

A19

FOLKLORE  
INTERPRETED  
ESSAYS IN HONOR OF  
ALAN DUNDES

EDITED BY  
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## ADDENDUM

*Sumba*

Transcribed for Kirin Narayan by Richard C. Miller (1993)  
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Sum - bā sum - bā a - khi - ye a - khi - ye

nī bha - li - ye sum - bā gi - yā par - a - de -

sa bā - rah bu - ri - e sum - bā ā - yā sum - bā ā - yā

nī bha - li - ye ā - yā kha - rā da - ra - vā -

ra mi - tti ku - tti chu - lāh gha - rā chu - lāh gha - rā

nī bha - li - ye kun - ku - e de sa pa - ra - u - la

THE CASE OF *K'ONGJWI*: FOLKTALE AND FAMILY IN KOREA

Timothy R. Tangherlini

In 1982, Alan Dundes edited *Cinderella: A Folklore Casebook*, which chronicled the development of scholarship on the Cinderella tale cycle (AaTh 510A, AaTh 510B and AaTh 511), and included some of the best known and earliest recorded variants. Despite the extensive, in-depth studies, which covered a wide spectrum both geographically and chronologically, the casebook gives but scant mention, either in the text or the bibliography, to the Cinderella tale in Korea, known as, *K'ongjwi P'atjwi*.<sup>1</sup> This is not a matter of oversight, but rather a reflection of the relative inaccessibility of Korean folklore scholarship to the international community. It also reveals the paucity of translated Korean Cinderella tale variants.<sup>2</sup> While limitations of space prohibit an exhaustive study of the Cinderella tale in Korea, the goal of this paper is to present an overview of the tale cycle in Korea, examine the performance of a discrete tale and posit an analytical framework to interpret meanings produced through the tale telling. As such, a major focus of the analysis will be on what makes the Korean oikotype(s) of the tale specifically Korean.

Although Marianne Cox's collection of Cinderella tale variants is a remarkable achievement and a treasure-trove for the comparativist, the variants included rarely provide any indication of the performance context (Cox 1893). Anna Birgitta Rooth's later comparative analysis of the Cinderella cycle begins to take into account the broad cultural areas in which the various oikotypes of the tale appear and includes culturally based explanations for the unique elements found in the oikotypes (Rooth 1951).<sup>3</sup> Roger D. Abrahams suggests that, "the reason von Sydow gives us for paying closer attention to local variations was that studying tales only through their plots given in stripped-down form may do a violence to the very materials we are concerned with understanding" (Abrahams 1986:65-66). Influenced as she was by von Sydow, Rooth goes beyond the analysis of stripped-down tales in the most extreme form. Still, the scope of her study forces her into the analysis of summarized variants. She is not the only Cinderella tale scholar to fall victim to the analysis of tale

summaries. Even relatively focused studies of Cinderella tale oikotypes, such as Nai Tung Ting's *The Cinderella Cycle in China and Indo-China*, do not treat macro-context, micro-context, text and meta-text in a thorough fashion (Ting 1974).<sup>4</sup> Such studies can result in misleading statements, such as those Ting makes concerning the Korean Cinderella tale tradition: "Outside the above-mentioned territory, only stragglers—corrupt and confused variants—are found. . . . A Korean tales (*sic*) from Manchuria . . . represents a jumble of some motifs common to the opening sections" (Ting 1974:34).

The study of Cinderella tales in East Asia was initiated as early as the ninth century when Tuan Ch'eng Shih recorded a Chinese variant (Jameson 1932:74-75). In more recent years, Jameson's lectures on Chinese tales, particularly on the Cinderella tale in China, helped to bridge the gap between East Asian traditions and western scholarship (Jameson 1932). Arthur Waley continued in this vein with his short article, "The Chinese Cinderella Story" (Waley 1947). Wolfram Eberhard's Chinese tale type index (1937), Hiroko Ikeda's Japanese tale type index (1971) and In Hak Choi's Korean tale type index (1979) all contribute to the ever growing accessibility of East Asian traditions to the non-East Asian specialists. Despite the concerted efforts of numerous scholars to internationalize their fields and make the traditions of East Asia more accessible, gaps still remain. Korean tale traditions in particular have remained in a state of relative obscurity. The collections of tales available in translation exhibit many of the pitfalls of popular tale collections, including over editorialized or reworked texts and lack of contextual information (Gale 1963; Kim 1955; Park 1974; Pyon 1946). This is a poor reflection of the actual state of folkloristics and tale collection in contemporary Korea, where excellent collections exist and the collecting projects of research institutions and university folklore programs are plentiful and on-going (Cho 1984; Cho 1983; Kim 1979; Yu 1979).<sup>5</sup>

The tale presented here is from one such collection project undertaken by the "Korean Oral Tradition Research Center" (Cho 1984). Other tales referred to in this study come from the archives of the National Folklore Museum and from my own field work in Korea in 1990 and 1992. A single folktale variant is provided in its entirety in the hope of avoiding the pitfalls of the study of tale summaries. At the same time, it is necessary to recognize the importance of the other oikotypes and variants found in Korea. The analysis of the meaning of the tale is predicated on the evaluation of the tale as emergent not only within a specific performative setting but also within a cultural and social setting.

The analysis relies heavily on aspects of Korean social organization as reflected in the tale.

The following tale was told by Kwŏn Ūn Sun, an eighty-four year old woman, who lived in a small village, Maeng Ri, in the province of Kyŏngki-Do, not too distant from the city of Seoul.<sup>6</sup> Here is her tale, translated from the recordings:

A long time ago, K'ongjwi and P'atjwi were living, and P'atjwi's mother was K'ongjwi's father's concubine—so she was the concubine and so she [K'ongjwi] didn't live well like that, and one day she told her [K'ongjwi] to go out and weed the field, that's what she said, "Go weed the field!" like that and she gave her a wooden hoe and told her to go to the field with it, you know. Go weed the stony field, and my daughter I give a metal hoe and tell her to go weed a fine sandy field and the first daughter who returns after weeding their field will be fed and the one who returns later will be shooed away, just like that.

