Kim Chi-Ha’s *Pansori* and Oe Kenzaburo: Focused on Grotesque Realism in “Ttong-Ba-Da” Exemplified by Oe Kenzaburo

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**ABSTRACT:**
Kim Chi-Ha is a poet who fought for democracy and the right of the suppressed populace in Korea, under President Pak Chung-Hee’s regime. His poetry is significant in Korean Modern literature for its unique development of ‘Damshi (narrative poem)’ that links modern western genres of poetry with traditional Korean art forms. ‘Damshi ’is the mixture of ‘Daeseol (epic storytelling)’ ‘Gamyungeuk (mask play)’ and ‘Pansori (musical ballad)’, the traditional genres that were used in criticizing an oppressive ruling power and enforcing resistance in the powerless people. A satire and a parody is the key expression. Kim Chi-Ha’s poetry is looked into two different categories before and after imprisonment. It is not just a classification by the time he wrote but by the distinction of the themes of poetry.

His early poetry is the portrayal of the alienated human condition by modernization, bringing the concept of ‘Minjoong (The Populace)’. Most of lyric poems at this period are compiled in his first anthology of poems ‘Hwangto (Yellow Soil)’ published in 1970. Kim stated in his post-script that he wanted his poems to be the poetries of action which moves forward from the dark reality towards freedom and light.  

He was sentenced to death in 1974 then to life imprisonment, resulted total of 8years served in and out of prison as a political offender, after having written Damshi ‘Ojeok (Five Thieves)’ in 1970. His translated English poems are published under the title ‘Cry of the People and Other Poems’.

In 1980s, Kim Chi-Ha shifted his themes of poetry from the political resistance to the cosmic unification. His view of how to free the oppressed human condition was philosophized, seeking wisdom to find balance and harmony between all the beings in the world. The philosophy of all existence in the world as containers of life is developed further into a theory of life which incorporates Korean traditional ‘Dong-hak’ and other eastern thoughts.

Oe Kenzaburo conducted a hunger strike in 1975 for clamping down Kim Chi-Ha to imprisonment. Oe Kenzaburo is a Japanese author who received the Nobel Prize in 1994. Oe has made a constant effort to rebuild Japanese identity after the war among international community, especially in Asia. He has brought into a light of an issue of the Koreans in Japan in several of his novels and visited Korea in 1995, as his first foreign country after having received Nobel Prize. At that time, Oe took part in the Symposium titled ‘Fifty Years of Liberation and Fifty Years since Defeat in War: Toward

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1 Kim Chi-Ha, 1982. Taneun Mokmareum euro(Burning Thirst); The Anthology of Kim Chi-Ha’s Poems, Changjiaekkwa Bipyungsa, Pajoo,Korea. P.170-1  
Reconciliation and the Future’. Later, Kim Chi-Ha and Oe Kenzaburo had a public conversation and were recorded in the Asian culture critique magazine the Positions.3

In this paper, I will focus on Kim Chi-Ha’s Pansori ‘Ttong-Ba-Da(The Sea of Excrement)’ first titled ‘BoonSSi MoolEo, implying a parody about a Japanese named Mr. Boon(Dung) who is a symbolic entity as a hostile power, Japanese Imperialism in history. The imperialism overlaps with dictatorship that suppresses Minjoong, which creates multilayered harmful forces to populace. Oe Kenzaburo quotes Kim Chi-Ha’s Damshi as an example of the expressions of grotesque realism which will bring regeneration and coexistence through a satire and laughter in his book Syousetsu no Houhou (Methods of Novel Writing).4 The grotesque realism in Kim’s Ttong-Ba-Da will be explored.

INTRODUCTION

Kim Chi-Ha is was born in 1941, in JunRaDo, the famous place for Dong-hak Peasant Revolution in 1894, which was an anti-government, anti-yangban (the aristocratic class, opposite to Ssangnom, the lower class) and anti-foreign uprising. In 1966, Kim graduated Seoul national university majoring the Aesthetics. He participated in a demonstration against humiliating diplomacy on a treaty with Japan while he was a student in 1964. His major themes of poems are Dong-hak philosophy and the life of the Korean populace. He tries to link modern Korean literature to a traditional genre of Korean literature and create a unique style of narrative poetry, Damshi. His anthology of poems, Hwangto( 1970), Taneun mokmareum euro(1982), Aerin(1986), Joongsim eui gueroum (1994) was published as in Korea and Nagai anyami no kanata ni(1972), Kimu Jiha, Minsyu no koe (1974) and English translated version, Cry of the People and Other Poems(1974) published in Japan. Kim received Lotus prize in1975 and several other literary prizes.

