

## A Research on North Korea's Modern Way of Accepting the Tale *Chinegaksi* (*Centipede maiden*)

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### Abstract

North Korean tale *Ch'ŏngryongŭi pŏnn* which was covered in this article is a representative folktale which was modified based on Juche Ideology. It is identical with *Chinegaksi* which is a representative folktale in the Korean peninsula except for the ending part. The difference in the ending is whether the fortune given to the male protagonist is individual or collective in its nature. This difference seems to be due to modification with the influence of collective morality and Juche ideology of North Korea. To assess the literary value of the modified narrative, this article learned about the identity and value of this tale based on the pre-division era records. And by comparing how modern tales in South and North Korea from a similar period and status accept archetype of this tale, this article aimed to analyze the narrative value of this tale. North Korean tale *Ch'ŏngryongŭi pŏnn* will be regarded as an important material to understand the social culture of North Korea and an old story with the message of social integration in the future society of the unified Korean peninsula. This tale is a story about two different beings trusting each other and working toward a better future. In other words, it is a story about the value of "symbiosis" being realized in the dimension of "group." Despite the modification intention behind this literature which is based on the North Korean view of history, this tale is an important literary work that shows what kind of life "we" as a group should pursue in a modern society filled with suspicion and fear.

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## 1. Introduction

How should Korean ethnic folktales be educated in the unified Korean peninsula in the future? Folktales are precious assets which are filled with our ethnic spirit and traditional culture as folktales have been transmitted for an extended period of time. Issues described in tales are close to the fundamentals of human and the solution provided in tales are so superb that it can contribute to maturing our spirit and culture. As heterogeneity between South and North Korea intensified for the past 70 years since the division of the Korean peninsula, folktales can be used as a valuable cultural education material for unity between residents in the South and the North. The value of tales must be continued in the unified Korean peninsula in the future, and in this context, how can literature education be provided?

North Korea uses adaptations of traditional Korean folktales as children's books. It was in the 1970s that North Korea began to use folktales fully to nurture children. Children's literature in North Korea has the common goal of becoming "the weapon of ideology education to cultivate successors to the revolution and reserve troops to build socialism and communism(Seo 2005, 87-88)." That is why traditional tales are modified according to North Korea's historical perspective. In many cases, tales that are familiar to us is transmitted in North Korea in different forms.

That is the case for *Chinegaksi* which will be covered in this paper. This tale which was known as "Chinekaksi type tale" or "snake wife turned dragon type tale" is called *Chinegaksi* as the protagonist lives together for a while with a lady who is a centipede (Kim, 1993, 172). This tale is one of the stories in which a person marries a non-human being. This is an important material for Korean classic narratives and is categorized as *imulkyokutam*, story of sexual copulation between men and non-human beings. Usually, one side of the couple is a human being

and the other is a non-human being, and human-god, human-animal, human-plant or human-inanimate object. Even though imulkyoku cannot happen in real life, a strange encounter with heterogeneous being often appears in classic narratives of Korea as it symbolizes important points in human relationships in real life.

There is more to imulkyokudam than tragedies caused by existential differences. A birth tale of Choi Chiwon, the greatest writer in Silla Dynasty appears in *Ch'oekounchŏn*. According to the folktale, Choi's mother was abducted by a gold hog from the underworld and returned home and gave birth to Choi. In Kimhyonkamho from *Samgukyusa*, a classical scholar named Kim Hyun copulated with a tiger maiden and took up a public office with the help from her. An encounter with a heterogeneous being provides a turning point in a person's life or fills gaps in imulkyokudam. Mysterious encounters and relationships are described from various perspectives in such tales. *Chinegaksi* is also a story about heterogeneous beings understanding, accepting and coexisting with each other.

