

# Listening to the Beat of Different Drums: Rituals, Music, and Ideology in Goryeo\*

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Music played an important role in the Goryeo dynasty. The administrative apparatus of Goryeo was largely Confucian in orientation and as such, music was considered to be of paramount importance in the proper performance of rituals. The *Goryeosa* mentions that Chinese ritual music was originally performed together with indigenous Goryeo music at the ancestral shrines of the Goryeo rulers. This fact is significant because it reveals the existence of heterogeneous elements within a tradition that is often portrayed as homogeneous and also offers an avenue for further exploration into the composition of Goryeo ideology. The present article looks at Goryeo ideology from a pluralist perspective. Using the example of mixed performances of ritual music, it describes and analyses the co-existence of different ideological elements in the same space. As such, it tries to offer an alternative for the abundance of one-dimensional characterizations of Goryeo and argues that in Goryeo's ideological landscape ideology functioned in a dynamical discourse where boundaries overlapped, intersected and were never absolute. In short, this article explores the different ideological elements of Goryeo by means of focusing on Goryeo ritual music.

*Keywords:* Goryeo, ritual music, ideology, pluralism, daesongak.

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Music played an important role in the Goryeo (高麗) dynasty. The Goryeo state had been structured along Confucian lines and its administrative apparatus was largely Confucian by orientation. As such, music was considered to be of paramount importance in the proper performance of rituals and the maintenance of

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the proper cosmological order. The introduction to the monograph on music of the *Goryeosa* (高麗史) puts it as follows: “Now music (*ak* 樂) establishes the proper socialization (*punghwa* 風化) [of men] and symbolizes merit and virtue”(GS 70: 1a.). Ritual music was performed to accompany all state rituals. Although the scores for most of Goryeo’s ritual music do not survive, the extant sources give detailed ritual instructions that specify at what moment during which ritual what piece of music should be performed.<sup>1</sup> In this sense, music constituted an indispensable underpinning of Goryeo’s ritual order. The phenomenon, though, that the different kinds of music played during Goryeo’s most essential Confucian rituals possessed distinctly different ideological backgrounds has often been overlooked. This is a matter that transcends or at least is different from the musical and instrumental differences which may exist between Goryeo’s different kinds of music. According to the *Goryeosa*, Chinese ritual music was originally performed together with indigenous Goryeo music at the ancestral shrines (*jongmyo* 宗廟) of the Goryeo rulers. An entry from 1114 describes how Yejong (睿宗 1: 1079-122; r. 1105-1122) ordered that the newly imported Song ritual music (*daeseongak* 大盛樂) should be performed at the ancestral shrines together with Goryeo’s indigenous *hyangak* (鄉樂) music (GS 13: 35a).

The significance of this fact lies in its implicit challenge of the abundance of one-dimensional characterizations of Goryeo society. It not only reveals the existence of heterogeneous elements within a tradition that is often portrayed as homogeneous, but also offers an avenue for further exploration into the composition of Goryeo ideology. The fundamentally heterogeneous nature of Goryeo does not mean that it did not possess its own distinctive identity. On the contrary, by the time *daeseongak* was introduced, culturally speaking, Goryeo was a self-confident and self-aware dynasty which had made the co-existence of differing and even contradictory cultural and ideological elements the mainstay of its peculiar Weltanschauung. Far from denying a unique Goryeo identity, then, the example of the mixed performance of ritual music alerts us to the common practice of deviation from the established norms. Goryeo’s prevailing attitude towards new and foreign things was one of curiosity and creativity. The way

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1. The monograph on rituals of the *Goryeosa* gives detailed descriptions of Goryeo’s state rituals and specifies both the sequence and the kind of music (often the name of the piece as well) to be performed at each particular moment.

*daeseongak* was received in Goryeo is revealing with regard to how pluralist worldviews function in general and to how Goryeo maintained its distinctive ideology in particular. The study of ideology is crucial to the understanding of any given society or group, but in the case of Goryeo it has special significance in the sense that Goryeo ideology has usually been described in monist, mutually exclusive terms. This has caused aspects of Goryeo society and culture to be alternately characterized as Buddhist, Confucian, Daoist or nativist,<sup>2</sup> depending on the point of view of the observer, while in fact Goryeo ideology was anything but homogeneous, but rather pluralist; a mixed bag of different ideologies and beliefs.<sup>3</sup> It is the purpose of the present paper to explore the different ideological elements of Goryeo by means of focusing on its ritual music.

## Ritual Music in Goryeo

The chapters in the *Goryeosa* dealing with rituals and ritual music prescribe what kind of music was played during the state rituals. Owing to the Neo-Confucian approach to the compilation of the *Goryeosa*, the arrangement and classification of the rituals is not representative of their Goryeo period significance. Previous research has established that during the compilation of the

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2. In this article, I shall refer to nativism as an umbrella concept for different religious and philosophical ideas that have Goryeo as the ultimate value in common. In this sense, it is clearly to be distinguished from Daoism or from shamanism. Nativism is in fact a collective name for ideas that due to a lack of sources are otherwise hard to define. The geomancing monk Myocheong (?-1136) is an example of a historical figure who had embraced nativist values, which is to say that he used heterogeneous religious ideas to advocate the unconditional precedence of his own country amidst competing values. No other value possesses the importance and immediacy that Goryeo possesses: this is the core of nativism. Admittedly, the lack of sources on nativists severely hinders any effort at a closer inspection of nativist thought and it should be kept in mind that this term accommodates different strands of belief.

3. Some studies by prominent Korean scholars that describe Goryeo history this way are Kim Sanggi (1960), Shin Hyeongsik (1995), Yi Gangnae (1996) and Cheong Gubeok (1990). The pioneering articles by Michael Rogers also divide Goryeo's decision-making elite in two starkly contrasting factions, Shilla-successionist sinophiles and Koguryeo-successionist nativists. See Rogers (1978), (1982), (1983) and (1991). The dichotomies presented in these studies are, if present at all, seldom as decisive or pervasive as portrayed. Often, one slice of Goryeo history is taken to be representative of one characteristic of the period. The pioneering studies of No Myeongho (1999) have left this framework that tends to read contemporary ideological preoccupations into Goryeo history.

