THE INFLUENCE OF SHAMANISM ON KOREAN CHURCHES AND HOW TO OVERCOME IT

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DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

By

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What problem do Korean churches have now? Korean churches have had serious growth problems since the 1990s. Although Korean churches have grown rapidly with the economic growth of Korea, there have been many contributions and evil influences of shamanism, which lies deep in the minds of Korean people. Obviously, shamanism has made a contribution to growth of the Korean church since Christianity was introduced. Many churches and pastors have consented to or utilized such a tendency. However, this created serious problems. Shamanism is anti-Biblical. Shamanism brought about a theoretical combination, transmutation of religion and many mistakes in church life. A questionnaire was used to reveal these facts. Ultimately, this thesis calls attention to shamanist elements in Korean churches and suggests how to eliminate them.
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"But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10).
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Korea is not a secluded country any longer. In terms of world politics, Korea attracts attention because it remains the last divided nation. The remnants of the cold war era, even at the turn of this new century, leave much unrest and many family tragedies.

Korean Christianity also attracts attention. South Korea interests the global community because of the insurmountable growth rate of the Christian population in a short period. Samuel Moffet, once a missionary in Korea, recollects the dramatic phenomenon with statistics as follows:

There were 10,000 to 17,000 Catholics in Seoul when my father arrived in 1890. According to the records in 1889 there were only 74 Presbyterians. After 40 years in 1930 there were about 41,500 Christians which is the equivalent of 2% of the entire Korean population. In other words, in 1890, 1 out of 100, in 1930, 1 out of 50, in 1955, 1 out of 20, and in 1987 to the present time, 1 out of 4 people is a Christian.¹

It is obviously true that a miracle has occurred in the churches of this land. One of the most pivotal issues in the 1960s and 70s was the skyrocketing growth of the Christian population. It is estimated that there were approximately 350,000 Christians just after the liberation from Japan. That number grew to 600,000 in 1955 and steadily climbed to 1,200,000 in 1965 and finally leaped up to 3,500,000 Christians in 1975. Today about

seven million Christians live in South Korea. Since the 1960s it has been reported that six new churches have been started everyday. In quantitative terms it can be said that during the 1970s the Christian population has grown by 600,000 every year.²

How can it be explained? This phenomenon has drawn the attention of world-renowned scholars like Patrick Johnston who explains the rapid growth of Christianity in Korea.

Praise God for the Korean church-founded on sound indigenous principles, blessed with revival, refined by suffering and now becoming a significant missionary sending body. The well-attended daily early morning prayers meetings are a notable characteristic. As a result over 20 churches are planted every day, and the gospel has penetrated every part of society. Pray that wealth, success and cultural acceptable may not stunt this growth or dampen the spiritual energies of Christians.

The capital city, Seoul, is almost 40% Christian, with over 7,000 churches, and is also home to ten of the 20 largest congregations in the world. The largest Presbyterian and Methodist congregations in the world are here.³

What is the driving force behind the rapid expansion of the Korean Church? The search for that answer has continued both in Korea and abroad. The majority of the missionary scholars and the leaders of the Korean Church believe that such growth resulted from internal and cultural factors.

_The Korean Repository_ (1892,1895-8) and _The Korean Review_ (1900-1905) contain reports from the foreign missionaries to Korea, and are invaluable references showing the driving forces behind the growth of the Korean Church in the early stage.

Charles A. Clark, _The Korean Church and the Nevios Methods_ (1930) and Harry A. Rhodes, _History of Korean Mission, Presbyterian Church U.S.A._ (1935) provide excellent information on the policies and methodology of the missionaries in Korea and the role of the Korean Presbyterian Church in the history of growth. Roy E. Shearer points out in his book _Wildfire: Church Growth in_ ² S. Lee, "Ishuro Bon Hankook Kyohoesa" [The History of South Korean Church in Terms of Issues], _Pitgwa Sogum_ [Light and Salt], (Seoul: 1997 (May).

Korea (1966) the differences in church growth depending on the interaction of the regional and cultural factors. Spencer J. Palmer, *Korean Christianity* (1967), compares evangelism in Korea and in China and examines the relationship between Korea's traditional culture and Christian evangelism.4

These books briefly mention localization, new methods, homogenous traits of the Korean society, social and political situations, and contributory role of foreign missionaries, revivalism movement of 1907, nationalism, and healing ministry as the common denominators of the expansion of the Korean Church.

More specifically, James Grayson classifies the factors behind the growth of the Korean ministry into four main groups.

1) The rejection at the end of the last century of the Confucian values of the Chosen Dynasty (1392-1910) by the younger, progressive elements of the social elite which in turn predisposed them to accept novel and non-traditional ideas.
2) The lack of any essential conflict between Christianity and the key values of the Korean society, and the highlighting of parallels between Christianity and certain elements of the folk religion.
3) The early achievement of tolerance for the new religion by the elitists and the eventual close associated of Christianity with Korean nationalism during the Japanese colonial era (1910-1945).
4) The lack of any organized religious resistance to the advent of Protestant Christianity.5

In the meantime, many South Korean scholars, too, have tried to search for the driving forces behind the expansion of the Korea Church. One of the leading works on the history of the Korean Church was Kim Yang-sun's, *The Ten-year History of the Liberation of Korean Christianity* (1956). *The Encounter of Christianity with...

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Traditional Culture and Ethics in Korea (1970) by Park Bong-bae deals with the aspects of culture and ethics in the growth of the Korean Church: Min Kyoung-bae explains in his book History of Korean Church (1974) the expansion of the Korean Church from the nationalistic standpoint.

In 1983, No Bong-lin and Marlin Nelson published Korean Church Growth Explosion, commemorating the centennial of the Protestant Church. They argue that the concept of God and religion; vigorous evangelical efforts; a unique social and political situation; the indigenization of the Korean church; and division of churches are the underlying factors behind the growth of the Korean Church. They argue that shamanism has affected the growth of the Korean Church to some degree. In their argument, supernatural gods and spirits, that were believed to bring about good fortune and prosperity, have been greatly entwined with the daily lives of the Korean people.

1. Statement of the Problem

Korean scholars in general accept that one of the main reasons for the expansion of the church in Korea was the belief of shamanism that asserts material wealth and health are provided in the present lifetime. In other words, expectation and dependence upon a supernatural power of shamanism was transferred to Christianity. In fact, most scholars in this field agree that spirit worshipping and shamanism are strongly relevant to

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the growth of the church. McGavran, a renowned scholar in the field of church
expansion, defends the notion that spirit worshipping plays a major role in its growth.\(^7\)
Shamanism, in the form of spirit worshipping, was the most typical and essential
religious phenomenon that is also the oldest form of religion in Korea.\(^8\) Roy E. Shearer,
who was avidly interested in the shamanism aspect of the expansion of the Korean
Church, claims as follows:

Through animistic religion, the people of Korea were able to accept and understand
some important tenets of the Christian faith. They were prepared in a unique way
by the Holy Spirit to receive Christianity.\(^9\)

We can easily observe many acts based on shamanism in everyday life in South
Korea. Although the number of Protestants is on the rise, so are the practices of
shamanism. Statues of Dan Gun are still being erected. The ritual of bowing to pig’s
heads before the start of a construction project is still widespread. Many young
churchgoers seem to have no problem in taking part in \textit{Jaesa} (a rite of ancestor worship
in which one pays respect to one’s ancestors). Seemingly harmless acts such as throwing
a stone after going over a mountain or dropping a pebble into a well within a Buddhist
temple stem from shamanism.\(^{10}\) Thus this study aims to elaborate how to remove the
superstitious elements from the daily lives of Korean Christians and how to counter the
rise of cult Christian groups based upon Shamanism. These groups are responsible for

\(^7\) Y. Kim, \textit{op cit.}, p. 33.
\(^8\) D. Kim, \textit{Hankook Jongkyosa} [The History of the Korean Church], (Seoul: Heamunsa, 1963), p. 41.
\(^9\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 218.
\(^{10}\) \textit{Kytok Shinmun} [Daily Christianity], 1999, 4, 28.
much confusion within the Korean Church.

When this writer served as the chaplain of a Christian school it was a shock to discover that the head of the board and his wife were very much involved in shamanism. At the start of every year a geomancer would come and relocate the office fixtures. The Korean Churches abroad are no exception as they are miniature versions of the churches in Korea. It is disturbing to know that there are quite a few intellectuals from different denominations who seem to be receptive to shamanism. This phenomenon that shamanism has infiltrated the very core of the Korean Church motivated this study.

There have been several studies on the influence of shamanism on Christianity in Korea. There is a meaningful relationship between shamanism and the Korean Church and the rapid increase in the number of Christians. However, no substantial research has been conducted on this relationship. One reason for the lack of such a study is that shamanism, which is usually belittled as a form of superstition, has not been touched upon as an object of research. This attitude is more prevalent within Korea. Therefore the fact that shamanism may have had a contributing hand in the growth of the Korean Church has been deliberately overlooked. However, the seriousness of the problem caused by shamanism must be addressed in order to overcome the influence of it. The Korean Church must quickly discard the shamanism element lying within Christianity in Korea and establish itself in its true essential form. To that end, this study will examine both the negative and positive effects of shamanism on the Korean Church. The Korean Church has passed the pinnacle of the growth curve in terms of quantity and is now in the stage of either stagnation or reduction. At this critical juncture, this research will submit
an answer to overcome the influence of shamanism while minimizing the side effects of anti-shamanism campaigns within the church.

No one can deny that a vast number of Koreans are accepting Christianity with shamanistic expectations, which results in the serious contamination of true Christian lives. In spite of this, the Korean Church has yet to address the seriousness of this issue. As the new millennium begins, the Korean church has arrived at the crossroads of either continual growth or severe decline. The continual growth of the Church depends upon whether true Christianity can be attained or not.

2. Methodology and Scope of the Study

The Western European scholars have already begun the studies on shamanism since they first started taking interest and studying the Siberian shaman about three centuries ago. Though there are few things in Western Europe common to the Siberian shaman, the shamanistic practices like witches in Britain and Hexe in Germany still exist today and share similar essences with the Siberian shamanism. The first European who reported the Siberian Shamanism was a Dutch merchant, Everest Yssbrants Ies. Having traveled from Moscow to Beijing via Siberia in 1692-1695, he came upon a male shaman during the performance of exorcism in the northwestern region of Lake Vikal. He recorded this in his journal and subsequently published it in Holland. The world began to

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take an interest in the shaman.\textsuperscript{12}

Afterwards many scholars and explorers recorded their encounters with the shamans of eastern Siberia including the Kamchaka Peninsula in the early 18th century. Entering the 20th century, shamanism researchers attempted to find its essence by employing psycho-pathological terms. But by the 1950s, Mircea Eliade, Hans Findeisen and others were convinced that the phenomenon of mental illness was not a major factor in shamanism. In the 1970s, I. M. Lewis wrote on the social anthropological interpretation of shamanism, which focused on spirit possession. He defined the shaman as a person who is periodically possessed by a particular spirit.\textsuperscript{13} Since the 1980s several international conferences have been held on shamanism with Russia being at the forefront. Active talks concerning shamanism are also circulating among the Western nations.

Meanwhile, in Korea, studies on the Korean shamanism vary in modes. But it can generally be divided into four time periods. The first period was from 1900 to 1920, when it was usually the foreign missionaries who did the research. In the second period, from 1920 to 1930, the Korean scholars joined the studies. From 1930 to 1945, the third period, the Japanese were solely responsible for the research being done. The fourth period, the post liberation era, Korean scholars resumed their studies from the historical and nationalistic point of view.\textsuperscript{14} Especially in the 1970s Korean folk religion was

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p. 90.


\textsuperscript{14} H. Cho, \textit{op cit.}, p. 99.
investigated by several groups of Korean scholars. These were trained to use interdisciplinary methodologies of culture, anthropology, psychology, and religion.

3. Outline of Chapters

Chapter One covers the aims and objectives of this study and states the methodology and scope. Chapter Two defines shamanism and explains its religious concept structure. Chapter Three presents the origin of Korea's unique shamanism and its development within the Korean history and covers the initial clash of shamanism with Christianity.

Chapter Four focuses on the influence of shamanism on the Korean church in two aspects. Shamanism's contributions to the quantitative growth of the Korean Church, through revival services and the prayer movement is investigated. The elements of shamanism in Christianity that have caused theological confusion and the birth of many cult Christian groups is examined. This chapter also examines what has caused the deterioration of the faith and abuses in the lives of Christians. Chapter Five shows the extent the residue of shamanism exists within the lives of Korean Christians. This chapter reports on a survey conducted to analyze the typical Korean mindset. The participants of the survey were from five Presbyterian Churches in Korea.

There are many complicated forms of shamanism, therefore this paper must select and focus on the mostly widespread practices of folk religion.

Chapter Six suggests how the Korean Church can ward off shamanism. The solution is the restoration of a strong biblical faith. This project tracks down all the
references to shamanism in both the Old and New Testaments. Furthermore, it searches and summarizes God's warning regarding such folk religion. It is written in the Bible that God is essentially the Creator and the only God to worship. But faith of shamanism goes against that rule. The view of biblical blessings and life after death is presented. The second part of the solution is to move toward an active change in the culture by clarifying that resistance to shamanism is a holy war. People must realize that shamanism is a conspiracy to destroy God and this is a task the Church must take very seriously. Chapter Seven is the conclusion of the study.
Shamanism is very much a part of the Korean culture and heritage. It has survived for centuries, in part by being absorbed into new religions introduced to Korea. This chapter is to present a general overview of Shamanism. Definitions, history, and some of the basic beliefs will be examined to help the reader understand the impact Shamanism has made in Korea.

1. Definitions

An encyclopedia defines Korean shamanism as "the crystallization of the religious consciousness of the common class deeply rooted within the minds of the Korean people and is the very lively internalized religious phenomenon."¹ Korean folk religion is represented by shamanism. It is difficult to comprehend how shamanism, as a religious phenomena, has such far reaching consequences.² Some scholars prefer to subdivide animism and to deal with the subdivisions: shamanism, fetishism, and ancestor worship. They treat each as a religion in its own right, thus avoiding the term "animism" altogether. The popular use of animism comes from E.

¹ Hankook Jongshin Munhwa Yonkuwon, Hankook Minjok Munhwa Daebaekgwa Sajon [Encyclopedia on the National Culture], (Seoul: 1991)

B. Taylor (1871). He saw animism as being a doctrine of spiritual beings, which embodied the very essence of spiritualistic philosophy as opposed to materialistic philosophy. He felt that when it developed fully it formulated concrete beliefs in such notions as the soul, the future state, controlling deities and subordinate spirits, especially when these beliefs resulted in some kind of active worship.3

David Burnett defines it in a broad sense:

The rituals performed by the priesthood are symbolic of the religious and magical beliefs of the society. Among small communities the role of the priest ranges over many areas. He may perform the functions of a diviner, or a medicine man, or shaman. His rituals may range right across the spectrum from the purely magical to the purely religious.4

Eliade defined shamanism as an ancient technique used to experience the state of ecstasy.5 Shamanism is one of the widely recognized primitive religious phenomena in Northeast Asia where Korea is located. Shamanism is dispersed across Manchuria and Siberia. It is embodied in the religion of Moodang where the female shaman occupies the center.

Each Chinese character form has a specific meaning in itself, and the meaning of the Chinese character for female shamans '孔' (Moo) is usually translated as one who performs miracles. Missionary Alan Clark defined it as one who deceives.6

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Ryu's observation, shamanism is written as ‘巫敍’ in Chinese characters. The upper horizontal line in the first character (‘巫’) stands for the heavens or the spirits while the lower horizontal line in the character represents the earth or people. The vertical line between the two horizontal lines symbolizes the connection between heaven and earth. The two curved lines ‘人’ placed beside the vertical line illustrates a person dancing which is none other than the dancing shaman who plays the mediator's role between gods and people.7

Therefore, shamanism is generally associated with the magical religious faith and morals appearing in primitive communal societies where shamans were indispensable components. Shamanism is not confined to a specific religion, but is more of a religious attitude based upon the naturalistic view of Animism. Animism believes that gods and spirits with spiritual power are responsible for the happiness and misfortune of humans. This belief requires special persons with close relationships with the gods, and they become the mediums between gods and people. It is commonly believed that the mediums can not only communicate with the gods, but also manipulate them for purposes of fortune and bad luck.8

Shamanism considers the role of the shaman, the intermediary between the gods and humans, as very important. Shamanism is viewed as polytheism or polydemonism despite the fact it is heavily grounded on nature worshipping. There is no doubt that Moodang (female shaman) is the central element in the faith of the Korean folk religion:


The primary role of the priest is to act as a mediator between the people and the spirit world. As such he or she is an expert in ritual, and has the knowledge of the gods and spirits.\(^9\)

In other words shamanism is a religious phenomenon which is formed by the shaman possessing special powers of attaining ecstasy with her followers. The functions of \textit{Moodang} (female shaman) are: to mediate between the gods and people; to relay the wish of the spirits to the followers; to heal the sickness of the followers; and to provide entertainment with song and dance to the people. \textit{Moodang} performs an important rite for the families and village called \textit{Koot} which acts to chase out misfortune and bring in luck by keeping in touch with the spirits. \textit{Moodang} believed that \textit{Koot} was the sole way to answer the prayers of the people. Currently an active \textit{Moodang} is Choi Bo Sal, who explains \textit{Koot} as follows:

\textit{Koot} has been practiced since the ancient times in Korea. When \textit{Moodang} enters the state of complete absence of ego by singing and dancing, and goes through the stage of leaving the spirit, she comes into contact with the spirits and gets divine messages and she prays for the fate of the humans.\(^{10}\)

The purpose of the rite is for \textit{Moodang} to contact the ghosts for the person who requests it so she could pray for that person's wishes. But \textit{Moodang} can only meet the spirits at a special time set by the gods and therefore special procedures and venue for the rite are needed. \textit{Koot} is a large-scale rite that entails both song and dance. It signifies the meeting and dialogue between gods and humans, and is used to solve problems of the humans.