Then a little bit later the one daughter goes out with her silk handkerchief goes off and the other one [K'ongjwi] has pumpkin leaves over her head and the first one easily weeds the field and her hoe doesn't get caught on anything, but for the other one there were all these roots that her hoe gets caught on—and then the hoe "snap!" it breaks. And so she starts crying. And while she's crying a black bull comes down.

"K'ongjwi, K'ongjwi, why are you crying?"

And so she says,

"Aigo,<sup>7</sup> I don't have a mother, I don't have a father [Kwŏn points at the TV and says, 'there there was a father!'] I don't have a father, and I'm living like this, and P'atjwi gets a metal hoe and she gets to wear a silk handkerchief and hoes the field, and I get a reed hoe and pumpkin leaves to wear on my head when I'm sent out to weed the field, and P'atjwi gets a hemp jacket, and I get a rough unlined summer jacket like this around my shoulders while I weed the field, and the one who finishes weeding first and returns will get food and the one who returns later from weeding will get turned away, and how can I do it well, since the hoe broke... ?"

"You go over to that gurgling stream a little bit downstream and wash your hands and feet and then go upstream and wash your hair and then bathe yourself and then go downstream again and wash your hands and feet and then come back."

And so. Ah, that bull weeds that whole field. It weeds the whole field with its hooves, and then P'atjwi had just gone ahead home. And so,

"Open up your jacket pocket."

And so she does. And then when she opens her pockets, plop, plop, ordinary wheat cakes drop into it. And since she didn't like wheat cakes, she didn't eat them but brought them home.

"The sun has completely set, please open the door," she says, and so,

"We've eaten all the dinner. Don't come in." That's what they said.

"Oh please open the door. I'll give you something delicious."

"Since we've finished eating dinner, you can't come in. Slip it to us through the door crack."

"Well, if I give it to you through the door crack, eat it!"

Then she ate it and the taste was so good. And then she opened the door for her, but she'd eaten it all up, you know. And then there was going to be a feast at K'ongjwi's paternal uncle's house, and they were invited to go celebrate the feast. And then when P'atjwi and her mother were leaving,

"Thresh three bags of millet, thresh three bags of hemp, fill up the bottomless water jar and make a pot of rice in the bottomless rice pot, and then come along."

And so, and so there she was crying so, and because she was crying Mr. Toad hippity hoppity comes along,

"K'ongjwi, K'ongjwi why are you crying?"

"Aigo, I have to make a pot of rice in the bottomless rice pot, how can I do that well?"

"I'll lie down in the bottom, then make the rice."

So the toad lies down in there, and the water doesn't leak out and she makes the rice. And so she's standing there crying and gurgle, gurgle boiling the rice and Mr. Snake comes slithering along,

"K'ongjwi, K'ongjwi why are you crying?"

"Aigo, I have to fill the bottomless water jar up with water, and how can I do that well?"

"Here, why don't you try and put me down in the bottom?"

And because it was down in the bottom not even a single drop leaked out and she was able to fill the water jar. And then she started crying again, and while she was crying, out on the hemp mat these birds are sitting.

"Oh, those bastard birds, I can't do all that threshing, so why are you eating all of it?"

And then she starts crying and tries to drive them away, but the chaff gets husked and the grain gets husked and they husk and get the hulled grain and leave it. Oh! and they're flapping their wings. And then while they're flapping, she starts crying and these magpies fly down onto a millet mat and attack it. And so,

"You bastard magpies, I can't husk all this, why are you doing this?"

But then they get the millet with the millet and the hulled millet with the hulled millet. And then it is all hulled and it rains down. And then she is crying again, and then from heaven the black bull comes down.

"K'ongjwi, K'ongjwi why are you crying?"

And so,

"I want to go celebrate the feast, but I need clothes to go in."

"Go look in the clothes closet."

And so she went and looked in the clothes closet and there was a nice set of clothes. And then she started crying again.

"K'ongjwi, K'ongjwi why are you crying?"

"If there were shoes too, I could go."

"Go look in the opposite room."

And so she went and looked in the opposite room and there was a pair of shoes in there. And the

shoes fit perfectly. And she puts them on. And then she starts crying again.

"K'ongjwi, K'ongjwi why are you crying?"

"If I had a sedan chair, I could go."

"Go look in the main courtyard." And so she went and looked and there was a sedan chair. And then she starts crying again.

"K'ongjwi, K'ongjwi why are you crying?"

"If I had a servant I could go."

"Go look in the main room (*sarangbang*)."

And so she went and looked in the main room and there was a servant. And then she went off. And while she's going, she loses one of her shoes. And the scholar finds it. And so,

"Aigo, here comes older sister."

And so that's the way it is. And so she came and then the scholar says,

"I am going to marry the person whose foot this shoe fits on."

That's the way it is. And then he gets to P'atjwi.

"Ah, P'atjwi. It's your shoe."

And so her foot is too big, so it won't go on. And when K'ongjwi tries the shoe on, it immediately fits. And so the end of this was that K'ongjwi got married. After she got married, the scholar had to go somewhere and said while he was gone for her not to bathe. But if she did go to bathe, he said that she should not go in first.

"Older sister, older sister. . . ."

"Why do you say that?"

"Let's go bathe."

"Oh no, the scholar told me not to bathe."

"No, the scholar just a bit ago told me to come here and take you to bathe."

"No, he told me not to go."

"No way. He said to go."

So she agreed to go.

"Older sister, bathe first."

"You go first. The scholar told me not to go first."

"The scholar said for you to go first."

K'ongjwi was bending over the pond, and then P'atjwi grabs her butt and easily tips K'ongjwi into the lotus pond. And so she died. P'atjwi went back to the house and the scholar had returned. And then when the husband came back, there was a small, dark and red-faced girl there.

"Wow, why is your face so pockmarked?"

"While I was waiting for Mr. Scholar I leaned against a buckwheat mat."

"Why is your face so red?"