*Goryeosa* the great Confucian state rituals gained in prominence and were classified as “great rituals” (*daesa* 大祀), while essential Daoist court rituals were demoted to “miscellaneous rituals” (*japsa* 雜祀) section.<sup>4</sup> It has also been suggested that during the time of the introduction of the Song ritual music in Goryeo, Daoist state rituals were actually considered more important than the classical Confucian state rituals. Despite the classical Confucian historiographical method of recording the facts and not rewriting them (*sur'i bujak* 述而不作), the compilers’ Neo-Confucian bias also caused the lyrics of indigenous Goryeo songs to be left out of the *Goryeosa*. The introduction to the music section reads that in Goryeo “Chinese music (*dangak* 唐樂), music from the Three Kingdoms and contemporary indigenous music (*sog’ak* 俗樂) were performed arbitrarily,” and it continued to say that “the lyrics of the indigenous music are often vulgar and of the most vulgar ones only the title and general purport have been recorded. These [three kinds of music] have been divided in Confucian ritual music (*a’ak* 雅樂), Chinese music, and indigenous music and incorporated into the monograph on music” (*GS* 70: 1a-b).<sup>5</sup> The compilers of the *Goryeosa* heavily emphasized Confucian *daeseongak* and omitted Goryeo’s indigenous *sog’ak* from the proper development of music in Goryeo. In the brief account of the development of music in Goryeo, it is taken to have developed alongside the introduction and internalization of Confucian culture (*GS* 70: 1a-b). The way in which the history of music in Goryeo has been retold in the *Goryeosa* suggests the significance that was attached to it. It was not taken lightly, nor easily associated with Goryeo’s improper and vulgar indigenous music, made for purposes of entertainment only.<sup>6</sup> This predisposition towards Song dynasty Chinese ritual music has structured the *Goryeosa*’s chapters dealing with music to a large extent, although Goryeo’s “blasphemous” music and its place in the important state rituals has been recorded in the ritual manuals. Despite the obvious aversion of the *Goryeosa* compilers to improper ritual music, their sincerity with

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4. Recent research has convincingly shown that Daoist rituals particularly suffered from the Neo-Confucian principles applied by the compilers of the *Goryeosa*. See Kim Cheol-ung (2002: 135-160), especially pp. 147-150.
  5. No Myeongho has discovered a revealing example of the re-editing of Goryeo lyrics. The lyrics of the original Goryeo song *Pungipsong* (風入松, “The wind in the pine trees”) celebrate the Eastern Emperor (海東天子), that is to say, the ruler of Goryeo. In its early Joseon version it has become a song celebrating the Ming Emperor. See No Myeongho (1999: 3-40).
  6. This attitude is related to efforts by king Sejong to restore Confucian ritual music as it had been when it was introduced into Goryeo in 1114-116. See Robert Provine (1974).

regard to the compilation of history meant that they could and did not omit information at will. If omission was deemed necessary, more often than not, it was recorded that something or other had not been included. The ritual instructions for indigenous music, then, have been recorded, but the *Goryeosa* remains silent on ritual music before the introduction of *daeseongak*.

Contrary to what might be expected, all major Confucian state rituals included indigenous music in their performances. The ritual instructions for the heaven-worshipping ritual of the Round Altar (*hwan'gul/weon'gu* 圓丘), the rituals at the State Altar in honor of the land and grain gods (*sajik* 社稷), the ritual at the royal ancestral shrines (*taemyo* 太廟), the rituals at the temple of agriculture (*jeokjeon* 籍田) and at the temple of Confucius (*Munseonwang myo* 文宣王墓) all featured performances of indigenous music:

The procedure for performing indigenous music [is as follows]: At the second and third ceremonial raising of the sacrificial cup and at the departure of the spirits *hyangak* is performed during the ceremonies at the Round Altar (*weon'gu*) and at the State Altar in honor of the land and grain gods (*sajik*), and when performing ceremonies at the royal ancestral shrines, the temple of agriculture and the temple of Confucius.<sup>7</sup>

The only notable exception to this list of most important Confucian state rituals is the ritual that worships the earth (*bangtaek* 方澤), which is probably due to the extreme brevity of the entry on this ritual (*GS* 59: 27b: 28a). Presumably, all detailed information pertaining to the *bangtaek* ritual has been lost. Despite the fact that Goryeo's indigenous music was often labelled "vulgar," it nonetheless played an indispensable role in the celebration of the state's most important rituals.

Music in Goryeo was classified into three categories: *dangak*, *a'ak* or *dae-seongak*, and *hyangak* or *sog'ak*. The monograph on music of the *Goryeosa* further shows that *hyangak* or *sog'ak* was subdivided into *Goryeo sog'ak* and *Samguk sog'ak* (三國俗樂): "In Goryeo, the music from Silla, Baekje and Goguryeo was all performed and music albums were edited."<sup>8</sup> *Hyangak*, or

7. *GS* 71:47a-48b. This information is confirmed in the entries pertaining to the each ritual in the monograph on rituals. *GS* 59: 13b-14b; *GS* 59: 34a-37b; *GS* 60: 18b-19b; *GS* 61: 1a-4b; *GS* 62: 11a; *GS* 62: 26b-27a; *GS* 62:41a-b.

8. See *GS* 71: 43b. The *Goryeosa* notes that the lyrics (which unfortunately have not been recorded) had all been written in vulgar language (*ieo*).

Goryeo's indigenous music, was not only used for ritual purposes.<sup>9</sup> On the contrary, it seems that the most popular music during banquets, poetry contests, and other social gatherings was *hyangak*. The often-found prohibitions on its performance during times of disaster or ritual cleansing refer to this use of *hyangak*.<sup>10</sup>

*Dangak* was, as the name suggests, the music derived from Tang Chinese examples. Although originally only used for entertainment, it was also used in ritual and formal settings.<sup>11</sup> Until the introduction of the Song ritual music during the early 12<sup>th</sup> century, *dangak* and *hyangak* found themselves more or less at opposed ends of the musical scale. Chinese envoy Xu Hsing (徐兢) wrote in his account of his visit to Goryeo the following:

Now the music is divided into two categories: The left is called *dangak* and consists of Chinese music; the right is called *hyangak* and consists of indigenous music. For the Chinese music, the instruments follow the Chinese system. But for *hyangak* [...] the construction [of the instruments] is different.<sup>12</sup>

It has already been suggested that the distinctions between *hyangak* and *dangak*, especially when used for entertainment, gradually became less.<sup>13</sup> By the middle of the Joseon dynasty, Confucian ritual music (*a'ak*) had become diametrically opposed to a mixture of Chinese (*dangak*) and Korean music (*hyangak*), both of which were used for entertainment purposes.<sup>14</sup> The origins of this development are already visible in the *Goryeosa*, where the compilers' annoyance with the seemingly arbitrary way in which Goryeo's ritual music was performed

9. The *Goryeosa* does not specify whether the indigenous music that was performed was originally from Goryeo or from one of the Three Kingdoms. It stands to reason, given the above-mentioned entry in the monograph on music of the *Goryeosa*, that they were performed alternately.

10. In times of drought or national calamity, the food of the court was simplified, consumption of alcohol was prohibited, and the slaughter of animals was outlawed. At such times, the playing of music was also banned. See for instance the fourth month of 1025, the eighth month of 1043, the ninth month of 1055, or the eighth month of 1056 in the *sega* (世家) of the *Goryeosa*.

11. See K. L. Pratt (1976: 199-218); also see by the same author (1981: 509-521).

12. See Gaoli Tuxing (高麗圖經), ch. 40. Translation adapted from Provine (1974).

13. See Jang Sahun (1972), "Goryeo sidaeui eumak," reprinted in *Goryeo Taemyo uirye yeongu nonjip* (2002: 127-161); also see Song Pangsong (1984) "Goryeo dae-akseowa gwanhyeonbang" reprinted in the same volume, 167-207.

14. *Sejong sillok* (世宗實錄) 65:8b; *Jeungbo munheon bigo* (增補文獻備考) 105:13a-b.

resounds in many passages.<sup>15</sup> The repeated remarks that music in Goryeo was not performed in a “pure manner” suggest that the strictness of the performance of ritual music in Neo-Confucian rituals cannot be transposed to Goryeo rituals without some serious reservations.<sup>16</sup> It also suggests that ritual music in Goryeo perhaps had a different significance and was less fundamentally distinct from music used for entertainment than in later periods. Indigenous music had completely lost its ritual status, after all, by the middle of the Joseon dynasty.

