

# Hahoe Pyolshin-gut T'al-nori

Adopted for robot faces theatre by Marek Perkowski.

This is only first variant. More work is needed, see below.

Persons – computer-animated robot heads with faces adapted from original Hahoe masks.

1. Male Lion
2. Female Lion
3. Ch'oraengi, the meddler, servant of Yangban
4. Paekchong, the butcher
5. Halmi, the old widow
6. Pune, young flirtatious woman
7. Chung, a wandering depraved Buddhist monk
8. Yangban, an aristocrat
9. Sonbi, the scholar
10. Imae, the fool, servant of Sonbi

- *Hahoe Pyolshin-gut T'al-nori, is a traditional play of Korean theatre. This ancient tradition is a combination of the mask dance, drama, and shaman rituals, consists of 9 different acts (i.e. episode, madang).*
- ***It is played in the village of Hahoe. This is one of the oldest continued and preserved tradition of world theater and is world famous. People all over the world come to this village to watch performances. Those that would criticize Hahoe for vulgarisms, should remember about vulgarisms of Greek, Middle Age European or Shakespearean theatres.***
- *Historically, Hahoe made fun of the ruling class, using humor and satire, and tried to ease tensions among the different social classes.*
- *In addition, the shaman rituals performed prayers for a prosperous year and were supposed to prevent natural disasters*
- *Here the play is adopted to robot heads (faces) that are stationary. They do not dance. When we write “dance” the heads will just shake and perform dancing movements to music.*
- *The performance is completely automated. All robots and lights are controlled by a computer.*
- *After the performance the public can talk to the actors and ask them questions. Then robots can demonstrate language understanding, emotions and property of their characters. Autonomous behavior will be demonstrated only in this second phase.*
- *The shamanic, ceremonial and religious parts are removed from this robot performance, dance of the original performance is replaced with music and songs singed by faces*
- *Faces will have from 4 to 18 degrees of freedom each.*
- *I will write complete robot-related didascalia and historical comments soon, but please give me your comments as soon as possible.*

- *If we will succeed, it will be the first in history robot theatre performance with talking heads.*
- *All your comments and suggestions are welcome. I compiled this text from various original sources. Translation to Korean will be provided, **and original Korean texts will be used in translation. We will try to be as close as possible to the historical original text.***
- *Based on my experience with robot head in Iizuka, the most difficult task of the first part of theatre will be to give truly emotional voices to robots. We can record them, but then their sound will be totally different than in the second part where the text to speech conversion is used. Perhaps we should mix recorded and compressed sound with text-to-speech in both parts.*



Yangban



Pung



Ch'oraengi



**Halmi**



**Imae (fool)**



**Paekchong (Butcher)**



**Chung (Fallen Buddhist monk)**



**Sonbi (Scholar)**



**Lion**

### **Act 3: Chuji Madang**

- A male and female lion (Chuji) sing and argue. (*Traditional Korean music*).
- We need to find or write the song of Chuji
- The female lion wins, promising the village a high productivity and an abundant harvest for the year
- Ch'oraengi (the meddler): Go away, you bad Chuji.
- Lions: (are silenced).

### **Act 4: Paekchong Madang**

The butcher Paekchong: Who wants to buy a bull heart? Look! It's still warm. Eat it and weaklings will become strong and dizziness will disappear. Nobody wants it? Huh, you people! Fancy not knowing the value of a fresh bull heart!

*He puts it into his bag and this time holds up a large brownish object.*

How about the testicles, then? Surely you must know what they are good for? What is more important than virility for a man? An old man with two young wives is envied by all; even Confucius was married and had children. There is nothing like the balls of a bull to improve a man's performance. Bull balls for sale! Anybody for the bull balls?

*Korean Traditional Music. Paekchong sings. We need the song of Paekchong.*

- When it thunders, Paekchong gets frightened and becomes silent.

### **Act 5: Halmi Madang**

The Old widow Halmi:

- Even though I have weaved my whole life, I have never hung new clothes on the stand for a guardian deity.
- (*It was said in those days that when one hung new clothes on the stand for a guardian deity, good fortune would come to one. Thus, people competed with each other to hang up new clothes.*)
- Oh my back! It's killing me. Listen, folks, have you ever seen a more wretched creature than I?
- Widowed at fifteen, only three days after my wedding. Poor little me.
- I've had to fend for myself, begging for food here, begging for work there! Always hungry, often cold!
- Oh, what is the point? I'll stop working and dance for a while.

