

A Fusion of Dreams, a Crossing of Borders: On Ch'oe Inhun's Transformations of Korean Classical Literature*

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This article discusses two adaptations of Korean “classics” by Ch'oe Inhun (1936–2018), *Kuunmong* (1962) and *Kŭmo sinhwa* (1963), offering an in-depth comparative analysis of these works with their canonized Chosŏn Dynasty models by Kim Manjung (1637–1692) and Kim Sisŭp (1435–1493) to identify and interpret intertextual ties. I hypothesize that Ch'oe Inhun's unusual transformations of these core works of the national Korean canon—written in a South Korea churned by internal and external conflicts, during an age when historical and cultural memories were forged and a national heritage and identity designed to legitimize, demarcate, and mobilize were created—constitute narratives of intellectual dissent. This paper argues that Ch'oe Inhun's adaptations of *Kuunmong* and *Kŭmo sinhwa*, both developing meaning and impact out of the creative interplay with their premodern models, can be understood as having been specifically geared to run counter to policies of simplification, linearization, collectivization, and glorification of tradition brought forth by the government under Park Chung Hee (1917–1979).

Keywords: Ch'oe Inhun, Korean heritage, intellectual dissent, Korean literary canon, adaptation

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