"While I was waiting for Mr. Scholar I leaned against a red-bean mat."

"Why are you so short?"

"When the scholar came, I banged my head against the door frame!"

"Why are your feet so small?"

"When the scholar came, I caught my foot in the door."

And so they were living together. And so the scholar went to the lotus pond, and there was a beautiful flower blooming there. He reaches out and cuts the flower and brings it home. When the flower sees the scholar it dances and sways, but when it sees P'atjwi it droops and so on. And whenever P'atjwi went through the door, it would pull her hair, when she went out it pulled her hair and when she came in it pulled her hair, and could she keep living like this? When she was going somewhere, she thought "If only that flower would leave, then I could live. If I get rid of that flower, then I can live," and so she went out, and as she was leaving she said, "Hey you bastard flower, what's up?" and she grabbed it and tossed it into the fireplace. And it got completely burned. And then the neighbor old lady came by to take some embers.

"Take all the embers in the kitchen."

In the ashes in the kitchen fire, red marbles were rolling about, and so she grabbed those bastards and left. And she left and she went—and she came and put them down and oh, a beautiful girl came out. She came out and said,

"You have to invite the scholar over for dinner. Otherwise I can't live."

That's what she said, and so it happened. And so the scholar was asked to come over the next morning. A chopstick is broken and put down on the table. And so when the scholar is eating, because one of the chopsticks is shorter, he keeps banging them on the table—bang! bang!—and because of this:

"God, these chopsticks! I don't understand why the girl switched them. These chopsticks don't match, take a look."

And he looked up and there was K'ongjwi.

"Hey, what's this? This is crazy!"

He looked up afterwards.

"It's not crazy," and she grabs him. "I have to get revenge."

And then . . . and then they went and killed P'atjwi. After they killed her, they made her mother eat her. They pickled it and made her eat her. And P'atjwi's mother was blind so she didn't know what she was eating. And so she said,

"Oh, this meat dish my daughter made so well," and she said this and was eating rice and eating and eating, and afterwards one day she discovered an ankle and the head.

"Now you've eaten your child. Now eat the rest," and she tosses it into her lap and rolling and tumbling she died. And then the scholar and K'ongjwi lived happily ever after (Cho 1984:460-66).

One of the fieldworkers provides the following annotation:

When I saw the children's puppet play of K'ongjwi P'atjwi on television, it seemed to have certain differences with the old tale I had heard. This is to say that on the TV, at the end, K'ongjwi pardons P'atjwi and her mother, but in the old story, it is said that K'ongjwi punishes them (Cho 1984:460).

This annotation builds directly on Kwön's meta-folkloric comment during the performance as she points at the television set and says, "and

[K'ongjwi has] no father. There she had a father." Such oral literary criticism concerning the reception of other traditions—those of other cultural areas and those presented in non-traditional performative modes (television, film)—are actually quite frequent in the collected variants of the K'ongjwi P'atjwi tale. One informant, who got slightly caught up in her tale, paused and said, "Oops, wait, this is all messed up. This sounds like 'Cinderella'," while another informant, commenting on K'ongjwi's slipper said, "These are *kkot' shin*. The glass shoe is something else. That's not in our story. That with the glass shoe, I don't know about that."<sup>8</sup> While these comments all reflect an awareness of other oikotypes of AaTh510, they also suggest a hypersensitivity to the Korean oikotypes as being specifically Korean. The performance of these Korean oikotypes produce the most meaning for their narrators; otherwise, there would be no need for these meta-narrative comments.<sup>9</sup>

What, then, makes the K'ongjwi P'atjwi tale performed by Kwön and represented here, a meaningful expression for her and other Koreans? While such a question can never be fully answered, an understanding of the variegated meanings produced through the tale can be reached through a consideration of the social and cultural context of the performance. Hølbek's (1987) structural scheme for the interpretation of the fairy tale, albeit with modifications to account for cultural differences between rural nineteenth century Denmark and contemporary Korea, may prove useful in this analytical endeavor.

In the *Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, Hølbek suggests that the tale process acts as a mediation of three main oppositions—*young/adult*, *low status/high status* and *female/male* (Hølbek 1987:410).<sup>10</sup> Through a series of "moves," the original situation of the tale hero and heroine is mediated in the final act of the wedding, with the young hero and heroine becoming adults, the low status individual becoming a high status individual, and the union of the female and male (Hølbek 1987:410-34). While these oppositions are certainly mediated in the K'ongjwi P'atjwi tale, a fourth opposition between those who value family organization and those who do not must be added if the tale is to be described adequately. Since a great deal of family organization in Korea is based on hierarchies informed by Confucian teachings, this opposition will be referred to as that between non-filial and filial. Thus, in the K'ongjwi P'atjwi tale in particular, and quite possibly the Korean tale in general, an analysis drawn from Hølbek would be based on the mediation of four oppositions: *young/adult*, *low status/high status*, *female/male*, and *non filial/filial*.

Kwön's K'ongjwi P'atjwi tale opens with an introduction to a family in disarray. The parents of the main house—K'ongjwi's parents—are

both dead. The second wife, *P'atjwi's* mother, has assumed the role of household head. In the traditional Korean patrilineal society, such a household would be an oddity.<sup>11</sup> One would expect *K'ongjwi* to live not with her father's second wife, but rather with her father's kin, particularly since Kwön mentions that the feast is to be held at *K'ongjwi's* paternal uncle's house. Instead, *K'ongjwi* remains in a household in which the normal hierarchies which organize domestic life have been inverted. Kwön gives no indication as to whether *P'atjwi* is a daughter by *K'ongjwi's* father or not. While other variants suggest that this is not the case, there is no way to tell in this account. However, there is clear evidence that *P'atjwi* is younger than *K'ongjwi*. In the properly ordered Korean household, one of the five moral relations is expressed as "between older and younger there is ordination" (Sorensen 1988:161). This is certainly not the case in this household. Despite the oddity of the household organization, *P'atjwi's* mother—and *K'ongjwi's* tormentor—attempts to maintain the normal economic functions of the household. Clark Sorensen, in an examination of Korean peasant households, notes that "each household is organized as an independent economic unit that ideally holds the means of production necessary to sustain life. Food and necessities are produced for household use with family labor" (Sorensen 1988:132). The task of weeding the fields that *P'atjwi's* mother assigns to the two girls is consistent with an attempt to present this dysfunctional family as a functional, independent economic unit.