Kim is known to be an activist who fought for democracy and the right of the suppressed populace under President Pak Chung-Hee’s regime. Kim’s narrative poem ‘Ojeok’ caused him to be imprisonment in 1970. He was sentenced to death in 1974 for the involvement in ‘Min-chung-hak-ryun , communist incident’ and later sentence reduced to life imprisonment. Kim’s original name is Kim Young-Il, using literary name Chi-Ha by himself. Kim said that he can see many signboards with the suffix Chi-Ha, which means under-ground, in streets of Seoul in 1960s. For examples, Chi-Ha coffee shop, Chi-Ha barbershop, Chi-Ha restaurant. Then he made up his mind to use that suffix as his literary name,5 though he changed the Chinese characters from 底下 to 芝河. The statement symbolically shows that his intention to work for the under-ground, suppressed people.

‘O-Jeok(Five Thieves)’which disclosed a critical view on the harmful authoritarian power, namely, Plutocrat(Big businessman), Aristocrat(Senator), Technocrat (High position public officer), Autocrat (Generals), and Bureaucrat(Ministers), was written in a genre of Damshi. In this poem, Kim expresses an illegality and corruption of the leaders of modern society at that time, by graphic depictions of sufferings of ordinary populace, using the parody which used in Pansori which is a traditional musical sung by one professional singer.

Japanese Nobel laureate and activist, Oe Kenzaburo wrote about Koreans in Japan in several volumes of his fictions and has made a constant effort to rebuild Japanese identity after the war among international community, especially in Asia. Upon Kim Chi-

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4 Oe Kenzaburo Syousetsuno Houhou, Iwanami Shouten, Tokyo. 1978.
5 www.artnsstudy.com/kimjiha/main.asp
Ha’s imprisonment, Oe went for a hunger strike together with other Japanese writers in 1975. Oe Kenzaburo was born in 1935 in a town called Ose in Shikoku where his family lived there for several generations. Oe studied French literature at the University of Tokyo and his major themes of his writings were influenced by Jean-Paul Sartre. In *Yoku wakaru Oe Kenzaburo* ⁶ the track of his writings are illustrated in 8 different chronological categories. *Memushiri kouchi* (Nip the Buds, Shoot the Kids, 1958), *Kojintekina teiken* (A Personal Matter, 1964), *Manengannen no futtoboru* (Silent Cry, 1967) which later has contributed for winning The Nobel Prize, *Atarashii hitoyo mezameyo* (Rose Up O Young Men of the New age, 1983) *Moe agaru midori no ki* (The flaming Green Tree Trilogy, 1993-1995) and recent *Sayonara watashi no hon yo* (Farewell My books, 2005) are only a small representative lists of his extensive writings. After Oe’s first son Hikari was born as a mentally-handicapped person, the issue of coexistence as a father to his son has been theme in many of his novel.

Oe and Kim have similarity in many aspects of literary thinking. 1) Both of them are ardent lovers of democracy defending the right of the weak, marginalized group of people, both of them to be called activists. 2) Both of them have a critical view on the issue of modernization that brought destruction of nature and the fact Asian countries are merely mimicking the Western tradition. 3) Both of them value the way to bring about coexistence between the differences by using satire and laughter as a carnival or as a traditional musical. 4) Both of them emphasize the importance regeneration by connecting individual life to universal life of Cosmos.

However, there are differences that 1) Kim’s concern is the populace, therefore, he tend to move as a drive, doing it together and aiming for a community based and global achievement whereas Oe’s concern is an individual, therefore, Oe tend to think about individual autonomy in his own situation. As an example, Oe wrote about the forest in Shikoku, his home town as a symbolic birth place for everybody, trying to find the link individual life with Cosmos. Kim wrote about Dong-hak philosophy, Korean philosophy incorporated with Asian wisdom, of which the belief of one universal life all connected and should revere every one of them, trying to propagate this philosophy to the world. 2) Regeneration, Oe uses term Saisei (再生) that means rebirth from a death and a defeat and Kim uses word Saeng-Seong (生成) that means growing life from a life gained by an enlightenment. Oe thinks regeneration can be achieved by the effort to coexist through education, especially learning from history, whereas Kim thinks regeneration can be achieved by the recognition of the cosmic life in every being in the world. It is not the function of the intelligence but the intuition to understand the interconnectedness of individual to cosmic life.

