



Impact the Effect of Shamanism in Modern Society in South Korea

Teguh Pratama Aditya

Nasional University, Jakarta, Indonesia

ABSTRACT: Shamanism is an indigenous Korean faith that incorporates various beliefs and practices influenced by native Korean Buddhism and Taoism. In Korean, shamanism is called mu (무) and practitioners are called mudang (무당). The function of the mudang is usually held by women who make contact (liaison) between gods and humans. Shamans perform gut ceremonies or offerings to perform healing, bring good luck and intercede for gods by means of possession. Gut ceremonies are also held to guide the spirits of the deceased to heaven. This research aims to 1) to reveal the role of shamanism in culture in the midst of modern South Korean society, and 2) to analyze the 1970s when shamanism was going through difficult times. This research used qualitative descriptive that described and analyzed the data in the form of information. The results of this research is presentation about the cultural asset of South Korea, namely shamanism, it is should be maintained because it is very influential on Korean tourism as an ancient ritual even though it is considered not in accordance with the modernization period.

KEYWORDS: Culture, Modern society, Ritual, Shamanism.

I. INTRODUCTION

Shamanism is a belief based on the belief that spirits that surround humans can infiltrate the body of a Shaman (a shaman or sorcerer) in a ceremony. Shamanism is also defined as a practice that involves a practitioner achieving altered states of consciousness in order to perceive and interact with the spirit world and channel this transcendental energy into the world (Koudela & Yoo, 2016).

A shaman is someone who is thought to have access to, and influence the world (evokation of) good and evil spirits, who usually enters a state of trance during rituals and practices divination and healing (Klein et al., 2002).

The word shaman is taken from the Tungusic language spoken by the Tungusic people in Siberia and Central Asia. Korean Shamanism is rooted in the culture of the inland people of the mainland which are more than 40 thousand years old Wróblewski, 2017). The word shaman is equated with "shaman", "healer", "psychopomp", mystical, and poetic. According to Park, (2003) the rituals performed have undergone many changes since the Silla and Goryeo eras, even this belief was not eroded during the Joseon Dynasty which implemented strong Confucianism.

Shaman, who belongs to the Cheonmin caste or the lowest caste since the Joseon Dynasty, is still experiencing discrimination (Sarfati, 2021). Shamanic beliefs are still strongly influential in fishing villages and farming village communities as well as shamanic practices in big cities.

Shamanism has characteristics that distinguish it from other religions in South Korea. The difference between shamans and spiritual leaders is the ability to perform trance techniques. After the end of World War II, Korea was a country that was open to influence from western culture, either wanting to develop modernization or wanting to preserve traditions that had been developed by proposing shamanism to be "superstition" which is contrary to progress and having the view that shamanism is a mechanism to defend Korean culture of the magnitude of westernization is too heavy (Kim, 2018).

Although shamanism is considered superstitious by some Koreans, it has shamanic rituals that are performed when a purpose is served (healing, protection, avoiding trouble) and is not worship but practice. The unification of shamanism with dance is not just phenomenological but also a combination of dance and religion. Apart from shamanism dance, it is also known for its mystical music. Traditional music in Korea is often related to language and religion and even Korean media still involve the character of a Korean shaman in every film or television series that deals with occult matters. Society does not accept shamanism but neither do the forbid shamanists from using rituals that have existed since ancient times.

II. RESEACRH OBJECTIVE

This research aims 1) to reveal the role of shamanism in culture in the midst of modern South Korean society, and 2) to analyze

the 1970s when shamanism was going through difficult times.

III. LITERARY REVIEW

a. Culture

Culture is a way of life that develops and is owned by a person or group of people and is passed down from generation to generation (Sahib et al., 2019; Andini et al., 2021).