The assignation of the task serves other functions as well. One of the responsibilities of a mother in a traditional Korean family is to prepare her daughter for marriage and, at the same time, present her to the outside community as a suitable bride. When *P'atjwi's* mother gives *K'ongjwi* pumpkin leaves to cover her head, provides her with a flimsy hoe and sends her off to a rocky field to weed, she marks *K'ongjwi* as a less suitable bride than *P'atjwi*, the second daughter. While such favoritism of her own child might appear acceptable, and even expected, it is in fact highly problematic. By promoting her own daughter over *K'ongjwi*, *P'atjwi's* mother is neglecting her duty to her deceased husband. As the older daughter and the daughter of the first wife, *K'ongjwi* should be higher in the familial hierarchy than *P'atjwi* and, quite possibly, *P'atjwi's* mother. Since her filial duty is primarily to her husband, *P'atjwi's* mother would be expected to promote the oldest daughter of the first wife before her own daughter. By crowning *K'ongjwi* with pumpkin leaves, *P'atjwi's* mother has made *K'ongjwi* unattractive, both physically and economically, in relation to her own silk-clad *P'atjwi*. Since economic status is often a

consideration in Korean marriage, it is unlikely that a girl of poor economic means would be able to marry a high status individual.

The flimsy hoe *K'ongjwi* receives guarantees that she will be unable to weed the field. When the hoe breaks, it suggests that *K'ongjwi* is incapable of fulfilling her part of the economic responsibilities associated with the well-functioning, economically independent, rural Korean household. Finally, the field that *P'atjwi's* mother sends *K'ongjwi* to is both barren and filled with stones. This is a representation of *P'atjwi's* mother's attempted evaluation of *K'ongjwi* as infertile. Sorensen explains that in the Korean peasant household, "a woman's most important responsibility is bearing children and nurturing the members of the household" (Sorensen 1988:135). In a society in which a woman does not become a member of a genealogical tree until she has borne her husband children, preferably sons, and in which the inability to bear children would mark an end to the family line, the suggestion of infertility would make it impossible for *K'ongjwi* to marry (Cha et. al. 1977). A childless couple has no one to care for them in their old age, nor would there be any one to propitiate their spirits with rituals after death. Furthermore, without sons, part of the family line would come to an end, a calamity which people try to avoid through, at times, extremely complicated maneuvering.<sup>12</sup> In assigning the task of weeding the two fields, *P'atjwi's* mother subverts her expected role in a functional traditional Korean family. In short, *P'atjwi's* mother has begun the process of inverting the family hierarchy, a process which is continued by her daughter in the second half of the story. The well-ordered family, the basis of which is the reciprocity of filial piety and parental grace, has been destroyed in the opening passage.

However, *K'ongjwi* does not fail in the task assigned her. Although she arrives home after her sister and is almost denied entrance to the house—and readmission to the family—her remarkable success in completing the task, and her subsequent ability to bribe her sister, gains her readmission to the domestic space. *K'ongjwi's* success in completing the difficult task, and consequent repudiation of the implicit claims of *P'atjwi's* mother concerning her suitability as a bride, is made possible through the agency of a magical donor figure. Hølbek suggests that "Heroines usually win their gifts by being the epitome of female competence as understood in traditional rural communities" (1987:420). Here, it is *K'ongjwi's* willingness to attempt the impossible task, an expression of her unquestioning filial piety towards *P'atjwi's* mother, her deceased father's wife, that precipitates the appearance of the magical donor figure, the black bull. Rooth mentions that "the cow (or calf, ox, bull) as helper occurs as a traditional motif in Types A and AB in Europe as well as in

the Near East," and further that in "many variants of Types A and AB the cow has been identified with the dead mother. . . ." (Rooth 1951:151 and 154). In many of the Korean variants, the helper cow is in fact identified as a reincarnation of *K'ongjwi's* dead mother. In Kwŏn's tale, however, the helper figure is a bull and therefore can be interpreted as a reincarnation of *K'ongjwi's* dead father. One should remember that Kwŏn emphasizes that *K'ongjwi's* father is dead. The black bull, *K'ongjwi's* dead father reincarnate, and therefore the object of *K'ongjwi's* filial devotions, returns to restore *K'ongjwi* to her place in the family order. His actions countermand the marking of *K'ongjwi* as an unsuitable bride.

The ablutions that the bull has *K'ongjwi* perform in the stream are reminiscent of the purification ritual of women on their way to "use the mountain" (*sanŭl ssŭda*), a pilgrimage based in Korean shamanism which is often undertaken to help guarantee fertility (Kendall 1985:127). Korean shamanistic beliefs and rituals are all-pervasive in rural communities and are dominated primarily by women. Therefore, it is not surprising to find such an allusion to these ritual practices in the folktale expression of an eighty-four year old Korean woman. Furthermore, a rural Korean audience would find such an allusion intelligible and significant. By obeying the commands of the bull spirit, *K'ongjwi* reveals yet again her extreme filial devotion and proves herself worthy of the reciprocal parental grace of her deceased father as expressed in the actions of the helpful bull. The bull changes what was once a rocky and infertile field into a fertile and productive one. By giving *K'ongjwi* the wheat cakes, the bull reasserts *K'ongjwi's* suitability for marriage. What *K'ongjwi* accomplishes, albeit through the help of a magical donor figure, is remarkable. She moves from being marked as unsuitable for marriage because of both infertility and an inability to contribute successfully to the domestic economy—to being marked as extremely suitable for marriage. Not only does she make an infertile and barren field arable, she also brings finished agricultural products back from the field—the wheat cakes. By helping *K'ongjwi* reassert her position in the family hierarchy as the most suitable of the daughters for marriage, her father moves to reestablish the well-ordered economically independent rural Korean household. If the initial barrenness of the field is interpreted as an expression of *K'ongjwi's* supposed infertility, an interpretation alluded to by the similarities of *K'ongjwi's* ablutions to those of a woman on her way to a mountain pilgrimage, then *K'ongjwi's* ability to bring back wheat cakes on the very day she goes to work the field must be seen as an expression of her remarkable fertility.

