



Seismic Melody/Spectral Sorrow: Simbongsa's Lamentation for Kwaak-ssi from the Pansori Epic Simchung-ga

Jon Sakata
Phillips Exeter Academy, USA

While pansori scholarship has placed focus on the important, indeed fundamental, role of vocalization techniques (especially vibrato); how discrete vibrato amplitude—amongst a range of parameters—is utilized to express concise poetic imaginaries and cogent design has often escaped analytical understanding. This paper examines how spectral analysis gives a perspective to peer into the diverse and highly particularized role of vocalization techniques in one of the climactic passages of the Korean pansori epic Simchung-ga. The paper also argues extending "melody" via the lenses of Deleuze's logic of sensation and seismology: where spectral gestures, phonemic atomization, vibrating spaces constitute lines of harnessed and unleashed force and color far richer, more complex, and destabilizing than reductive theories based on pitch, rhythm, and contour alone, as well as "vibrato" more commonly applied and understood.