How the shaman meets with the spirits varies in different cultures. In most

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\(^{10}\) http://galaxy.channeli.net/choibosal/shaman03.htm.
cultures the shaman would leave his or her body to meet a god. However, the Korean shaman, despite sharing the same origin, would call gods into his or her body. This is a Mongolian and Chinese influence. While the shaman in most cultures would leave the body to find the gods, the Korean Moodang would accept the gods into her body. Thus it is gods who would descend. The Korean folk religion can be summarized as the following:

1) It is a religious phenomenon centered upon Moodang, who freely repeats the state of ecstasy attained from the experience of the mystique.
2) Moodang is a practitioner of ecstasy and is able to deal directly with the spirits in that state of ecstasy.
3) It is a religious belief that by negotiating with the spirits which are believed to have control over nature and the fate of the people, the destiny of nature and the happiness or misfortune of the human beings can be manipulated.11

2. The structure of the concept of folk religion

At the folk level there may exist a range of associated ideas, superstitions, divination and rituals. Norman Allison has proposed the following useful characteristics of high and low religion.12

According to the categorizations of Allison, Korean’s shamanism belongs to the group of low religion. Unlike the religions in the high religion category such as Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam; Korea’s folk religion has no particular system of beliefs which could be seen as a religious doctrine. But it does express its ideas through forms of myths, legends, songs and dances. So by going through these materials we can piece together the doctrine of Korea's

11 Ryu, op cit., p. 69.
shamanism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Religion</th>
<th>Low Religion</th>
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<tr>
<td>Answers cosmic questions:</td>
<td>Answers everyday issues:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origin of universe, meaning of life.</td>
<td>sickness, drought, war.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written texts with fixed system of beliefs.</td>
<td>No written text. Myths and rituals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist leadership roles.</td>
<td>Informal, no specialists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central institution: church, mosque, temple.</td>
<td>Few institutions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formal training.</td>
<td>Apprenticeship type of training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formalized moral teaching.</td>
<td>A moral system, pragmatic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no written mention of creation within shamanism. But shamans from the beginning of time have passed on their story through myths. It states that god divided the heavens and earth and brought order. In this view, the universe is split into three sections: the heavens, the earth, and the underground. In each of these places there were the sun, the moon, and stars. The highest part is the world of light and the heavens and is cohabited by the supreme god and several other gods, including the gods of the sun, the moon, and the stars. The middle part is occupied by humans and animals and ruled by the gods of earth, mountain, and man. Regarded as hell, the underground part is ruled by the King of Hell and the dead. It is believed that how humans lead their lives during their time on earth they could either ascend to the higher world or or descend to that of the lower.\(^{13}\)

There is an alternative view that the world is simply divided into the world

\(^{13}\) Ryu, op cit., p. 306.
of this life and the life after death. While it is understood that the world of this life is the world of reality, the world of the life after death is the world of spirits. But it is considered that these two worlds are not distinctly separated but more or less in continuity. From the time one is born to when one arrives at the door of death, life is a continuous process. This concept is similar in thought to Buddhism but it is actually from shamanism. 14

As it has already been pointed out, animism underlies shamanism. It is believed that powerful anima is present in tall trees and boulders. Strong and agile animals possess it as well. Stars and the sun also have it and underneath the nature worshipping of the tall trees and mountains, there exists a certain spirit worshipping for the Anima. The world of Anima is that of life, conflict, and power and all living things are affected by the causal rule of gods. The religious set of beliefs of shamanism is based on the primitive cosmic view.

1) The view of gods: A primitive polytheistic religion

There are 273 kinds of gods which are served in the Korean folk religion. They can be placed into thirty three different kinds of categories with twenty two being those of gods of nature and eleven being that of man. Various gods can be put into four groups: gods of the heavens, human gods, gods of earth, and evil spirits. The gods of the heavens and earth have existed from the beginning but the human gods and the evil spirits were added later. 15 Sixty-three percent of gods worshipped in


Korea's shamanism consists of the gods of nature, which are soil, mountains, and water. This tendency reflects the longtime traditional agricultural social structure of the Korean people.\footnote{Ibid., p. 162.}

The earth, mountain, water, and sky are ranked in order related to their relevance with the everyday lives of human beings. More specifically, gods can be ranked into four classes. The supreme god is a god in the heaven with gods of the sun, the moon, and the stars; while the gods of mountains, dragons, and earth belong in the middle group. The lower class of spirits sometimes inflict harm upon the humans when friction arises among them. Thus, it is difficult to differentiate between the good gods and the bad gods. Since these gods are responsible for deciding the fates of human beings, then villages and families have gods that act as patron saints. The gods of life and wealth, in particular, are the main objects of worship.\footnote{Hankook Jongshin Munhwa Yonkuwon, \textit{op cit.}, p. 43.} Even though spirits in shamanism rarely have character, there is distinction in the gender. It is difficult to find transcendence in shamanism. Most of the gods are immanent in existence except for the god of heavens and furthermore, there is no difference in matters of quality between the gods and humans.

It must be noted that in shamanism all humans are capable of becoming gods or evil spirits after death. For example, it was believed that if souls of men and women meet untimely, they could not avoid violent death, and eventually should end up being \textit{Youngsan}--a terrifying evil spirit. Cattle, if kept for an extensive period of time, could also become malicious spirits. A person could be a benevolent spirit or a malevolent one depending on how one meets one's demise. Life, death, and fate
of humans are in the hands of the gods and spirits. The moodang is able to communicate with them in the state of the absence of self-ego. If one serves any kind of god in earnest then one will be blessed; on the other hand, if one should be idle in serving the gods then personal consequences would have to be faced.¹⁸

According to the Korean folk religion, spirits are the dead spiritual beings bringing bad luck to humans, therefore, the living people have to console the dead spirits. All unhappiness and misfortunes of humans are believed to be the result of a disgruntled evil spirit. The evil dead spirit has the power to determine the entire fortunes of people.¹⁹

The greatest challenge in reforming the Korean culture and in performing the Christian evangelical activities is how to overcome the tendency that even Korean Christians attribute birth, aging, disease, and death to the evil spirits. This is the same belief as shamanism, which even can be regarded as the single most hazardous factor.

2) The Human View

Shamanism’s theory about the origin of life and the creation of the universe is close to the evolution theory. One of the Korean myths, Changsaega [The Poem of the Creation] explains that the human was originated from a worm.²⁰ As already discussed, the Korean shamanism’s view on humans is that spirits supposedly dictate

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every aspect of one's life ranging from the good to the bad. In that sense, it is very similar to fatalism.

From the moment of birth it is believed that Samshin (the goddess of birth) determines who can and who cannot have children, and looks after the children to see they grow well. The fate of people is in the hands of ghosts and spirits. These beliefs resulted in various forms of worship rites. In Korea, the typical rite is Koot. Many gods have very specific functions. Chilsungshin is the god responsible for one's life expectancy. Jaesukshin is the god to protect children from disease. Daegamshin is the god that endows wealth. Tojushin is the god that protects houses and buildings. Because of this, people tend to rely on the gods to solve their problems rather than to manage their own problems.

It is believed in shamanism that man is the dual combination of flesh and soul, and the latter, a formless type of energy, is the core of human life. Death is conceived of as the state of the soul’s departure from the flesh. Therefore, man’s life is determined whether the soul dwells in flesh or not. The soul, after moving out of the body, is then reborn as a new person or lives eternally in the world after death.\footnote{T. Kim, op cit., p. 302.}

3) The View on the Life After Death

The shamanistic view on life after death is related to the question of how one understands death. All rites which are given in relation to the world after death reflect the people's view of the soul. Thus, the view on life after death is directly extended from the view of the soul. The place where a person's soul would go after death, and

\footnote{T. Kim, op cit., p. 302.}
in what form does matter. There cannot be a life after death nor any kind of ceremony relevant to it, if the concept of the soul does not exist. By the same token, the view on the world after death focuses on people's attitude to the immortality of the soul.

Then in what light does shamanism see the human soul? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to distinguish the spirits from the ghosts in Korean terms. The ghost is the one which enters the world of the life after death while the spirit is the one which exists inside a living form. The soul is also divided into the soul of good, mediums, and bad. The soul is considered to have the same level of character as a living creature and receives equal treatment in the unconsciousness. Though its shape is like that of a human body it can only be seen in dreams and illusions. But usually it is not visible to the human eye and is similar to the formless air and breath which has no spatial limitations. It is immortal and wields invincible power.22

Paradise is considered to be the world after death in Korean shamanism, which is called Sochonsongkuk (the Heaven in the Western Sky) which lies west of Korea, equivalent to the Garden of Eden in the Holy Bible. There is food, clothes and no disease, war, nor death in Sochonsongkuk. It is a world of eternity and is believed to be located at the very opposite end of the practical and present world. As other side of a coin, there is also the concept of hell as well as paradise in the view of life after death in Korean shamanism. After a person dies he descends to the underground where he must pass by the ten kings who would then proceed to judge the sins and merits of his life. Then, depending on the verdict, the good soul ascends to the heavens whereas the guilty soul is sent to hell where all sorts of punishment await him. This was a change in the view of the hereafter after the influx of Buddhism. The

22Ibid., p. 12.
original folk version of the view of the world after death is that in the world of the hereafter, all ties to the world of this life are severed and a brand new idealistic life would begin.\textsuperscript{23}

The fact that faith in the present life is not necessary to go to the heavens in Korean shamanism is what separates it from the religion of the high class. Therefore, in Korean shamanism the view of the hereafter has taken more of a natural meaning rather than that of a religious meaning. Korean Shamanism is more in line with the early primitive religions with the souls going forward into the world of the hereafter as a part of the natural process. Thus, in the view of the hereafter of the high religions there lies a dual structure of the heavens and hell according to the good and the evil. In contrast, the shamanism world of the life after death was not split into different levels until punishment according to one's deeds of good or evil was conceived by humans.\textsuperscript{24} From this we are able to observe the primitive and basic morals and the view of world after death in the faith of Korean folk religion. This primitive belief later became mixed with Buddhism and Confucianism.

4) Fatalism

One of the main features of Korean shamanism is to rely on other people or forces to attain blessing or luck. Instead of making decisions for themselves they have Moodang or witches to rid them of misfortune. Despite that fact it concerns one's life and fate, one does not take responsibility for oneself and is simply willing to place everything on the shoulders of the gods or the witches. This implies the loss of one's

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., p. 6.

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., p. 14.
self-determination, as the person relies only on fate. This fatalism results in conservatism and stagnation.\(^{25}\) Therefore, the people accepting fatalism in Korean shamanism grow to be idle and lazy. They tend to blame fate for everything that happens surrounding them. Striving for earthly pleasure becomes the main goal. In other words, there is no spiritual world, no hope for the future, nor any kind of metaphysics. In shamanism there exists only the order of nature's circulation as well as the prayer for the well-being of one's family and village in the present life-time. The values are centered on the present and shamans perform a functionary role.\(^{26}\) Thus the followers of shamanism come to strive for pleasure of the moment as their main objective in life.


\(^{26}\) I. Kim, "Musokgwa Oyrae Jongkyo" [Shamanism and the Foreign Religions], \textit{Jayu} (1986.1), p. 27.
CHAPTER 3

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SHAMANISM

1. The Origin of the Korean Shamanism

This chapter will discuss the origin of the Korean shamanism, the practices of it, and the encounter of shamanism with Christianity in the 19th century. The Korean shamanism has had a long history. It had been at the fore of the ancient Korean people for four centuries since the pre-historic age until the influx of foreign religions. Even during the time the foreign religions were making inroads into the Korean culture, shamanism was still very much in the background. In the early 1900s G. Herber Jones, Director of the Korean Bible Research Center, explains the religious characteristic of the Korean people as follows:

The Korean is a religious man. He is not a theist. It might be said of him as Paul of the Athenians of old, he is very religious, for he finds gods everywhere. All nature is animated with them. He has a dim conception of continued existence after death, as his worship of the dead clearly indicates.¹

The Korean shamanism evolved in Mongolian and Manchurian areas along with the east coastal area of China. Later a group of people migrated to the Korean Peninsula in search of better climate and environment. As they settled

down, there came a natural change in the content of Korean shamanism.

The Korean folk religion, shamanism, is believed to date back to the Stone Age. It is uncertain when it was introduced to Korea.\(^2\) The first record on Korean shamanism is found in the King Namhae term of rule, the second dynasty of Shilla, which was A. D. 1st century. The first foreign religion to have come into Korea was Buddhism about the late 4th century A. D. It is safe to say, therefore, shamanism was present in the Korean Peninsula before Christ came to the Earth. Mircea Eliade states the following in his study on the origin of the Korean shamanism:

> In Korea, where shamanism is documented as early as the Han period, male shamans wear women's dress, and are far outnumbered by shamanesses. It is difficult to determine the origin of Korean shamanism; it may include southern elements, but the presence of stag horns on the shaman's headdress of the Han period indicates relations with the stag cult characteristic of the ancient Turks.... The present predominance of shamanesses in Korea may be the result either of a deterioration in traditional shamanism or of influences from the south.\(^3\)

It is necessary to trace back to the period when history was passed down by word of mouth in order to understand the origin and formation of Korean shamanism. Today Korea upholds *Dan Goon* as the forefather of the Korean people. This indicates that the beginning of shamanism must go back to the time of the *Dangoon* myth. The *Dangoon* myth dates back to around the 20th century B. C. This was the time when Kochosun, the first ancient tribe-state in the Korean history, existed. The *Dangoon* myth is the essence of the Korean shamanism.


Dangoon was not only the nation's founder but also the religious leader in a country where the state and religion were combined into one. According to the myth, if Moodang is considered to be a medium between the spirits and the people, Dangoon is the father of the Korean Moodang as he was the very symbol of the mediator between the heaven and the earth. One of the key points in the Dangoon myth is that the relationship between Dangoon and a god in the heaven were described in a way which emphasized the supremacy of gods of the heaven. The faith towards the god of heaven is the most important characteristic in the early spirit worship and shamanism. It is still true in today's shamanism as well.

2. Shamanism in Korean history

The first three major ancient states which appeared in the Korean peninsular were Kokyuryo (37 BC—AD 668), Paekjae (18 BC—AD 660), and Shilla (57 BC—AD 935). Samgooksaki, one of the oldest history books on Korean history, describes the rites of shamanism in Kokyuryo. For instance, it is written that King Yuri begged for forgiveness from his servants' souls whom he had buried alive using Moodang as a vehicle when he fell ill. King Euja of Paekjae called Moodang to ask about the destiny of the country. In Shilla, the higher form of address for the king was "次雄" in Chinese characters. The second character '雄'

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5 Ibid., p. 16.

6 J. S. Gale, "A History of the Korean People," Korea Mission Field (Seoul, Korea: Published serially from July 1923-September 1927), No pagination. Chapter 8.)
means shaman in Chinese.

After the unification of the three countries to the Shilla Kingdom (A.D.668), Buddhism was declared as the state religion. But Hwarangdo, the major military machine contributed to the unification of the three ancient states, was actually an organization based on shamanism. The name, Hwarangdo, refers to the spiritual movement as well as the political and social class along with the elites.\(^7\) Palkwanhoe, a rite held during the Shilla Kingdom period, was formally a Buddhist rite but it was actually a mixture of shamanism with Buddhism. Many rituals that included various types of entertainment were given to worship gods of the heaven, mountains, and dragons.

The Koryo Dynasty, which followed Shilla, also adopted Buddhism as its state religion. Several kings were fanatic about shamanism and called the shamans to the palace to have them sing and dance. Wangkon, the founder and first king of Koryo, made Yondunghoe (a ceremony of lighting up candles inside paper-made lotus flower) and Palkwanhoe, both rites tied to shamanism, as official ceremonies of the state. Both of these rites were related to shamanism.\(^8\)

Shamanism could also be seen in the everyday lives of the common people of the Koryo Dynasty. When people were sick, instead of using medicine they consoled the soul by giving rites in a belief that the soul was responsible for the ailing body. Moodang sometimes presided over state ceremonies.

During the period from King Taejo to the last king, moodang was always


\(^8\) B. Lee, *Hankook Yoksa: Jungsepyon* [The Korean History: The Middle Ages], (Seoul: Bulyu Munhwasa, 1961), pp. 202-204.
summoned during the time of famine to perform the rite of praying for rain. It is said during the age of King Chunhye that linen and cotton were collected from moodang as tax.\(^9\) From the fact that tax was collected from shamans during the Koryo period one could presume that there were quite a few moodangs during that time, even though it was a Buddhist nation.

After the fall of Koryo, Chosun came to take its place. Chosun abolished Buddhism as the state religion, replacing it with Confucianism. During this period, shamans along with Buddhist priests belonged in the lower class and were looked upon in disdain. Nevertheless, there are various mentions of the activities of Moodang in several documents from that time. Moodang still played a functional role not only in the people's homes but also within the king's palace and furthermore conducted national ceremonies and acted as a prophet.\(^{10}\)

The shamans were also deeply involved in the lives of the people. During the reign of Chosun's King Soonjo, the tax of the shamans was one roll of cotton cloth per Moodang. At this time, shaman taxpayers numbered around 2,600. Moodangs were cast outside the castle claiming they were misleading the people with their witchery.\(^{11}\) Yet in times of drought the shamans were brought in by the king to perform the rite to pray for rain. As can be seen from above, shamanism continued to remain a fixture in the lives and minds of the Korean people, despite the changes in the political, historical and cultural landscape.


3. The Encounters of Christianity with Shamanism

Nestorian first introduced Christianity to Korea in the early 8th century in vain. Karl Gutzlaff, the first protestant missionary to come to Korea, mentioned the spirit house for the shamanism rite during his visit in 1832. Then the Western missionaries started making their way into the Korean Peninsula in the late 19th century. Rev. G. Underwood and Rev. Henry G. Appenzeller and his wife, came to Korea on Easter morning, April 5, 1885. Christianity had finally made its entrance to the land where shamanism was deeply embedded.

The missionaries and foreigners who came to Korea during the late Chosun Dynasty could easily observe that shamanism was a part of the cultural fabric of Korean society. James Gale was clearly able to see that shamanism in Korea ran deep and wide:

Korean belief (Shamanism) is that earth, air, and sea are posed by demons. They haunt every embargoes tree, shady ravine, crystal spring, and mountain crest. . . . This belief keeps the Korean in a perpetual state of nervous apprehension, it surrounds him with indefinite terrors, and it may truly be said of him that he sees demons, here, there, and everywhere. They touch the Korean at every point in his life, making his well-being depend on a series of acts of propitiation, and they avenge every omission with merciless severity, keep him under the yoke of bondage from birth to death.

Furthermore Gale expressed his concern over the severe degree of which

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shamanism influenced Koreans. "The whole land is shadowed by these (Shamanistic things) as was Egypt by the swarms of locust which came up to strip her."\textsuperscript{15}

Several records document the prevalence of shamanism during that time. According to one statistic during the period from 1890 to 1900 the average farmer's yearly income was 30 dollars while the shamans practicing in Seoul made up to 75 dollars per month, which is thirty times more.\textsuperscript{16} This shows that a large number of Koreans went to shamans and found themselves dependent on them in their daily lives. Another record states the following in regards to the circumstances of that time:

Shamanism is the base of the faith of the Korean people. This holds true especially in the northern region. Despite the influence of Buddhism we will find that no significant change has occurred in the religion of the Korean people over the last 2000 years. Worship of the gods of heaven, earth, mountains, rivers, and stars still exist. The custom of offering lambs or bulls as sacrifice is still practiced.\textsuperscript{17}

The age of Japanese colonialism came after the downfall of the Chosun Dynasty. The annexation to Japan in 1910 lasted until 1945. Even then shamanism persisted as a custom of the Korean people. In 1930, the colonial government of Chosun estimated that in 100 years the number of shamans increased from 10,000 to 12,380.\textsuperscript{18} Against this background it was inevitable that Christianity would clash with shamanism. As the gospel was spreading across the

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p. 83.

\textsuperscript{16} C. Chung, Ihwa 80nyonsa [The Eighty Years' History of Ehwa University], (Seoul: The Ehwa University Press, 1976), p. 21.

\textsuperscript{17} W. E. Griffith, The Hermit Kingdom, Korea, translated by B. Shin into Korean, Eunjaui Nara Hankook (Seoul: Pyongminsia, 1985), p. 410.

\textsuperscript{18} J. Seo, op.cit.,p.186.
country, the movement to root out superstition was also being carried out. During this process the movement was faced with outside pressure and resistance.19

The first church of Korea founded by Koreans, Sorae Church, can be seen as a primary example. When the Suh brothers, Sangryun and Kyungjo, founded the church in Sorae they preached that only God should be the center of one's faith, and all other gods should not accepted. This brought a strong wave of resistance from the people, but as time progressed so did the minds of the people as genuine faith in Christianity took root.20 Gradually, the practices of Koot, seeking fortune telling, or praying for good luck at the Shinjoomok, meaning “contacts with gods” in the Sorae village became less frequent. Eventually, shamans of the village were out of business. By the time construction of a new church began in 1895, 95 per cent of the village had become Christianized. A village wide consensus was to eradicate shamanism. The first service in the new tile-roofed church was held at Tanggol, the stronghold of moodangs.21 Through faith in God, the Christian believers of the Sorae Church were able to uproot shamanism, which the powerful kings of Korea's past history failed to do. Furthermore, they changed the people's attitude towards shamanism and basically eradicated it.