Culture has a very broad influence on a society and is even passed on to the next generation (Rahman et al., 2019; Weda et al., 2022). A culture can affect aspects of religion, politics, clothing, traditional buildings, customs, and also language in everyday life, so that culture is a lifestyle that has been carried out since birth, even from when it was still in the womb until it death (Rahman et al., 2022; Jariah et al., 2022; Sukmawaty et al., 2022).

b. The History of Shamanism in South Korea

Shamanism has become very important in all areas of Korean society such as history, culture, medicine, religion and thought. Shamanism also penetrates into the lives of the Korean population where every house, the gods are enshrined in certain areas (Jinseok, 2019). This proves that people believed that the gods ruled and took care of all aspects of their lives.

The Korean system of shamanism focuses on blessings in the present life such as health, wealth, longevity, and fertility, not on the afterlife such as the afterlife and death rituals only focus on death not on what happens after (Walraven, 2009). Furthermore, shamanism is a belief that does not have the idea of God as the creator and the scriptures as the word of God.

Today's Shamanism has been mixed with elements of foreign cultures and has undergone various changes. Pure shamanism can be found in ancient beliefs such as myths and rituals before being influenced by foreign cultures. In Korea, shamanism can be found in the Dangun myth, where Dangun is the ancestor of the Korean people who was the first King of Gojoseon during the heyday of ancient Jeonson. Dangun is the son of Hwanung and Ungnyeo. Hwanung is a God, while Ungnyeo is a bear who turns into a human with help from Hwanung (Oh, 2016).

Dangun chose Pyeongyang as the nation's capital and founded the Gojoseon Dynasty. After a reign of 1500 tyahuns Dangun entered the mountains and became a mountain spirit in 1908. Dangun mythology explains how the Koreans formed the nation and led their lives in a simple and clear way (Kwon, 2017).

According to Lee (1973) Korean shamanism has played an important role in the development of Korean civilization since the mythical Dangun Age in 2333 BC, to the present day North Korean civilization, centered in Manchuria and South Korean civilization, centered in Gyeongju, has been shaped by the dynamics of shamanism. Korean shamanism has included a variety of indigenous beliefs and practices that have been influenced by Buddhism and Taoism.



Figure 1. The offerings provided at the Gosa Ritual
(Source: sumber: wikipedia.org)

In the 1980s shamanism was still not certain, many observers suggest that the shamanistic rituals of healing the sick as well as healing the human soul should be shifted to a more credible psychiatrist instead of being concerned with the divine spirits in shamanism. Korean society shows its unwillingness to replace traditional ways of going to a psychiatrist to deal with mental health. Even though at this time Korean society has used psychiatrists, the practice of shamanism rituals has not disappeared from South Korea. Shamanism began to go hand in hand with modern society in South Korea because Shamanism is something that is expected and seems to have a responsibility for South Korean culture (Bou-Yong, 1970). South Korea is a country that has various cultures and historical buildings from various regions.



Figure 2. South Korea Region Map
(Source: worldatlas.com)

The image shows parts of the area in South Korea. Shamanism covers various fields including music, drama, ritual, dance, and so on with different names for each region (Kendall, 2009). Although there are not many types, the culture that shamanism contributed to South Korea is very unique and can only be found in South Korea. The rituals, dance and music of shamanism are entertainment for Korean people as well as religious ceremonies for adherents of shamanism (Winkleman, 2010). Everything that has been applied by Korean society to shamanism as a culture is in accordance with a system of meanings and symbols which contains an understanding of how each individual in society evaluates and interprets it historically and is manifested through forms of knowledge development, devotion and means of communication.



Figure 3. Jeju Chilmeoridang Yeongdeunggut Rituals
(Source: Guide To Korean Culture)

In this picture there is an old man who leads the Jeju Chilmeoridang yeongdeunggut ritual. The picture above is a snapshot of a series of activities contained in the ritual.