In North Korean society where socialistic realism is pursued, such significance of *Chinegaksi* remains intact but is shared and enjoyed after slight modification of the story based on their unusual perspective. North Korean tale *Ch'ongryongŭi poŭim* is a good example of a modified version of *Chinegaksi*. The male protagonist solves difficult problems through the relationship with Imoogi and finds a new life. Imoogi also succeeds in shedding its skin with the help from the male protagonist and ascend as a blue dragon. A human being and a heterogeneous being overcame perplexity and fear and formed a special relationship to trust and help each other. Based on the idea that even though there were plenty of changes in the texts, above mentioned messages are handed down to people in North Korea, the authors aim to analyze the literature to use this tale to use as a medium for South and North Korea to communicate.

This paper compares how one of the most representative Korean tales *Chinegaksi* was transmitted in South and North Korea based on tale materials from the pre-division era and tries to discuss how modifications made according to the characteristics of North Korean tales should be accepted for cultural integration of two Koreas. Through such efforts, this study intends to overcome cultural heterogeneity of South and North Korea caused by division and tries to closely

contemplate upon the culture of accepting old tales in South and North Korea so that values of folktales can be thoroughly transmitted in the unified Korea of the future. A fair assessment of North Korean literature is an undertaking that must be continuously tried for the unification of Korean peninsula, and in that context, this study also is part of that effort.

## 2. South and North Korea's acceptance of folktale *Chinegaksi*

To begin with, the author attempts to understand the archetype of *Chinegaksi* with folktale materials from pre-division era, and based on that initial attempt; the author will compare acceptance aspect of two Koreas and try to understand acceptance culture of folktales in North Korea. Among folktale materials from pre-division, Yim Suk-jay's *Korean Orally Transmitted Tales* is a valuable collection of folktales to grasp the aspect of oral literature from the 1930s to 1940s. The collection is an outstanding collection of folktales in terms of quality and quantity with 12 volumes of books in total, in which volume four covers orally transmitted tales of North Korea (Choi 2001, 56). The oral material of *Chinegaksi* in this article was recorded in 1937 in Uiseong County in North Pyongan Province (Yim 1987, 81-83).

- (1) Formerly rich and now poor man named Yang had to make his living by begging. Because he couldn't accept how his life turned out to be, he decided to kill himself in the mountains and left his house late at night.
- (2) As he wandered around the mountain, he found a tile-roofed house. He saw the maiden at the house and asked for her permission to stay for one night. The maiden refused several times but eventually allowed him to stay and brought a nice pair of clothes and food to him. Time passed, and they became a husband and wife.
- (3) Yang was worried about his family who were still back at home, and the maiden told him that she sent some money to his family, and they are well taken care of, so he should be relieved and remain here with her. He still

couldn't get his mind off his family, so he visited his old house. His lawful wife at home told him that someone came to the house with a lot of money and that his family is well-off now.

- (4) Yang was on his way back to the maiden's house when he met a man who suddenly appeared from the sky. That man told Yang that the maiden was actually a great centipede and told him where he could find a tobacco pipe. The man from the sky said that if Yang doesn't kill the centipede with the pipe, he will die.
- (5) As Yang arrived back to the maiden's house, he found the pale maiden who was curled up and crouching on the warm spot on the floor. He questioned her but she did not say anything.
- (6) As Yang closed the door and began burning his tobacco pipe, the maiden withered and began to die. But he realized that he was alive and well now by virtue of her, so he decided to save her and kill himself instead. He opened up the door and saved the maiden.
- (7) The maiden told Yang that the man from the sky who told Yang about her identity was a serpent and that the serpent was competing with her to acquire 100 people first to build the virtue of 1000 years. And she said that now she will fight against the serpent, Yang should not come out of the house even if he hears the sound of the sky falling.
- (8) On the next day, there was a rumbling sound as the maiden fought with the serpent. The maiden came back shortly after the fight to tell him that she won and now became a full human being. Yang went to see the serpent only to find a large cave with a dead serpent inside.
- (9) The maiden gave Yang a lot of gold and jewels and told him to go back to his family. As he walked, he turned around and found nothing but a big cave where there used to be the maiden's big tile-roofed house.<sup>1)</sup>