Another example is Minister Lee Sung Gil, who was born in Haejoo, Hwanghae Province. He came south after the liberation from Japan and with a


21 Ibid., p. 197.
few other people they organized the Thomas Memorial Evangelist Group. After arriving in Ongjin they mostly focused on rooting out superstition. These evangelists established a new church when they had gathered a few followers. They also burned down the practice houses of the shamans. Despite the stone throwing by the locals and threats made claiming they would be cursed by the spirits of the mountains, the evangelists remained steadfast in their mission to spread the truth that only God is the one true God. Major and minor incidents of fighting continued as the spread of gospel made its way into the rural regions and fishing villages. Enlightened with the existence of Christ they stood at the forefront in the movement to do away with idols and superstition.

Prof. Shin Kwang-chul of Hankook Theology University described it as culture shock. The first culture shock came during the influx of Buddhism and Confucianism with the second shock coming from western religions and modernization. The first culture shock met the needs of the Korean people and, therefore, was eagerly adopted. But unlike the first, the shock waves brought on by the second culture shock ran far and wide. The second culture shock otherwise known as the Western Impact resulted in the clash between the traditional and foreign elements within the Korean culture. Roman Catholicism, the pioneer of spreading Christianity in Korea, was in conflict with Korea's traditional culture. Conflict grew and became a violent showdown between the two sides, with about 10,000 followers being killed as persecution against Catholics increased. Protestantism, which came after Roman Catholicism, learned from the past

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23 Dae-in Kim, *op cit.*, p. 199.
experiences of the Catholics. Though managing to avoid direct conflict with traditional culture they still butted heads with traditional culture in various degrees.  

It was inevitable that the spread of the gospel would be in conflict with shamanism from the very beginning. Overcoming shamanism was an obstacle that could not be avoided in order to realize God's dreams in this nation. In 1945, the Republic of Korea was formed after gaining independence from Japan. The people were able to exercise their right for the freedom of religion along with democracy. In 1980, the 5th republic emphasized in the new constitution that ancient traditional culture would be preserved without discrimination. Koot was publicly allowed along with homage to the spirits of the mountains. Numerous shamans were called to a ceremony where hope for unification of the nation was sought. Hulbert explains the relationship between shamanism and the other religions in Korea.

As a general thing, we may say that a Korean will be a Confucianist when in society, a Buddhist when he philosophizes and a spirit-worshipper when he is in trouble. Now, if you want to know what a man's religion is, you must watch him he in trouble. Then his genuine religion will come out, if he has any. It is for this reason that I conclude that the underlying religion of the Korean, the foundation upon which all else is mere superstructure, is his original spirit worship.  

Shamanism has been an integral part of the lives of Koreans since the prehistoric age. Shamanism came before the other mainstream religions and has remained a fixture in the lives of Koreans of all classes.

Now the shamans have organized their own association. Today in Seoul,

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there is a Moodang association, which has 70,000 paying members with its headquarters, located in Mountain Samkak. Every new year there are many shamans who discuss and counsel the year's fortune with their clients. In villages, it is only after Koot of the shaman that the fishing boats and ferries are put in operation. Even intellectuals ask shamans for good dates for weddings or house moving. People seek Moodang to inquire about the success or failure of business or whether their children would be able to go to college.

There is also a feature of shamanism in the rite of paying homage to one's ancestors. Shamanism and the ritual of giving respect to one's ancestors have always been in mutual association. The ancestral rite became an occasion that was more family oriented and the presence of Moodangs was no longer vital. The shamanism notion that their ancestors would bless and reward them became entwined with these rites. It is interesting to note that the rite of paying homage to one's ancestors stems from the customs of Confucianism, though it won't be delved into in this study.

Prof. Son Bong-ho, who is actively involved in the social reform movement, said at a gathering of European ministers that:

It is without question that shamanism, Buddhism, and Confucianism in the given order are the religions which wield most influence on Korean people. Shamanism is the base religion exercising influence over the others. Buddhism is a prime example of its shamanism influence. Confucianism gradually developed from ancient shamanism in China. It can be said, therefore, that shamanism and Confucianism have molded the minds of the Korean people. But if one considers that Confucianism is an extension of shamanism then one can conclude that the minds of Koreans are in fact a product of shamanism. Thus, their view on the universe, humans, life after death, and values are strongly in line with shamanism. This holds true for Buddhists and Christians as

well. It is for that reason that a Western atheist can actually have more Christian like values than a Korean Christian.²⁷

Conclusion

Korean shamanism moved to the Korean peninsula with the immigration of some groups of people. Since then, it has been deeply rooted in the ancient tribe states and in the medieval states. When Christianity came into the land by the Western missionaries, it was natural that shamanism overwhelmed the country. Even though Christianity successfully replaced some the existing shamanistic beliefs, in practice, it can not be said that the roots of shamanism have disappeared. The following chapters will show the influence of shamanism on Korean Christianity and the complex way in which both Christianity and shamanism interacted behind the rapid growth of the Christian population.

²⁷ Son Bong-ho, who leads the ‘The Korean Christianity Ethics Movement,’ lectured on “Modern Koreans View of the World and Their Mind Set” at the E.M.I. (Europe Ministry and Mission Institute) sponsored training for ministers of Europe held in May 18, 1999.
CHAPTER 4

EFFECTS OF SHAMANISTIC ORIENTATION ON THE EVANGELICAL MISSION

1. Contribution of Shamanism

1) Fertile Soil for the Smooth Introduction of Christianity to Korea

The major obstacle confronting a missionary when communicating the Christian message is that the people already have their own cosmology with its view of gods and spirits. Although the Korean shamanism, which is rooted deeply in the nation's spirit, experienced conflict with Christianity when first introduced. It is an undeniable fact that it played a great role as a rich ground for Christianity to grow. In particular, the belief that had existed among Korean people toward the absolute shamanism led them to easily prepare for the acceptance of the God of Christianity. Korean shamanism is basically polytheistic, but, at the same time, it presents a vague idea that there is the supreme God above the others called ‘Hananim’ which controls the whole world of the gods and spirits.¹

In other words, having believed in the existence of the absolute Hananim through shamanism, Korean people could easily understand the God of Christianity, and the meaning of virtue and evil. Therefore, such religion for Hananim would be said to have integrated Korean people's spiritual life and thought with its own lexical meaning.

in Korean. This, and many other factors reflecting spiritually in shamanism, in turn, could be considered to contribute much to the substantial growth of Korean churches. This ‘Hananim’ was also called ‘Hanelnim,’ who was the lord in the sky controlling everything. Besides, it also indicated another meaning that he was the only one who could control the world.\(^2\)

Considering this aspect of Korean shamanism, we would be able to say that it has a monotheistic element in it. Korean people believed in many different gods, but they had one god who was above all other gods. This concept developed from the contact with Nestorians early in its history. In fact, Nestorians brought Korean shamanism a big change in respect to the concept of the god.\(^3\)

Kyong-Kyo, the name of the Nestorian religion, flourished once they moved to the East in the Dang Dynasty. Since Silla had a very close political and cultural relationship with Dang, it had a great impact on Silla. However, the Korean belief toward Hananim was different from the Nestorians. “The Koreans have never attempted to make any physical representation of Hananim. He has never been worshipped by the use of any idolatrous rites. . . . As a rule the people do not worship Hananim. He is appealed to by the Emperor only.”\(^4\)

Christian missionaries came to understand that Koreans already had a background to worship the God of Christianity. Koreans are strictly monotheists and the attributes and powers ascribed to their god are in such consonance with those of

\(^2\) D.H. Kim, Hankook Sasangsa [Thought History of the Korea], (Seoul: Beakamsa, 1965), p. 27.


\(^4\) Hurbert, op.cit., pp.404-5.
Jehovah that the foreign missionaries have almost universally accepted the term for use in teaching Christianity.\(^5\)

Korean shamanism was polytheistic but with a monotheistic aspect to some extent. Korean shamanism thought that one supreme god rules the rest of the other gods. Mostly engaged in farming and agriculture, Korean people traditionally worshiped Hananim, who was believed to have a power to bring them rain and, thus, a good harvest. They performed ritual ceremonies for him under this belief. They believed that Hananim is the creator of human beings and the ruler of the world, and signified love in him.\(^6\) Hananim should not be identified with the God of Christianity, who created this world, according to the Bible. In tribal mythology the creator god is one who created and has moved away. He is considered as being remote from the daily lives of ordinary people, in a way similar to the philosophy of deism in the West. Hananim keeps a distance from the real world we live and is not concerned with every single tiny event the lives of people. Instead of him, there are many other lower gods taking care of it and they are who Koreans have worshiped. From the beginning in their history, Korean people called the supreme god of the universe Hananim. What is interesting, by the way, is that the idea remains in the very bottom of Korean people's mind, and the word Hananim always comes out of their mouth naturally whenever they have an emergency.

In the same sense, it is also an interesting fact that the God of the Christian Bible was translated to the word Hananim in Korean by the foreign missionaries who had attempted to evangelize in Manchuria or Japan. This was an excellent point where Christianity could join Korean shamanism. Therefore, in this sense, shamanism can be

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\(^5\) Ibid., p. 404.

said to play a part as a sound ground of Christianity's entering into Korea. In early 1890s, one of the Christian missioners in Korea had said: “The Hananim is so distinctive and so universally used that there will be no fear in the future translations and preaching.”

Korean people have long been encouraged by shaman practices and beliefs to communicate with the beings of the higher level. Then, they turned themselves into the enthusiastic followers of Christianity once the seed of Christianity was planted. Especially, those who had lived around the prevalence of shamanism were really ready to accept from their mind the God of monotheism, which was at a higher level than what they had believed.

2) Quantitative Growth and Undulation of Church

Korean shamanism has been characteristically generous to the other religions from different places and made little resistance to them. Throughout history, for example, it had Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism come to Korea. Then, it made a positive influence on Koreans' accepting quite easily the gospel of Christianity without feeling strange to it. It is one of the factors to which Korean churches owe their incredible growth in numbers.

"Be a Christian and you will get good luck." This is the phrase Korean churches have commonly used in missionary work. In fact, a number of people came into Christianity because of that phrase and the number and the size of the churches could continue to

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grow by that phrase. Korean Christians adopted many of the elements from Korean shamanism, which eventually contributed to their growth. For instance, a special rite aimed at the prosperity of worldly materials was adopted and believed among Christians to have an actual effect on blessing human beings. The religious spirit of Korean people is based strongly on shamanism, where happiness and material prosperity were the core to be pursued. One of the keys of shamanism is seeking blessings. Influenced from this element, Korean pastors also have shown a strong tendency to stimulating the seeking of blessing trait of Korean people.

Stimulated by the national plan of economic development, Korean people wanted to obtain a better life. When they heard a Christian minister preach that the better life was just waiting for them and could be unfolded immediately, they were anxious to go to church and become a Christian. This worked for both low-class people and for middle-class people, who were sensitive to what they didn't have. Thus, people with a strong desire for worldly luck were attracted to Christian churches, where the sermons mostly focused on material prosperity. For instance, Priest Cho Yongki of Sunbokum (Evangelical) Church has strongly appealed to his followers through his sermons, emphasizing the richness within the present life. This has produced an astonishing level of growth in his church. His church took its motto from John 3:2, from which his famous “Belief of Three Measures” was drawn. The three measures mean achieving true Christianity through a harmonious integration of richness in spirit, strength in body, and abundance in possession.

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Many churches promised that people would obtain wealth, health, prestige, and honor as a strategy for leading them into Christianity. In this theology, people were taught that they could expect God's prosperity in their possessions and success in their work, if they continued to pray. It was obvious that through their preaching the preachers put too much emphasis on the prosperity of the present world. Therefore, people have believed that they could make themselves "qualified" for blessing just by attending the church service and praying to God. However, whether the blessing preached about would be the same as the true blessing appearing in the Bible, is a quite different matter. Anyway, Korean people's common and strong desire toward good luck and blessing clearly reflects their shaman custom. The churches promising the prosperity of followers have satisfied what Korean people wish to have and produced fast quantitative growth.

3) Revival Movement

The revival movement has contributed much to the growth of the Christian church in Korea. In the beginning, it took the form of 'Sakyunghyoe'. The 'Sakyunghyoe' split the attendants into three classes: elementary, intermediate and advanced. The number of classes attended determined the class people would attend. Sorae Church, which was the first church built by Koreans, constructed a new chapel room and had a three-month-long 'Sakyunghyhoe'. This was in 1907, 20 years after the beginning of Christianity in Korea; Korean churches became involved in a great work of the Holy Spirit. The revival

12 Y. T. Kim, op cit., p. 271.
14 Dae-in Kim, Sumkyojin Hankook Kyohoesa [The Hidden Parts of the Church History in
movement started in August of 1906. Some of the missionaries in Pyongyang invited the preacher Hady and held a ‘Sakyunghyoe’. Rev. Howard A. John from New York visited Korea then, and reported on the great revival movement occurring in India and Whales. Listening to this report, the people in the church prayed for North Korea.\textsuperscript{15} Rev. W. N. Blair of the Northern Presbyterian Mission, who worked for 40 years in the Anju area north of Pyong-yang, gives the following account of what occurred at the annual Presbyterian and Methodist Bible conference in January 1907:

The evening meeting connected with the Bible conference began January 6th, in the Central Church, with more than 1500 men present. Women are excluded for lack of room. Different missionaries and Korean leaders had charge of the evening meetings, all seeking to show the need of the Spirit's control in our lives and the necessity for love and righteousness.\textsuperscript{16}

The revival affected the churches all over Korea. In spite of the emotional experience described above, which characterized the movement all over the country, it is the universal testimony of those who were there that this was not an irresponsible emotional orgy.

Finally, the barriers between different religious orders were just taken away, and all Christians gathered and united. The revival movement of the first Korean church caused many to turn to Christianity and established the ever rising status of churches in Korea. Here are some data showing it clearly: In 1904 there were 23,700 Presbyterians and Methodists, including 2,773 baptized adults; and in 1910, six years later, 107,717 followers including 13,939 baptized adults. This shows that during that period the

\textsuperscript{15} Lee Graham, "How the Spirit Came to Pyongyang," The Korean Mission Field, 39 (March 1907), pp. 33-7.

member of Christians greatly increased.¹⁷

Meanwhile, Korea had been put in the nationally dangerous political situation when it was forcefully annexed as a Japanese territory in 1910. The future of the country was bleak and national hope was gone. During this time, the Korean church got into the fever of revival services. The Korean churches never stopped growing and reviving, and even non-believers started to turn toward the church. The revival services were in all its glory during the period of Japanese occupation. The revival services provided Christians with spiritual and religious enthusiasm and energy of life. The work of the Holy Spirit came out clearly in the revival services.

Today, the revival services have undergone rather big changes and are becoming more charismatic and containing more emphasis on spiritual experiences. People used to look forward to revival services. Crowds would come. The success of the revival services may have something to do with shamanism. In shaman rites, people got exited at the practitioners’ mysterious supernatural ability. The same thing seemed to occur in the charismatic revival service. People in the revival services would sing a series of fast songs with much repetition, sometimes with hand clapping to the beat of the songs. During the sermon various musical instruments were used to enhance applause and create a mood.

The preacher’s personal experiences and his emotional background caused these charismatic and enthusiastic revival services. For instance, one of the most charismatic preachers in the 1930s, Yong-do Lee, was widely known for having overnight services since he was 13 years old, and of making it a common practice. While fasting and praying, he claimed to receive a very clear, but mysterious image, where God gave him

¹⁷ Y. T. Kim, op cit., p, 141.
a call to be a leader of the revival services.\textsuperscript{18}

The charismatic leaders in the revival services often focus the sermon on their personal experiences of God's mystery as a means of maintaining authority over their followers. Following the leaders, the people like to pursue something imaginary or spiritual in their religious experiences.\textsuperscript{19} They also expect to see the Holy Spirit healing people. Inseo Kim has described one of the revival services of Indo Kim, who was very famous early in the history of the Korean church. In April of 1920, holding a revival service in Taegu, Indo Kim healed 808 people. In May of 1920, praying for Kyudu Kim with hands on his head, the crippled man stood up straight and walked.\textsuperscript{20} The atmosphere where people were crazy for the healing work of the Holy Spirit in the revival services never cooled down. According to a report on contemporary society, more than 80 per cent of Christians are reported to have experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{21}

The Korean church has faced another period of rapid growth around the time of the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the Protestant church in Korea. In the summer of 1973, a large-scaled revival service was held in Seoul with the evangelist Billy Graham. In that revival, more than 4,500,000 people came to Seoul to attend the services. More than 1,000,000 Christians fully packed the Yeouido Square. Of course, this surprised


\textsuperscript{19} J. Huh, Hankook Kyohoeui Buhung ae daehan Kochal [A Study on the Revivalistic Movement], (Seoul: Shinhak Hyobhoe, 1980. 10), p. 190.


\textsuperscript{21} Donga Yonkam [Donga Year Book], (Seoul: Donga Chulpansa, 1983), p. 638.
Christians and non-Christians.\textsuperscript{22}

This revival service has the record of being the biggest in the world. From August 12-15, the 1980 mission fair conducted seminars, services and gatherings. During the period, 12 major seminars were conducted for four hours a day, and 50 conferences of local churches took place throughout the Seoul area. Every night 1,500,000 Christians remained in the square for the overnight service aimed at world peace.\textsuperscript{23}

This large-scaled revival service brought the churches vitality, the followers a sense of confidence, and stimulated the mood of missionary work. Many preachers called themselves professional evangelists and led a number of revival services throughout the country. As a result, many people actually were influenced and became Christians.

Recently, the revival service has demonstrated many problems. The leaders have expressed some concerns and have suggested some form of self-monitoring. Still, most of the Korean churches have one or two revival services a year. Members use them as an opportunity to evangelize others, to study the Bible, and to increase in spiritual alertness. In fact, every order has its own group for the revival service.

4) Movement of Prayers

Korean churches are well known for their enthusiastic prayers. Overnight services and early-morning services are proof of the strong emphasis on prayer. These are unique things that are found only in the Korean church. All the churches of Korea

\textsuperscript{22} Young-jae Kim, \textit{Hankook Kyohoesa} [Church History of the Korea], (Seoul: Kehyokchui Shinheang Hyophoe, 1992), p. 326.