Oe wrote about Kim Chi-Ha’s narrative poems in his ‘The Image System in Grotesque Realism’ in 小説の方法 (Methods of Novel Writing) in 1978. Oe wrote that after Japan’s defeat in the War, Japan and her surrounding countries were faced with the task of regeneration. This essay will examine the way to bring about coexistence between the differences by using satire and laughter in Kim Chi-Ha’s Damshi Ttong-Ba-Da. It will be explored through Oe’s Illustrations of Kim’s poems and explanations. I will present relevant parts of the Pansori ‘Ttong-Ba-Da’ sung by Yim Jin-taik in the original Korean with a script explaining the lyrics in English. It is not translated into an English narrative poem but will be a text to convey the meaning of the Korean narration.

⁶ Ed. Bunngei genkyu proje, 1994. Yoku wakaru Oe Kenzaburo, Japan Mikusu, Tokyo
Kim’s narrative poem ‘Ttong-Ba-Da(Sea of Excrement)’, first titled using the Japanese term of story ‘Mono katari, BoonSSi MoolEo(糞氏物語) in Korean, which is not generally used in Korea. By a deliberate selection of the title, Kim implies that the story is a parody of a Japanese named Mr. Boon (Dung). Story unfolds that Mr. Boon’s family had been an enemy of Korea for generations, who is a symbolic figure representing the Japanese imperialism. ‘Tatong- Ba-Da’ is consisted of 12 short episodes that are as below:

1) Natural Consequences
2) Mr. Boon Sam-Chon-Dae
3) Sam- Chon-Dae’s family history
4) A prohibition order on moving a bowl
5) Having a hard time to obey the rule
6) Sam- Chon-Dae visits Korea
7) Visit a kisaeng house
8) Living-room of the kisaeng house
9) Noisy atmosphere among Pro-Japanese and Japanese
10) 10)A scene of confusion and disorder
11) Having a bowl movement on General Lee’s statue
12) 12)Death from a falling from the statue

Tatong-Ba-Da is written in a genre of narrative poem named Damshi by Kim Chi-Ha himself. Damshi, unlike Western Ballard which incorporates a story line that develops mostly by character’s conversation and the theme is hidden in the story line, unfolds through a narrator and reveals clear message. For example, the episode starts with “I will tell such a story” or ends with “Such a story has handed down.” Therefore, Kim’s narrative poems have a closer connection to the Korean traditional genre of Pansori rather than Western Ballard. Pansori can be described as a long epic song or a solo opera drama which carried out by a professional singer. It appeared as a mode of folk literature in 18 century Korea when the populace start to grow after the Feudal system collapsed. It reflected a collective consciousness of the society at the time, using parody and satire.

Kim Chi-Ha’s Damshi is rooted in Pansori and Kim borrowed the traditional genre of Pansori deliberately in order to put his political idea in 1970s since he knew that aesthetics of satire and parody in Pansori. Song Kwang-Sung wrote in his thesis that “Kim’s narrative poem has a factor of an epic story in form and content and a characteristic of ballad in expression and technique.” Im Sang-Seok wrote in his thesis that Kim adopted Pansori and made a new genre Damshi in order to harmonize a specific political drive and the universal aesthetics of traditional genre in which there already is a presence of political orientation. Im wrote that “The pre-modern scene of Pansori is adjusted to the presence of Damshi by its timely modification and fusion with political purpose.” Ko Hyun-Cheol wrote in his article that Kim’s Damshi should be categorized as a Modern Parody, which reflect present situation through old tradition. This was brought to be highlighted by Russian formalists and Michael Bakhtin’s grotesque realism. Ko quotes Kim Chi-Ha that the literature in 1970s should be MinJoong (ordinary

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7 Song Kwang-Sung, 2005. ‘A Study on Narrative Poem Tatong-Ba-Da of Kim gi-Ha, Korean Language Education, Hannam University, Taejon, Korea p.60
8 Im Sang-seok, ‘The Political Presence of Kim Chi-Ha’s Damshi and the Adoption of Pansori’ PhD Thesis, Korean Literature, Korea University. P.23
people)’s literature of a satire and should be in a form of the people’s literature such as Pansori and Folk tales. 9

Oe exemplifies Kim Ch-Ha’s Tatong-Ba-Da as Grotesque realism quoting Mikhail Bakhtin that Dong is a lively substance since it makes earth futile and brings about new life. Oe point out that Mikhail Bakhtin’s idea of Satire and laughter of populace is the image of grotesque realism. Oe wrote that the Japanese in Kim’s Pansori Tatong-Ba-Da caused a carnival by the action of moving bowl on top of the statue and by the counter act of Korean populace’s clearing the dung. Oe argues that one of the major features of Grotesque realism is that a highly spiritual and abstract idea comes down to a physical, bodily dimension. The earth and body is one united body which cannot be separated. Oe quotes Bakhtin’s thought that the people’s joyous, unreserved laughter in a carnival is the most important part of art.