Figure 4. A series of shamanistic rituals contained in the danoje festival
(Source: ich.unesco.org)

The picture shows a series of shamanism rituals contained in the Gangneung Danoje Festival. South Korean cultural assets contained in Shamansime are more than the two that have been mentioned earlier. Shamanism has many cultures that are still actively performed by rituals, it accompaniment music, dance performed by mudang or dance performed during rituals, and it also paintings from the history of Shamanism.

c. Shamanism in Modern Society of South Korea

Shamanism has been born on the Korean Peninsula since ancient times (before 1000 BC). Shamanism adapted with foreign religions such as Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and after a long time Christianity began to become dominant (Sarfati, 2014). In the Wei Chi text compiled in the third century and can be summarized and translated into Indonesian what is said as follows:

"First, Koreans believe in the heavenly God they worship in religious ceremonies held in spring and autumn that year. They believe that this God is the Most High that rules the whole world " .

It can be concluded that the ancient Korean people believed that it would be able to enjoy life more and have a peaceful life through worshipping the supreme and divine or spirits. Despite this, Shamanism continues to compete with other religions and has not disappeared from civilization. Its popularity continues, the main target of shamanism is women and the less fortunate and then transmitted to the next generation. There are three means of transmission that can be classified. The following picture shows how shamanism is transmitted.

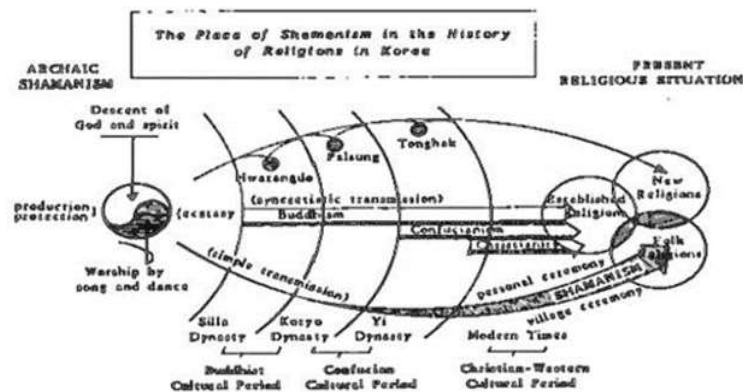


Figure 5. The transmission cycle of Korean Shamanism

In the picture we can see that there are simple transmission, syncretistic transmission, and sublimated transmission. The first is simple transmission, namely by time through private or village ceremonies. In this transmission, the influence of foreign religions on the transmission of beliefs and practices of ancient shamanism is shallow and does not have fundamental changes. The second is syncretistic transmission, namely bringing shamanism into the beliefs and practices of other religions such as Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Christianity. By attacking the religion and replacing some of the substance or essential meaning of the religion with its own (shamanism). The third is Sublimated transmission which involves the formation of a new religion that is different from mixing shamanism with other major religions.

In 1985 shamanism was not shown in table 3.2 of the religious population by the national census published by the ministry of culture although shamanism has regained their social recognition as a valuable cultural tradition. Thus it is clear that shamanism is not included in Ryu (1984). According to Chacatrjan (2015) the official religion category of the South Korean government, but it is possible that shamanists are included in the “other” category in table 3.2. but that exception doesn't mean shamanism has no adherents in South Korea today.



Figure 6. Korean shamanism painting exhibition
(Source: eargus.org)

The pictures above are some of the paintings in the exhibition of Korean shamanism paintings. The painting is the work of Park Saeng Kwang. From the fourth period, Park Saeng Kwang made a new attempt with Korean color images to express historical subjectivity in Korea.



Figure 7. The ritual leader interacting with the ritual participants
(Source: folkency.nfm.go.kr)

The Dodangut (도당 굿 굿) ritual is a village ritual in Gyeonggi Province. This ritual is held routinely at the beginning of the lunar month or between spring and autumn. The purpose of holding rituals to provide abundant peace and harvest for the community.

The Dodanggut ritual is carried out by the villagers and supervised by the head of the neighborhood, called Hwaju or Dangju. The ritual leader is a shaman from outside the community.

In addition to the purpose mentioned above the Dodanggut ritual also has the aim to pray to the dodangsin (provincial god), the village guard god who is commonly referred to as Dodang's grandfather or grandmother Dodang. This is done to create peace and luck people. The ritual implementation procedure has similarities with other village rituals such as byeolsingut which are located along the east coast, then Danggut in Jeolla and Hwaraengi Provinces. Moreover, there are differences between the Gyeonggi Dodutut rituals with Dangsanggut in Hwaraengi Province. Dangsanggut in Hwaraengi Province was carried out by means of a group of hereditary male shamans who showed their talents in music and creativity.