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., p. 326.
have daily prayer services at the break of day. The origin of this early-morning service is traced back to the year of 1906, when the pastor Seonjoo Kil of Changhyun Church in Pyongyang began to offer a devotional prayer meeting at dawn. He announced the church bell would ring at 4:30 AM for a prayer meeting. People started gathering at 2:00 AM and more than 500 were there when the bell started ringing. Since that day, early-morning services have spread to all the churches in Korea, and have become a part of the Christian’s daily routine.24

Myungsung Church, which is located in Seoul, is the one of the most famous churches for its early-morning service. In March of 1995, they were conducting four early-morning services a day at 4:30, 5:30, 6:30 and 10:30. Every day there were more than 16,000 people gathered to pray. Korean churches have been given the blessing of God because of the early-morning prayer services.25

The underlying Korean shamanism enabled the early-morning prayer services to enjoy such popularity. As a shaman custom, Koreas ancestors used to kneel in prayer at the break of day with a bowl of water in front of them when they had special requests. They also prayed looking up to the Great Dipper twinkling in the sky. Cardinal Suhwan Kim, one of the most influential people in the Korean Catholic Church, recalled an experience with his mother:

Whenever I think of my mother, I think of her bedroom left empty already at dawn. Whenever I happened to wake up at dawn, I always saw Mom’s bed left empty. Then, I found her in the garden, not in her bed, kneeling in a prayer with a bowl of water before her. What I’ve heard from her prayer was all about the well being of her children. From the very beginning of my childhood memory, she was

24 Y.T. Kim, op cit, p. 229.

always praying every dawn regardless of what the weather was like. And, it continued until she went to heaven. 26

Beside the early-morning service, there is another regular prayer service held on Friday nights. The Friday night meeting was originally a form of the overnight service where people stayed up all night praying. Several hours easily flew by while singing hymns, listening to sermons and testifying about personal spiritual experiences. During the service, the people enhanced the mood by praying in a loud voice, singing and crying, and sometimes even bursting into applause. Such a strong passion about prayer led them to pray outdoors on mountains or hills. Many Christians frequently go to the mountains to pray. This prayer service in the mountains was not something new or strange to Korean people. The preacher Sunjoo Kil, one of the main figures in the early revival services of Korean church, said he heard God calling his name on the third day of an outdoor service in the mountain, and he believed that it empowered him to become a leader of charisma. 27 It happened even before he became a Christian, but such an ecstasy was not new to him. As another example, the preacher Ikdo Kim, who had led the first revival service in the history of Korean church, also said that he experienced true repentance during an outdoor service in a mountain near his home. 28

In Korean shamanism, the mountain was a place that has a special spiritual meaning. In Korean legends, the mountain was also described as a divine place from which the sacred come down to earth. The mountain was believed to be a holy space which was


separated from the earthly life and thus, desirable to hold religious rites.\textsuperscript{29}

Most Korean Christians believe that the service in the mountain itself is more powerful and rich in bringing them a spiritual experience of feeling God.\textsuperscript{30} Therefore, they tend to be much more serious about the services in the mountain than in the church. This has created one of the outstanding characteristics of the Korean church. That is, there are so many special places for prayers built in the mountains throughout the country that sometimes they are considered a social problem to be criticized. In

\textsuperscript{29}Tae-gon Kim, ibid, p.286.

\textsuperscript{30}W. S. Han, “Otohan Yeberul Durilkosinga?” [What kind of worship service should we have?], Kitokkyo Sasang No. 3 (Seoul: Kitokkyo Sasangsa, 1979), p. 28.
many churches Christians are led to these places of prayer frequently.

At first, special prayer places were directed by individuals who had experienced the power of prayer. There were rooms for those who came to pray individually. Special prayer places got bigger and bigger and now most of them are owned and operated by churches and are called ‘Suyangkwan’ (a place for spiritual cultivation). Big churches are very anxious to build their own Suyangkwan in the mountains. Why are Korean people so into climbing up the mountains and praying there? It is because people have rendered a special meaning to the mountain itself and long lived with it through the generations.  

At the present, there are 521 special prayer places throughout the country. Thousands of people keep going to the mountains to pray. Besides, each church holds a summer or winter special training camp for their teenagers and single adults. They usually choose the special prayer place in the mountain or the Suyangkwan for this special spiritual training.

Jesus Christ was the very model of enthusiastic prayers. He never stopped praying from early in the morning till midnight. He also prayed with fasting and lying on his face to the ground on the mountain (Mark 1:35; Matthew 14:23). In the Bible, we also can see that all the People of Trust were described as having bold passionate prayers. Prayer was the great thing, and here we have to accept the fact that Korean shamanism has played a part in such a great Christian heritage thriving in Korean church.

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31 Jong-il Kim, op cit., pp.29-33.
2. Bad Effects on Shamanism

From the early days of the Korean church, shamanism has played an important role in propagating Christianity. Also, it has contributed to the growth of Christianity. Nevertheless, we cannot deny that shamanism is a cause for serious problems in the Korean church. The religious beliefs of all peoples are constantly changing in response to internal social pressures and environmental changes. However, the major factor that usually causes change is the spread of ideas and practices from one society to another. This process is generally called “diffusion”, and applies to any aspect of a culture.32

1) Theological Mixture

The theological mixture of shamanism and Christianity has caused theological damage. Shamanism easily permeates to other religious groups and gets mixed with their doctrines. It is not like bringing a renovation by receiving other religions, but shamanism only accepts things that would whet its appetite from all other elements of sacrificial rites. Korea's shamanism has mixed its prayers and sacrificial rites with Buddhism and Taoism.33

When people who had this kind of shamanistic belief converted to Christianity, a mixture of shamanism with Christianity occurred. They accepted Christianity without giving up their shamanism. Especially, they had many shamanistic elements in their understanding of God. The shamanism belief that supernatural spirits controls life/death and good/evil and shamanistic ideologies arouse fear of demons that affects a lot in

understanding Christianity.\(^{34}\)

Shamanistic faith is basically pantheistic. Therefore, it interferes with a one and only concept of God. In Christianity, God is immanent through all things and risen above all at the same time. Many people in Korean churches don't have a personal relationship with God, but consider Him as a tool for achieving their desires. This is a shamansitic factor.\(^{35}\) Especially, shamanism maximizes misconceptions about the Holy Spirit. Receiving the Holy Spirit is misconceived of as providing success in life and experiences of ecstasy. The desire is for the mysterious experience, gifted tongue, or ecstasy. There is a trend in churches to force people to receive the Holy Spirit in that manner, and judge people as worldly persons that have not received the Holy Spirit in that way.

The mysterious experience of Kangshinmoo is basic to shamanism. Kangshinmoo is a person who became a shaman by calling, who has an ecstasy experience while calling to the gods, and who gives an oracle. This calling for gods and relationship with divine spirits is the real essence of ecstasy and the foundation of shamanism.\(^{36}\) When shaman dance, they are said to attain a spiritual state of perfect selflessness and to rise above themselves, then gods and men become united. Some think that real Christians with the Holy Spirit should be like this. They have a tendency to relate receiving divine spirits with the ability to cure and speak with gifted tongues.


Therefore, the church which practices this grows and its pastors become famous. Due to this emphasis, malformed Christians were born who laid much stress on visible healing power or gifted tongues rather than the truth of Bible itself, or balanced faith.

As we have discovered from shamans, many charismatic believers understand that experiencing ecstasy is meeting their god. That is, they strongly believe that such experiences as receiving the Holy Spirit, baptism and speaking in tongues is meeting their God. However, mysticism is originally a psychological and historical escape from reality. It is absurd trying to go back to before Christ's revelation. Christ's revelations are manifested throughout history. Mysticism cuts off the history, and turns away from the reality and devastates history. This unsound mysticism neglects nature and only praises grace. Therefore, personal charismata has been too excessively propagated, spoiling the history of the Holy Spirit. Such Christian belief depends primarily on religious emotion. The mixture of Christianity with shamanism is shown as an erroneous outlook. Shamanism's worldly way of thinking has affected Christianity. Even in churches, people are pursuing worldly salvation. They put as first priority recovering from disease, living long and healthy lives, and solving present problems.

Since the Korean church has been influenced so much by realism, the outlook of salvation has fallen into the realism-oriented passive optimism or compromising. Also, some phenomena typically expected at the end of the world appear today, such as

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39 Y.S. Chong, op cit., 33.
entering reality and denying life after death.\textsuperscript{40} Although both faith and behavior should be considered to be important and they are reciprocally related, there is a misleading belief that people can do something to earn salvation, which is far away from faith in Jesus Christ. But the true meaning of Christian salvation is not pursuing worldly salvation for a priority but rather achieving spiritual future salvation, living the present life as you have already been saved spiritually.

Most of the prevalent Christianity-like heresies in Korea are rooted in shamanism. These non-affiliated heresies were greatly generated during the period from Korea's emancipation from Japan to the end of the Korean civil war. And yet, most of the rising Christian denominations in Korea are usually deeply related to shamanism. So they are not a rising force in a strict sense because they are an extension of old shamanism. They share basic doctrines that are related to shamanism: challenge for the future world, earthly paradise, faith for the head of a sect, eliticism and the belief about 'Chungkamrok' (the prophecies of the Korean history, especially about its political future).\textsuperscript{41} The doctrines and practices of new heresies risen from Christianity are a mixture of Christianity with shamanism. Followings are their common characteristics:

First, they have a new religious structure combined with Buddhism, Taoism/Confucianism and Christian belief. Second, they are based on the conception and practices of shamanism to which other religious factors are added. Third, most of them are consisted of Buddhists, Christians, Taoists and shamanists. Forth, democratic elements are strongly penetrated in their ways of propagating and their doctrines. Finally, they expect the earthly paradise to offer better lives and hopes to their believers.\textsuperscript{42}

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., pp. 34-5.


\textsuperscript{42} Y.T. Kim, op cit., p. 305.
The Unification Church: Moon was born in a Presbyterian family on January 6, 1920. At age sixteen, he witnessed Jesus during the Easter week in 1936 while he was having a deep prayer time in the mountains. He heard Jesus' voice telling him that he was chosen to complete His work on earth. "In 1945, Moon had his most important experience. The Divine Principle says of this experience that "he fought alone against myriads of satanic forces, both in the spirit and physical world, and finally triumphed over them all". As a result of this experience, he changed his birth name to Sun Myung Moon, which means "Shing Sun and Moon"– a title savoring of divinity and of the whole universe. He established a church in 1954 in Seoul, and published a book titled Divine Principle, which explains about the new revelation that he heard from God. Moon had a doctrine of unification of men and women in God, who had created doctrines of earth and corruption. Moon is believed to be superior to Jesus Christ by his followers. They believe that they seriously admit fortunetellers, although they have evil spirits. Probably fortunetellers could understand Moon better than other Christians could.

The followers of Moon believe the following about God. "Ultimately God is an invisible essence manifesting dual qualities, spirit and energy, from which all existence generates. Thus, with regard to the creation, God is set forth as 'Perpetual, self-

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44 James Bjornstad, The Moon is not the Son (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, Inc. 1976), p.31.
46 M.H. Tak, Hankookui Shinhung Jongkyo [New Cults in South Korea], Vol. 1., P. 167.
The Unification Church construes the snake, that appeared in the time of human's corruption in Genesis, as an angel, Lucifer. Lucifer got jealous of God's love for human beings and he complained about their existence. Consequently, Lucifer seduced Eve to fall in sin. The Unification Church explains eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as a sexual relationship between Lucifer and Eve. Since then, human beings have become the descendents of the Devil. Due to Lucifer and Eve's adultery, the dirty blood of the Devil is running down through all human beings. But Jesus failed in His mission. He was crucified before He could marry. Jesus failed to redeem man physically. Therefore physical restoration is still to be accomplished by another Messiah at the Second Advent. This other Messiah is a man who will be born in Korea. This Messiah will establish the perfect family, the task that Jesus never fulfilled.48

In this church, the religious ceremony to get rid of this dirty blood is to share blood today, that is, during the Holy God period. This means a replacement of evil blood to holy blood by attaching to the Second Coming Messiah, that is, Moon. This way the Unification Church illustrates its dualistic trend by perceiving God and the Devil equal. Moreover, it supports the claim for compensation by insisting that human beings have to pay an indemnity for them to be shaken from the yoke of the Devil.49

The Unification Church interprets human corruption as an immoral relationship between the Devil and Eve, and claims that God has no gender, a neutralized body of


48 Ibid., p. 196.

49 C. Mok, op cit., p. 53.
bisexuality, male and female. This is an erroneously born native phenomena based on Oriental cosmic dual force's theory and ideology and Mysticism.

The Cult of the Evangelical Hall (Jondokwan): Taesun Park (1916~1987) spent his youth in Japan. In 1955, he was disillusioned about churches and their leaders, so he started to have services in his own way. He blamed existing churches for their sins and mistakes, and he emphasized healing sick people and receiving the Holy Spirit. At the same time, he prophesied that the end of the world was drawing near. His followers were very passionate and most of them were believers with simple faith. He called himself the olive tree, from Revelation 11:46. 50

The movement of the olive tree has continuously flourished. In 1964 he and his followers established a community called “the town of faith” in the suburbs of Seoul. They formed two more communities later. Churches because of their intermixed style of Christianity with shamanistic belief and practices attacked this movement. After Park’s death, the number of his followers conspicuously decreased and their disappearance is easily predicted now.

Kidong Kim and Sungrak Baptist Church: Kidong Kim and his church (Sungrak Baptist Church) is a typical example of one that deluded Christians and the Korean churches into the confusion of shamanistic understanding of evil spirit and disease. He published many books about the Devil. At the same time, he insisted that he had driven away about 400,000 demons by 1988. His claims are unequaled. He has mixed Christian interpretation of devils with Korean shamanistic belief of devils, and

came out with his own interpretation. Pastor Kidong Kim’s assertions are being taught in Sungrak Baptist Church and Beryoa Academy, which he founded as part of his church in 1978.

Sungrak Baptist Church was the largest Baptist church in Korea until it was accused of being a heresy in the 1985 Baptist's general meeting. According to John N. Vaughan's writings, it is a church which was ranked in the largest 20 churches in the world. However, the reason why Pastor Kim started to be noticed was not because of the fast growth of his church but because of his way of healing people through blessings and his revival services. Following are some of the problems with his doctrines. First, he taught that angels were corrupted and became demons, but he denied a traditional Christian doctrine that supports the idea that demons were also corrupted angels. He stated that demons were distrusted believers' lives after death. Second, Kidong Kim says that demons’ lives are limited and they move around in their family. When people die without completing their age, they live until their original life is completed after death. Third, he insists that all disease is caused by demons. Getting ill is demons sneaking into people's body and curing diseases is getting rid of demons. Medicine does not heal diseases, but it makes them even worse. Forth, his ways of blessing to get rid of demons include shamanistic factors. In this church, he hit people with demons inside, pinched them and gave them pains or prayed to please demons. Korean shamanistic religions are just like this, too. His way of getting rid of devils is through conversation.

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51 Mok, op cit., p. 57.


Demons use hiding their identity as a weapon, so when their identity is revealed they get scared out.

The rise of a theory of demons and its confusion in Korean churches is not surprising when we consider Korean people's religious characteristics and traditional shamanistic elements in them. In this sense, the appearance of charismatic Kidong Kim and his work of embodying ordinary people's desires that are prevalent in the traditions and suggesting that cures of illness can be considered as a natural flow of Korean history. Consequently, we can say that Kidong Kim's claims and theories came from his experiences rather than from the Bible. He came to firmly believe that demons were the non-believers' after-death being, from his experiences of getting rid of demons from 8,000 people for three years, from 1968 to 1971.

These days, there are two other pastors just like Kidong Kim: Manyoung Han, a professor at Seoul National University and a pastor at Revival Church; and the pastor Choshuk Lee of the Korean Jerusalem Church, which has headquarters in Incheon and leads outdoor gatherings at various places.

2) Deterioration of Belief

Even with the arrival of Christianity in Korea, shamanism has not lost its effects over Korean people and has infected Christianity, taking place in the heart of Christians. 

_Bliss-chasing doctrine_: Personal welfare has a long history in shamanism. It is absolutely worldly and materialistic. It is not too much to say that possessing goods and

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54 Mok, op cit., 67.

55 Kidong Kim, op cit., pp. 146-55.
living splendidly and long are everything in shamanism. During the primary stage of preaching Christianity, the name of God, that is, “Hananim” was almost identical to that in shamanism (Hanilnim); thus, the meaning of fortune in Christianity was the same as that in shamanism. The mediator was switched into Jesus from a shaman and the way to attain the fortune was naturally the same as that in shamanism. But in Christianity the God is the only God, while it is the highest god among many gods in shamanism. The fortune in Christianity is mostly spiritual and absolute, but in shamanism it has completely relative values. Of course, it is true that those who sought this urged the growth of church by trying to find coincidences between shamanism and Christianity. Then bliss chasing became to be a serious disease.

What is the key to bliss chasing in shamanism? The shaman Choi Bo-sal summarizes the contents of her shamanistic rituals as follows: 1) continuing the route of our ancestors; 2) coming into the world; 3) living long; 4) possessing large fortunes and living with comfort; 5) fighting against bad luck; 6) healing illness to recover health; and 7) praying the spirit to live in a good place to enjoy immortality.\(^{56}\)

The key point in Christianity is being free from diseases, enjoying longevity, enjoying bliss, and passing away to heaven in peace. This is just like pursing worldly luck. It is quite difficult to find reincarnation (yonseang), which is valued as first birth (choseng), social justice, or individual freedom, ethics, or moralities in Christianity. The key to the bliss-chasing faith inherent in Korean Christianity is that followers can obtain fortunes by having faith in Jesus. This has revealed huge negative problems, though it helped evangelizing.

\(^{56}\) http://galaxy.channeli.net/choibosal/shaman01.htm
Revival services and New Year blessing services that had strong effects on the growth of Korean churches, but also brought about problems. One of the problems is that it aggravated bliss-chasing faith. The blessing service has changed into services for allowing physical blessing, health, promotion and being prosperous in everything. This helped the poor and helpless people to have the dream of success while it left the result of being in collusion with materialism and secularism.\(^5\)

The eight fortunes that Jesus taught were not physical fortunes. It is not a matter of the amount of possessions. It is a matter of characteristic problems and that of the relation between God and human beings. It is a spiritual and religious matter. What we must remember here is that bliss-chasing faith in Christianity is not wordily and shamanistic like seeking windfalls, but rather it is an ethical thought and a matter of covenanted religious blessing-doctrines.

**Selfish secularism:** According to a recent survey, Protestantism happens to have less loyalty and a higher rate of secession than Catholicism and Buddhism. The rate of secession in Protestantism is 46.1%, Buddhism, 29.4%, and Catholicism, 39.9%. When they were asked about why they did not attend church, they responded as follows: 41% of them said they did not have enough time to attend it; 12% said that followers were exclusive and selfish; and 7.7% said that the church did not function as it was supposed to. Eventually the second reason why people avoid church is a biased view about church followers.\(^5\) The Korea Christianity Future Preparation Committee and the Korea Gallup Poll surveyed the national Protestant denominations and Protestants all over the country to find out about their religious consciousness and church life. They also analyzed and

\(^5\) T.J. Im, op cit., p. 24.

\(^5\) 98KFP-GALLUP SURVEY PAPER.
compared their answers with those from different religious followers.

As we can understand from the surveys, these days Korean church followers have been criticized for being selfish in their own society. Kilsung Choi has pointed out that the cause of such personal selfishness is the strong influence of shamanism and Buddhism.\(^59\)

This is a mental devastation generated from the mixture of shamanism and Christianity. The distinction of shamanism is that there is no ethical character owing to the lack of a community concept as held by most other individualistic religions. The main interest of Shamanism is not the public welfare but personal prosperity and the human freedom from the disaster controlled by spiritual world.\(^60\)

The God of Israel is concerned with the Community, Israel, but God in Korea is concerned with individuals. Christianity has settled on the Shamanism of the egoistic character without any filtration. Therefore, people started to believe God while they were trying to own all the things in the world by taking all possible steps. Though Christianity in Korea is flourishing in public, we cannot deny that the egoistic character of Shamanism that has settled on Christianity influences the rapid growth. This kind of egoism is connected with secularism. Neither the death nor the life after death, becomes the core of faith. Making the real life as a standard of life, they prayed for good luck and to get rid of disaster as the basic purpose. In shamanism, there is no kind of historical perception, direction, aim or meaning. The existent is the cycle of repeating the same things. There exists only the repeating history and cycle of nature. The interest and


wishes of Shamanism is all concentrated on the present time. Their interest is how to escape the fatality and keep a peaceful and enjoyable life. There is no plan for future as well as no interest about the deep root of human being. This is a sort of secularism.

The higher religion is concerned with truth and the matter of salvation. Then, what is the biggest concern of Shamanism? It is the pursuit of good luck and peace rather than the pursuit of truth. That is, they are trying to gain good luck with their religion. In brief, the aim of Shamanism is fortune, to own the long life and wealth.

