Title: The mediator in Korean Shamanism and in the epistle to the Hebrews

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Abstract:

One aspect of Korean church life which appears to have a noticeable parallel with Shamanism is the relation between members and pastor. In shamanism the clients depend entirely on the mudang for mediation with the spirits. Many Christians seem to see the pastor as a mudang mediator. They appear to forget that Christ is the only mediator between God and man. Perhaps this happens because of a misunderstanding of Christ’s ministry combined with the prevailing presence of Shamanism.

This research analyzed and compared the concept of mediation in Shamanism and Christianity. It specifically studied the function of the mudang and Christ. Its purpose was to clarify the similarities and differences between the two. The resulting information should provide Korean Christians a better understanding of Christ’s mediatorial ministry. It has also been designed to provide points of contact to construct bridges to reach Shamanists with Christianity.

The Korean mudang stands in the middle between the spirits and man as a mediator. Her role of mediatorship, however, is temporary, incomplete, insufficient, and sometimes irresponsible for the benefit of the people. This is because the role of the mudang is possible only during the trance experience.
Christian is also a mediator between God and man. But his mediatorship is eternal, complete, all-sufficient, and responsible to the end, on the basis of his eternal high priesthood and eternal sacrifice for men.

There are some similarities between the *mudang* and Christ as mediators. They are human beings who can share all the experiences of their people. They carry out the roles of prophet, priest, and healer to help the people. They have their own ritual: the *kut* ceremony for *mudang* and the heavenly sanctuary service for Christ. Both of them have strong influence upon the people.

Founded on these similarities, a bridge can be established between Shamanists and Christians for the outreach of the gospel. Contextualization, however, should be taken into consideration. It means here the missiological task of preaching the gospel for the society which has a traditional culture. But the gospel must not be controlled by culture.

Since also there are differences between the two systems dialogue is urgently needed between them. In view of the shamanistic influence upon the church, the church should take an initiative to win the souls to Christ. Hence, the contextualized approach is suggested.

Shamanists have a supreme god, Hanaim, who may be identified with the God of Christianity. Shamanists need a mediator to approach gods through the *kut* rituals. Likewise, Christians have a mediator, Christ, to precede to God though the service of the heavenly sanctuary. This makes a major point of contact.

Christians may then guide Shamanists to trust in the “better” mediation of Christ. As they come to accept this mediatorship, they need to be led gently. Their first contact with the church could be through worship services in Christian homes. Throughout the process of their
becoming Christians, the beauty and completeness of Christ’s mediation is to be an important focus.