In the end, I turned to François Rabelais, a forefather of Blake and Yeats. He connected the small body of a human being with the universe. He thought that human laughter is more important than rationality. He also thought about the meaning of the human body, about human desire, appetites, excretions and death and rebirth. These were very human thought. 10

The idea of grotesque realism relies on emotion as laughter rather than on reasoning. In order to achieve a regeneration, the essential process is degradation which lower down all spiritual, abstract idea into concrete bodily desire and material level to form a grotesque body which is “a comic figure of profound ambivalence: its positive meaning is linked to birth and renewal and its negative meaning is linked to death and decay. In Rabelais’ epoch (1500-1800) "it was appropriate to ridicule the king and clergy, to use dung and urine to degrade; this was not to just mock, it was to unleash what Mikhail Bakhtin saw as the people’s power, to renew and regenerate the entire social system."

In this Pansori, Tatong-Ba-Da, Japan’s new militarism and self interested behaviour of pro-Japanese Korean is depicted as a harmful opponent who damages life of populace, such as farmers, workers and students. In order to achieve regeneration and coexistence, Oe emphasised the importance of diversified ways not a single united direction and the need for self discipline. Oe writes, “For the purpose of having an achievement in self control, the Korean poet Kim Chi-Ha’s literary work has an educational power.” 12 Oe explains that the Japanese image expressed in Tatong-Ba-Da contains not only a satire but also sadness and an elegy as a human being. However, Oe is wondering the fact that there was no mentioning about ‘regeneration’ even though talking about a death.

Kim Chi-Ha wrote about anti Japanese colonialism in 1970s when Korea is well independent. What he is raising an issue here is that we should aware the economical domineering power of Japan and Korean dictatorship that nurtures this happening. Kim In-Hwan wrote in his ‘Kim Chi-Ha’s Damshi’ that the Japan in Kim’s poem is not a country Japan but a symbolic entity as Japan which exists in Korean society. The enquiry that Kim addresses is not what is about Japan but what does Japan do to Korea. Japan means an international monopoly that forces Korea to accept all the unequal subcontracts, a petty official that helps America to perpetuate the division of the Korean peninsula, to

stir up political situation by encouraging dictatorship and corruption. Kim Chi-Ha recognizes that Japan is in the middle of a hostile power and he tries to conjugate various social movements against it. Kim In-Hwan explained that a struggle for imperialism overlaps a fight for dictatorship and slide down to a multilayered combat, joining a struggle for freedom of expression and strife for women’s liberation. In other words, Tatong-Ba-Da is a gathering place of all unfair oppressive powers that weigh down on populace like a sea of excrement.

Kim Chi-Ha’s philosophy and value system for which is just or fair to populace is based on Dong-hak ideology that cosmic life is growing within every human beings, animals, and plants. To serve the man as an interconnected god( Hanulim) is an uppermost principle. Dong-hak is a Religious thought that originated from Korea in 1860 by SooWoon, Choe Je-woo, who was born in 1822 and originally a Confucian scholar. Choe believed in a doctrine of transmigration that nobody can avoid the rhythm of the time in Cosmos, called Un-Se(運勢), can be translated as a ‘fate’. He further developed the oriental thought of Ki(氣), the fundamental energy of cosmos, into ChiKi (氣), the amazing energy of God. As a prayer, Choe wrote “Chi Ki Keum Chi, Won Wi Dae Kang, Si Cheon Ju, Chohwa Jeong, Young Se Bul Mang, Man Sa Ji” “(至氣今至 願為大降侍天主 造化定 永世不忘 萬事知)” The meaning is “Please let me reach to the amazing energy of God now. I wish you come down generously. When we serve God, the marvels of nature unfold and when we don’t forget this forever, we know everything.” Kim Chi-Ha’s equal right of human being is as serious as respect and revere god.

Kim Chi-Ha further developed in a new universal global view, emphasizing on the differences between the Western democratic idea and East Asian thought. Kim points out that in the east, revering human being as a part of interconnected universe is the humanism where as in the west, respecting human rights based on a legal, institutional system of Western Democracy. Kim talked about Chi (氣), an invisible but alive energy as a basis for a creative supplement to the limit of Western science. Kim argues that western thoughts are binary-oppositional thinking but the East Asian notion of Chi, is a non dualistic system, unifying all that opposed and contradictory thought.