Thus, the distinctive feature of Shamanism that has a main interest on fortune is realistic. Compared to the higher religion pursuing the eternal life after death, it has a truly realistic value. The distinguishing mark of the value of future existence is lack of judgement after death of the ultimate salvation concept. Therefore, Shamanism does not have any teaching for life after death but only for the present life, while the higher religion teaches the eternal life after death and simply enduring the present situation.

Lack of historical and ethical awareness: In shamanism, historical awareness does not exist. While everything happening in the world is the will of the gods, human beings are satisfied with today’s good luck and escaping disaster. The happiness of a person and group is the only interest of Shamanism. Human beings are able to think and act, and exist reflecting on the past. History is the series of decisive actions creating

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61 Ibid., p. 35.


64 S. H. Moon, Shamanismgwasa Hankook Kyohoe [Shamansim and the South Korean Church], Seseangmyung No. 7 (1969), p. 21.
a new present time while preventing the things that happened in the past from being repeated.

There is no historical perception in Shamanism. There is only circulating mechanical reiteration doing the exact same thing. We cannot find the historical direction, purpose, and the awareness of meaning. If there is not any historical awareness, we cannot expect the solution of historical problems.\textsuperscript{66} Thus, Shamanism eventually becomes non-ethical and cannot take a role of the higher religion though it is spreading into the public awareness.

The South Korean church has become a target of social criticism. Christians are involved in many events of social irrationality. Shamanism simply promotes the good person and punishes the wicked. For instance, we could conclude that we should not kill a person from shaman's teachings. However, to speak strictly, there is almost no moral standard and ethical rule in shamanism.\textsuperscript{67} In shamanism, regardless of ethics, people try to trade with divine spirits and take advantage of them. Accordingly the leadership is on the side of people\textsuperscript{68}

Therefore, divine spirits in shamanism are not the subjects of service, but the invention of a shaman. These divine spirits could add to good fortune and luck and manipulate irrationality. Shamanism is vague about the discrimination between a good spirit and a wicked spirit. It does not draw a definite line between a good and an evil

\textsuperscript{65} K.I. Kim, Musokgwa Hankookin [Shamanism and the Korean People], Pulbit Mokhoe (1982. 3), p. 43.


\textsuperscript{67} Ibid., p. 346.

\textsuperscript{68} I.H. Kim Hankookinuo Kachigwan [The Value System of the South Korean People], (Seoul: Munumsa, 1979), p. 105.
spirit. The spirits are not seen as ethical norms but as material norms. In this climate, a sinful consciousness, like the pang of the conscience, and an ethical judgement do not happen in the world. In the end, shamanism regards the relationship with God as one with fear and discomfort and does not teach love to a society. Rather, it gives incantations to curse the hateful and the hostile in the power of a spirit.

Shamanism believes in good spirits who bring about happiness, and wicked evil spirits who bring about disasters. Good and evil that shamans have concerns about is not related to ethical norms but to the norms of economic and material wealth. In shamanism, the consciousness of sin and ethics doesn't matter at all. Hence, shamanism is by no means an ethical religion. When religion essentially provides an individual and a society with ethical norms and values and abides by them, then individuals get to the intended objective and establishes order. But though shamanism has many taboos for individual happiness and comfort, it has no ethics and values for an individual and a society. Since it is focused on satisfying the desire and the necessity, it is so selfish that it may cause the absence of public morality and social ethics.

Man in shamanism is lacking a permanent ideal and has nothing as an absolute confirmation. Since he is deficient in an absolute God to define ethnical norm, he does not have a simple dualism of black and white to judge the good, justice and right of his acts. Consequently, shamanism is a lack of the concern about human relationships. It just includes a vertical relationship with spirits and has no interest in a horizontal and social relationship. In addition, it is wanting not only an idea of public society but also an ethical idea. Finally, values of shamanism are concerned about not reasonable good and evil but quality of possession.

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Moon, op cit., p. 184.
Shamanism is, therefore, wanting of responsible consciousness, and is so selfish that it can trade with divine spirits for benefits and manipulate with a lack of ethical consciousness. On the other hand, Jesus called his disciples light and salt of the world and emphasized social responsibility.

3) Fallacy of the Church Life

Shamanism is phenomenally giving ill effects to the church life of Christians. The worship service is a communal behavior where God's people come up to him with a humble spirit and a true heart, bowing before him. According to the research by Mijun Han, the result of the frequency of South Korean Christians’ attending Sunday service was as following: every week presence 65.2%, 2-3 times a month 18%, and less than once a month 5%. The result was very encouraging. However, some people pointed out that there were some wrong motivates in attending services. That is, people come and attend the church to reduce their anxiety, or for materialistic desires.

Many believers think that the reasons for attending the service are to avoid disaster and receive blessings. When they are faced with hard problems they think it is because they didn't attend the service. Service is considered to be a technology, a concert led by an assigned executor, an effective form, but the soul is considered to be secondary.\textsuperscript{70} The deterioration of service is quite serious. In shamanism, the Sorcerer is an executor who leads the religious service and people watch and evaluate it and share their opinions. In church service, believers become audience and religious workers just act like a sorcerer while believers should be participated in the service. So Korean

\textsuperscript{70} D. R. Ha, Jongkyo Wa Sahoi [Religion and Society], (Pusan: Kosindae Choolpansa 1997), p.142
Christians say “going to the service” instead of “giving the service.” The service is a pure religious ceremony which religious workers and believers dedicate to God as one. But, in the Korean church, which was affected by shamanism, pastors perform as sorcerers and believers become by-standers as an audience.

In some churches, people are induced to go wild as they play drums and a gong. The dance they perform for a revival is beautified by calling it a “dance of grace.” Many people, who were already affected by shamanistic inclinations, probably hoped that the fascinating, enthusiastic, and mystical experiences of shamanism would go on in Christianity. Many have been happy with a cult called Taeui Buhunghoe. Revivals started to maintain this mixed character and a revival evangelist had to lead the revival services in this manner. The most important reason for believers' attending revival was to experience a frenzy spirit of the soul. In addition, as the number of believers and religious workers who were captivated with this religious mentality were they excessively desire miraculous works such as predictions, gifted tongue, and healing power, the revival meeting has become some kind of an exorcism in many places.

On the other hand, this phenomenon became the subject of blame by people. According to Mijun Han, one of non-Christians’ complaints about their neighborhood churches was noisy (6.9%). This needs to be noticed because this was the first item pointed out.

Korean believers' passion for praying is very amazing. Praying is a precious privilege where believers can interact with God, the Father. However, many believers

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misunderstand the meaning of praying and misuse it. For many believers, shamanistic praying is the dominant way to achieve their earthly blessing and happiness. Therefore, one scholar who researched the Korean church pointed out this problem. "They were praying for their personal needs so there were no common prayers with the same contents. It had simply gathered in the same place at the same time."  

Jesus said that we need to seek first His kingdom and righteousness as He gave the Lord's prayer for a model. Some Christians believe that they are blessed in proportion to how much they give, because they think the offering is like a sacrificial offering to promote God's blessings. Attending and serving in the church is thought to be a means to get more from God, not as a token of gratitude. According to one statistics, the result of the relationship between offerings and blessings was like this: 35% said yes, 49% said no, 52% said not sure. Almost half the people believe that there is a connection between offering and receiving blessings. 

Even in the kinds of offering, there are sometimes irregular things; for example there are Special Rice Offering, Offering for a Petition, Offering for 100 days Praying, and Offering for special thank. Giving of offerings in the service is returning back the most valuable qualities to God who is worthy to be praised and respected. Therefore, giving offerings has to be with spirit and the true heart and is a spiritual service that we give our body as a holy living sacrifice that pleases God.

**Dependable life:** In shamanism, it is believed that supernatural spirits controls every phenomenon so people depend for all their destinies and lives on these spirits.

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73 J. H. Jung, Sungryungchehumei Hyunsangkya koocho [The phenomenon and structure of Holy spiritual approach], (Seoul: Daehwa Publishing co.), p.129

74 B. S. Min, Hankook kyohoieui Shamanism Ihae [The understanding of shamanism in Korean Church], (Poolbit Mohoi, 1982), p.31
They don't admit to their problems and try to solve them on their own. They rather attribute their conflicts to gods. There exists no other problems for human beings. Therefore, they avoid being responsible for their lives, and they even commit their belief to the shamans' care. They have dependency on the sorcerer, a mediator to connect with the spiritual world for their destiny, not their own self-determination. Due to this, people dedicate materials to shamans and wait for blessings. Believers put themselves in a different mindset, and depend on God with pure hearts as children. They obey and trust completely, having no doubts, and don't try to stand on their feet. Shamans are recognized as Kangshinmoo, and his authority becomes absolute, having power over all the events in a town. Many religious workers in the Korean church are charismatic and have sanguine appearance and authority and they conduct absolute assertion and dictatorship in all things.

Virtuous shepherd sacrifices his life for his sheep and serves them. Some pastors keep the same position as shamans by reigning over the sheep and putting absolute assertion and superiority first. This has made believers become too dependent on religious workers. Consequently, it has caused a burden on the religious workers. One typical example is the demand for visiting. Korean believers expect religious workers to visit their houses on New Year's Day and pray and bless them. Of course, one of the important roles of Korean religious workers is visiting the believers. So there is a yearly visiting, called Great Visits to Believers Homes' in Korean churches. Religious workers and seniors in churches visit each house to bless and provide believers' peaceful and

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75 K. I. Kim, Hankook Juntongmoonhwaei Jungsin Boonsukhak, [Mental Analysis of Korean Traditional Culture], (Siinsa, 1987), pp.144-5

76 H. K. Ko, Interview of Christian leaders, (Hyundai religion, 1982.8), p.184
abundant lives. At this time, usually all family members come together. Also, believers invite pastors for a special service on special days, such as child's birth, family member's birthday, moving, or initiating a new business. This similar phenomenon can easily be seen in shamanistic culture. It surely has positive effects, as church can understand believers' personal situation through organized visitation system. However, believers become too dependent on religious workers for their personal or family problems and worries. Moreover, for religious workers who want to keep the pace, eventually they cannot do religious work in a balanced way and it often results in burnout.

The interesting fact is that mostly female evangelists take charge of visiting homes in Korean churches. Female workers have been taking charge of healing and blessing from early church history in Korea. A missionary in the early history of Korean Christianity, Scranton, reported on the work of female evangelists; “The women were highly respected and people believed that they were the people with effective praying power. If when people are faced with problems, female workers are sent to pray and worship for them. When a person gets tired of trying to please an evil spirit, a female evangelist has to come and burn an amulet.”

The work of female evangelists: Korean magicians show conspicuous similarities to sorcerers. Many females were persuaded to destroy various things that were related to worshiping the devil by a woman evangelist, called “Sara.” The people established a traditional custom of calling female evangelists instead of calling sorcerers

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77 Isabel, “A Mudang’s Conversion”, The Korean Mission Field, 3, No. 6 (June, 1907), p.86
Healing diseases: Korean believers' interest in curing disease is quite astonishing. In Korean churches the emphasis on healing has a deep connection with the traditional concept of shamanism. It is believed that the disease is generated by evil spirit in Korean shamanistic religions. That is, greediness of evil spirit is the cause of disease. People expected shamans to be a healer in shamanism. Therefore, Koreans hope to be cured through religious workers or service at church. Professor, Jin-hong Chong said that 30% of Sunday service attendants at Yoido Sunbokum Church, one of the largest churches, are the people who want to be cured from their disease by getting rid of an evil spirit. As the survey says, most of the Korean Protestant pastors still believe that mental disease is a part of Shamanism. Protestant pastors believe that all mental diseases are caused by an evil spirit (80.6%), while Catholic priests recommend general doctors or psychiatrists. 84.6% of Protestant followers regarded mental disordered people as people who have been attacked by evil spirits or ghosts.

The pastor of Sunbokum Church himself was healed of disease by a spiritual experience. Pastor Cho Young-gee, overcame his serious pneumonia by receiving help direct from the Lord. Therefore, his service was clearly accepted to his believers as the middleman of healing from disease and blessings for present materialistic fortunes. Pastor Kim Chang-in, from Chung-hyun Church, and Pastor Han Gyung-jick, from Young-lack Church, and others, are well known for overcoming serious disease by spiritual experience. It is quite similar to the entering stage of shaman. It is common for people who become future shaman's to suffer serious mental and/or physical diseases


79 Hankook Daily, 1983.3.10
with pain and experience ecstasy until they are able to capture the spirit.80

Therefore, pastors are expected to be capable of healing diseases as the shaman performs an exorcism to heal diseases. Besides this, there are many parts of Shamanism in the Korean church. Here, fortune telling, curing diseases, or imposing hands is performed on people who visit. Also a special donation must be submitted, and this is nothing different from fortune-tellers fee.

There are people asking for special prayers for such situations as children entering school, or health issues, to so-called spiritual female deacons.81 Some call people from outside the church. Sometimes they set up the time and have prayer or worship meetings for days to figure out and solve the problems. During the meeting the woman deacon gives appropriate words to fit to the situation and prays for them. Of course they are interested in children entering upon studies, moving to a new place, marriage, job, business affairs, financial problems and so on which are related to present and practical situations.

We can also find the scent of Shamanism in the origin of the custom of the Holy Rice (Songmi). In Songmi, housekeepers take rice whenever they cook food and collect it for the whole week and then pour it into the jug that is in front of the church on Sunday. The pastor cooks this rice with prayers and blessing for the followers. The Korean ancestors collected such grains like, rice or barley for the shaman who lived in town. In the countryside, on the New Year’s morning and after Thanksgiving, the shaman visits each family around the town to bless for materialistic comfort and a sound


81 H. K. Ahn, Survey of actual condition of prognostication, entering church, Pitgwa Sogum (1995.11), pp.70-7
life. Shamanism religious followers paid the shaman with grains and money as a reward. Songmi practice still remains in the countryside and is regarded as a beautiful tradition in Korean church.

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82 Tae-gon Kim, op cit., p. 431.
CHAPTER 5

CHRISTIANS AND SHAMANISM IN SOUTH KOREA

In the previous chapter, the theoretical contributions and evil influences of shamanism into the Korean Church was presented. It helped to show the seriousness of the problems with shamanism that was once a help but now has become a serious problem. This chapter will show the ways shamanism has permeated into the people’s lives. A questionnaire was used with Korean Christians to reveal the extent of the problems with shamanism.

1. The Continuence of Shamanism in South Korea

Shamanism and South Korean People

A female shaman, Choi Bosal, living in Hongsong, South Chungnam Province, introduced shamanism to the public on her web site on the Internet as follows:

Korea has cultivated different cultures from other countries by accepting and amalgamating Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism on the basis of traditional folk religion, shamanism. The mother places a bowl of fresh water in the kitchen, people offer rice-cakes to spirits or gods at toilet or at terrace where soy source crocks are placed, when they move to a new house, mothers pray in front of university gates when their children take entrance exams. Even when a telecommunication satellite, Mugunghwa 2, was launched, the practitioners offered a sacrifice to spirits. From these cases, it is discovered that even in the high-technology age, folk beliefs and shaman culture have
firm roots in our national mentality.¹

This is not exaggerated at all. Before Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism were introduced to Korea, the shaman beliefs existed everywhere in Korean culture. As a result, the Korean culture is identified with shamanism or shaman culture. Probably, shamanism is one of the most fundamental and influential religious beliefs to Korean people. The shaman beliefs have been interwoven with Korean life styles from the pre-historic age. The shaman worship was followed by other major religions, and has influenced those religions and still exists as a foundation of Korean thoughts. It has intruded into the thoughts of all walks of life, and has dominated their daily lives. Every New Year, they consult their fortunes with fortune-tellers or read books related to fortune telling like Tojongbikyol. Villages have exorcists to get rid of demons, and common village worship of ancestors and other spirits and gods, especially in fishing villages where ships and boats can go fishing only after special worship and performances of exorcists. In cases of marriages or moving into a new house, there are special rituals to perform. Even intellectuals want to choose special lucky days. People go to houses of prognosticators to get solutions for the economic and political business and successful promotion of their children in education.

Therefore, it is safe to say that shamanism is widely embedded in Korean mentality and life. Humbert explains the relations between shamanism and other religions in South Korea as follows:

As a general thing, we may say that all-round a Korean will be a Confucianist when in society, a Buddhist when he philosophizes and he is a spirit-worshipper when he is in trouble. Now, if want to know what a man's religion is, you must watch him be in trouble. Then his genuine religion will come out, if he has any. It is for this reason that I conclude that the underlying religion of the Korean,

¹ http://galaxy.channeli.net/choibosal/shaman01.htm.
the foundation upon which all else is mere superstructure, is his original spirit worship.²

In line with this observation, it is plausible to argue that from the pre-historic age, shamanism or shaman beliefs has been the foundation of the folk religions. This foundation has undercurrents throughout the life of the Korean nation to a degree of embodiment. This shamanistic influence of Korea is one of crucial factors behind the dramatic growth of the South Korean church. As discussed already, the Korean shaman belief in an unspecified god has helped the people to understand the God of Christianity. However, this has presented problems because many Christians still maintain the shaman elements in their daily lives. Scholars like Kwang-sun Suh point out that the religious ways of South Korean Christians are not entirely different from non-Christians.³

Under the rapid modernization and industrialization since 1970s, gambling, and concupinage were barred, and the anti-superstition policy against exorcism and fortune telling were criticized as anti-modernity. Looking at the other side of a coin, however, rapid industrialization and urbanization brought out unprecedented social changes which increased new factors affecting individual life. Atomized individuals lost control of their own lives. A tendency developed for people to rely on the means of superstition and transcendental exorcism, prognostication. Other large incidents like the collapse of a luxurious department store and disastrous traffic accidents triggered recognition that rapid economic growth is closer to an insatiable appetite for

² Herbert, *op.cit.*, pp. 403-404

the wealthy, rather than the sound development of security. Consequently, fears from
the unpredictability of the future and anxiety about death have become social issues.

What makes matters worse was the preservation policy of traditional culture
adopted by the Fifth Republic in the early 1980s. Apparently, the shaman beliefs
occupy the core position in this context of the traditional Korean culture. The
practices of exorcise was allowed openly, and the ritual ceremonies worshipping
mountain gods were performed on a mass scale. The special events yearning for the
unification of the nation employed lots of exorcists, and mass media reported them in
a friendly manner. No criticism was allowed. Alongside this mood, the number of
fortune-tellers increased to 60-80,000 as of 1995. Books dealing with the life and
prophets of famous shamans like Shim, Jin-song became bestsellers. She had
precisely predicted the date of the death of North Korean General Secretary, Kim Il-
song in the early 1990s. Shim advocated in her book that the department of the
shaman beliefs should be established in major universities given that the everyday
religion of Korea was shamanism. 4

Today, shamanistic thought and behaviors seemed to be gaining momentum
and are projected to be natural. Computer programmed fortune telling is provided in
banks as an entertaining service to customers. It is common to see fortune-telling and
shamanistic activities on campuses in the name of the restoration of national religion,
like Kutongdoga. When there is intercalate August in a year, parents avoid arranging
their children’s wedding ceremony or moving into new houses on that month.
Politicians and businessmen listen to the words of fortune-tellers before making
important decisions. Most large bookshops have a special separate corner for the art

of divination, which reflects popular interests in "theories" of prognostication.