Quickly after *K'ongjwi's* readmission to the household, Kwŏn turns to the feast. In her narrative, the feast is to be held at the house of

*K'ongjwi's* paternal uncle. It is significant that Kwŏn refers to the house as *K'ongjwi's* paternal uncle's house, as this reaffirms her primary position in the household. Kwŏn herself is quite aware of the family hierarchies and the associated expectations. That *K'ongjwi* is not allowed to attend the feast is yet another event which runs counter to expectations. The feast would provide an opportunity for the otherwise isolated young woman to appear at a public gathering and allow village members to consider possible marriage alliances. This feast may be related to the concept of "bride show" discussed by Bourboulis, an interpretation supported by other Korean variants of the tale in which the motivation of the person giving the feast is often explicitly stated as an attempt to find a match for his son (Bourboulis 1953:98-109). When Rooth mentions that, "In the Oriental tradition the feast Cinderella attends is to be regarded rather as a feast for women. . . . The habit of sexual segregation in the East makes it virtually impossible for Cinderella and the prince to meet at the feast," she could not have had the Korean tradition in mind (Rooth 1951:75). While separation of the sexes was perhaps an ideal mode of existence in the Confucian dominated society, in the rural communities this was simply not possible. The feast here is most likely called to make wedding alliances. Since *P'atjwi's* mother refuses to recognize her duty to promote *K'ongjwi* as a bride, it is not surprising that she assigns the difficult tasks to her as a condition for attendance at the feast. Ironically, it is through the assignation of these impossible tasks that *P'atjwi's* mother indirectly confirms *K'ongjwi's* suitability as a bride.

All of the tasks assigned to *K'ongjwi* are ones closely linked to the domestic responsibilities of a rural Korean housewife; only the magnitude is different. In rural Korean communities, the household work is divided into two spheres—outside work (*pakkaniŭl*), generally taken care of by men, and inside work (*aniŭl*), generally taken care of by women (Sorensen 1988:134). Sorensen notes that "The house head, known as the *pakkat chuin*, or 'outside master,' and the house mistress, known as the *an chuin*, or 'inside master,' are each in charge of their respective spheres of activity and run them relatively independently of each other's control" (Sorensen 1988:134). This relative independence may help account for the extreme focus on the female side of the household to the extent that no males whatsoever are present in *K'ongjwi's* household. In the tale, *K'ongjwi* is effectively asked to produce her entire lifelong domestic economic output in the span of a single afternoon. In despair, she begins to cry. That her crisis calls forth spirits may once again be linked to Korean shamanism and the frequent emotional appeal for help in rituals to the various spirits. The inversions perpetrated by *P'atjwi's* mother



require countermeasures to restore the accepted familial organization. Through the agency of animals performing actions antithetical to their nature, *K'ongjwi* is able to counteract the actions of a mother acting antithetical to her "nature." The action of the birds most clearly illustrates this point. When *K'ongjwi* sees the birds attacking the grain, she immediately assumes that they are eating it, since that is what birds normally do. But these birds perform the unexpected—they husk and sort the grain. Thus once again, *K'ongjwi*, with a little magical intervention, succeeds in asserting herself as an extremely competent household master.

When the bull left *K'ongjwi* after helping her weed the rocky field, she was still wearing pumpkin leaves. Her clothes marked her as a poor, low status individual. After *K'ongjwi* finishes the difficult tasks, the bull returns to finish the process of marking *K'ongjwi* as a suitable bride. Part of this process includes giving *K'ongjwi* new clothes. Without the proper clothes, *K'ongjwi* would be destined to marry a poor, low status individual. This would be an improper alliance since textual clues suggest that *K'ongjwi*'s family has considerable social standing. The most noteworthy of these clues is that *K'ongjwi*'s father has a second wife. *K'ongjwi*'s low status is one forced on her by *P'atjwi*'s mother; it is not a reflection of her actual status. Roger Janelli and Dawnhee Yim Janelli, in a discussion of Korean marriage strategies, remark, "When marriages were arranged by parents, most brides came from families and lineages of comparable social standing" (Janelli and Janelli 1978:39). Therefore, the bull has to make sure that *K'ongjwi* is presented with the proper markers of a person of reasonably high social standing. With this in mind, *K'ongjwi*'s seemingly endless demands for what she requires for attendance at the feast are not as unreasonable as they first appear. Furthermore, the black bull, *K'ongjwi*'s dead father reincarnate, wants to reestablish the hierarchical order in his household. Thus, he must promote *K'ongjwi* as a suitable bride and try to guarantee her a proper marriage alliance.

In most of the variants collected in Korea, there is an intense focus on the shoes *K'ongjwi* receives. They are almost exclusively described as *kkot' shin*, delicately hand-embroidered silk slippers which are often part of the bridal costume. Kwön, however, does not include this aspect of the tale. Instead, she focuses on the beautiful clothes, the sedan chair and retinue given to *K'ongjwi* and, in particular, where *K'ongjwi* can find them in her house. Kwön essentially catalogs the physical organization of the house, moving first from the *anbang*, or inner room, where the clothes closet is, then to the opposite room, then outside to the courtyard, and finally to the *sarangbang*, the room reserved for the male head of

household. By having *K'ongjwi* move through each of the rooms, Kwön helps *K'ongjwi* on the way to reestablishing the domestic order.<sup>13</sup>

In other variants, *K'ongjwi*'s loss of one of the slippers also receives more attention than the casual mention it receives in this variant. The loss of a beautiful *kkot' shin* might at first appear as an irresponsible action. It suggests that *K'ongjwi* is perhaps a bit footloose, and therefore not the exceptional bridal prospect that all events leading up to the loss suggest. In some variants, this interpretation is hinted at, with *P'atjwi*'s mother remarking that *K'ongjwi* has undoubtedly received the beautiful clothes and shoes from an illicit lover. The loss of the shoe does not function as a representation of the loss of innocence. Rather, it provides an opportunity for the scholar to take the initiative, thereby allowing *K'ongjwi* to maintain her humble deference and humility, both valued traits in a bride.<sup>14</sup> Kwön does not pay too much attention to the shoe test either. Instead, she simply tells us that *P'atjwi* fails the test, and is therefore identified as an unsuitable bride, and that *K'ongjwi* passes the test. Since *K'ongjwi* has consistently proven herself to be a fitting bride, it is only appropriate that she marries the scholar.