Song Confucian ritual music (*a’ak*) was introduced in Goryeo during the reign of Yejong. In 1114, envoy An Jiksung (安稷崇, fl. early twelfth century) introduced 167 new Chinese musical instruments, musical scores and instructions, gifts from the Song emperor, into Goryeo (*GS* 70: 28a-b; *GS* 13: 33b). The imperial gifts came with an imperial edict, explaining the importance of ritual music with regard to the maintenance of a prosperous and peaceful cosmological order.<sup>17</sup> Two years later, the initial gift of the Song emperor was followed by an even more splendid gift when in the sixth month of 1116 (the eleventh year of Yejong’s reign) envoys Wang Jaji (王字之, 1066-1122) and Mun Gongmi (文公美, fl. late eleventh/early twelfth century) returned from the court of the Song emperor with impressive gifts, consisting of 428 musical instruments, music, rit-

15. See for example *GS* 71:1a; *GS* 70:1a-b.

16. Although Confucian ritual music continued to be distinct from both *dangak* and *hyangak*, it must be noted that this distinction was probably lost on Chinese ears. Among other things, due to a different instrumentation and different preferences with regard to the relative importance of some instruments, Confucian ritual music in Goryeo had changed to such an extent at the end of the Goryeo dynasty that it became necessary to search for its original form. See Pratt (1976) & (1981); Provine (1974).

17. *GS* 70: 28a-b. The edict of 1114 reads as follows: “Music moves with the Heaven and the Earth. It rises only one hundred years after meritorious deeds have been performed. After the virtue of the previous rulers declined and proper ritual was abolished, [proper ritual] music perished. Ever since Chu, no one has been able to address [this state of affairs]. I have succeeded to the achievements of the many generations of my royal predecessors. Thinking of their sacred virtue and achievements, I have followed their intentions and now succeeded in rearranging music. I ordered the relevant institutions to take my body as a yardstick and manufacture sacrificial cauldrons and musical instruments. These have subsequently been conferred to the altars of heaven and earth and the imperial ancestral shrines. Even the birds were moved by it. Since the new music is largely similar to the ancient music, I have not discarded it, but have enlightened the hearts of the people by adding its beautiful sound to today’s music and spreading it around the country. As our neighbouring country, you embrace righteousness and people have been commuting [between our countries]. You said you wanted to hear my new music and I commend your sincerity, so I have decided to give it to you. I hereby give to you my new music through your envoy An Jiksung.”

ual paraphernalia, and Goryeo musicians that had been trained in the new Song ritual music.<sup>18</sup>

The *Goryeosa* records that the new music was first performed in the tenth month of 1114 at the royal shrines (this was still before the musicians trained in the performance of *daeseongak* had returned): “On the *jeongmyo* day, the king performed the three-yearly great ancestor worship ritual (*hyeop* 輿). The new music from the Song was jointly performed and [convicted criminals] were granted amnesty” (*GS* 13: 35a). The next mention is from 1116, again during the ancestor worship ceremonies at the royal ancestral shrines in the tenth month (*GS* 70: 14a; *GS* 70: 16a-20b). Yejong was apparently much impressed with the new music, for he decreed that it also be played during the morning reveille of the court officials (*GS* 70: 14a). Nevertheless, despite the epochal nature of the gifts of the Song emperor, the first ceremonial performance of the Song ritual music was combined with the first performance of a new Goryeo composition for performance at *jongmyo*.<sup>19</sup> Goryeo could not have chosen a better way to achieve the cultural balance between indigenous and Chinese accomplishments. In the twelfth year of the reign of Yejong’s son Injong (仁宗, l. 1109-1146; r. 1122-1146) *daeseongak* was for the first time used during the ceremony that marked the beginning of the agricultural year, the *jeokjeon* ritual (*GS* 16: 28a; *GS* 70: 14a). *Daeseongak* went through several changes during the reign of Uijong (毅宗, l.: 1127-1173; r. -1146-1170), but these need not concern us here (Yi Hyegu 1965: 143-145; Song Hyejin 2000: 276-285).

The introduction of Song ritual music did not go entirely unchallenged. As may be surmised, the music that was performed during state ceremonies before the Song emperor’s musical gift did not disappear just like that. The fact that it

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18. *GS* 70: 5b-9a. The training the Goryeo musicians received is not mentioned in the *Goryeosa*. It is mentioned, however, in a letter of gratitude composed by Im Jon (fl. early twelfth century). In it he describes how grateful Goryeo is for the gift bestowed upon it by the Song emperor. He also makes it clear that the initiative came from the side of Goryeo. See *Dongmun seon* (東文選) 35: 19b-21a. Im Jon (林存), *Sa heoseup daeseongak pyo* (謝許習大盛樂表, Letter of gratitude for granting permission to study ritual music). These gifts to the Goryeo court were unsurpassed in sheer magnitude and have remained so. No Chinese emperor was ever again quite so generous. Goryeo was keenly aware of this: “Your generous gifts exceed all precedents” and “If one would look for a precedent, one could search the ancient past when our country was established and yet never hear of another glorious day on which we came to enjoy such gifts,” writes Kim Bu’il (金富僖). See *DMS* 34: 18a-19b.

19. *GS* 14: 17b. The composition performed was the *Gusil deungga* (九室登歌).



was jointly performed did not necessarily mean that it was also performed harmoniously. A memorial from Jo Jun (趙浚, 1346-1405) alerts us to what kind of music was performed before the introduction of *daeseongak* in 1116 and what may have happened to it. In this memorial, which deals with ritual matters and their practical implications, Jo condemns the decadence which was now associated with court music and the ever widening gap with proper ritual music:

It used to be so that with regard to the music at our court, guests were invariably entertained with a banquet and *dangak*, which was then followed by *hyangak*. But these days the dance of the *gisaeng* and the melody of the music do not harmonize any longer. [The music] is, in particular, losing its origins in ritual music. According to the Court Ritual Prescriptions (Jojeong uiju 朝廷儀注), music during the morning reveille and at banquets must be performed by able and wise men and *gisaeng* must not be allowed to join. It is my sincere hope that in the future *dangak* will be performed during banquets and *gisaeng* will be prohibited from participating. (GS 118: 15a-b)

Jo Jun, known for his radical Neo-Confucian ideology and harsh criticism of late Goryeo's corrupt court, informs us that firstly, the *dangak* and *hyangak* of late Goryeo had ceased to be anything else but music for entertainment.<sup>20</sup> Secondly, he explains that the origins of Goryeo's indigenous music were ritual. Jo's memorial contrasts sharply with a comment in the monograph on music in the eighteenth year of Myeongjong's (明宗) reign (r. 1170-1197; l. 1131-1202). This anonymous comment, probably written by Gweon Gyeongjung (權慶中, fl. early thirteenth century) who was one of the compilers of the now no longer extant *Myeongjong sillok* (明宗實錄) (Song Hyejin 2000: 288), is an indictment against the disappearance of Goryeo's indigenous music:

The comment of the historian is as follows: "The shortcomings and confusion in music are terrible. The Office for Ritual Affairs (*Taesang* 太常) recently requested to follow the institutions as they had been under former kings, but the supervising bureau is delaying this and it has not been

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20. This partly explains how *dangak* and *hyangak* came to be one category of music during the Joseon.

implemented, which is deplored by those persons who are knowledgeable. [They think that] the music which was bestowed by the Song on Yejong was newly created Song music and not music made by emperor Taizu (太祖). Not long after this music was established [as the official state music], the Song court was thrown into disorder. Even worse, in 1161 Confucian officials and foolish musicians from our own court changed it to their own liking, reversing the order and confusing above and below. Instruments such as the *gan* (干), *jeok* (戚), *yak* (箛) and *jeok* (翟) have increased and decreased, causing great discrepancies. According to the *Regulations for Ritual Affairs* (*Taesang pyeonje* 太常編制), the Song court only sent us clothes, headgear, and instruments, but we did not know how to use them. Transmitter Seo On (徐溫) went to the Song and learned about dance and ritual privately and taught them (to us). But since there is no evidence for the [correctness of the] procedures of moving forwards and backwards in the dances, it seems it is not to be trusted. And the musicians wanted to follow how it was done when it was first introduced, but until now it has not been executed that way. Even if the chief examiner would do something about it, the old records cannot be changed and if it was performed, it would just be as before. From among the eight instruments, the *sa* (絲) and the *to* (土) are missing. The singers merely memorize the high and low tones from the scores and have no idea whatsoever what the lyrics are about. This is deceiving both god and man. Furthermore, *hyangak* is our indigenous custom and should be performed at all rituals from beginning to end. Presently, it is only performed at the second and third time the sacrificial cup is raised. [In this manner] the error of performing [the ritual] thus biased cannot be avoided. [...]" (*GS* 70: 14a-15a)

Although this comment is aiming at very different issues as compared with Jo Jun's memorial, they both point to the originally ritual nature of Goryeo's indigenous music and to its gradual replacement by Song ritual music. And, as if that is not bad enough, the Confucian ritual music from the Song is not performed "correctly." The complaints in the comment should probably be taken with a grain of salt, but nonetheless ring true.<sup>21</sup> It has been argued that the claims

21. Song Hyejin argues that the complaints in this comment are commonplace. The lyrics, for

of the anonymous author cannot have been true because a letter of gratitude by Im Jon (林存) thanks the Song emperor for having allowed Goryeo musicians to be trained in the correct performance of *daeseongak* in China (Song Hyejin 2000: 280-290). Although this is a very plausible argument, Seo On mentioned above in the comment may very well have been one of the musicians who went to China. Admittedly, the argument of the anonymous writer of the comment consists partly of an exaggerated representation of the state of affairs. On the other hand, his argument revolves around the contention that even though Goryeo musicians had been instructed in the proper usage of music and dance, this could not be trusted since it relied on nothing substantial. Rather than a denunciation of Seo On's command of Song music and dance, then, the comment seems to aim primarily at *daeseongak* itself. This was, after all, not the ritual music associated with the Song emperor Taizu, the glorious founder of the dynasty, but it was connected to the desperate state of affairs at the Song court, which would eventually lead to its downfall. The comment also reveals the great importance that was attached to the proper performance of ritual music, be it Song or Goryeo music, with regard to the conditions in the country. The implied causal relationship between the proclamation of the new Song music and the capture of the two Song emperors by the Jin is more than a rhetorical sleight of hand.<sup>22</sup> Music was an essential part of proper ritual and proper ritual was essential to the well-being of ruler, country and people.<sup>23</sup> It is highly probable that by

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example, would have been in classical Chinese and thus mostly incomprehensible to most musicians. See Song Hyejin (2000: 280-290).

22. The author seems to refer to the catastrophic capture of two Song emperors by the Jurchen Jin in 1126. An entry in the Goryeosa for the sixth month of 1128 recounts the request of a Song envoy not to be welcomed with song and dance: "On the *jeongmyo* day, a Song envoy led by ambassador Yang Ying-cheng (楊應誠) and the Cheju defense commissioner Han Yeon (韓衍) arrived in Goryeo. When Yang Ying-cheng arrived at the river pavilion, he first sent a request to the Reception Bureau which was as follows: "We are on our way to the pavilion for foreign envoys at imperial command, but since yours is a country which excels in etiquette, if we were not to not say anything, you would certainly welcome us with musical performances. At this time, our two emperors are far away and their servants cannot bear to listen to music or to participate in banquets. According to precedent, music will be played in a little while when the imperial edict is formally read and on the day when your answer will be formally sent. If there is any banquet outside of these ceremonies, we will attend, but will evade music and decline your gifts of clothes and liquor." See *GS* 15:29a-b. This is an outstanding example of how music, politics and ritual were interwoven in East Asia during this period.
23. Especially in Goryeo, where the ruler had 'usurped' some of the ritual privileges of the Son of Heaven, the proper performance of rituals was considered to be exceedingly important and of immediate relevance to daily life. See Breuker (2003a) & Breuker (2003b) [forthcoming].

the end of the twelfth century, the compilation of the Confucian *Ko'geum sang-jeong ye* (Detailed rituals from past and present, 古今詳定禮) had given *dae-seongak* a more prominent position in Goryeo's ritual world by providing it with recorded ideological underpinnings (Song Hyejin 2000: 284). For "those persons who were knowledgeable," having a contender for Goryeo's indigenous ritual music was one thing; having that contender on the official record as the proper ritual music was quite another and would have been apt to stir up resistance. After all, this music was performed at each and every essential state ritual.

### The Ideology behind the Music

The dearth of historical records makes it an ungrateful task to try and gauge the ideological intention behind Goryeo's music. There are almost no sources that reflect on Goryeo's indigenous music. It is possible, however, to infer some important points from indirect source materials. Contrary to Goryeo's indigenous music, the case for Confucian ritual music is readily made. It was supposed to "bring the minds of the people into harmony and transform the world."<sup>24</sup> The enormous importance attached to ritual music can be inferred from the fact that during the time of the Northern Song, more books on music theory were written than ever before (Pratt 1981: 510). As is also clear from the edict the Song emperor sent to Goryeo in 1114, creating proper music was expected to last long and cost much effort: "Music moves with the Heaven and the Earth. It rises only one hundred years after meritorious deeds have been performed" (See *GS* 70: 28a-b). This was a realistic appraisal of the situation because by the time the new ritual music from the Song was introduced in Goryeo, four to five generations of musicians and scholars had been working on it. Goryeo scholars were aware of the painstaking endeavors in China. A letter of gratitude for the Song emperor's gift by Kim Bu'il (金富佺, 1071-1132) clearly states this:

In my humble opinion, the virtue of the Five Emperors and Three Sovereigns grew ever more distant and the sources for rituals and music became lost. [Later generations] have made do with very poor [versions of it] and have not been able to resurrect all [of the achievements] of the

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24. See Pratt (1981: 509). This citation is from the monograph on music in the *Songshi*.