- *She sings Beteulga (a song for a loom), begging the spectators for donations. This act symbolizes the conflicts between social classes and the pain of life of the common people. We need to find or write the song of Beteulga.*

### **Act 6: Chung Madang**

- A young woman (**Pune**) sings. *We need a song of Pune.*
- **Chung** : Hello, pretty maid. I may be a monk, but I'm also a man. You have aroused me by showing me your private parts and letting me smell your urine. Come! Come and dance with me
- **Pune**: feigns resistance coquettishly for a little while, but soon sings a love song with **Chung**.
- **Ch'oraengi** : *(enters pointing to the couple)* Oh, my gods! Did you see that! Whatever next, I wonder? The Buddhist monk and Pune! Well, I never!
- *The fool, Imae appears, smiling broadly*
- **Ch'oraengi** : Hey, Imae! Did you see the monk and Pune disappearing into the bushes? Have you ever heard of such a thing?
- **Imae**: *just grins and makes stupid faces.*
- **Ch'oraengi** : Ah, well, no matter. It's a funny world. Come, let's sing together
- *The two sing together the song that satirizes the religious corruption of those days. We need their song.*

### **Act 7: Yangban and Sonbi Madang**

- *The Yangban and the Sonbi are sitting down, a long way from each other.*
- *They clear their throats unnecessarily, stroking their long beards.*
- *Each one is trying to look more dignified than the other.*
- *Ch'oraengi rolls in, all excited.*
- **Ch'oraengi**: Oh, my masters. I have just seen something really outrageous. Absolutely scandalous! Can you imagine, masters?
- **Yangban**: What is the fellow babbling about?
- **Sonbi**: Come to the point at once!
- **Ch'oraengi**: Pune and the Monk, my lords. I saw him carry her off into the bushes with my own eyes. Have you ever heard of such a disgraceful thing?
- **Yangban**: Pune and a Buddhist monk, of all people. What is the world coming to? However, not to worry. Just bring Pune here.
- **Sonbi**: That's a good idea. Boy, go and fetch her.
- *Head of Pune that did not move so far, becomes animated. She is coy and pretends to be timid..*
- **Yangban**: Is that you Pune? Come, girl. Come and massage my back.
- *Pune goes to Yangban and starts massaging his shoulders.*
- **Yangban**: Sir, as Pune here well knows, there is no family around here to match mine.
- **Sonbi**: That may be true, sir, but I have mastered "Sa-so-sam-gyong\*." Come, Pune. Come and massage my arms. There's a good girl.

- (*\*Four "Soes" and three "Gyongs":the Chinese classics all Confucian scholars had to study during the Choson Dynasty. There were four books whose titles ended with "So", and three with "Gyong".*)
- *Pune flirts between the two men, talking about massaging their arms and backs coquettishly. Her face is surrounded by men's faces, so she turns left and right to her suitors when she speaks or sings.*
- *Hearing Sa-so-sam-gyong, Ch'oraengi pricks up his ears and jumps in.*
- **Ch'oraengi:** You have mastered only three "Gyongs" sir. I know at least six "Gyongs".
- *They all look at him in bewilderment.*
- **Sonbi:** What do you mean by six "Gyongs", boy?
- **Ch'oraengi:** I'll tell you, sir. First, Palman-dae-jang-gyong (*\*Eighty Thousand Wooden Blocks for printing the Buddhist scriptures kept in Haeinsa Temple, dating back to the Koryo Period. Over the ages the Korean people have taken considerable pride in these magnificent blocks.*). Second, a Buddhist Monk's Para-gyong (*Chanting of the sutra accompanied by the para, a musical instrument which resembles two plates*). Third, a blind man's an-gyong (*glasses*). Fourth, an apothecary's Kil-gyong (*Chinese balloon flowers used for medicine*). Fifth, (*Putting his hand in front of his mouth, in a hushed voice,*) a virgin's wol-gyong (*monthly periods*). Sixth, a farm laborer's sae-gyong (*wages*).
- **Yangban:** (*Looking disgusted*) Really, I've heard it all.
- **Sonbi:** Whatever next!
- **Yangban:** Sir, it's no good arguing in front of these philistines.
- **Sonbi:** I agree with you, sir. There is no point.
- **Yangban:** Let's all have a song and dance together instead.
- *They all dance around.*
- *Halmi appears and tries to chip in.*
- *Sonbi looks at Halmi's face and pushes her away.*
- *Yangban frowns at her and does the same.*
- *Pune dances with Sonbi, next with Yangban.*
- *Halmi joins Ch'oraengi and dances with him.*
  
- *Enters the **Paekchong** (Butcher), carrying the bull testicles.*
- **Yangban:** What is that object in your hand?
- **Paekchong:** I'm selling it, sir.
- **Yangban:** What? Really, dirty fellow. Go away and take that horrible thing with you.
- **Paekchong:** One moment, masters. Please, would you be good enough to listen to me? They say that there is nothing like the balls of a bull to improve a man's virility.
- **Yangban:** (Getting hold of them) Is that really true? I'll buy them then.
- **Sonbi:** (Trying to snatch them from the Yangban) No, I spotted them first. They're mine.
- **Yangban:** Would you mind, sir? I was offered them first. Therefore, they're mine.
- **Halmi:** The Yangban says they're his balls, and the Sonbi says they're his. Whose balls are they anyway? I've lived more than sixty years in this world, but I've

never seen anyone fighting over bull balls. The fight and they lost bull's testicles.  
So I can pick them and show to you!

- **Imae:** Look! Tax-collectors are coming to collect taxes..... !
- **Sonbi** (in panic) Pay taxes!!
- **Yangban** (in panic) Pay my taxes!
- **Pune:** pay taxes!!
- **All:** We do not want to pay our taxes!!!!
- *Korean Music, all sing that they do not like to pay taxes. **We need this song.***