A second possible interpretation of *K'ongjwi*'s problems in her family is based on the tradition of *minmyönūri*. A *minmyönūri* was a young girl sent to work at the house of her fiancée's family, often for seven or eight years, until her eventual marriage into the family. In traditional Korean rural households, girls are often considered to be a financial burden. One proverb states, "*ttal chasigūn todungnyōn ida*" (a female offspring is a thief), since the girl eventually marries out of her parental home and into that of her husband (Janelli and Janelli 1978:37). Because of the patrilocal nature of Korean marriage, sending a young girl off to another family was financially expedient and socially acceptable. Ting suggests that this type of engagement system explains the absence of AaTh510 tales in large parts of China: a story of a disliked step-daughter was a non-viable tale; the unliked daughter would simply be sent off to another household (Ting 1974:36). The presence of both AaTh510 tales and the tradition of *minmyönūri* in Korea negate this argument. The majority of *K'ongjwi P'atjwi* narrators in Korea are women and the tale itself examines the plight of women within an oppressive patrilineal, patrilocal social system. *K'ongjwi* could very well be the *minmyönūri* sent to work at *P'atjwi*'s mother's house. In an examination of the life and hard times of *minmyönūri*, Youngsook Kim Harvey mentions that "*minmyönūri* were usually badly treated, rather like second class daughters in the Cinderella tradition . . ." (Harvey 1983:57). The tale, then, would be an examination of the pre-marriage travails of the young *minmyönūri*

sent to work in a stranger's house. While the interpretation of *K'ongjwi* solely as *minmyōnūri* is problematic given the total absence of men in the household and the clear outside provenance of her eventual husband, the practice of *minmyōnūri* quite possibly informs a great deal of *K'ongjwi*'s troubles. Also, Korean audiences, not to mention Kwōn, are undoubtedly aware of this practice and would easily recognize *K'ongjwi*'s situation as analogous to that of a *minmyōnūri*.

Kwōn's tale does not end with the wedding but continues into a second section, an oikotype of AaTh 403, "The Black and White Bride" (Thompson 1961:132-34). While the majority of the Korean variants end with the shoe test and the marriage of *K'ongjwi* and her groom, a small minority of the variants continue the tale after the marriage. Similar variants are attested in China and form the core of what Ting labels the "Modern Chinese Tradition" (Ting 1974:14). The second half of the tale is an integral part of these variants and should not be considered a mere conflation of two tales into one. While the Korean variants which end with the happy wedding chronicle *K'ongjwi*'s move from her parent's household into her husband's household, variants like Kwōn's chronicle two of the phases of the life of a Korean woman. The first is that of the filial daughter; the second is that of the filial wife. While a well-ordered family emerges at the end of the first half of the tale, the non-filial machinations of *P'atjwi* soon wreak havoc on the new family.

When *P'atjwi* comes to convince *K'ongjwi* to bathe with her, *K'ongjwi* replies as one would expect. Since her duty is now to her husband, she is bound to obey him, and therefore refuses *P'atjwi*'s request. However, by changing the scholar's command from prohibition to behest, *K'ongjwi* has no choice but to go along with *P'atjwi*'s suggestions. While *K'ongjwi*'s breach of the scholar's wishes can be seen as a lack of obedience, a quality not suitable for a wife, just the opposite is true. *K'ongjwi* is not willing to risk breaking the scholar's apparently modified directions. *P'atjwi*, through this deceit, is able to assume the role of wife, which she was shown to be unsuited for during the shoe test. While the familial order was inverted by *P'atjwi*'s mother in the first part of the tale, the familial order (and *K'ongjwi* as well!) is inverted by *P'atjwi* in the second part of the tale. This change in the agent of inversion further underscores the change in the focus of the tale from *K'ongjwi*'s childhood household to her adult household. The enemy changes from being the dysfunctional mother who does not value the familial organization to the jealous peer rival who also does not value the familial organization.

If the first half of the tale is seen as focusing on *K'ongjwi*'s suitability as a bride, one can possibly see the second half of the tale as

focusing on the scholar's suitability as a husband. It also focuses on *P'atjwi*'s insuitability as a bride, a concept which first became clear with her failure at the shoe test. *P'atjwi*'s motivation for killing *K'ongjwi* is quite clearly jealousy. Jealousy, as Lee Kwang Kyu notes, is one of the "seven evils to divorce," the other six being "lack of filial piety, barrenness, immorality, stealing, talking too much, and disease" (Lee 1975b: 402). *P'atjwi*, it turns out, is guilty of at least four of these seven evils—jealousy, lack of filial piety, immorality and disease—and therefore certainly not a suitable wife.<sup>15</sup> The scholar's biggest gaffes in this section of the tale are his naive acceptance of *P'atjwi*'s explanations and his inability to recognize the differences between *K'ongjwi* and *P'atjwi*. The latter may be a subtle valuation on the part of the narrator as to the attitudes of Korean men to their wives. They pay them such little heed that they can not even tell one from the other. Or it could be a reflection of the scholar's extreme trust of his remarkably capable wife. To *P'atjwi*'s credit, she gives answers to the scholar's inquiries which suggest extreme devotion. She has done nothing but wait for him in his absence, and seriously injures herself in her rush to greet him upon his return home.