‘Tatong- Ba-Da (Sea of Excrement)’ can be heard from http://pppfc.tistory.com/558

**Story starts with a song of Natural Consequences: 2minutes20 seconds**

It has been said from ancient,
One who had a sword met with destruction by the sword,
One who had money was ruined with the money.
Everything in the world and all that happen to human being are
Natural consequences of one’s own deeds.
A strong person who believes only his strength
Thrusts himself to be collapsed
A good climber of trees can fall down from the trees
A good climber of mountains can slip down from the cliffs
A good swimmer can have cramps to be drowned
An absorbed brick layer can go through clattering down of bricks
Chattering person is prone to be abused verbally
Writing a harsh remark is prone to have a trouble by a slip of the pen
Participating in demonstration is prone to be involved in court case.
One who is good at bribery, in taking an advantage, an opportunist, a speculator
When they make a mistake, their various skills are all self destructive.
People said that it was an overly smart person who brought about their own ruin.
Hey, I am going to tell you a fabulous story. 
Listen to me well with glaring eyes, with straining ears, 
By the chant of ‘Good’ ‘Doing well’
Let’s play with elation. ‘Jota (Excellent)!

Oe quotes episode 2 Boon Sam Chon-Dae : 2minutes

1) There lived an incredible Japanese whose sir-name is ‘Boon( ), meaning is excrement, 
Name is ‘SamChonDae’ in their pronunciation ‘Zotto Matte’, meaning is ‘wait a moment’. 
This fellow was so greedy that he ate everything he can lay his hand on, 
Once he swallows, even caustic soda, he never spit it out.
His tummy is fat as Mt. Fuji or Mt. Glutton, 
Height is one yard three inches five Poon (=0.1 inch) ,
Round tummy like a drum, thin neck as beans,
Knock-kneed like a duck, look-at-me bottom, help-me knee
Monkey face, tiny slanted eyes,
Moustache of a mouse aggressively set
An up turned nose, small pop-out mouth
Small gourd ears, flea’s forehead
Wearing a pair of wooden clogs that are higher than their height.
Takak Takak
Two dark testicles sagging down, moving east to west, south to north.
Ttalang ttalang

Oe quotes end part of episode 3: 40 seconds

2) クソと朝鮮 不倶戴天(ふぐたいてん)の敵。。。 
This family had been an enemy to Korea and Excrement 
For a long time, generation after generation. 
Family order is ‘Kill the corpse of General Lee Soon-Sin with a sword’ 
Family motto is ‘Stupid bitch Korean’ 
Family tradition is ‘Hold the action of moving bowl until the day of revenge’

Oe quotes first part of episode 11: 50 seconds

3）起死回生 苦尽甘来！…
Look!
Now the majority of world and rules of nature have given us
The great Japanese, Boon Sam Chon Dae, who has been endured humiliation and sufferings,
A right to inveigle and violate Korea as he likes.
Look! Now go forth! Now at last go out to the world!
Dung which has been put up with for a long time, which dung!
Dung, dung. Yes, this is the very dung.
Pujijik, pujijik…
In such a way, the ground has become a sea of excrements. Oe pointed out that students, 
ordinary good people, famers and a day labourers appear try to stop the flood of dung, 
shouting ‘Cleaning Dung!’ among them the most ugly beggar lead the crowd is Kim Chi-Ha.
Boon Sam ChonDae had ignored the crowds’ asking, at the end he slid on a sparrow’s shits, fall down from the statue of the General Lee and died. (p.207)
Oe quotes last part of episode 12: 50 seconds

4) 天皇へいか万歳_____
Long live the Emperor!

Students, workers, farmers and a daily labours cleaning the Shits
Burning sunset, falling down Sam Chon Dae.
I am done! It’s fate.
Sam Chon Dae has now finished!
Long live the emperor!
In an old tale, there are many people perished like this.
Even nowadays, not only Boon SamChonDae,
People try to collect dung crazily, nurturing dung ceaselessly.
I am wondering the secret of attraction in dung maybe the ruin itself.