ancients. Generations after generations have only transmitted the poorest of traditions. When your dynasty was founded, emperor Taizu endeavored to realize good government and establish great things. He ordered chancellor Xie Chong-yi (葉崇義) to revise the three classics of ritual. Chong-yi fathomed the old theories of all philosophers, attached his own interpretation to them and made these into a ritual diagram. But there have been corrupt Confucian scholars whose vulgar learning has not been able to discover the true meaning of the author. The right time had to be awaited for this to happen.<sup>25</sup>

The right time finally had come, but it had taken some hundred years. On the other hand, Kim Bu'il, although courteously exaggerating his praises, was also well aware of the consequences of the performance of proper ritual music:

Thus, if you sacrifice at the Round Altar, the heavenly gods all descend towards you and if you sacrifice at the Square Altar all earthly gods come out to watch you. The rain falls timely and the stars appear at the right moment. Every year the harvests are abundant, auspicious clouds appear, and sweet dew comes down. Auspicious fungi are magnificent and sweet springs erupt. Since all these [symbols of] blessings and signs of universal peace appear, how could this not be a bright response from Heaven? The four seasons are responding properly to one man's felicitousness. (DMS 34: 18a-19b)

25. See DMS 34: 18a: 19b. Kim Bu'il, *Sa ha yegi jebok cheonhyang gokbo yegi gwanji deung pyo* (謝賜禮器祭服薦享曲譜禮器欸等表, A letter of gratitude for Your Majesty's gift of ritual vessels and ritual clothing as well as music and illustrations for the ancestral shrines). "Im Jon writes something very similar: I respectfully think that in olden times when the way was established, music alone was regarded as a fundamental of government. Bells, drums, reeds, and flutes were used for instruments; joy and love were used as emotions. Through [music], the spirits were communicated with. Through [music] customs were transferred. The Three Emperors transmitted this to the Two Emperors Yao and Shun. The Two Emperors Yao and Shun transmitted this to the Three Sovereigns. The writings of the Duke of Zhou and Confucius still preserved this law, but after the Jin and the Han, everything that had been transmitted became lost and simultaneously, obscene sounds arose. It has been a long time since proper music and the songs that sing the praises of the ancestors have disappeared and the restoration of the ritual codes was only awaiting the intention of the ruler." See DMS 35: 19b-21a.

The proper performance of ritual music ensured the harmony of the ruler, the people, and Heaven. There was also another feature of Song Confucian ritual music which was as attractive, though on another level. This was, predictably perhaps, its effectiveness in singing the praises of the Song dynasty and its emperors. Im Jon has Yejong eloquently describe this aspect in his letter of gratitude to the Song emperor, signifying that the Goryeo court was very much aware of the implicit propaganda value of ritual music:

The beautiful creation that is *daeseongak* embellishes the meritorious achievements of the fiery<sup>26</sup> Song. Its content that begins with the founding ancestor and the flow of [Song history] is identical to [that of] Heaven. Heaven overspreads all without partiality. Earth accepts all without partiality.<sup>27</sup> How then could our faraway country not be made to listen to the melodies of this ritually proper music?<sup>28</sup>

Ritual music from the Song, then, was both ideologically and politically legitimate. In the process of being adapted to Goryeo, Song ritual music kept its cosmological implications that fitted well with the ideological background of the rituals celebrating Goryeo and its ruler. Rituals such as the heaven-worshipping *weon'gu* and the earth-worshipping *bangtaek* were performed in Goryeo by the Goryeo ruler as a Son of Heaven, ontologically equal to the Chinese (or Liao or Jin) Son of Heaven.<sup>29</sup> By performing these rituals, not as a stand-in for the Chinese Son of Heaven, but as an independent Son of Heaven, the Goryeo ruler proclaimed his ontological independence. At the same time, of course, his celebration of those originally Chinese rituals signalled his acceptance of the value of Sinitic culture.

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26. The expression 'fiery Song' or "yeom Song" (炎宋) refers to the fact that both the Song dynasty and the Goryeo dynasty had risen by virtue of the fire phase (*hwa-deok* 火德).

27. This is a slightly adapted quote from a passage in the *Book of Rites*, when Confucius lectures on the importance of proper ritual and proper music and the role of the ruler. Aided by proper music, the sage ruler impartially protects and supports everything under heaven.

28. See *DMS* 35: 19b-21a. Keith Pratt has argued that the main reason the Song bestowed its ritual music on the Goryeo court was political. It hoped to win over Yejong to unite against the Jin. Yejong accepted the bribe, but it was unsuccessful. Pratt seems to have been unaware, however, of the letter of gratitude by Im Jon in the *Tongmun seon* that explicitly states that Goryeo asked for this music. See Pratt (1976) & (1981); also see Song Hyejin (2000).

29. It falls outside the scope of this paper, but this characteristic of Goryeo ideology is very important. See Breuker (2003a) & Breuker (2003b); also see No Myeongho (1999).

In the same manner and for the same reasons that the “blasphemous” lyrics of Goryeo’s indigenous music had not been recorded in the *Goryeosa*, the majority of contemporary Goryeo designations for ruler and country were also left out (Byeon Taeseop 1984). Most of the references to a Goryeo Son of Heaven, to Goryeo as a realm (*cheonha*) or other imperial designations have been erased, although traces do remain. Other sources such as literary collections, epitaphs and inscriptions carved in stone still preserve terms such as “Son of Heaven” and other terms of comparable ontological weight (No Myeongho 1999; Breuker 2003a). The introduction and performance of the Song *dae-seongak* should be seen against this background. Performing Song Confucian ritual music seems to have had the same function as the performance that original Chinese Confucian state rituals had. In the Goryeo context, these performances became centred on Goryeo and the Goryeo ruler; the initial Chinese orientation was first subverted and then mobilized to serve the Goryeo state.

Goryeo’s indigenous *hyangak*, on the other hand, did not share the cosmological preoccupations of the Song ritual music. It had developed following a different trajectory and it responded to different needs. Although ritual in origin, as far as the sources divulge, *Goryeo sog’ak* and *Samguk sog’ak* were as much about Goryeo and the Goryeo ruler (or about their historical antecedents) as *dae-seongak* was about the Song. A song like *Pungipsong* (風入松) directly celebrated the Goryeo ruler as a Son of Heaven; he was perhaps not the only one, but he was nonetheless a Son of Heaven (No Myeongho (1999). Unfortunately, most lyrics have not survived, but what can be gathered from the short descriptions of contents in the *Goryeosa* is that more than half of the recorded songs describe celebrations of Goryeo or famous landmarks within or precisely at the borders.<sup>30</sup> Almost all the songs are laudatory songs that sing the praises of ruler and country, often by focusing on one particular aspect or place.<sup>31</sup> The continuation of the

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30. A composition such as *Seogyeong* (The Western Capital 西京) not only firmly situated Gija’s (箕子) (and Dongmyeong’s 東明) old capital within Goryeo territory, but also sang about the love of the people for the ruler. *Daedong-gang* (Daedong River 大洞江) recalls Gija’s achievements, compares Pyeongyang landmarks to famous places in China and praises the ruler of Goryeo. *Yangju* (楊州) is a song about present-day Seoul, praising its wide fields and bustling markets. *Geumgang-seong* (Diamant Fortress 金剛城) praises the strength of the capital Gaeseong (開城) and the resilience of the Goryeo court in the face of Khitan (or perhaps Mongol) invasions; the association with the Geumgang Mountains seems unavoidable. See *GS* 71: 33a; *GS* 71: 33a-b; *GS* 71:35a.