Other media spread this superstition, such as daily newspapers that, without exception, have "Today's Fortune" or articles interpreting fortunes. Telephone companies have similar services like "30 seconds information on daily fortune" for 50 won (South Korean currency), and cafe and coffee shops specialized in fortune telling are mushrooming. Young people frequently play ghost game imported from Japan and other types using ball-pen and coins.\(^5\)

Juyok, the Book of Changes, a Chinese classic on divination, states that five primary substances (metal, wood, water, fire, and soil) affects the nature of changes. The title was taken after the Chu dynasty of China. Saju is the Four Pillars telling about man's fortune by interpreting the year, month, day and hour of his birth. The core principle of Saju is that it is good for people to accommodate themselves to the providence of nature. It holds that mankind cannot escape from the wheel of confrontation and harmony among the five primary substances (wood, water, fire, metal, and soil) and the unification of two different energies (yin and yang) dwelling in every material and phenomenon because man is influenced from birth by the changes in these energies. Combined with oriental religions, this principle turned to a superstition pursuing material fortunes. Saju claims that the fortunes are allocated by the combination of energy and the year, month, day, and hour of birth.\(^6\); the interpretation of people's delicate combination of energies affected by the timing of birth has been the business of shamans.


\(^6\) Ibid., p. 24.
The key element of the shaman beliefs is the practices of exorcists. There are three kinds of exorcists; Kangshinmu who becomes an exorcist by the decency of a certain ghost; Sesupmu who inherits the job from his or her parents; and Haksubmu who becomes an exorcist by learning it. They influence the lives of ordinary people today through the fortune-teller shops in towns and villages.

Most serious to us is the fact that many Christians who believe in the only God, Jehovah still live with shamanistic thoughts and custom. According to research, about 80% of South Korean people have in some sense shamanistic practices. Many that practice Buddhism, Catholicism and Christianity, the big three religions in South Korea, still hold to their shamanistic background.\(^7\)

The shamanistic rituals that Christians participate in are not necessarily performed by Kangshinmu who have their own specified ghosts, like ancient military generals. The access to shamanistic elements itself is, and should be a serious issue.

Many had once admired Kim, Hae-kyung who founded of the cult of Dan Goon, the mythical fist ancestor of Korean people. Recently however, Kim warned that any other kind of fortune-telling was in nature affected strongly by Satan. The theories of change on human fortune began as scholarly knowledge exploring philosophical understandings from natural changes. The basic idea was to prepare for the future by scrutinizes the past and the present, rather than to function as prophecy. This changed in the Chinese Tang Dynasty when the theories met Saju, emphasizing the function of predicting fortune, disaster, accidents, and good happenings. Knowing the future is the work of God, therefore, efforts to know the future naturally allows the decisive momentum for Satan to intrude. It is because evil spirits have some

There are some embarrassing passages in the Bible that seem to defend astrology: Genesis 1.14; 1 John 38.31; Isaiah 47.13; Jeremiah 10.2-3; and Matthew 2.1-12. However, while astrologists predicted the fortunes of people by reading the changes of stars, God only occasionally uses stars as preludes to special prophets and events. In general, God rules the universe and the human history with his special providence and justice. God has given the Bible, not stars to guide us, as is stated in Deuteronomy 29.29: “There is something that the Lord our God has kept secret; but he has revealed his Law, and we and our descendants are to obey it for ever.”

The most important point to make here is that when Christians are more interested in the future than in the present, dangers of sophistries always exists because obsession to the future is nothing but to "only produce arguments" rather than to "serve God's plan, which is known by faith" (1 Timothy 2:4). Put differently, it is a waste of time without constructive outcomes. Against such possibility, the Holy Bible warns, "You pay special attention to certain days, months, seasons, and years. I am worried about you! Can it be that all my work for you has been for nothing?" (Galatians 4:11). Therefore, the Holy Bible defines again that worship of idols and witchcraft is closely related to immoral, filthy, and indecent human nature and actions (Galatians 5:19-20). By the same token, the Old Testaments prohibit superstition:

Don't sacrifice your children in the fires on your altars; and don't let your people practice divination or look for omens or use spells or charms, and don't let them consult the spirits of the dead. (Deuteronomy 18.10)

The words of fortune-tellers instills a certain thought, and thoughts produces actions, and actions produce habits, thereby, man's personality and life are influenced

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and in a bad way, by fortune-tellers' Satanic words. Shamanism and practices of divination keeps Christians from concentrating solely on God. In short, therefore, any kind of shamanistic rituals result in anti-Jesus forces.

*Aspects of the Contemporary Shamanism*

There are several popular practices of divination in South Korea. One of the most representative shamanistic behaviors is fortune. Post-modern application of various means and techniques explores new ways of fortune telling. Palm-readers believe the lines of palm tell a person's fortune. Voice investigators make their judgement about present situation, background, and future fortunes after carefully listening to clients' voice. Sole readers tell clients' fortune according to the appearance and health of sole in a belief that sole reveals every organ like heart, liver, and lung, etc. Pulse readers tell fortune by sensing one's pulse, and face readers also do their own job by reading their specialized part of body. The christening of newborn babies or to those who want to change their names is also quite a popular job in South Korea.

When a New Year comes, many people want to know their fortunes by decoding Tojong Pikyol, an original South Korean secret way of fortune telling. Common underpinning of the fortune telling is to pursue luck by using supernatural power to void disasters. The shaman believers tend to totally rely upon the practice of divination in order to escape from frustration and conflicts. Fortune telling is the system of exposing their mentality, sometimes indirectly and some times indirectly.9

Some practices of divination are particularly related to the dead including the

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finding of fortunate location for graves and ancestor worship. The first martyrdom occurred in 1791 when Catholic believers in Cholla Province, Yun Ji-choong and Kwon sang-yon and others were killed because of their refusal of Confucian rituals for parental funerals. In 1801, A Chinese Catholic Father Chu Mun-mo was killed for the same reason when he visited Korea when ruled by the Lee Dynasty. These cases prove that Catholics strictly opposed ancestor worship when Catholicism was first introduced. However, about a decade ago, in May 1989 the South Korean Catholics established a Special Committee for the Research on the Localization of the Ancestor Worship. After four years and seven months, Catholics in South Korea adopted a proposal of ancestor worship ritual for localization. The contents of the proposal are not different from the conventional ancestor worship inherited from the pre-modern age. The only difference is to place a cross by the kindle stand.

A similar movement is also found among Protestants. On October 28, 1997, the Anglican Churches in South Korea formulated the Charter of Common Worship. The charter suggested that the Anglican Churches in South Korea accept boldly some parts of traditional ancestor worship such as dining for ancestor ghosts, ritually bowing to ancestors during the worship service, and incense burning. The charter reveals the Anglican Church rites to take a viewpoint that the tradition is beautiful.10

Ancestor worship is based on shamanistic. From the outset, ancestor worship has been closely interconnected with shamanism. Ancestor worship accompanies the shamanistic quasi-religious conception of compensation and rewards. Ancestor worship is practiced without the presence of fortunetellers or spiritual mediums and

its origin was Confucianism, rather than primitive shaman beliefs.

Changsun, or totem poles, were erected at the entrances to villages and treated as a protecting god. Under the name of the restoration of tradition, some student unions and city councils erect them sporadically in campuses and cities. This causes unnecessary friction with Christians. Christians regard Changsung as one of the representative shamanistic signs, and believe it stimulates superstition and shamanism. The opponents also think Changsung is without value for children's education. More fundamentally, it is the expression of Christian belief that Christians have to risk their life to oppose Changsung in terms of spiritual war.

In general, the shaman world in South Korea calls the ritual of shaman and fortune-tellers "Koot." It is a comprehensive expression of shaman belief. The collective Koot is found in the historic records, and the individual Koot was discovered from late Shilla. Experts on Koot claim that the contemporary forms of Koot were already formulated about the 12th century. We can see the basic idea of shaman belief through Koot in which mainly female shamans called various ghosts and supernatural powers by singing and dancing. This was supposed to forestall misfortune and to call in good fortune. When a family has serial diseases among members and bad luck, they want to have Koot.

2. An Analysis on the Consciousness of South Korean Christians

How much are South Korean Christians influenced by shamanistic thought and behaviors? A fortune-teller opening his shop in Shinchon, Seoul revealed that: "Christians too visit his shop with the same agonies and troubles to consult."

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According to him, Christians have no difference from non-Christians except relative
durability: "Their pride is very strong and ask this and that before performing the
fortune-telling. Those who are talkative usually are Christians. I can perceive who is
Christian and who is not by reading divination signs. Some Christians tell their
religion while conversation. According to my statistics for last two and half years,
about 30\% of customers are Christians.\textsuperscript{12}

Ahn, who visited another area where many fortune-tellers have opened their
parlors in Miari, Seoul, exposed the serious state of South Korean Christians who are
deply interwoven in shamanism. Especially when they face difficulties like
unidentified diseases and serious domestic troubles. They stumble when trying to
escape from those predicaments, become extremely weak, then fall in frustration.
However, recommended by acquaintances, they come to consult with fortune-tellers.
"Even though fortune-tellers say that real Christians would not come to see them
many do, except pastors and evangelists rarely come to see a fortune-teller.\textsuperscript{13}

Many Christians tend to visit the fortune-telling shops in the New Year
season, marriage seasons like Spring and autumn, election periods, and entrance exam
season in winter. It is mainly because they think of shamanism as a shamanistic
custom, not as a shamanistic religion. This conception is reflected even in the South
Korean encyclopedias, which do not put shamanism in the categories of religion.
Buddhism, Christianity (including Catholicism), Confucianism, and Chontokyo are
mentioned as the biggest religions in South Korea. Chontokyo believes in the

\textsuperscript{12}H.K Ahn, Report: Christian Culture under Threat [Rupo: Kitokkyo
Munhwaga Witaeropita] (Seoul: Kyujang, 1999), p. 15

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 17.
mythical national founder, Tan Koon. However, as Mok Chang-kyun unmistakably observes, the most representative folk religion of shamanism, undermines the consciousness and behaviors of South Korean people.

A survey by the Gallop Poll of Korea on the shamanistic traits of South Korean Christians in September of 1997 confirmed Mok's observations. About 30 percent of Christians thought there was a correlation between their names and their fortunes. Nineteen percent thought there was a close relationship between the marital harmony signs in Saju and successful marriage. A quarter of the respondents believed the correlation between the location and direction of ancestors' graves affected the descendants' fortune.

This survey shows that ancestor worship is one of the considerable obstacles for South Koreans conversion to Christianity. Even lots of existing Christians have continuous troubles with their relatives due to their refusal to participate in ancestor worship. According to historians Korean ancestor worship was imported from China with Confucianism in the late Koryo Dynasty.

3. South Korean Christians' Basic Understanding of Shamanism

Five hundred questionnaires of the survey in this study were distributed to five

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16 98 KFP Gallup Survey Paper.

churches, and 232 respondents were gathered. For a deeper investigation, these respondents were divided into two groups, deacons and other Christians. The deacon group had 139 respondents, and the other group had 93 respondents. The ratio of deacon respondents is high, showing that those who have been to church for a long-term period responded to the questionnaires. The questions asked for the gender of the respondents because of an assumption that males and females might have different religious thoughts. Male respondents to the survey were 92, and female 140. This ratio compares well to the overall sex distribution in the Korean church.

In the following pages, the 17 questions from the survey are presented and each question has a diagram to analyze the answers. Each question has 5 answering items (see the appendix). Each item has its own bar in the diagram. The first bar means the average of all the respondents and second and third bars show the male’s and female’s dispositions and 4th and 5th show deacons’ and lay persons’. In general, the analysis was on the average (first bar), but when there was much variation between male and female or deacon and lay person then additional explanation was given.
What do you think Satan should be?

This question was given to the respondents because shamanism in the Korean church is closely related to the false understanding of spirits. 45.3 per cent, less than half of respondents correctly answered that Satan is the fallen and corruptive angel, the definition in the Holy Bible. 23.7 per cent believed Satan is an evil ghost, who has existed from the beginning, 15.1 per cent thought it the spirits of the dead, which is seemingly affected by shamanism. Respondents who had no understanding was 7.3 per cent. The deacon group had a relatively right understanding about Satan: 47.5 per cent answered Satan is corruptive and disobedient angel while 41.9 per cent of the laymen group had the same answer. It is seemed that the career in the church has had a positive effect helping them to better understanding it, even though the degree is not much.
Do you think shamanistic elements are found in your thought and life?

Those who answered "high" occupied 6 per cent of the respondents, "a little" was 43.5 percent, and those who responded "none" were 23.8 per cent. Those who have "absolute" conviction of non-shamanistic elements in their thought and lives were only 19 per cent. After all, more than half respondents admitted to shamanistic elements in their thought and lives. This question showed a noticeable difference between the genders. Fifty percent of females answered they had shamanism elements, but only 7.2 per cent male group answered this way. 85.8 per cent of males marked the fifth item that shows that males have much less shamanism beliefs.
Have you heard of concerns about superstitious behavior from casual conversations with friends and reverends in churches?

This question is not about the case of the formal education of the church but about the case of casual conversations with believers. "absolutely none" and "seemingly none" occupied 19.4 per cent and 18.1 per cent respectively. As can be seen in the table, the respondents who answered "seemingly yes" and "yes" were 31.9 per cent and 22.8 per cent.

case of casual conversations with believers. "Absolutely none" and "seemingly none" occupied 19.4 per cent and 18.1 per cent respectively. As can be seen in the table, the respondents who answered "seemingly yes" and "yes" were 31.9 per cent and 22.8 per cent.

Have you had accurate education about superstitious behaviors from
This question asks whether the subject of superstition has been dealt in the education programs in churches such as sermons and weekly Bible studies. The responses were "absolutely none" 25.9 per cent; "seemingly none" 27.2 per cent; "seemingly yes" 25.4 per cent; yes 27.2 per cent, and "don't know" 7.8 per cent. If the last group, which had been uneducated, is removed, some 61.9 per cent of Christians have no opportunity for education about the dangers and hazards of shamanism.

Have you ever seriously thought about practices of divination and superstitious behaviors including fortune telling?

"Yes" and "seemingly yes" received 20.7 per cent and 20.3 per cent.
However, the responses of "absolutely none" and "seemingly none" occupied 21.1 per cent and 23.3 per cent. The negative respondents were relatively higher. If the "don't know" group of 14.7 per cent is added to the negative respondents, approximately 60 per cent did not think such behaviors were problematic. In this case, obvious the variation is between deacons and lay persons.

Have you thought of the restoration of traditional culture and the Dan Gun shrine?

This question is about one of the crucial pending issues initiated by the government in terms of the restoration of shamanism. It was encouraging to find that 32.8 per cent had thought of the matter and 18.1 per cent expressed their concerns.
However, still 16.9 per cent had not thought about it, and 20.7 per cent of respondents had no interest in it. At present most of evangelical churches and groups regard this as a serious problem and seek ways of coping with it.

What do you think of superstitious behaviors appearing in TV programs?

These programs were disapproved by 36.2 per cent, and 24.6% answered it was problematic. However, the respondents who "don't know", or thought "there was no particular problem," or "there might be no problem" reached 39.2 per cent. To this question, the distinction between the deacon group and the ordinary group was comparatively clear: 40.3 per cent of the deacons were consciousness of a problem
and 30. 1 per cent of the laypersons felt it. The difference between male and female is not significant.

Concrete Behaviors of Shamanism Intervening in Individual Life

Attitudes about Consulting the Matters of Business, Children's Promotions and Higher Education with Fortune Tellers

Fortune telling is the most common way for shamanism to influence the public. As discussed above, some of the highly educated and the prominent figures of society go to fortunetellers. The response of Christians was very firm against it. 60.3 per cent thought it should "absolutely be prohibited." 31.5 percent responded "it is
better not to do it." The respondents who answered they had to do it were only 1 per cent; "probably” was 2.2 per cent; "don't know" group was only 5.2 per cent.

The Face Reading, and the Palm Reading

It is also common in South Korea to think that face reading and palm reading have some value about judging people's character and fortunes for the future. Sometimes, famous South Korean conglomerates employ fortunetellers, face readers, and palm readers when they have interviews for recruitment. It is rather common for the Koreans to believe that their fortunes are recorded in their palms. They identify the lines of their palms with the welfare of their lives. To this question, 47 per cent answered it must be prohibited, 32 per cent responded that it is better not to do it.
About 21 per cent responded from "don't-know" to "they can know." The respondents were relatively more generous here than with consulting fortunetellers.

Having Rites after Building a New Building

It is not uncommon in South Korea to see that they wish safety and prosperity by having a rite after building a new house or constructing a new bridge or other structure. Customary they offer a sacrifice of the head of a boiled pig, rice cakes and alcohol drinks. 74 per cent agreed that it should not be allowed, and 12 per cent answered it was better not to do. Those who responded they had to were only 2 per cent, and the "don't know" group was 5.2 per cent. South Korean churches should
suggest alternatives such as an opening service and a moving service, instead of shamanistic rites.

Asking Marital Harmony for their Children

The marriage of children is so important in the oriental culture where parents strongly desire the prosperity and fertility of their descendants. Especially for reproduction, parents want to know whether the future spouses are compatible. What were the attitudes of South Korean Christians? "Absolutely no" was 59.9 per cent, and 30.2 per cent answered they had better not do it. Those who defended it was low: "should do" group was only 2 per cent, and 4.3 per cent answered they could do it. 3.9 per cent expressed
their opinion as "don't know." One of the interesting points was that the opposition of the male group was lower than the female by 54.5 per cent versus 63.6 per cent.

Selecting a good date for a marriage and for changing houses based upon shamanistic belief

The Korean folk religion believes that good luck, bad luck, disaster, and fortune are closely related to a certain date. Thus, they select particularly lucky days in a year for marriage and changing houses. The majority of Christians opposed this idea. "Absolutely not" was the response of 56 per cent, and "better not to do" was the response of 34.9 per cent. Positive respondents were only 7.3 per cent. To this item, the deacon group and the laymen group showed a considerable gap: the deacons answered "absolutely not" by 66.9 per cent, and the laymen's response was 39.8 per
Going to Name-makers for New-born Children

The response to this question shows a similar tendency to the previous question. Koreans have believed that the name of a person greatly affects one's life, and so parents of new born-children go to name-makers or fortunetellers to get the right name, and pay a high cost. The survey proves that most Christians regard this as a taboo. "Absolutely no" was the response of 52.2%; "better not to do it" was 32.8%; and "don't know" was 6.5 %. The positive respondents were only 8.6 %.
Calling Geomancy to Select Perfect Location of Grave for Ancestors.

A belief that locating a good gravesite will affect the fortunes of descendants is a commonly held belief in South Korea. The people call an expert to judge the value of the grave place Jikwan.

"Absolutely no" was the response of 55.8%, but "better no to do it" was 27.5%, and the positive respondents, "should do" and "can do" were 3.8%. The "don't know" group was relatively large at 12.9%. In other words, their attitudes showed some ambivalent views to the question.
Ancestor Worship of the Dead Ancestors

The religious rite for dead ancestors on the anniversary date of their death has been one of the thorniest issues. It has had vibrant confrontation and controversies from the early days of Korean Christianity. Still, most non-believers mention this issue as a major reluctance to becoming a Christian. The group who answered "absolutely not" was 58.6%, and "better not to do it" was 31%. The survey reveals that most Christians have come to oppose this practice. Only 2.1% thought the rite should be held, and "don't know" was only about 8.2%.
Going to Fortune Tellers and Reading *Tojong Piokyol* in the New Year Holiday

Many South Koreans have explored their new year fortunes by consulting with fortune tellers and reading Tojong Piokyol, which is regarded as having some secret codes to predict the new year. To this question, 57.8% expressed their absolute opposition. Better not to do it was the response of 28%. 10.1% answered "don't know", and 4.8 % responded that it was all right.
Erupting Changsung

The Korean people have treated Changsung as a protecting god, and recently there are strong moves to strengthen this in certain cities and universities. 59.1% replied "absolutely not", and 32.3% answered with a positive response. No significant difference between male and female was discovered.
In summary, many Christians indicated that there were remnants of superstition in their lives. Most serious was the fact that these Christians were relatively faithful believers. In spite of it, churches have not coped with the undercurrent of shamanistic elements in South Korean Christians. Only the respondents who answered "absolutely not" to the questions of superstition, this study assumes, maintain a real Christian standard. On the other hand, the groups who answered they should do it, or they can do it, still believe in the power of superstition. The group replying that they don't know might compromise with such behaviors whenever they think them necessary. Thus, this group is still holding to superstition and shamanistic behaviors. Going one-step further, the "better not to do it" group, in principle, has not developed a clear value system based upon the Holy Bible, thereby, it can be called the gray zone which demands solid education.
4. Conclusion

One of the essential questions, ‘what do you think that ghosts are?’ revealed that 55 per cent of Korean Christians have wrong ideas. Some of them still want to select a good day for marriage and changing houses. As we have seen in the whole analysis, deacons and lay people have differences in their understanding and convictions in most areas. As the result of this analysis shows, the difference is not because of the systematic education program of the church. On the contrary, the lay people have maintained their ideas about Shamanism through their long church life. And it is the female group rather than the male group that responded more negatively towards Shamanism in this analysis.