In the pre-division era oral tradition of *Chinegaksi*, a man who lost the will

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1) Information about three oral materials is provided in Yim Suk-jay's *Korean Orally Transmitted Tales*. Two out of three is about a man who attempted suicide because of his poverty meeting *Chinegaksi*, and another story is about a widower meeting *Chinegaksi* who came down to be with him. Based on two stories, the authors selected the first type of story in which a poor man meets *Chinegaksi* as he attempted to commit suicide.

to live due to the economic turmoil solves his problems with the help from Chinekaksi whereas Chinekaksi ascends to heaven because of the man who protected her and risked his life even though he found out the true identity of Chinekaksi. The man is relieved from his distress from the real life with the help from Chinegaksi and the centipede ascends to heaven. *Chinegaksi* is a story of symbiosis, a story about two different beings reaffirming trust in each other and filling deficiencies in each other.

This story is one of the representative oral traditions of Korean peninsula even in the modern world. About 64 stories are contained in the South Korean's representative modern oral literature collection *The Comprehensive Collection of Korean Folklore*, and the stories are recorded from all over South Korea. This type of tale is also found in folklore collections from North Korea as well. One example would be *Ch'ōngryongŭi poŭnn* from North Korea's *Collection of Oral Literature (Volume on Folktale)* which was published in 1964. A serpent maiden, instead of the centipede maiden, appears as the main character, and this is also the case for some oral narratives of South Korea.

*Ch'ōngryongŭi poŭnn* is a story about impoverished male protagonist receiving fortune, riches in this case, from a serpent-turned maiden, and the maiden eventually ascending to heaven with the help from the man. In this narrative, the male protagonist is in fear once he finds out the true identity of her from her competitor, but makes up his mind to help her and does his best to help her ascend to heaven. She grants his wish and presents him and his villagers a fertile land.

North Korea's *Ch'ōngryongŭi poŭnn* is similar to *Chinegaksi* in many ways including the plot. A heterogeneous being turned beauty saves a man from poverty, another heterogeneous competitor uncovers her identity, but the man trusts the maiden and helps her.

However, there are certain differences such as how the impoverished protagonist reacts to the developments in his life, the process of heterogeneous beings ascending to heaven, and the outcome. First, the difference regarding the impoverished man's reaction to the developments in his life is as follows.

In *Chinegaksi*, the culprit is poverty. Many protagonists from orally transmitted *Chinegaksi* tales are frustrated and are in despair. They suffer from poverty for

various reasons and when they fail to find a solution, they leave their home or climb the mountain to attempt suicide and a bizarre encounter begins.

“Who are you to tell me to come closer? I’m here to hang myself to die, so you just mind your own business and walk away. You go ahead, don’t ask me to come with you.”

“No, I won’t walk away. Who could dare to walk away from a man who is about to hang himself? You don’t have to die if you follow me. I will serve you well, so follow me.”

“No need to offer. Tomorrow is the New Year’s Day and I can’t even feed my children. How can I bear that? It’s better off for me to just disappear. You go your way, and no need to save me.”

“No, come with me. I will save you. Follow me.” (Park 1984)

At this point, the man is depressed and has lost all his will. He pushes her away and tells her to mind her own business. Many people say that those who attempt to commit suicide want somebody to save them, but in this story, the man refuses her offer several times. In another version of *Chinegaksi*, the protagonist gets enraged at *Chinekaksi* when she brings him back from his death. He gets angry because there is no possibility for him to overcome nor end his bleak circumstances. The South Korean version of the story describes a discouraged protagonist who is in despair, who failed to escape from the despondent state. This is similar to the folktale materials from pre-division era.

*Chinekaksi* earnestly persuades the man and saves him. She provides a comfortable haven and takes care of him so that he gradually forgets about death. For him, *Chinekaksi* is a savior to help him escape from poverty as well as a healer to lead him out of deep frustration.

The unfortunate event which cast upon the male protagonist was poverty in *Ch’ŏngryongŭi poŏnm* was also poverty. He had a big family to support, but could not feed them due to continued years of poor harvest.