31. A good example is the song *Jaha-dong* (Jaha Neighbourhood 紫霞洞). Its contents deal with a

music of the Three Kingdoms is also of great importance in this respect. It falls outside of the scope of this article to deal with this issue in any depth, but the dominant historical perception in Goryeo traced back Goryeo's ancestry to the Three Kingdoms and the Three Han, rather than to any one of these, as is often argued.<sup>32</sup> The lyrics of the surviving songs clearly reflect this.<sup>33</sup> In doing so, they reveal the ideological component of Goryeo's indigenous music, which was, quite naturally perhaps, not the celebration of the cultural achievements of the Song dynasty, but the celebration of Goryeo, its ruler, its history and its people. Introducing the prestigious Song ritual music in this environment evidently harnessed Song music for this purpose, instead of the other way round. It may be argued that Goryeo's attempt at legitimisation by seeking recognition from the Chinese Son of Heaven, while at the same constructing a (conceivably even more important) domestic counterpart and relying on indigenous (or indigenized) concepts and beliefs, is mirrored in the way it tried to use *daeseongak*, *hyangak* and *dangak* in its most important rituals.

### Goryeo's Ancestral Shrines

Goryeo's complicated and diverse ritual world was not hierarchically arranged but instead consisted of constantly interacting and changing performances and interpretations of rituals (Breuker 2003b). The rituals at royal ancestral shrines were an important part of Goryeo ritual. The rituals performed at the ancestral shrines involved more than the history of the royal Wang lineage or of com-

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very localized topic. The author of the lyrics used to spend his days drinking and talking with old men in his private guest hall. At the same time, the descriptions of the old men as "old men of the Three Han" and the fact that the locale is situated on Pine Mountain (松山), the most sacred mountain of Goryeo near Gaeseong, introduce a more general dimension of belonging to Goryeo which in the song is promptly put into perspective by saying that "our lives in this age of peace (*taepyeong* 太平, one of the characteristics of saintly rule) are but inebriated scenes." See *GS* 71: 42b-43b.

32. Goryeo's literati were very practical when it came to claiming ancestry, especially towards foreign dynasties. If, however, the domestic references are looked at, it is conspicuous that most references pertain to either the Three Kingdoms as whole that somehow belong together, or even more often, to the Three Han. It is even more conspicuous that a concept of the Three Han (三韓) or the Three Kingdoms existed that exceeded being the mere sum of their parts.
33. The songs sing about the most famous places in the Three Kingdoms: Gyeongju, Naju, Gwangju, Jiri-san, Naeweol-seoong, and Myeongju. See *GS* 71:43b-47b.



memorating Goryeo's past rulers.<sup>34</sup> As shown by the central place ancestral shrines were accorded when the new Song ritual music was introduced, the ancestral shrines were at the heart of the Goryeo state. The imperial *daeseongak* was first performed at the royal ancestral shrines, exemplifying their status as a focal point of both the state and the royal family (*GS* 70:5b-9a; *GS* 70: 28a-b; *GS* 13: 33b). The former rulers were enshrined there and Goryeo's most famous officials were also commemorated on the same premises, symbolizing the indissoluble bond between ruler and vassal.<sup>35</sup> The importance of *jongmyo* during the reigns of Sukjong (肅宗, l. 1054-1105; r. 1095-1105), Yejong, and Injong increased, which can be explained by the fact that, finally, succession of the throne from father to son had become the rule in Goryeo. The ancestral shrines not only figured in the ritual life of the Goryeo royal family and state officials, but also in the daily life outside of these great rituals. The tablets belonging to deceased rulers were ceremoniously kept informed of all important official events. Military campaigns, royal marriages, the investment of a crown prince, the coronation of a king; all important events pertaining to the state and the royal house were officially passed on to the ancestral tablets. The monograph on rituals in the *Goryeosa* has detailed descriptions of the instances when deceased rulers enshrined in ancestral shrines had to be informed of what was about to happen. Moreover, the most important state rituals included an additional ceremony at the ancestral shrines.<sup>36</sup> The increasingly heated power struggle between the great lineages and the royal house also underlined the central position of ancestral shrines in Goryeo's state structure.<sup>37</sup> Although separate shrines for

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34. I use the term "lineage" for Goryeo aristocratic extended families in the sense that Martina Deuchler uses it in her study of the Goryeo family system. Since the ruling family of Goryeo had the surname Wang, the Wang lineage refers to the lineage with the surname Wang. "Wang" meaning "king," the term "the royal Wang lineage," then, is not a tautology, but includes both the surname and the status of the mentioned lineage. See Martina Deuchler (1992), *The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology*. Cambridge: Harvard University Council on East Asian Studies.

35. Due to Goryeo's complicated indigenous kinship system, frequent problems arose in the arrangement of ancestral tablets. Chinese ritual regulations stipulated that the fathers should be put on one side and their sons on the other, and so on. In Goryeo, where succession to the throne by a brother was quite common for a long period, this system could not be adopted as it was. For an excellent description and analysis of this issue and the debates it gave rise to, see Martina Deuchler (1992), *The Confucian transformation of Korea*.

36. See Choe Sungweon (2000), reprinted in *Goryeo Taemyo uirye yeon'gu nonjip*, 79-111. There are too many examples to include here. For some representative instances, see *GS* 67: 35a-b; *GS* 68: 22a-23b.

Goryeo's deceased rulers had existed from the beginning of the dynasty, the Goryeo ancestral shrines that followed the Chinese model were only established during the reign of Seongjong (l. 960-997; r. 982-997) in 992:

“On the *gyeongshin* day, the king promulgated the following edict: “As for the basis of the country, the royal ancestral shrine comes first. For that reason, there has never been an emperor that has not added to the halls, built palaces for the tablets, arranged the tablets with the fathers on the right and the sons on the left, and held three-yearly and five-yearly memorial services. It has been several generations since our dynasty responded to its destiny and was founded, but there have not yet been memorial services in the royal ancestral shrines. [...]” (GS 3:24b-25a)

The ancestral shrines were a sacred place, rivalled by few other locations. *Jongmyo* accommodated the tablets of former Goryeo rulers, which gave it its sacred character, but politically it was also of paramount importance. Seongjong's establishment of *jongmyo* had transformed the Wang lineage's ancestor worship from an essentially family affair into a state affair and the direct father-to-son succession after Sukjong cemented the status of *jongmyo* (Ch'oe Sungweon 2000: 80-85). *Jongmyo* furnished a strong source of political legitimisation, a visual and tangible representation of Goryeo's past and, through the rituals and prayers that were performed there, also of its future. Its connection with the royal family and ritual music is revealed in an anecdote recorded in Kim Bushik's (金富軾) biography in the *Goryeosa*:

In 1124, when the king had posthumously invested the late grandfather of Yi Ja'gyeom (李資謙), Pak Seungjung, in an attempt to curry favor with Yi, requested court music to be played when Yi visited the tomb of his grandfather [to ceremonially inform him]. Kim Bushik reacted with the following words: “Music is played at the royal ancestral shrines, for it symbolizes life. But in the case of a tomb, how can music be performed when [the mourner] is wearing white clothes [of mourning], performs the rites, and cries?” (GS 98: 3a)

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37. See note 35.