Shamanism is not only the custom of the past. It is still breathing beneath the surface in the lives of the South Korean people. It is imbedded deeply and they perceive it a kind of a religion. Moreover, having experienced rapid economic growth and industrialization, unpredictability in the South Korean society has been drastically increased. As a result, the people want to have psychological stability, and begin to see fortunetellers more frequently than before. This observation is confirmed by the fact that the number of fortunetellers' shops noticeably increased when Seoul was changed to an international metropolitan area. It is very alarming, especially when one looks at the campuses, and other places where young people usually congregate. At least at this juncture, there is no sign that the mushrooming of superstition and shamanistic practices will fade away in the near future. Rather, books on shamanism are increasing at the present, and various magazines and newspapers give space to fortune telling and other similar concerns without exception.
This trend does not leave Christians alone. The number of Christians who hold shamanistic beliefs is large. Even though they have feel guilty, they tend to see fortunetellers and mediums in order to resolve their psychological insecurity and to realize their wishes for the future. During the last three decades, South Korean churches achieved drastic quantitative growth. Lots of people joined churches. However, the churches are not making proper efforts to meet believers' spiritual needs that transcend shamanism. South Korean Christians are Christians in name, but they have the mentality of the past. Even though there are desirable moves represented by the boom of the "apostles training" programs; it is still far from overcoming the shamanistic elements in South Korean church life.

As can be seen in the survey above, the amount of shamanistic elements existing in the churches is really dreadful. It is urgent to strip off the old custom, shamanism, from the minds and lives of South Korean Christians. Shamanistic behaviors, thoughts, and elements are not only in individual Christians, but also more seriously, the churches do in part accept them. When churches teach that God will reward some kinds of service, like offerings, early morning prayers, and sacrificial service for churches, this extends shamanistic beliefs. Sometimes, churches use believers' pursuit of fortune with special programs. "One Hundred Days Prayers" or "One Thousand Days Offerings" are very similar to shamanistic elements. In this way, there are some churches that mislead their members toward shamanistic tendencies.
CHAPTER 6

THE CHRISTIAN WAYS TO COUNTER SHAMANISM

We have already seen the relationship and influence of shamanism with the Korean Church and with Korean Christians. In this chapter three suggestions are made that will help to counter the influence of shamanism on Korean churches and Christians: balanced Bible teaching which includes the biblical prohibition to the shamanism and the restoring the right conception of God and blessing, regarding it as essentially spiritual wars, and working toward a positive cultural transformation.

1. Teaching the Bible with Balance

It is not difficult to perceive that the shamanistic elements are based on a belief in God. As already discussed in Chapter 5, shamanistic openness, eagerness, and recognition of the supernatural world assisted the Korean people in accepting Christianity relatively easily. Now, however, it is important to infuse historic and subjective consciousness and strip the elements of shamanism from South Korean Christianity. Jesus made earnest efforts during his three-year public life to nurture and educate his disciples. Well-educated and trained disciples are needed to be the tools of revolution in the society and in the world. By the same token, Christian education is only possible through balanced and systematic biblical teaching in churches. Children in Sunday schools must be provided accurate understandings about the nature of Christianity and human history as a stage of God's activity.
Prohibition about Shamanism

Even though the Bible contains ample cases showing how seriously God treats shamanism as different forms of satanic works, South Korean churches have taken a surprisingly low-posture or at least have muted the warnings in the Bible against shamanism. Pastors have not taught their congregations, so South Korean Christians have not learned the serious sinful nature of shamanism and shamanistic practices that are deeply rooted in their lives. A number of Christians practice Christianity from the shamanistic point of view, participating in mundane blessings, physical healing, expelling evil ghosts, and spiritual ability and experiences. Many of them see fortunetellers about their problems.¹

What does the Bible teach about shamanism? God called Abraham out of his native country because God needed to seclude His man from idols and shamanistic custom (Genesis 12.1). Abraham's descendants lived in the land of Goshen, Egypt, for four centuries, isolated from other tribes. When they made the exodus from Egypt to Canaan, one of the most crucial missions and obligations given by God was to protect them from the religious corruption of existing tribes in Canaan (Exodus 3.20-25). Actually, one of the central themes in the Old Testament was the teaching and history of struggle between the only God and the plural gods, and the collision of the historic religion and natural religion. God strongly warned the Jewish people that they should not be assimilated into the shamanistic religious culture of foreign tribes. God conveyed the message through Moses to strictly keep away from Canaan religion and

The Bible gives a warning about every kind of magic by pointing out its wickedness and satanic reality. For example, Exodus 7-11 illustrates Egyptian magicians' ability to perform some degree of supernatural magic. They changed a wooden stick into a snake and the River Nile into blood, and brought forth frogs with substantial success. However, in the third plague when lice were produced, they were unable to duplicate this with their powers. Their magical power was limited and God did not permit them to transcend the power of God:

When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you, do not learn to imitate the detestable ways of the nations there. Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD, and because of these detestable practices the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you. You must be blameless before the LORD your God (Deuteronomy 18:9-13).

The Old Testament provides many examples in which the religious practices of the people around Israel were seen to diffuse into the Israelite religion. King Solomon provides an obvious example.

On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites. He did the same for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods. (1Kings 11:7,8).

This process led to marked changes in the religious beliefs and practices of the

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Israelites, which was condemned by Yahweh, their God, and finally led to judgement.  

The Bible also prohibits the spiritualism of mediums, a spiritual magic to call a ghost to a medium by pray or by saying a spell. It was widespread in the ancient nations and is now being restored in various and unique forms reflecting the characters of certain regions. The trait of the mediums is to seek for some information or knowledge from a ghost of the dead. One may in fact make a case for the reality of ghosts from the Bible. In the well-known story of the so-called witch of Endor in 1Samuel 28, the medium was surprised that Samuel actually rose from the dead. This did not seem to be what she expected. Luther and Calvin argue that Samuel in that case was nothing but a ghost made to appear by the trick of Satan. Similarly, Park, Yun-son, one of the prominent researchers in theology, claims that Samuel in the case was hypnotised by the cheating of a devil.  

The prophet Isaiah emphatically warned the people about questioning the dead and not asking God (Isaiah 8.19). After the Babylonian exile, Isaiah harshly denounced the Israeli people who, having been contaminated by the Babylon religions, used to sit by graves to receive an oracle from the dead for the living people. (Isaiah 65.4).

Also in the New Testament one finds Moses and Elijah conversing with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. Although these are unique cases, they do not
discount the possibility of spirit beings after death.\(^6\) By the same token, the New Testament is adamant against all kinds of magic. More than anything else, Jesus told his disciples not to repeat the same words when they prayed to God. It is a clear warning not to pray to God in the way of casting a magical spell as the Gentiles. (Matthew 6.7). Actually, Deacon Philip made a magician, Simon, repent and convert to Christianity when Philip went to Samaria to deliver the good news. (Acts 9-24). In his first evangelical tour of the Mediterranean region, Paul performed God's judgment to a male shaman, Elymas on the Island of Cyprus. (Acts 13.4-12).

In short, it should be stressed that shamanism is obviously idolatry, and abominable and filthy sin. In oriental societies, some regard the human body as a little universe, which reacts to the changes of the great universe mechanically. These ideas, hindering the people from facing the creator, God, set up the movements of stars, climatic changes as the basis of philosophical knowledge in which the human-being, natural phenomena, and the universe are one organic subsistence. They apply ignorant Juyok and Saju to God's splendid and colorful reign of the universe. Therefore, the shamanism and its various sub-ideas do not go along with Christianity.\(^7\)

Even though some significant portions of South Korean Christians have not yet severed the influence of shamanism, it is an obligation for churches to teach correct understanding about God. Whatever their motivation to become Christians, they are now Christians who have to know the truth about God.\(^8\) Calvin began his

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\(^7\) H. Ahn, op. cit., p. 25.

\(^8\) H.J. Jon, op. cit., p. 143.
Calvin's Institutes of Christianity with the knowledge about God. In other words, even if South Korean Christians are accustomed to the word, Hanunim, meaning heavenly god, this is a pantheistic absolute being in shamanism which weakens emotional ties with God. Churches must educate their believers to have a true knowledge and awesome respect about God. Knowing God means to know God as a creator at first, and to know of God through Jesus Christ as the Savior. (2 Corinthians 4.6). God maintains the universe he created with limitless competence, rules it with wisdom, preserves it with virtue, and judges humankind with His justice. There is no truth that originates from other sources than God. Therefore, every human expects everything from Him and seeks for everything from Him, and has to learn to pay back to Him with gratitude.

Christians must also have a right understanding about Jesus Christ. This is a problem in Korea, because shamans have been occupying the hearts of the people. The Korean people believed that shamans, as proxies between gods and man, could appeal to gods and make wishes come true. Under the circumstances, the role of shamans can be confused with the role that Jesus Christ plays. It cannot be emphasized too much that Jesus Christ is Creator and Ruler of the universe, and the Savior who sacrificed his body to cleanse our sins and to remove the barrier between God and man. Jesus is the King of Peace and the ultimate healer of disease and now sits by God, praying for us.

It is also necessary to educate people that ghosts in shamanism are not the spirits of the dead. They were corruptive angels who had to be expelled from the

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10 Ibid., II. ii. 1.
Heaven (John 12:7; Matthew 25:41; Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4; Romans 8:38). Ghosts are perpetrators of Satan.

_Return to the right conception of blessing_

The concept of "blessing" needs to be understood in accordance with the teaching of the Holy Bible. The blessing is one of the key concepts of Christianity. However, the essence is not by any means the same as blessing or fortune in shamanism. Fortune in shamanism is the predominant objective, but in Christianity, the blessing is a natural gift from worship of God.11 The Holy Bible defends material and practical fortunes, but does not place it in the first place. Such fortunes are preceded by spiritual fortune and salvation to the Kingdom of Heaven. There is abundant evidence to prove it (Hebrew 11.3-12.2). People want to have material things, health, longevity, success, reputation, and power. These fortunes per se seem to be neutral, but the ways of receiving them matter. Those who believe in God need to be armed with the mind of a steward (Romans 11.36). The Lord gives everything. The wealth that occasionally appeared in the Old Testaments was gained due to right relationship with God.

It is time to nurture Christians to be able to overcome the desire for material fortunes. If there are some other words that should be as familiar to Christians as the blessing, the words are the Cross, suffering, and resurrection. In the nascent stage of Christianity, most Christians lived with suffering before they were granted practical fortunes. The most important things to them were to know eternal life and the Lord.

11 E.J. Ha, _Purikipun Shamanismui Yonghyangul Kukpokhaeya_ [We should overcome the deeply rooted influence of shamanism], _Mokhoewa Shinhak_, 1996.12, p.167.
They did not fear death. In fact, Christians are commanded to shoulder the cross for the Lord (Matthew 16:24-5). The Lord promised special blessings for ones that love God and were willing to risk death (Matthew 19:29). Christianity is the religion of the cross. Any religion without it is not Christianity. The basic spirit of Christianity is not on the blessing, but on the endeavors to make the will of God be realized on the earth.12

_The life after death oriented belief_

The reason why beliefs in South Korean Christianity fall into the fortune-wishing religion is mainly due to the tinted conception of life after death. Should South Korean Christians have really believed in the Kingdom of Heaven, and that the glory in the Heaven is God's inheritance for us, they would not be so interested in making a little more money and being promoted to a higher position in this world. As Lee, Dong-Won argues, it is urgent to restore the belief in the life after death in the South Korean churches.13 Christianity teaches that the life after death is the final destination all mankind should pursue while shamanism pursues the interests of the present world. Despite this, a number of Christians who are materialistic are indifferent about heaven, hell, and the life after death. This attitude becomes the soil of shamanism pursuing the practical fortune in the present world. According to Lee's research, only 80% of South Korean Christians believe in the existence of heaven as compared to 80% of American Christians. It is usually said that the American society is much more mundane than the South Korean society. The statistics, however, tell us

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13 D. W. Lee, _Sesangeso Choigoro Chukbokpaden Saramduru 5kaji Popchik_ [Five Rules to the most blessed people in the world], Seoul: Kyujang, 1999, p. 76.
that Christianity in South Korea is much more present world oriented than in the US. It is mainly because South Korean churches have been lazy about preaching on the life after death. The belief in the life after death makes the people live with true freedom in the present world.\textsuperscript{14}

Churches must prove adequate education that meets the need of individual spiritual growth. The Kingdom of Heaven is never to be exchanged with any material thing, but it is the climax of salvation. It is most urgent to restore the belief in the life after death and in the Kingdom of the Lord.

2. Countermeasures as Spiritual Wars

The removal of shamanism is not a mere improvement of an old custom, but it is spiritual combat. From this viewpoint, countermeasures must be set up. It has been the work of Satan to direct people away from God. As a result, the people of God have been struggling against satanic forces relentlessly through the entire human history. The appearance of Satan has not been necessarily been as an abominable monster. Initially he was created beautiful. So it is not strange that Satan has ability to be seen as a glorious angel.

Before the Israeli people conquered the land, supra-naturalism overwhelmed the land of Canaan. Deuteronomy 18:10-11 illustrates it in detail. The native tribes scarified their children in the fires on their altars, and there were many practices of divination. God hates those "disgusting things," that's why God drove them out of the land (Deut. 18:12). The Old Testament has never yielded the principle even an inch.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p. 75.

King Saul lost his life when he ignored the warnings of God to the matter: "Saul died because he was unfaithful; to the Lord" (1 Chronicles 10:13-14). The Law of Moses prohibits the practices of divination (Leviticus 9:31 & 20:6). "Any man or woman who consults the spirits of the dead shall be stoned to death" (Leviticus 20:27). A shaman was also the object of the punishment (Exodus 22:18). By contrast, Samuel regarded as rebellion things like divination and witchcraft which were as sinful as idolatry (1 Samuel 15:23). Similarly, King Josiah removed from Jerusalem and the rest of Judea all the mediums and fortune tellers, and all the household gods, idols, and all pagan objects of worship while Manasseh sinned against the Lord by rebuilding the pagan places of worship, altars for Baal and so on (2 Kings 23:24, 2 Chronicles 33:6).\(^{16}\)

The Holy Bible judges any spiritualism as sinful. Isaiah challenged the people who indulged in spiritualism in his time as follows:

By the wrath of the LORD Almighty the land will be scorched and the people will be fuel for the fire; no one will spare his brother. On the right they will devour, but still be hungry; on the left they will eat, but not be satisfied. Each will feed on the flesh of his own offspring (Isaiah 9: 19-20).

Coming to see mediums to consult fortune and trying to make contact with the dead breaks the trust with God. King Saul died from such unfaithful behavior. It was common for the people in the ancient world to keep a talisman at home or in his/her body for safety. When belief among the Israeli people became weakened, such superstitious practices struggled into Israel. Merrill F. Unger assumes that's why the parishes kept a small box containing sacred tools. In other words, they imposed magical significance to the boxes.

Then how did Jesus Christ counter the attacks from Satan? During his works,

\(^{16}\) Ibid. p.25.
Satan attempted relentlessly to attack Jesus and derail him from the plan of God. From the moment Jesus was born, the conspiracy proceeded to deprive Him of life. There were several occasions to do harm to Jesus and at several attempts to assassinate him. The test in the desert was only a prelude. Temptation came even from his disciple, Peter, and at last, Judea became the tool of Satan for killing Jesus.

However, Jesus overturned the kingdom of Satan wherever he went. Jesus healed people captured by devils as proved in many cases (Luke 13:16, Mark 16:17). Jesus sent seventy disciples out, commanding them to expel devils. It may also be the case today, even though not many can be permitted to use such skills. Thus, missionaries need to pray to God to send proper persons for the work of expelling devils.

Expelling devils is not uncommon in Christianity. It is impossible not to use the word, exorcism. However, the Bible never uses the word, esorkso. Instead, ekballo is used to mean to "expel." Expelling the Devil or Satan is difficult and necessitates caution. There are ones that have the process of questioning, which, however, has no biblical ground. Talking with the Devil is very dangerous. Jesus ordered ghosts to calm down. We don't need to "test" evil spirits. Curiosity about spiritualism and evil ghosts are the same as to call Satan to himself.17 Plainly it is necessary to disarm the enemy, Satan. Jesus achieved that work on the cross. Paul, in a letter to Colossian Christians, described it vividly: "And on the cross he freed himself from the power of the spiritual rulers and authorities"(Colossians 2:15). As Paul told in Ephesians 1:22, "God put all things under Christ's feet and gave him to the church as supreme Lord over all things." This fact gives all of us astonishingly.

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graceful courage to struggle against Satan. Reliant upon this scripture, churches can breakthrough the dark jungle of the world with God's total protection from dangers.\textsuperscript{18}

The world consists of two parts: Seen World and Unseen World. The latter affects the former. Similarly, wars in this world have two types: wars in the seen world and wars in the unseen world. Churches have been called by God to wage wars against adversaries in the unseen area. God also calls all Christians to the spiritual wars (2 Corinthians 10.3-4). The Holy Bible makes it clear that Christians are engaged in spiritual war (Ephesians 6:12).

Shamanism needs to be understood not merely as custom and culture, but as a matter of spiritual combats. Korean ancestors violated the first commandment that urges to worship the true God, and they worshipped false gods. In addition, they broke the second commandment about idolatry. Such sins are not only treason against God, but also empowerment of Satan.

The sins stemming from the violation of the first two commandments are very serious because the sins imply the hated of God. The judgment of the violation of the first two commandments takes the nature of a curse from God. The punishment would be passed on to three or four generations. In some countries, however, the root of false worship and idolatry dates back to several hundred years or to several thousand years in extreme case. The influence of shamanism in this case is far stronger than assumed, in which lots of people indulged in idol worship and the occult and have been captured by satanic nets and became the slave of Satan (Psalm 106.36; Exodus 23.33; Deuteronomy 7.16,25; 1 Samuel 2.3,8.27; 1 Corinthians 10.20).

Satan is wicked and has its own forces (2 Corinthians 4.4). However, our

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid. p.34.
Lord, Jesus, disarmed all powers and capability of Satan (Colossians 2.14-15). He destroyed the works of Satan (1 John 3.8). Jesus' cross was not the symbol of failure, but it was the wisdom of God to banish satanic history (1 John 5.4-5). Jesus has given us authority, so that we can walk on snakes and scorpions and overcome all the power of the Enemy, and nothing will hurt us (Luke 10.19). Now God commands us to confront Satan directly. Paul taught us not to give the Devil a chance and showed categorically how Christians should stand up against the Devil's evil tricks: "to "build up your strength in union with the Lord and by means of his mighty power" (Ephesians 4:27, 6:10-20).