While the appearance of spirits in the first half of the tale seems primarily dependent on *min'gan sinang* (indigenous folk beliefs), their appearance in the second half of the tale is primarily dependent on popular notions of Buddhism. In this latter section, *K'ongjwi* drowns in the pond only to return as a beautiful, animated lotus blossom which, in popular Buddhist belief, symbolizes a clean and pure spirit, rising as it does out of the murky depths of the pond and bursting into the clarity of the surface as a resplendent blossom.<sup>16</sup> This transformation is reminiscent of another Korean tale in which a girl drowns herself to preserve her virtue and returns as a dancing lotus blossom. The scholar marvels at the beauty of the blossom, picks it and brings it into his room. This represents a reunion between the groom and his original bride, whose spirit once again has proven itself to be of immeasurable virtue. *K'ongjwi*'s readmission into the domestic space resonates well with her return home after the bull had helped her weed the barren field. Just as that readmission began the process of restoring *K'ongjwi*'s childhood household's organization to equilibrium, so too does this readmission begin the process of restoring *K'ongjwi*'s adult household's organization to equilibrium.

Realizing the significance of the lotus flower's position in the household, *P'atjwi* seizes it and burns it. When the elderly neighbor roots through the ashes looking for an ember she finds the marbles which are another reflection of the Buddhist beliefs informing this part of the tale. When a Buddhist monk is cremated, a small relic, the *savi*, is left behind.

The larger the relic left in the ashes, the more virtuous the monk was thought to be.<sup>17</sup> In this case, *K'ongjwi* leaves behind several large marbles—a sign of great virtue and a reaffirmation of her spiritual purity. The grandmother seizes the marbles, brings them home and *K'ongjwi* reappears. This sets up the invitation to the second feast.

The second feast is far less sumptuous than the first, but it serves an equally important role. Rather than a demure and humble *K'ongjwi*, silently waiting for her suitor's advances, the scholar encounters a somewhat enraged reincarnated *K'ongjwi*. Whereas *K'ongjwi* had succeeded remarkably well in the tests prior to her marriage, the scholar failed in the single test presented him: simply to recognize his wife. It is through the help of the low status elderly neighbor woman that *K'ongjwi* is able to regain her position within the household. This inversion in status resonates well with the earlier section of the tale. *P'atjwi's* mother actively subverts the expected familial organization in the first half of the tale. This inversion in status is countermanded by the actions of *K'ongjwi's* helpers who undertake activities which are outside of the bounds of the expected economic organization. One inversion deserves another. In the case of the feast in the second half of the tale, the low-status elderly female neighbor invites the high-status married male scholar to dinner. Furthermore, through the agency of *K'ongjwi*, this woman provides the scholar with defective utensils, quite likely an implicit allusion to his deficiencies as a husband. It is through these actions, however, that the scholar is made aware of the situation, and steps can be taken to restore the household and familial order.

The brutal punishment of *P'atjwi* and her mother mark the final defeat of the non-filial agents who time and again tried to invert the family organization. Janelli and Janelli mention that "Filial piety was a virtue not only supported by the court. Actual instances of sons feeding their own flesh and blood to parents seem to have occurred until the end of the Yi dynasty" (Janelli and Janelli 1982:51). When *K'ongjwi* and the scholar feed *P'atjwi* to her mother, it can be seen as a gruesome ironizing on the filial acts of sons referred to by Janelli and Janelli. *P'atjwi* and her mother, both apparently devoid of filial piety and certainly unwilling to support family order, are forced to play out the ultimate filial act by *K'ongjwi* and the scholar. *P'atjwi's* mother has reached old age and, if she and her daughter had valued the filial order, she would have expected her daughter to take care of her. *P'atjwi's* mother in fact alludes to this in her comments when she receives the meat dish. Instead, the inversion of the filial act carried out by *K'ongjwi* counteracts the totality of the non-filial acts of *P'atjwi* and her mother. Through the assertion of the importance

of filiality, the agents of non-filiality are removed from the tale, and the opposition filial/non-filial is finally mediated. The re-established family can then continue as a balanced and well-ordered independent economic entity.

The final question to be addressed, then, is why does Kwön choose to tell this tale the way she tells it? Is the tale solely a confirmation of the importance of the Confucian informed family order, with emphasis on filial piety, parental grace and expected behavior the underlying motivating factor for performance? Certainly, Kwön, in her old age, would have come to depend on her children, or other members of her kin, for support, just as *P'atjwi's* mother does at the end of the tale. Performance of the tale would help reaffirm these values and confirm the need for the rigid family hierarchies which would guarantee her support. Could the tale also be speaking to other issues that women confront in their daily life which cannot be easily addressed within the confines of a strict Confucian society? Certainly there is the similarity between *K'ongjwi's* plight and that of the *minmyönūri*. Additionally, the dependence on *min'gan sinang* and Buddhism help mark the tale as female. It also fits Holbek's model for a "feminine tale," since *K'ongjwi's* "real fight begins only after the wedding" (Holbek 1987:418). *K'ongjwi* is consistently presented as a strong individual, particularly when she moves out of her childhood house, where she still depended a great deal on the spirit of her deceased father, and into her adult house where she takes control. In her various incarnations, she torments *P'atjwi*, she gives commands to the elderly neighbor and she confronts her husband. In a rare instance in Korean life, the woman has been able to seize control of both the house and the narrative. *K'ongjwi* is no longer the meek, humble and deferent wife strictly obeying the commands of her husband, and Kwön is no longer telling a tale that serves only to reconfirm the importance of the male-dominated hierarchies of the Confucian informed family. The story itself is a subversion of the strict Confucian values that the tale seems to valorize.

The Korean oikotypes of Cinderella reflect the cultural context in which they emerge through performance. The interpretations provided here are based on an awareness of the macro-context of Korean social organization which values hierarchies in the family and relies on the reciprocity of filial piety and parental grace. In addition, the interpretations take into account the micro-context of performance and the possible concerns and motivations of an eighty-four year old Korean woman living in a rural community and telling tales to suit her own needs in a still vibrant tradition.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup>The names *K'ongjwi* and *P'atjwi* loosely translated mean "Soy bean" and "Red-bean."