There were 17 members in Lee’s family including his old mother, his wife, and children. It was arduous to feed mouths in lean years. Children hung on to their

mother for more food. As he watched his children beg for more food, he had no other option but to climb up the mountain to get something to eat, like skin of the pine trees.

(.....)

“Old men say that even when a woman heaves a deep sigh, a big hole will be made on the ground, and why are you, a man, giving a big sigh?”

Lee got angry at the question from a woman he didn’t even know, so answered back bluntly.

“None of your business.”

“I’m a person from a humble background, but I may be of help to you, so please tell me candidly.”

“How can a woman fix my problems when the great men can’t?”

“They say many hands make light work, so it will be better off if we share any concerns we have.”

As the maiden did not back down and continued to ask him questions compassionately, Lee opened up about his impoverishment. After listening to his story, the maiden told him if he follows her, he will receive rice (Oral Literature Research Team 1964).

The male protagonist endeavors to find any means to live. He climbs the mountain to fill his stomach with the skin of pine trees. That is when he meets his savior of life, Ch’ōngryongkaksi. She is a savior who helps him to overcome his poverty and who provides composure in his life.

Two different reactions of the male protagonists to “poverty” represents how strange encounters provide certain powers in their lives respectively. Roles and significance of mysterious women are also slightly different according to happiness and type of wealth that the male protagonists attain. Chinekaksi of South Korea is the savior of the poor and the healer for the depressed and the discouraged, whereas Ch’ōngryongkaksi of North Korea is a divine being which affects not only the male protagonist but a vast number of people. South Korea’s Chinekaksi is similar to the type of character from pre-division era whereas Ch’ōngryongkaksi



of North Korea has a supernatural aspect or the ability to produce the rain of rocks which is a singularity only seen in North Korean tales.

Another noticeable aspect in North Korean version of the tale is the detailed depiction of the fight between Ch'ongryongkaksi and her competitor.

“When I fly up to the sky with the yellow dragon before sunrise, please shoot the yellow dragon with this bow. If you do, I will repay your kindness.”

Lee went out to the riverside early next morning. The blue dragon and the yellow dragon were fighting in the sky. Lee drew the bow but couldn't dare to shoot. The fight went on for some time, but two dragons failed to battle it out and came back to the ground. The blue dragon changed into the woman after coming back to the ground and spoke to Lee in tears.

“If you fail to shoot tomorrow again, I will lose because I'm a woman.”

On the next day, Lee made up his mind firmly and went to the riverside again. Two dragons were fighting against each other just like yesterday, and dragon scales sparkled whenever sunlight touched them. He opened his eyes wide and shot when yellow dragon twisted the body toward him. The yellow dragon died when his arrow hit him (Oral Literature Research Team 1964).

Battle in the sky appears in *Chinegaksi* as an important motif, but the role of male protagonist is not underlined. But as mentioned above, the man in *Ch'ongryongŭi poumn* plays an important role during the battle of shooting the arrow to help Ch'ongryongkaksi. With the confidence of the male protagonist, the display of courage after overcoming the fear plays a decisive role for the ascension of the blue dragon. Ch'ongryongkaksi who turned into a dragon with the help from the man rains rocks on to the village to stamp out corrupt ruling class and presents fertile land to the villagers. On the other hand, in *Chinegaksi*, the battle of Chinekaksi and the competitor is depicted concisely, followed by the ascension of Chinekaksi and the man and his family live happily ever after with the fortune from Chinekaksi.

The main plot of two stories is similar in a sense that a poor man forms a special relationship with a heterogeneous being and that relationship brings a big turn of

life for both, with small differences in detail as described above. Real problems in our daily lives and the significance of those issues are highlighted when two stories are juxtaposed with one another. By juxtaposing the North Korean tale with the South Korean tale, it is possible to find out special meanings in the North Korean version of the tale.