Figure 8. Shamans who tore up a piece of Rami to break the relationship between the world today and the underworld
(Source: encyclopedia Korean folk beliefs)

The jinogigut ritual (진오기굿) is a ritual performed in the Seoul area. It had the goal of guiding the deceased to the underworld. The historical origin of jinogigut is difficult to determine, because the human death rituals have existed for a long time (Herrera, 2018). The history of the jinogigut is very long, but it cannot be found in literature.

There are several types of jinogigut, first based on the time the jinogigut was issued (the jinogigut is done at the place of death of the deceased), the jinjingi-gut is carried out within 100 days after the deceased's death. Currently, the period of time is divided into 2 types, namely rituals that are performed after quite a long time has passed since the deceased died and rituals that are performed within one year. Based on the scale of the ritual, jinogigut can be categorized from the simplest to the most difficult, being pyeongjinogi eolsaenam (saenam means as a ritual to appease death). Jinogigut is done in 5 steps namely, 1) ritual purification of the place, 2) preparation for sending the dead, 3) sending of the dead, 4) confirmation of the departure of the dead, and 5) cleaning the place (Burqa & Chala, 2022).

The segments are complexly intertwined, but the direction of the ritual rests solely on guiding the dead to the underworld. This ritual is also accompanied by the shamanist song "barigongju" (the bar song of the princess left behind and sung continuously by the shaman who also plays the janggu (hourglass drum) as seen in the following picture standing in formal attire complete with this impressive action that has been preserved and passed down for the next generation (Nelson, 2019).

The gosa ritual is a series of rituals performed to wish peace and prosperity to the household god or known as gasin. Gosa is generally performed in the tenth lunar month as a rite of worship for all the guardian deities in the home environment. Based on the dongguksesigi (Records of Seasonal Routines of the Eastern Empire), "In the tenth lunar month, which is the best month of the year (sangdal), people's homes hold shamansime rituals for household deities by serving rice cakes and fruits as sacred food...".

An auspicious date has been set for the ritual to be carried out, then each house attaches a straw rope at the entrance of the house (geumjul) and sprinkles clay (hwangto) in front of the house. Installing straw ropes to prevent family members from leaving the house or also to prevent uninvited guests from arriving while the function of clay can avoid crime outside the home.



Figure 9. The procession of worshipping the gods in the gosa ritual
(Source: encyclopedia korea beliefs)

d. Syamanism Development in South Korea

On the scale of the evolution of the Scholar Colonial civilization calls syamanism in Korea as something that is not developed, whereas in Japan it has been developed into Shinto and it stated that the two originated from the same root.

Tceluiko (2019) Stated that Syamanism has influenced Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism that affect culture and ways of thinking in the life of Korean society. Most Koreans today no longer think of it as a belief but as part of their cultural heritage.

The position of Syamanism in Korea is still very ambiguous, although there are many holy places of syamanism in every city. Moreover, Syamanism is still alive and dynamic in Korea today, although it has experienced many changes from the form taken when Korea is a small rural country. In addition, since many people are interested in traditional Korean culture, people's attitudes towards Syamanism have changed. This results in syamanism change positively and is now often considered a unique expression of Korean culture.

e. Adaptation of Syamanism to Modern Society of South Korea

Along with the times, the history continues to go hand in hand with society that evolves into modern humans. South Korean society continues to develop follow the times, but on the other hand it still maintain the history and culture that have developed in South Korea (Silcott, 2009). Modern society has a definition as a society that is not related by tradition but that tradition keeps up with the times so that modern society can accept the development of a tradition that hinders progress. Shamanism is an example of Korean heritage that exists today. Korean shamanism has entered the modern era and is required to adapt to modern society. It adapts to keep up with changing times and it is a religion that is still closely connected with the mystical and superstitious world (Yoo, 2017). Currently, people have a level of curiosity about their future destiny by meeting a shaman who can read their destiny in the future.