CONCLUSION

Kim Chi-Ha’s Damshi ‘Ttong-Ba-Da’ shows a satire of a symbolic figure, Japanese named Mr. Boon (Shit), as an imperialist who harms the ordinary people. The event of a Japanese moves a bowl on top of a General Lee Soon-Sin’s statue brought Minjoong’s clearing action as if a carnival that brings laughter to all of them together. This will bring a new social order and coexistence and this is Mikhail Bakhtin’s grotesque realism emphasizing a satire instead of an intellectual understanding. The idea of grotesque realism relies on emotion as laughter rather than on reasoning. In order to achieve regeneration, the essential process is a certain degradation which will lower down all spiritual, abstract idea into concrete bodily desire and material level to form a grotesque body.

Kim Chi-Ha’s Damshi has a unique position in Korean literature since it made a link with traditional genre of Pansori and modern narrative poetry. Kim adopted the characteristics of political presence in Pansori into Damshi using the same method of expressions of satire and parody. Kim’s Tatong-Ba-Da is the expression of high spirit of ordinary people against any oppressive powers, Japanese imperialism as a front runner. Kim Chi-Ha wrote in ‘Song of race, Song of populace(民族의 노래,民衆의 노래)’ 13 that The need for an establishment of true Korean literature, literature of the people is felt ever since under the Japanese occupation. Kim is acutely aware the importance of the succession of the traditional Korean literature in modern Korea. Kim Hun-Sun wrote that Kim’s Damshi has a close connection and similarity with Pansori, in attacking with satire and presenting laughter to populace. Kim culminates in “Kim Chi-Ha’s poetics shows three distinctive characteristics. One, it formulates a systematic succession of traditional genres of literature. Two, it unifies the aspects of an activist and of an artist. Three, it is ambivalent both in theory and in original creativity.” 14

Kim Chi-Ha’s early period poems can be categorized as a political activism and a resistance to oppressive power and unjust, then late period poems as life theory based on his Dong-hak ideology. Kim Chi-ha wrote in his post scrips of the first anthology of poems ‘Hwangto’ that he wanted his poem to be a consciousness of many regrettable situations in Korean peninsula advancing on all four for the ones who are in lament. Kim also wrote in his Minsyu no koe(金芝河, 民衆の声) under the title ‘Arts is the reflection

13 Kim Chi-Ha, 1982. Taneun mokmargeum euro(다는 목마름으로),Changbi, Pajoo, Korea p.160
14 Kim Hun-Sun, ‘A Study of Kim Chi-Ha’s Poetics金芝河詩學小考’ 韓國文學研究第4輯
of reality’ that one should express the contradiction and should have courage to change the reality. Then, Kim wrote in his *From a Buning Thirst to Sea of Life* that the features of life itself are connected and open to change from individual to totality, from universe to human life through the movement of Ki energy. Kim argues that we should change the direction of destruction of environment and life to a movement enforcing the natural freedom of all lives in universe.

Kim Chi-Ha visited Japan in 1998 for the first time and his interview was put on Otodani Tatsuo’s *Bunngakuno Chikara* (文学の力). Kim said that he visited Japan in order to deliver greetings to the people who had helped him while he was in prison and to find out the possibility to overcome a barrier on historical issues and to start a new relationship between the two countries. To a comment that Kim carries a strong impression of a resistance poet in Japan, Kim replied that his philosophy changed so as the Korean political situation and he explained about his new thought. In the interview Kim mentioned that he discovered the importance of ‘life’ when he saw full of the fluffy tuft of a dandelion in the prison cell, he came to understand the ‘life philosophy’, reading and meditating about Buddhist, Dong-hak, Ecology and Science. Now he believes this philosophy, the traditional East Asian thought should be propagated to the world.

Kim further explains that western humanism based on a concept of human civilization as a conquest and as a winning over the nature whereas his new humanism, and Yulryeo thought is aiming for the fundamental change of humanity. Yulryeo can be explained as music of Cosmos or the order of universe. It is important to recover the relationship between universe and human by cultural activities that are sensitive to understand the change of universe, for example, the change of weather and environmental problem on earth. Kim suggests that East Asia should make a movement towards ‘East Asia Common Life Organization’. He emphasizes the importance of Asia orientation since Asia has the most population and the impact towards an ecosystem is the maximum.

Kim Chi-Ha’s effort to find Korean’s root in Korean originated philosophy Donghak and to express his political idea using the traditional Korean genre of Pansori, should be recognized and appreciated in Korean contemporary literature. However, his Damshi as a modern Pansori will evolve by the populace and his idea of Dong-hak will be understood by individuals of the world naturally, by its own merit. It is interesting to see further development of his Yulryo thought and the movement in East Asia. The idealism and the utopia has been always a part of human history.

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