### 3. Narrative Value of the North Korean Tale *Ch'ōngryongŭi poŭnn*

What differentiates the archetype of North Korea's *Ch'ōngryongŭi poŭnn* from *Chinegaksi* is the ending of the tale where the blue dragon eradicates irrational ruling class and provides fertile land to the peasants. In *Chinegaksi* of South Korea, the man and his family obtains fortune, and the centipede ascends to heaven with the faith from the man whereas *Ch'ōngryongkaksi* in *Ch'ōngryongŭi poŭnn* asks the man to shoot the arrow during the battle with the yellow dragon and ascends with the help from the man. After the fight, *Ch'ōngryongkaksi* asks the man to make a wish.

“Now I can ascend to heaven as a dragon and I don't know how I can repay your kindness. If you have any wish, please tell me.”

Lee slowly stuttered a reply.

“People are starving because of the drought in our village, so I would be more than happy if you could supply water to the field.”

As soon as he finished speaking, the maiden and the tile-roofed house disappeared into thin air. Lee hurried back home as if he just woke up from a dream.

On the fourth night since Lee came back home, he dreamed about a blue dragon who came down from the sky telling him that rocks will be raining down tomorrow night so that he must take the villagers to the mountain to save them. Lee woke up early the next day and walked around the village to take the villagers to the mountain. Because of his good nature and sincerity, the villagers trusted him and evacuated as he said whereas the noblemen and landowners cursed him saying that

Lee must be out of his mind after wandering off in the mountains and sniffed at him.

It was that night. Suddenly, out of nowhere, black clouds covered the sky. Thunder and lightning shook the heaven and the earth, and a sudden shower of rocks poured down. The noblemen and landowners who cursed Lee were struck dead by the rain of rocks.

After about half an hour, the blue dragon came down to the village and rubbed the rocks and returned to the sky. The villagers came down to the village as the sun rose to find vast fertile land in the village. They also found a new large cave with abundant water coming out of it under the mountain. Lee and the villagers equally shared the fertile land and lived happily ever after (Oral Literature Research Team 1964).

The man's wish was none other than the abundant water to get rid of drought. Compared with *Chinegaksi*, the battle with the yellow dragon was added to the story, and the plot develops from a dream come true for an individual into a fortune for a group of people.

The man's wish of having an abundant source of water in the village is significant. From the beginning, the man did not despair due to poverty and consistently displayed the strong will to carry on with his life and was active. And he did not limit the fortune from the blue dragon to himself but tried to share that fortune with others. He is the kind of independent person that North Korean society wants everyone to be and also displays collective morality of North Korea. The tale repetitively shows desirable attitude of a person from the North Korean perspective.

"Rain of rocks" which was a response to the man's independence and morality plays various roles. The ruling class who could not trust the man were killed off by the rain and the vast land goes to peasants just like the male protagonist. And the rain of rocks which was a punishment to the ruling class changes to an affluent stream of water and drought-stricken land becomes fertile, just with the touch from the blue dragon. Peasants who suffered from the tyranny of the ruling class and the drought fairly divided the fertile land and lives happily ever after. In this tale,

the rain of rocks represents strong criticism on the feudal status system, punishment to unjust tyranny, and affluence given to the grassroots of the society.

The blue dragon is an enormous power that supervises all of this. A blue dragon maiden who shared difficulties with the man and helped each other grew up to a bigger presence who holds the power to punish unjustness in the world and shares wealth equally for everyone in an impartial manner. She not only solves the man's impoverishment but also cuts off the contradictions of the society in which poverty is always handed down to the next generation for the peasants and provides the ultimate solution. The North Korean version of the tale describes the exquisite view of the fertile land with the affluent amount of water and gives an impression that the people are being protected by the blue dragon.

Heterogeneous beings in *Ch'ōngryongŭi poŭnn* or *Chinegaksi* have different appearances but essentially are same as they share feelings with humans and solve significant problems that the men have in their respective lives. Literary fantasy of becoming intimate with eccentric heterogeneous beings represent people's hope to meet a friend who can find possibilities amidst the impossibilities of the real life. In *Chinegaksi*, readers can look forward to a close friend who can save themselves from depression caused by hardships in life, and in *Ch'ōngryongŭi poŭnn*, readers can look forward to a hero-like friend who can overthrow an irrational social system in the macroscopic perspective. Our traditional stories depict friends who can bring happiness to us through heterogeneous beings close to humans.