Society can witness shamanistic rituals through cyberspace or shamans provide future prediction services through social media. Shamanism indoctrinates modern society through cyberspace or also South Korean films. Even though shamanism adapts to keep up with the times, shamanism still maintains the authenticity of its traditions. In general, activities to collect national wealth are followed by the selection and control of national cultural assets. All were not very visible in the early stages of Korean folklore studies, but have improved since the late 20th century, as the 21st century progresses, the cultural content industry is recognized as an important economic sector, and is capable of bringing significant benefits.

IV. METHOD

In preparing this paper, the researcher used a qualitative descriptive method. It described and analyzed data in the form of information, this method is usually used to examine an object, symptom or a phenomenon by making a description or description of the facts and characteristics and the relationship between the phenomena investigated in a decomposed form say. Some of the main types of references used are obtained through data collection from books and journals.



V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Shamanism rituals are currently an intangible cultural asset, and it is easy for the executors to get support from the government. This is because the South Korean government understands the importance of indigenous culture for nation-building and it becomes a culture that is valued because it can generate economic benefits.

This research discussed the role of shamanism in culture modern South Korean society. Furthermore, the results of the analysis have been presented in the previous chapter. Based on the analysis in the previous chapter, in the 1970s shamanism went through a difficult period where it received the treatment it did not deserve. The government at that time did not want to show its shamanism rituals to tourists in South Korea because it was considered an ancient ritual and it was considered incompatible with modernization. After passing through various obstacles shamanism can melt the minds of Korean people about the culture brought by shamanism. Korean society is starting to open their eyes to rituals that were not previously introduced to the public. Currently shamanistic rituals are used in the opening of hotels and restaurants in new branches which are carried out by the employees themselves up to the owner of the place. Shamanic rituals can attract tourists who are looking to learn about South Korean culture.

A religion has a special role in the development of a nation's civilization, not only affects the view of every individual in society, but also forms the soul and fate of the nation. Religion begins to be debated among the people whether it is important for a country to be influenced by various religions throughout history. The answer is of course, it can provide valuable experience for the country. Korea is an example of religion to be important for people at different times and even the same time. Based on the history of diversity in Korea, Korean civilization was largely formed by the belief of Shamanism after that the influence of Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Christianity entered into the influence.

In 1990 there was a shamanistic ritual which was recorded as an intangible heritage protected by UNESCO. Shamanism revived South Korean culture by contributing rituals that became its trademark. With the recording of these rituals, shamanism has an important role in culture in South Korea. South Korean people still maintain the culture that has been passed down to modern times. Shamanism develops following the times by adapting to the environment. Adherents of shamanism are currently unpredictable because shamanism is not included as an official religion in South Korea. Even though shamanism is not included as an official religion at this time, shamanism still exists in South Korea. Furthermore, shamanism began to spread to the world of South Korean cinema and is also present on digital platforms today. various films and television series in South Korea often feature shamanistic exorcism rituals. Not only on the screen, but behind the scenes, the television series players attend and carry out gosa rituals for the smooth running of their shooting process. In addition, shamanism is realized through painting with an exhibition of shamanism paintings held by an artist in South Korea.

In this modern era shamanism is well received and even its ritual is used till now. South Korean modern society has more open-mindedness so that it can accept what was previously considered a barrier to modernization. Not every society but most of Korean society interpret historically and in the way of forming knowledge and means of communication. The results of this research indicate that Korean shamanism has a role in culture in South Korea and can adapt well to the developments and changes in South Korean society so that shamanism can maintain its rituals and traditions to date.

VI. CONCLUSION

This research argued about the influence of ancient rituals and considered incompatible with the modernization period in South Korea, instead it has a very extraordinary effect on the country's development, but there is a contribution in tourism, and it becomes a cultural treasure as well as an asset of South Korea so that shamanism is maintained by including rituals and tradition that is still found today.

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