Kim Bushik's antagonism towards Yi Ja'gyeom is well-known, as are the ideological objections he voiced against the infringements on royal power made by Yi (Edward Shultz 1991: 1-20). Here, Kim relies on the intrinsic sanctity of ritual music, as described by the Confucian classics and developed during the Tang and Song dynasties (Pratt 1981: 509-518). The fact that Kim used this occasion to lash into Yi Ja'gyeom, leader of the powerful Gyeongweon Yi lineage and the most powerful figure at court at that time, shows the importance that was attached to the proper performance of music.<sup>38</sup> Enough, at least, to furnish a sufficient excuse to attack Yi Ja'gyeom at the height of his power. Ritual music, then, was not something to be lightly regarded, especially not in connection with the royal ancestral shrines which symbolized royal power. With respect to its ritual importance, the performance of ritual music could become a formidable political weapon. A letter of gratitude to the Song emperor by Kim Bushik's older brother, Bu'il, in recognition of the extraordinarily generous gift of instruments, ritual paraphernalia, and music recognizes this as follows:

Through the mysterious words of music, you have illuminated the melodies of the sacrificial ceremony. Through the illustrations on the book covers, you have taught us how to play. Embarrassed by these extraordinary gifts, I know the difficulty of responding appropriately. How could [this music] only be used to comfort [the spirits of] our ancestors? It will influence later generations and extend to our grandchildren.  
(DMS 34: 19a-b)

The emperor's gift, his new Confucian ritual music, should first and foremost be performed at the royal ancestral shrines, an opinion that the Song emperor shared with Yejong. The music that had been played at the royal ancestral

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38. The Gyeongweon Yi lineage is one of the great Goryeo lineages. Its male members occupied the highest bureaucratic offices throughout the dynasty and its wealth was legendary. Twice, a member of this lineage tried to become ruler. In 1094-1095 Yi Jai 義繼 was thwarted in his bid to occupy the Goryeo throne by Sukjong who deposed his nephew Heonjong (r. 1084-1094, 1095-1097) to rule himself. Twenty years later Yi Ja'gyeom had become the virtual ruler of Goryeo, at once father-in-law and brother-in-law to Injong. Yi was finally banished from the court after an abortive coup attempt in 1126, but the fact that the Gyeongweon Yi lineage emerged largely unscathed after two of its most prominent members had been involved in failed coup attempts, testifies to its strength and influence. See Yi Man-yol (1980) "Goryeo Gyeongweon Yi-ssi gamun-eui jeon'gae gwajeong," in *Hanguk hakpo* 21: 2-29.

shrines before the introduction of *daeseongak* had sung the praises of Goryeo and its rulers. The introduction of the new music with lyrics that were completely in Chinese meant that Goryeo ritual music became more complicated and diverse. *Dangak* had by this time become thoroughly Goryeonized; the introduction of *daeseongak* added a new and contrastive category of music to the ritual repertoire. Both royal power and the state received prestigious support by accepting this imperial gift, although not enough to convince Goryeo to side with the Song openly. The performances at the royal ancestral shrines were intended to further strengthen the royal house as the focal point of the Goryeo state; *daeseongak* was certainly not intended for use at the tombs of the powerful families, such as the Gyeongwon Yi lineage.

## Different Beats

It would seem *prima facie* that *daeseongak* was introduced in Goryeo to strengthen royal power and perhaps also to stimulate the dissemination of Song Confucianism. The reign of Yejong was after all characterized by the efforts of scholars and officials alike to assimilate the new Confucianism that had been gaining in popularity in the Song (Chae Ungseok 2001). Yejong himself was renowned for his hunger for learning, culture, and knowledge. It was under his reign that such famous institutes of learning as Bomun'gak (寶文閣) and Cheongyeon'gak (淸博閣) were established (GS 96: 9b). It makes sense, then, that the initiative to introduce *daeseongak* in Goryeo came from him.<sup>39</sup> Yejong's ambitions were, however, not limited to Confucian culture. Buddhist ceremonies were very frequently held on the palace grounds.<sup>40</sup> Daoism experienced an unprecedented bloom; Daoist rituals at the court were perhaps the most important rituals during Yejong's reign (Kim Cheol-ung 2002). The royal lectures (*gyeongyeon* 經筵) were also established when Yejong ruled Goryeo. Though Confucian in origin, the subjects treated were diverse and heterodox.<sup>41</sup> Yejong

39. This is not only clear from Im Jon's memorial. The *Songshi* also confirms this. *Songshi* 82: 19b. Also see Song Hyejin (2000: 266).

40. See for example GS 12:23a.

41. Subjects treated included orthodox Confucian topics, numerology and astrology and Daoist texts. See for instance GS 96:9b; *Yun Eoni myojimyeong* in *Goryeo myojimyeong chipseong* 115: 89, 97, 100.

also had historical works compiled, along with an anthology of geomantic secrets (*GS* 121: 9b; *GS* 12:23a). There was ample reason, then, for cultural pride, not just for the magnitude of Goryeo's accomplishments, but also for its diversity. In a text on the Cheongyeon'gak composed by Kim Yeon, he has Yejong say that "now that the warfare and fighting at the three borders has ceased [Goryeo] has achieved a unified culture that is equal to that of China".<sup>42</sup> This manner is exactly the manner in which both the introduction of *daeseongak* and the establishment of the pavilions of learning functioned. On the one hand, they served as important emblems of Sinitic culture and of Goryeo's cultural achievements based upon Sinitic culture. On the other hand, they signalled Goryeo's cultural maturity vis-à-vis China.

The bloom of diverse and often divergent cultural strands during Yejong's reign had its counterpart in the contemporary political situation. Domestically, a struggle was raging between the great lineages, supporters of royal power, and officials from the country without the backing of the powerful aristocracy. Internationally, the Khitan, with whom Goryeo had enjoyed a long and stormy but also advantageous relationship, were losing the fight with the Jurchen Jin. The Song dynasty was bending under the continuing onslaught of the Jin, that had come after protracted wars with the Liao. Goryeo, in the mean time, tried to profit as best it could from the constantly changing international situation fraught with danger. The long relationship with the Liao had been most profitable for Goryeo—especially with regard to Buddhist knowledge and books—and there was understandable aversion to recognizing the suzerainty of the Jin, Goryeo's former vassals (Kim Yeongmi 2002: 47-77; An Pyeongu 2002: 78-110). A plea in 1110 by yet another sibling of Kim Bushik, Kim Buui (1079-1136), to recognize the Jin Son of Heaven initially fell on deaf ears.<sup>43</sup> It took several more years before Kim Buui's plea was heeded. Yejong, however, was to be the last king invested by the Liao emperor; his son Injong would receive his investment from the Jin emperor (*GS* 17: 7a-b). Goryeo's relations with the Song meanwhile were intense, but not officially ratified and would stay so until the demise of the Song. The incredibly generous gift of *daeseongak* did not have

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42. *GS* 96: 9b. Yejong liked this text so much that he ordered it to be carved in stone, a rare honour indeed.