Both North Korea's *Ch'ōngryongŭi poŭnn* and South Korea's *Chinegaksi* depict special affections and trust of the main characters. Heterogeneous beings taking care of male protagonists like their mother, or the male protagonist not leaving or harming the maiden even after he finds out their true identities are identical in both tales. A mysterious old man appears to tell the man about the real identities of the maiden and threatens him that he will get killed soon if he doesn't attack the maiden first. He finds out who the maiden really is with his own eyes and his body must have stiffened with fear and probably began to lose faith in the relationship with the maiden. He must take prompt action to attack this fearful being, but he is reluctant to do so even after learning about her identity. Soon,

he changes his mind and helps the maiden.

In *Ch'ōngryongŭi pōŭm*, the man does not cough before entering the house just like the maiden told him to do after meeting the old man to find out her identity. He is instantly terrified and feels as if his hair has bristled up, but eventually calms down first, coughs, then enters the room. The *Ch'ōngryongkaksi* already knows about his encounter with the old man and confesses everything and asks for help.

The process of the male protagonist calming down and changing his heart for the maiden is depicted in *Ch'ōngryongŭi pōŭm* in a straightforward manner. His inner conflict is described in detail and clearly shows why the man makes a certain decision. When the man does not act according to the competitor of the centipede who appeared as the man's father and not kills the maiden, the centipede asks why he did not kill her.

“Because of you, we lived a comfortable life and were happy. (.....) What more could I ask for when we lived happily because of you?”

The maiden carried him on his back and rejoiced.

“You can live, I can live. You can turn out fine and I will too because of you and your kindness. (.....) Because of your good heart, I can be a dragon. I can become a dragon, and you will be happy. Your family will be happy generation after generation.” (Shin 2015)

The reason the male protagonist changed his mind was quite simple. He and his family could live comfortably at least for a few months because of her. It was her who helped him to escape from poverty, and it was her who saved his life. So he was ready to give up his life for her if she wanted it to become a dragon.

The man could make such decision only because he overcame the fear of possible death. If he failed to overcome the fear, he would have quickly killed the maiden to be at ease. However, the man looked back his relationship and the history with the maiden in *Chinegaksi*. By looking back at their history, he gained the power to make the decision for her. As he ruminated on the history of their relationship, intimacy with the maiden was a bigger force than fear to make the

courageous decision.

Such action of the male protagonist provides a valuable lesson about human relationships. When one has doubts that someone close may jeopardize him or her, one may regard that someone as a terrible being such as a centipede or serpent. But quickly pushing away someone and severing the relationship with that person to stabilize one's life proves that one lacks power and confidence of his or her life as much as how quickly he or she cut off the relationship. Having composure like the man in *Chinegaksi* to take the time to take a walk outside and to look back at the time that he spent with the maiden will guarantee earnest trust and deep intimacy as much as the time he took to look back.

If somebody is disappointed at me but if that person tries to believe me by looking back on the time we shared, I would be so grateful, and the centipede maiden would also have been grateful to the man. *Chinegaksi*, which was transmitted by many people orally, describes how happy the maiden was. Just like the version mentioned above, the maiden sometimes gives a piggyback to the man and jumps around to express joy, and in another version of the story, the maiden is amazed at her own ability of judging the man's character correctly and slaps her own lap to express pure joy. This is more than her feeling of relief that she can now be a dragon. It is close to the thrill when one confirms the belief and loyalty for each other. *Chinegaksi* was in great joy when someone she judged as a good person demonstrated his power, and when she confirmed the confidence she had about the relationship.