<sup>2</sup>There are very few scholarly collections of Korean folktales available in any language other than Korean. Collections consulted during the course of study include the anonymous contribution of a tale variant to the Korea Review (1906); Chang (1970); Cho (1983 and 1984); Cho (1949); Choe (1982); Chŏn (1949); Garin-Mikhailovskii (1948); Ha (1962); Im (1972); Ju (1950); Kim (1979); Lee (1980); Pyon (1946); and Yun (1979). Also see Jameson (1938) and Ting (1974).

<sup>3</sup>Rooth's (1977) later work addresses some of the questions of East Asian tradition in somewhat greater depth as well.

<sup>4</sup>Mizusawa (1964) provides one hundred variants of the Japanese tale oikotypes. Also see Gardner (1906), which is a much less analytical work than Ting, but deals with Cinderella tale oikotypes in a circumscribed area.

<sup>5</sup>While one can study folklore (*minsokhak*) as part of a program at numerous universities in Korea, the aforementioned department at Andong National University is the only university department in South Korea.

<sup>6</sup>This story was told on July 15, 1982, and was collected by Cho Hŭi Ŭng, Kim Yŏng Rae and Yang Yŏng Tŭk, all fieldworkers for the collection project of the "Korean Oral Tradition Research Center." The main economic endeavor of villagers in Maeng Ri is small scale agriculture, with particular emphasis on rice cultivation. Kwŏn had lived through the Japanese occupation and the Korean war. A trip to Maeng Ri

in 1990, to meet Kwŏn Ŭn Sun proved to be unsuccessful, and therefore more biographical information is not available. An overview of the Korean Cinderella tradition can be found in Tangherlini (1994).

<sup>7</sup>"Aigo," is a difficult expression to translate. An English equivalent may be "My goodness," or "Oh!"

<sup>8</sup>Both of these examples are taken from variants I collected. The first comes from a story performed by a twenty-five year old mother of one, who lived in a village forty miles south of Seoul. The second example comes from the tale of a fifty-five year old village shaman in Cheju-Do. For a description of the village and her role as performer in village ritual life, see Tangherlini and Park (1988 and 1990). For a discussion of the role of shaman as story-teller and narrative performer in Korea, see Kendall (1988).

<sup>9</sup>It is also likely that, in the case of the stories which I collected, the narrators wanted to signal to me that they were familiar with non-Korean tales, but that their tales were specifically Korean. Because I am not a Korean, they wanted to emphasize the Korean aspects of their stories. For a discussion of meta-folkloric comments during performance, see Dundes (1966).

<sup>10</sup>These oppositions were first suggested by Elli Kŏngäs-Maranda (Kŏngäs-Maranda 1976).

<sup>11</sup>Discussions of Korean family organization and structure can be found in Choe (1988); Sorensen (1988); Kim (1985); Hahn (1985); Janelli and Janelli (1982); Choe (1981); Choe (1976); Lee (1975a and 1975b); Choe (1966); and Ko et. al. (1963).

<sup>12</sup>A great deal has been written about adoption and adoption strategies in Korea. See, for example, Peterson (1974 and 1977).

<sup>13</sup>This is reminiscent of certain shamanistic rituals performed after the death of a family member. After the road for the spirit has been carefully prepared and the spirit sent on its way out of the house, the shaman moves from room to room smashing storage jars to guarantee that the spirit has departed the house and to insure that the living household members reassert their positions in the newly ordered domestic space.

<sup>14</sup>Once again, Confucian values inform the tale, with the selection of a scholar, rather than a king or magistrate, as *K'ongjwi's* intended groom. The royal groom would be far too high a jump on the social scale. The scholar, however, is a man of considerable social standing and commands a great deal of respect. In many variants, *K'ongjwi's* father is also described as a scholar. Thus, the marriage alliance between these two individuals would be one reflecting the need for marriage between families of similar social standing.

<sup>15</sup>Disease is alluded to by *P'atjwi's* pockmarked face.

<sup>16</sup>This interpretation was given by an informant to whom I showed this tale variant, and who attended a local Buddhist temple.

<sup>17</sup>This information was provided by an informant who worked at the National Museum in Seoul in the Department of Fine Arts.

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PETUNGAN, SANGKALA, AND THE NATIONAL  
LOTTERY: TRADITIONAL SYSTEMS OF SYMBOLIC  
CLASSIFICATION IN CONTEMPORARY JAVA

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In this paper, I will examine a particular aspect of symbolic classification in Java, namely, those systems which focus on the symbolic significance of numbers. In so doing, I adopt a structural approach in which the goal is to uncover underlying patterns of relationships that exist in different aspects of social, intellectual, and spiritual life.

What Geertz called "one of the most fundamental Javanese metaphysical concepts," *tjotjog* (or *cocog*, as it is currently spelled) is particularly applicable here, as it describes the value the Javanese themselves place on coherent systems of structure:

In the broadest and most abstract sense two separate items *tjotjog* when their coincidence forms an aesthetic pattern. It implies a contrapuntal view of the universe in which what is important is what natural relationship the separate elements—space, time, and human motivation—have to one another, how they must be arranged in order to strike a chord and avoid dissonance. As in harmony, the ultimately correct relations are fixed, determinate, and knowable . . . (Geertz 1960:31).

How this "natural relationship" of elements is articulated numerologically elaborates a model for Javanese society which I believe is consciously acknowledged by the members of that society. Symbolically, numbers serve as "conventions or templates" (Barnes 1982:17), as a way of relating empirical experience to imagined order. Rather than focusing solely on their magical or sacred properties, this symbolic use of numbers emphasizes their structural and classificatory functions.

My study of Javanese numerological symbolic classification was guided by Dundes' study of the ritual importance of the number three in American culture (1968), as it was apparent that a similar folk cognitive