blocks with

[96] Cusick, "You Are in a Place," 23.
[97] Byeon, "The Wounded Dragon," 233.

> which the monks in a nearby Buddhist monastery accompany the ours. You know how that sounds. You have heard it in *Bulgugsa*. You have said that it sounds like when heavy water drops fall on a resonance board, one after another. It sounds heavy and hard, but musical. In the night stillness it sounds loud. I heard this sound and I thought the monks beat the blocks whenever a prisoner is dead. One more and then one more, and I thought, my turn is coming. That became for me like an obsession. Actually, I had no fear of dying, but I continually had to come to terms with not being able to work anymore. And these protests and the submission, the grief and the peace, these things are in this piece.[98]

He continues to talk about the concerto and about the portrayal of the cello as human and the orchestra as the world and reality.

When analyzing and listening to *Nore* and *Glissées*, it is clear that the effects of trauma are portrayed throughout both compositions. *Nore* was written after Yun endured through the Japanese colonialism and the Korean War. He was in Germany by choice and knew that he would return to Korea as soon as he felt confident that he had learned the Western compositional technique. Therefore, the sentiment felt in *Nore* reflects more of his longing and yearning for Korea from the camaraderie he gained from participating in the rebellion against the Japanese and the calamitous reality that resulted in the separation of Korea. The Korean title, the clear separation of parts through the cello and piano, the utilization of long, held notes, and the resemblance to *P'ansori* show that although the trauma of war impacted his life through the painful sounds of war, there was something greater than himself. Alexander states, "However tortuous the trauma process, however, it can allow collectives to define new forms or moral responsibility and to redirect the course of political action. Collective traumas have no geographical or cultural limitations."[99]

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[98] Ibid., 243-244.
[99] Alexander, *Trauma, A Social Theory*, 30.

Glissées on the other hand was written shortly after his exile from South Korea following his abduction by the KCIA. The trauma he suffered was truly personal and directly influenced Yun. The personal torture of loud sounds, hearing others being tortured, constant physical pain, brutal conditions, and the anxiety of not knowing when his death was coming was so intense that he attempted suicide. Although *Glissées* depicted traditional Korean instruments *Komungo* and *Haegum*, resulting in a variety of extended techniques, the portrayal of the sounds clearly contrasts the sounds from *Nore*. The sentiment of longing and yearning for the country he loves is no longer displayed and the musical concept reflects the flashbacks, fragments, and rapid changes to character that traumatized patients frequently display. The voice of the cello in *Glissées* does not represent Yun himself, but a tradition and sound. Rather than a longing sentiment, it is strictly technical.

The differing traumatic experiences culminated to the Isang Yun we know today. It is not to suggest that without the traumatic experiences, he would not have been the composer we know today, just as he clearly implied this sentiment. However, scholars have only analyzed his music in Eastern and Western terms and have not consider the studies in trauma and its impact on him and his music. The reason Isang Yun survived these traumatic experiences is through music. Although this study is focused on only a small portion of his life and two compositions written for cello, my hope is that more scholars consider the impacts of trauma and the power of music in healing.

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