In this context, the relationship of the man and the maiden in *Ch'ōngryongŭi poŷmn* cannot be regarded as just a simple relationship where kindness is provided and repaid. Even though the details are described, inner conflict and concerns of the man just like in *Chinegaksi* and the depth of trust and loyalty similar to these two share is hidden in between the lines. Just as the man risked his life to be loyal to the serpent, just as the maiden presented a new world to the man after becoming a blue dragon, readers can find trust and loyalty which are the outcomes of the relationship of the two in *Ch'ōngryongŭi poŷmn*. Family members of the man shared the fortune they received from *Ch'ōngryongkaksi* with their neighbors and the villagers even believed and followed the man when he said unreliably that

the shower of rocks will pour down.

*Ch'ongryongüi poünn* and *Chinekaksi* offered happiness to all of those who trusted and followed her. The ending of this tale depicts “symbiosis” in which those who fought fear and doubts and committed to loyalty and confidence in others moving forward together. *Chinekaksi* ends with two main characters' dreams coming true and ascension to heaven, and *Ch'ongryongüi poünn* concludes with an extended symbiosis in which not only two main characters but everyone around them can lead better lives. The outcome of risking one's life to protect the relationship was symbiosis where everyone, including the two, could live happily ever after.

Heroines in *Ch'ongryongüi poünn* and *Chinekaksi* display interesting and diverse transformations. They change themselves from beasts such as a serpent or a centipede into beautiful ladies. They also meet the male protagonists, go through various experiences and eventually becomes dragons to ascend to heaven. *Ch'ongryongkaksi* and *Chinekaksi* are mythical beings that cannot exist in real life. They still symbolize different aspects of people. Under the skin, *Ch'ongryongkaksi* and *Chinekaksi* have images of human, beast, as well as the possibility to become the dragon. These images are referring to attributes of humans and animal as well as deity-like superpowers.

If one regards transformation into human beings by *Ch'ongryongkaksi* and *Chinekaksi* an uncovering of their partial identity and not deceptions, their transformations are not unpleasant nor threatening. The figure of serpents or centipedes are the strong beast-like instinct that beautiful maiden holds, and beast-like instincts are naturality of human beings and displaying such aspect does not always jeopardize situations.

People established civilizations and protected themselves so that their natural urges do not harm others. However, from time to time, high walls of civilizations overly invaded naturality of humans to cause unpleasantness and obsession rather than to provide stability. Human's naturality is constantly attacked within the walls, and eventually humans lose their unique vitality. This problem arises when the animal instinct of humans is regarded as a danger and therefore people try to suppress and eliminate them. Hysteria, aggressiveness and even issues of social

violence and war were discussed as such issues.

Therefore, animal instinct of Ch'ōngryongkaksi or Chinekaksi must be viewed from a broader perspective because they advance beyond human life and transform themselves to deities. The maidens competed with their opponents to determine who were qualified to be deities and the battles were the means to determine who is qualified to be deities. The decisive factor leading to divinity was inherent in their animal identities.

Moreover, trust that humans have in them was also a decisive factor leading to divinity. Scenes where the maidens and their opponents competing against each other to persuade the male protagonists were essential in the tales as the maidens, needed the trust of humans. This means that genuine humanity is added to their animal identity and symbolizes an exquisite combination of animality and human nature which forms divinity. The relationship of the male protagonists and the heterogeneous beings depict such eccentric and mythical combination.

Also, when one views the main topics of these tales as the issue of civilization and naturality of humans, the meaning of divinity depicted in imulkyokudam can be understood as more meaningful. The male protagonists respected the maidens even after finding out about their animalities. This plot is an honest and good human being acknowledging animal instincts. The naturality of humans is not rejected by artificial moral sense or ethics but is being accepted and approved by true humanity. Respecting natural instincts based on credible humanity can be a key to overcoming harmful consequences of excessive civilization.

Compared to *Chinekaksi*, *Ch'ōngryongūi poūnn* highlights the divinity. *Chinekaksi* ends with the maiden's ascension to heaven whereas Ch'ōngryongkaksi is deified as a dragon and brings the rain of rocks to the village. Then the dragon abolishes the civilization of ruling class which made people suffer and presents a new world to the man and the villagers by letting them recover their naturality which is fertile land and affluent water. *Ch'ōngryongūi poūnn* allows the readers to confirm directly and experience a grand process of combining animality and humanity to reach divinity. It shows that how respecting natural instincts based on credible humanity can open up a new era where everyone can rejoice.