Shamanism is a matter of spiritual war. Christians have the imperative to expose the fallacy of Satan, to destroy the satanic forces, and all the more, to try more eagerly in expanding the good news to the people captured by shamanism. Good news must be conveyed to shamans and the people indulged in shamanism. It is not too difficult, rather it will be an easy mission especially when they realize the power of God excels to the spiritual power they fear and rely upon.

3. Countermeasures as Cultural Transformation

More than anything else shamanism has molded the Korean tradition of religion. Every major religion imported from foreign countries like Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity has been accepted within the frame of shamanism. Shamanism has functioned to form the basis of Korean mentality, the value system, thoughts, and worldviews; and has assimilated and accepted foreign religions. In the early stage of Korean church history, missionary methods pursuing social reformation

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through cultural transformation were employed. At that time, Christians made strenuous efforts to transform customary practices.  

The core of Korean folk religion was shamanism and the shaman beliefs. This buttressed the peasant class and uneducated social groups. Nonetheless, shamanistic phenomena did not limit its influence to a certain class. The educated and the middle class were also influenced by it. As discussed in Chapter 5, the shamanistic belief, having penetrated into every corner of the Korean society has dominated South Korean people's ways of thinking and behaving.

If there is one thing many South Korean priests and theologians misunderstand, it would be the illusion that shamanism and the shamanistic belief have been fading away because of the westernized civilization and the introduction of Christianity. Korean shamanism is not merely an ancient religion or sorcery. It has been sustained for the entire Korean cultural history, and as pointed out above, has played a crucial role to make the world's great religions indigenous. Facing the state of domestic or individual crisis, many Christians accept the shamanistic belief or the practice of divination willingly. Therefore, leaders of South Korean churches need to have a right understanding about traditional shamanistic belief and should not simply keep away or try to combine it with Christianity. For the sake of an effective mission in spreading The Good News, and sustaining growth of the churches in the future, the shamanistic belief should not be dealt with lightly.  

In the very beginning of Christian history in Korea, Christianity was accepted as a protector of the Korean culture. Soon after, however, the Western missionaries

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21 Y. T. Lee, op. cit., p. 310.
were portrayed as destroyers of traditional culture, even though they contributed to
the abandonment of polygamy, slavery system, fenshu, opium smoking, and
gambling. On the other side of the coin, it was also the case that they made a mistake
to devalue the Korean culture as a whole. This background became one of stimuli to the "indiginisation debates" discussed in the following part.

Shamanism, deeply rooted in the national mentality, gave rise to new debates, called "indigenization debates." South Korean people began to recognize the peculiarity of Korean culture and history from 1960s. Since then, nationalism, national consciousness, national enlightenment have overwhelmed the society. Namely, new recognition of the South Korean tradition and culture emerged as a new trend of thought. In addition, the thought that the most "Korean" is the best was added to the trend, which sparked "indigenisation debates" in the Korean church.

The debates of Korean theology movements were affected by three waves: the revolutionary moods in the Western society in 1960s; the national enlightenment and the following economic prosperity; and the advent of the liberal school in theology. The indigenisation debates had two different main arguments. While one group of scholars, Yun Song-bum, Yu Dong-sik, and Kim Kwang-sik, argued that good news needed to be reinterpreted in terms of Korean region and culture; another faction represented by Kim Chong-jun, Lee Chong-sung, Hahn Chol-ha, and Hong Hyung-sol, advocated that indiginisation could only be limited to the cultural and functional sides of Christianity.

The indigenisation theologians, who attempted to interpret good news from the perspectives of Korean religion and culture, had primary interests in the

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22 Y.S. Kwon, "Jontong Munhwaye Barame Driun Satanui Silchaerul Kyungkaehara" [Be alert to the reality of Satan shadowed by the Wave of the Traditional Culture], Pitgwa Sogum (1998.1), p. 64.
development of Korean history. Jang Byung-il, "Tankun Shinhwae Daehan Shinhakjok Ihae-Changjo Solhwauui Tochakhwa Sogo [A Theological Understanding of the Tankun Myth: A Report for the Indigenisation of the National Foundation Myth], contributed to by Kittokyo Sasang (1961). Jang advocated finding a better way to indiginise the creation myth in the Holy Bible by comparing and utilizing the Tankun myth. Shortly after the article, in October 1962, Professor Yu Dong-sik at the Methodist Theological School, raised the necessity of linking self-understanding and the issue of indiginisation for the evangelical mission of South Korean churches. Yu argued that the understanding of the Korean history and culture was one of the prerequisites for the evangelical mission in South Korea. In his terms, history and culture included tradition and religion. Put differently, as for him, it was a must to study and understand other traditional Korea religions, the shamanistic beliefs, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Chontokyo. The studies, Yu continued to argue, would provide Korean mentality and religious traits, thereby opening a way to converse with people believing in other religions. The conversation would be the first step forward to the expansion of good news, therefore the primary tasks of churches.

The conservative wing of the South Korean church promoted the idea that a belief that attempts indigenisation would bring about a jumbling of faith. In response, Park Pong-bae, influenced by Helmut Richard Niebuhr, raised transformism as a

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possibility to transform traditional culture and ethics towards Christianity through the power of good news which is in nature transformation-oriented. As a way of combining Christianity and traditional culture, he tried to employ the transformation theory. According to Park's argument, traditional culture and ethics were not necessarily condemned and judged as "Gentile." Rather, those elements should be regarded as positive sources for the contacts with Christianity. Traditional culture and ethics could be developed and transformed in line with Christianity and churches could work for the maintenance of them. Park argued that the power for enlightenment toward Christianity would result in positive transformation.\textsuperscript{26}

Only the balanced and rightly attempted indigenisation would be applied as a means of missionary work. For example, good news of Christianity might have some synergy effect when it copes well with the national and cultural mentality and consciousness. Church music and buildings can be better expressed, reflecting cultural features of a certain country. However, indegenisationists argue for creating a typical model of South Korean Christianity, having taken off the true confession of the faith. They, losing the norms and confession which traditional churches have maintained and developed, were unable to criticize shamanism. Rather they make irreversible fallacies in expanding the good news.\textsuperscript{27}

The response of a people to what is for them a foreign religion is not a simple process of merely accepting new ideas and rituals. A people may respond in different ways, ranging from complete acceptance to total rejection. Usually technological

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., pp. 145-6.
\textsuperscript{26} P.B. Park, "Kitokkyowa Tochakhwa", [Christianity and Indigenisation], \textit{Kitokkyo Sasang}, Vol.4 1971, p. 72.
\textsuperscript{27} Yontaek, op. cit., p. 345.
items are accepted more rapidly than are religious ideas. According to David Burnett, three main patterns of change can be identified:

1. Acculturation - the process of being converted to the new religion with its different worldview and life-style.
2. Syncretism - the selective adoption of items from the new religion and culture, and reinterpreting them in terms of the old culture.
3. Demoralisation - a society becomes overwhelmed by the dominant foreign culture and religion. The people feel a sense of the total inadequacy of their traditional religions, and yet at the same time are conscious of their ability to adopt the foreign religion.28

We should abandon identifying Christianity directly with the Korean culture. Meanwhile, we must also reconsider the idea that the Korean culture has no elements acceptable in Christianity. The main elements of shamanism obviously collide with the lessons of Christianity. In some sense, however, certain aspects of Korean shamanism can be effectively utilized to invite the people to the Lord. If theological indigenisation means to penetrate deeply into the Korean society, churches can utilize things such as an eagerness to prayer and the fear of the Devil in the Korean mentality. On the other hand, magical techniques, idolatry, and the concepts about man and god contradict with Christianity. Particularly, the Kingdom of Heaven, the guilt nature of the human being, and salvation through Jesus Christ can never be shared with the shamanistic beliefs.29

The South Korean churches need to recognize the sovereignty of Jesus that transcends culture. In his classical piece, Christ and Culture, H. Richard Niebuhr raised the question of the relationship between Christianity and situations and of the correlation between good news and human culture. He submitted five approaches to

28 David Burnett. op.cit. p. 212.
the question: Christ against Culture; Christ in Culture; Christ above Culture; Christ and Culture in paradox; Christ the transformer of Culture. Nieber took the fifth approach, Christ transforming Culture.\textsuperscript{30} Similarly, Charles Kraft treats culture in view of God’s transcendental nature:

God, being completely unbound by any culture (except as he choose to operate within or in terms of culture) is "supracultural" (i.e., above and outside culture). Likewise, any absolute principles or functions proceeding from God's nature, attributes or actives may be labels "supracultural." For they, too, transcend and are not bound by any specific culture, except when they are expressed within a culture.\textsuperscript{31}

One noticeable reverend in South Korea wrote in his recent best selling book as follows:

If possible, please spare your cares about not to come to service late. If all right, I wish you would able to take bath and wear the best suit you have before you come to church. When you offer to God, why don't you elaborately choose clean notes? As our ancestors prayed and worshipped to gods, they took bath, wore new clothes. I wish we could learn that sincerity when we worship our God, the Lord... When we do so, I believe our God will be with us, and the Holy Spirit will be with us. \textsuperscript{32}

Man changes the good heritage of God to evil and unfaithful direction. South Korean Christians need to understand their culture for the future of churches. A simple deal with it might go to the pro-traditional culturism or lead to the opposite way identifying shamanism and Christianity, the mixture. Effective expansion of good news is largely dependent upon the capacity of churches to distinct positive elements from negative ones within their national culture.

\textbf{4. Positive Suggestions for Churches}

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\textsuperscript{29} Y. T. Kim, op. cit., p 356.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., p. 366.
\textsuperscript{31} Charles Kraft, Christianity in Culture (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979), p.120ff.
\textsuperscript{32} (D. H. Kim, Pyungshindo Romaso [Romans for Ordinary Believers], Seoul: Kyujang, 1988) p. 318.
Now we know the destructive reality and identity of shamanism that has overwhelmed the South Korean society and even intruded into churches. The remaining task is then how South Korean churches should counter.

At first, it is necessary to recover well-balanced education about the Holy Bible. The South Korean church has failed to teach the full contents of the glorious Good News delivered through Jesus Christ. The church should teach how seriously the Holy Bible warns about various kinds of idolatry and superstition, as in the first part of the Ten Commandments. The rationale of the emigration of Abraham from his homeland was to avoid idolatry. The prophets also conveyed lots of warnings about worshipping satanic idolatry and shamanistic gods and goddess. The prosperity and the collapse of Israel were always related to the worshipping of God or the worshipping of idols. It was also the case in the age of the New Testaments. Jesus expelled demons, and Paul collided with male shamans on his missionary journeys. This side has been ignored when educating believers in churches. The central point of education, however, should be placed upon God and the Holy Spirit, rather than the dangers of idolatry per se. God is the creator, and humans and nature are His creation that should not be worshipped. The role of Jesus as mediator between God and the believers should not be identified as the role of mediums carried out by shamans. The church needs to set up a biblical view on the blessing. The Holy Bible admits the fortunes accumulated with material things. However, the materialistic fortunes are not the ultimate ones. Christianity, in essence, is the religion that pursues the Cross and suffering to reach the Kingdom of Heaven. Pastors in South Korean churches have emphasized and encouraged materialistic achievements too much. In this regard, the belief in the life after death needs to be re-emphasized. Materialism stems from fetishism and secularism. From some uncertain point of time, the Kingdom of heaven
and the life after death have become unpopular subjects in the South Korean church. However, shamanism will lose its standing only when the church makes a resolution and begins to teach the entire contents of the Bible with balance.

Secondly, the South Korean church has to cope with shamanism as spiritual warfare. The history of Israel in the land of Canaan was the history of warfare against the customs and worship of other gods by the residents. This was spiritual warfare between evil spirits and the people of God. At last, Jesus came to earth and Satan attacked him from his birth, but Jesus won the struggle on the cross and made it possible to save people from their sins. Now, the fights against evil spirits are handed over to us, the believers. Shamanism is a wicked scheme of Satan. The final warfare is to uproot shamanism that corrupts and darkens the society. We can get the victory only when it is regarded as a war and we are alert to wage a war.

The third measure is the cultural transformation. Shamanism has already deeply rooted in the Korean history, and positioned as a culture and tradition. It is undeniable. The South Korean church also has its own power and influence and is able to spread the Christian culture in the land. Of course, the Western civilization is not necessarily identical with the Christian civilization. There was a flurry of debates on this issue for a time. The Koreanized indigenisation advocated by some scholars was an unnatural attempt that did not consider the nature of the Good News. The church has to make enormous efforts to expose the fallacy of shamanism that has settled in the society in the names of traditional culture or the Korean culture. Christian culture needs to be infused to the new generations. The believers who have established their positions and status in the society need to shoulder their role and to take responsibility as light and salt in their individual places. The churches in South Korea should demolish the walls between denominations and between themselves in
the road of solidarity to promote Christian culture in South Korea.
CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

On the verge of the 21st century, South Korean churches stands at the critical juncture heading for the evangelization of the entire nation and the shouldering of world missions based upon sustained growth and prosperity within the country, or for being static and retreating backward. Above all, it should be careful to hedge the influence of shamanism that has already cast its shadow on South Korean Christianity. It is obviously necessary to remember that shamanism has never disappeared with the advent of new major religions. Rather, it tends to yield the surface role while it aims to fuse the new religion into its own frame. Foreign or advanced religions have not entirely replaced it. Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism prove it in the history of Korean religion. At this juncture, therefore, the potentiality of shaman beliefs should not be ignored as Mok argues.¹ The question is how can South Korean churches deter the extension of shamanism and dismantle its basis?

First, new research about the identity of shamanism is urgently needed. South Korean churches should educate their members on how the Bible warns about the sinful nature of totem worship, idol worship, and shamanism. The nature of Christianity and the reasons why Jesus had to suffer and die on the cross should be preached systematically,

¹ C. K. Mok, op cit., p. 59.
comparing it to the mundane pursuit of materialistic fortune in the present world. The real
significance of the ordeal Jesus had to shoulder must be well taught.

In practice, South Korean churches need to declare the true capability and power
of the Christian good news that transcends shamanism, which directs people's interests to
satanic temptations. A step further is to train immature Christians to the level of disciples
and apostles in early Christian history. Provided this work is done successfully, they will
live proactively as reformers of cultural transformation in South Korea. Then, South
Korean Christians will be the productive majority, without being influenced by
shamanism.

Awareness is necessary to counter the problem of shamanism as conspiracy and
the continuous attack of Satan to the expansion of the Kingdom of Heaven in this present
world. Individual Christians and churches together should not avoid spiritual combat
against shamanism. South Korean churches have to unite in coping with the shamanistic
customs that are mushrooming with the support of government and society in the name of
restoration of traditional culture. In fact, very recently, there was an alarming shamanistic
event Christian churches were unable to have cancelled. Kitok Shinmun, a Christian
newspaper published by the biggest Christian association in South Korea reported on
"Sikimkoot" on December 22, 1999. Reportedly, Sikimkoot, a shamanistic practice in
which an exorcist pulls out a ghost that died by drowning in a river, would be held as one
of main events to pray for unification of the two Koreas. The event was entitled, The
Praying Festival for the National Unification in the New Millennium" under the auspices
of the New Millennium Committee. It was thought that Sikimkoot would be cancelled
from the program because of the strong opposition from the Christian society in South
Korea. However, rather than cancel this event, even more shamanistic practices were added. The festival included Kilnori, a shamanistic road-worship in which a shaman, as a spiritual agent of a dead person, would come to the places the dead man used to play, live and like to go. In addition, shamanistic dance performances were held to console the ghost, the ghost which symbolizes the Korean people, Korean history, and in a narrow sense, victims of the divided country. After that, five shamans, representing five races on the earth, performed Kilkoot, a roadshow to celebrate the new millennium. Not to mention, representative South Korean broadcasting companies broadcast the whole program and several other prominent international broadcasting companies from 6 p.m. to 1:40 a.m. December 31, 1999. Put plainly, the entire program was filled with various shamanistic practices.  

It is an irony that at some points, shamanistic customs and thought in Korea were springboards for Christianity when it was initially introduced more than a century ago. Now, however, it is time to face the truth that shamanism pollutes the Christian belief. As can be manifestly by this festival, there is still a long way to go. One of the most urgent tasks for South Korean churches is to uproot shamanism and cleanse the stains on themselves. South Korean churches have to move ahead to the purity of Christianity and to truly healthy churches in spiritual terms. 1 Corinthians 13:11 is very appropriate, "When I was child, my speech, feelings, and thinking were all those of a child; now that I have grown up, I have no more use for childish ways."

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1 Kitok Shinmun [Daily Christianity] (22 December 1999).
APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire to investigate the Consciousness of Christians against Shamanism.
"This is a questionnaire for a research. Please do not put the name of you or your church".

*What is your present position in the church?
1. Deacon  2. General Layman

*What is your gender?
1. Male  2. Female

1. What do you think the ghost is?
1. A soul of the dead  2. Fallen angels  3. The evil spirit  4. I don't know

2. Do you think you have anything superstitious in your life?
1. Many  2. A few  3. Have no idea  4. I don't think I have any  5. Never

3. Have you ever heard about divination or superstitious acts?
1. Never  2. I don't think I have heard  3. Have no idea  4. I think I have  5. Yes, I have

4. Have you ever been accurately educated about divination or superstitions?
1. Never  2. I don't think I have heard  3. Have no idea  4. I think I have  5. Yes, I have

5. Have you ever seriously thought of divination or superstitious acts?
1. Never  2. I don't think I have heard  3. Have no idea  4. I think I have  5. Yes, I have

6. Have you ever thought of the revival of traditional culture and Dan-gun Shrine which is popularized among Koreans?
1. Never  2. I don't think I have heard  3. Have no idea  4. I think I have  5. Yes, I have

7. Have you ever seriously think about the broadcasting of superstitious rituals, including Gut?
1. Never  2. I don't think I have heard  3. Have no idea  4. I think I have  5. Yes, I have

8. What do you think of going for divination to decide on your business, or the future of your children?
1. It is essential  2. It is understandable  3. Have no idea  4. It is better not to do it  5. Never

9. What do you think of going for Phrenological Interpretation or Palmistry?
1. It is essential  2. It is understandable  3. Have no idea  4. It is better not to do it  5. Never

10. What do you think of having Ko-su, after completing a great building?
1. It is essential  2. It is understandable  3. Have no idea  4. It is better not to do it  5. Never
11. If your children will marry someone, what do you think of inquiring about the marital affinity?
   1. It is essential  2. It is understandable.  3. Have no idea  4. It is better not to do it.  5. Never

12. What do you think of selecting a lucky day for moving and marriage?
   1. It is essential  2. It is understandable.  3. Have no idea  4. It is better not to do it.  5. Never

13. What do you think of asking a specialist to make a name for a newborn baby?
   1. It is essential  2. It is understandable.  3. Have no idea  4. It is better not to do it.  5. Never

14. What do you think of asking a geomancer to select a lucky burial-site?
   1. It is essential  2. It is understandable.  3. Have no idea  4. It is better not to do it.  5. Never

15. What do you think of the family ritual for the deceased ancestors?
   1. It is essential  2. It is understandable.  3. Have no idea  4. It is better not to do it.  5. Never

16. What do you think of going to fortune-teller in the beginning of a New Year?
   1. It is essential  2. It is understandable.  3. Have no idea  4. It is better not to do it.  5. Never

17. What do you think about establishing a *Jangseung*, the wooden statues, in front of your village?
   1. It is essential  2. It is understandable.  3. Have no idea  4. It is better not to do it.  5. Never

Churches for Research

Nakwon Church, Namahyun Church, Youngkwang Church, Chungsung church, Coventry Korean Church
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