43. *GS* 97:3a-b; *GSC* 8:20a-b. According to Kim Buui, Goryeo would stand nothing to lose and much to gain. Moreover, even Chinese dynasties had recognized barbarian ones when that was considered expedient.

the effect the Song court had perhaps hoped for. Goryeo was not won over.

Goryeo's attitude is perhaps best exemplified by the proclamation which was issued by Yejong in the eighth month of 1116, not long after envoys Wang Jaji and Mun Gongmi had returned with *daeseongak*, and slightly before its first ceremonial performance in *jongmyo*:

[Proper administration] should not do away with or incline too much to either one side of diplomacy or warfare. Lately, however, the brigands of our vassal territories are becoming increasingly restless. I deem it to be [an] urgent [task] for our civil and military officials to mend their suits of armour and drill their troops. I remember with longing how emperor Shun used to propagate civilized virtue and have both the dances of the military and of the civilians danced at both of these two branches. He thus appeased the Yumo barbarians in no more than seventy days. Now that the Song emperor has specially bestowed the gift of *daeseongak* upon us, the dances of the civilian and military branches should first be performed at our ancestral shrines and then also at banquets and during memorial services. (*GS* 70: 13b-14a)

The entry concludes mentioning that Yejong inspected a performance of *daeseongak*. Some days later, he performed the memorial services at the ancestral shrines in person, at which time *daeseongak* was jointly performed with *hyangak*. Yejong's proclamation displays some peculiarities of Goryeo's *Weltanschauung*. Format, references, and even the stated purpose of the text obey Confucian guidelines, but a closer and contextual reading reveals more. The proclamation first of all uncovers the fact that the role of ritual and of ritual music was "real", that is to say, it was thought to exercise influence upon the lives of men and as such to be real. It is simply not plausible to deny the role ritual music played in Goryeo on the basis of the presented evidence. Ritual music was not a mere cloak for other, more important issues such as politics and security. On the contrary, as contemporary scholars, statesmen, and rulers declared, it was at the basis of it. This is not to say, of course, that political concerns did not play a role. It is very clear that they did. What should be realized, though, is that ritual music was perceived to exercise direct influence upon politics and the state. Historians may disagree with or fail to understand ideology, but a historian underestimates it at his own peril. Beliefs, such as the belief in the efficacy of music, cause differences, as they demonstrably did in Goryeo. Secondly,

Yejong's decree intimates the flexibility in Goryeo's politics and administration, which did "not do away with or incline too much to either side of diplomacy or warfare." This crucial flexibility is well attested to in Goryeo's diplomatic history and is mirrored in its ideological flexibility (No Myeongho 1999; Breuker 2003a and 2003b). The embrace of *daeseongak* at first sight seems to be sinocentric and Confucian, but, as explained above, it must be seen against the background of strengthening royal power and protecting Goryeo's international interest. The reigns of Yejong and Injong were extremely dynamic, both politically and ideologically and both abroad and domestically. The example of *daeseongak* reveals how deceptive it can be to try and "freeze" this dynamic, changing, and still remarkably stable situation (or situations) at one moment and take that moment to be representative of the period as a whole. *Daeseongak* is Chinese Confucian ritual music; there can be little debate about that. The way it was used in Goryeo, however, had less to do with its provenance than with the ways it could profitably be used by Yejong, who had requested the introduction of this new music. The introduction of *daeseongak* meant that from that period on, Goryeo's official music consisted of three different genres: *hyangak*, *dangak*, and *daeseong a'ak*. If it is realized that all three genres first and foremost catered to the royal family, the significance of the introduction of *daeseongak* comes into focus.

Unlike the Joseon period, in Goryeo, the distinction between *hyangak* and *dangak* and later *daeseongak* was always made; in other words, what was indigenous and what was not was very well known. Nonetheless, when rituals were performed, these distinctions, which could add up to becoming contradictions, were often tolerated: Essential Confucian rituals were accompanied by indigenous music, while rituals that were thought to be of immediate state importance were accompanied by foreign ritual music. Often, both kinds of music were performed at the same ritual. This is not to say that there was no opposition from within Goryeo society to this phenomenon. There certainly was, but this goes to show that ritual or ritual music was as much a site of contention as politics was, because ritual, or the ideas it expressed, was thought to matter. The introduction of *daeseongak* goes far beyond being a mere means of political expediency, or for that matter, of musical love.

## Conclusion

The mixed performance of ritual music at the Goryeo ancestral shrines, sacred spaces rivalled by few other locations, reveals the flexibility of Confucian and non-Confucian ritual and, more importantly, hints at the co-existence of different ideological elements in the same space. The different beats or the divergent rhythms of Chinese and Goryeo ritual music did not prohibit their virtually simultaneous performance in the same sacred space, despite occasional clashes. Boundaries between different ideological elements are not always as clearly delineated as in music and even in the case of *hyangak* and *dangak* they tended to blur. Ideology functions in a dynamic discourse where boundaries overlap, intersect, and are never absolute.

The present article has looked at Goryeo ideology from a pluralist perspective. Ideologies function as the means by which man meets his world. The world is grasped, as it were, through ideology which chops it up in smaller pieces, arranges it and assigns significance to each piece, making reality comprehensible and manageable. There are limits to what can be tolerated, chopped up, and assigned significance, but most ideologies show unsuspected flexibility when put to the test. Goryeo's pluralism, its capacity to tolerate inconsistency and contradiction, is effectively illustrated by the uses of *daeseongak*, *hyangak*, and *dangak*. All three kinds of music possessed different histories, different ideas, and different ways of performing. By putting them in the same environment, they influenced each other; remember for instance Jo Jun's comments or the attempts at rediscovering the original *daeseongak* during Sejong's reign which by then had become unrecognizable. But at the same time they stayed different, contrastive, and occasionally hostile to each other. The unity that was formed at simultaneous performances was temporary and subject to change at every moment. The example of ritual music is merely one in a virtually inexhaustible list of similar instances in which the fundamental pluralist Goryeo approach to the world is found.

Goryeo's pluralist worldview was an integral part of its identity. It allowed Goryeo literati to be extremely flexible in their choices and yet be securely moored to an ideology with which they looked at the world. While this approach to the world may at first sight seem to deny a peculiar Goryeo identity, this is certainly not the case. It is perhaps more fitting to regard the complicated, inconsistent, and contradictory way Goryeo literati dealt with their environment as the mainstay of Goryeo identity. Far from being a homogeneous whole, in which



the different ideologies merely complemented each other, Goryeo's ideological landscape was diverse, fluid, heterogeneous, and constantly moving. This landscape should not be ignored or reduced to a frozen frame, chosen more or less at random, in which the movements and changes can no longer be detected. Change, contradiction, and inconsistency are key concepts when examining Goryeo ideology.

During the Goryeo period, both in musical matters and other issues, people listened to the beat of different drums. Sometimes these beats went together pleasantly, at other times discordantly: The different musical and ideological beats did not necessarily harmonize, but they did play together.

## References

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*Goryeo myojimyeong chipseong* 高麗墓地銘集成  
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