North Korean society has the tendency to underestimate literary fantasy which



is distant from scientific facts. Based on socialistic realism, unrealistic fantasy is deemed as something uncivilized or trite and old. That is why some eccentric scenes or peculiar characters are sometimes modified or deleted based on their historical views from time to time. It is notable that a fantasy like *Ch'ongryongŭi poŭmn* is included in an important collection in such circumstances. The reason this tale is acknowledged in North Korean society despite the trend to underestimate such fantasy should be understood as an expectation toward divinity such as the rain of rocks brought by the blue dragon.

Analysis and assessment of North Korean literature should be done carefully with regard to social contexts including ideology, cultural differences, and division of Korean peninsula. It is dangerous to denigrate something based on our standard as the absolute value, and especially for modified version of traditional folktales that ethnic Koreans shared, one needs to capture carefully the intention behind modification and study mindset in the revised version to properly criticize them.<sup>2)</sup>

North Korean folktale *Ch'ongryongŭi poŭmn* well displays the original archetypical meaning of *Chinegaksi* such as special trust between human and heterogeneous being, the exquisite combination of animality and humanity which together forms divinity. Moreover, as the battle with the yellow dragon was added to the North Korean version of the tale, plot of the tale develops from an individual's fortune to the fortune of the entire group which demonstrates collective characteristics of North Korea. On top of such characteristics, this tale well captures the significance of the original tale by depicting people who fought fear and doubts and successfully secured trust and loyalty work together to build better lives. This is a good representation of extending ending of "symbiosis" to the larger group of people.

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2) Mindset and attitude of researchers on children's literature of North Korea is a crucial issue. Many researchers have shared their views on rejecting using studies as a means to criticize North Korean society (Ma 2012, 99-126). This study agrees to this keynote and aims to examine pros and cons of North Korea's intention of modification in detail.

## 4. Conclusion

This article compared how modern acceptance of two Koreas on folktales as a solution to intensifying division that is spreading out from the territorial division to division in daily lives for the past 70 years. By studying how traditional tales are transmitted in modern mediums in South and North Korea, and by comparing uniquely modified North Korean folktales with the folktales from pre-division era, the authors aimed to assess changed points literarily. North Korea changes traditional folktales to correspond to Juche ideology and spread the modified versions as literature for children. However, with the awareness that such modified tales cannot only be evaluated as political propaganda, the authors discussed the narrative value of the modern tale.

North Korean tale *Ch'ōngryongŭi poŭnn* which was covered in this article is a representative folktale which was modified based on Juche ideology. It is identical with *Chinegaksi* which is a representative folktale in the Korean peninsula except for the ending part. The difference in the ending is whether the fortune given to the male protagonist is individual or collective in its nature. This difference seems to be due to modification with the influence of collective morality and Juche ideology of North Korea. To assess the literary value of the modified narrative, this article learned about the identity and value of this tale based on the pre-division era records. And by comparing how modern tales in South and North Korea from a similar period and status accept archetype of this tale, this article aimed to analyze the narrative value of this tale.

North Korean tale *Ch'ōngryongŭi poŭnn* will be regarded as a necessary material to understand the social culture of North Korea and an old story with the message of social integration in the future society of the unified Korean peninsula. This tale is a story about two different beings trusting each other and working toward a better future. In other words, it is a story about the value of “symbiosis” being realized in the dimension of “group.” Despite the modification intention behind this literature which is based on the North Korean view of history, this tale is an important literary work that shows what kind of life “we” as a group should pursue in a modern society filled with suspicion and fear. The reason that

this study aims to not only understand the status of North Korea's modification of folktales but also to pursue literary analysis is to discover such narrative values which are covered with political purposes. The authors look forward to continued literary research on North Korea's modification of folktales as this paper so that modern creations of two Koreas can be enjoyed without prejudice or extortions.

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