

IMAP USA Webinar: The Cultural Contributions of the Korean People

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USA-IMAP -- "Dangun to Hallyu," the first in a series of historical inquiries produced by IMAP to examine the cultural contributions of the Korean people, was aired on October 25th, 2022. Panelists included **Dr. Sung-Bae Jin**, president of the Hyojeong Academic Foundation in Korea, and senior leaders of the IMAP Group in North America, **Mr. Ray Lipowean**, **Mr. Pierre Beauregard**, and **Mr. Hans Moyer**.



Dr. Sung-Bae Jin focused his remarks on the historical importance of the King Dangun myth in Korean culture. King Dangun was the legendary founder and god-king of Gojoseon (also called Joseon), the first Korean Kingdom in the northern part of the Korean Peninsula. Dr. Jin stated:



Dangun, the "Son of Heaven," king and founder of Gojoseon, is the origin of much of what we call Korea's tradition and legacy. The ancient tradition of Gojoseon, the first united Korea, was established by their great king: "Love God, Love Humanity, Love Nation."

To this day, both North and South Korea regard October 3, the day when Dangun founded Gojoseon, as a national holiday.

Dr. Jin expressed gratitude to UPF's co-founders, who have inherited the tradition of Dangun and the calling of Jesus Christ, and "have woven a strategy to reconcile our divided nation."

Dr. Jin also spoke about the the "Miracle on the Han River," which refers to Korea's transformation from being a recipient of international aid to becoming a donor country. This phenomenal recovery following the Korean War, as well as "Hallyu," Korea's contemporary contribution to pop culture and entertainment, "testifies to the ardent passion, faithful perseverance, cleverness and gumption of our people," he said.

The Korean unification issue is a complex matrix of geopolitics, ideology, history and culture. IMAP plans to continue hosting webinars on this topic and promote the peaceful reunification of the peninsula.

[Click here to read Dr. Jin's remarks.](#)

Speech given by Dr. Sung-Bae Jin during the “Dangun to Hallyu” Webinar

Thank you for your invitation. Concerning Hallyu culture, I just want to mention a traditional Korean anecdote, namely, the story of Dangun. “Culture” is a popular catch word, whose meaning has evolved over decades and centuries. The original meaning is “ritual” and was applied to the early Christians in Rome almost two millennia ago. Now a certain aspect of the same meaning has come around once more in the word “cult” that is too often applied to new religious movements or social phenomena with a generally biased sense.

As Europeans were fanatic in their missionizing, empowered with sailboats capable of navigating the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, they encountered many varied and wondrous societies of so-called “pagans” in Africa, India, the Caribbean islands, America, the Polynesian islands and the Far East. In fact, those peoples whom they visited were often more civilized in some ways than the rugged sailors who arrived half-starved, ridden with pests and disease, and ready to raise havoc. And with them the sailors brought their most powerful weapon, the Bible, with Jesus at the head.

At that time Chosun was off limits. The merchants and missionaries could only frequent China and Japan in the Far East, for Korea was a vassal state of the ancient and powerful empire of the Ching dynasty. What did the Chinese think? These were “the barbarians from the West.” The Westerners in turn evaluated the Orientals as a technically inferior heathen race, and sought to convert them to the One True Faith. We were all culturally backward in those days!

So what was the religion of old Korea hundreds of years ago? As we know now, Chosun in the Yi Dynasty rose out of the formerly Buddhist culture of Shilla and Goryeo, to be dominated by the Confucian social ethic and traditions. Korea in its five thousand years of recorded history has embraced many religions eagerly. Koreans are a very religious people since their legendary founding in Gojoseon in 2,300 B.C. by King Dangun.

North and South Korea both honor Dangun as the founder of our nation. In fact, the foundational ethic of our first great king is probably the only one thing that can reunite our divided people. Let us then turn to the teachings of Dangun, which are very significant today, presenting the three core pillars that can bring our country together again as one.

Names of countries change over time, but somehow the rivers and mountains keep the same name forever. The Han River is a good example. It is the main river in Korea, flowing close to the DMZ where our country is currently divided. “Han” is the root of our people, and the name of our country is “Hanguk”—the nation of Han. What is the meaning of Han?

Han is the core of the meaning of our national culture, philosophy, religion and consciousness. “Han” has many meanings, including “bright,” “grief,” “unity,” and “God,” to name a few. In fact we call God “Hananim”—the “One Honored One.” Interesting also: As Jesus and True Parents revealed to us, God is also the God of unfathomable grief and sorrow. He desires unity among all of us as His children. God wants to see our bright faces resurrected and pure once again, once we bring peace to this warring world at last. “Hananim”—God.

The central hope of the world’s one billion Christians is the expectation of the Second Advent, the return of Christ, the Last Adam. What is the purpose of the Second Advent of the Lord? It is to usher in God’s Kingdom, the ideal world all people long for. To accomplish that, he has to fulfill the same purpose as the original Adam, namely that of the True Parents for all humankind. Amazingly, this

closely parallels the concept of Dangun who came to lead and teach the scattered tribes of our ancestors as the Son of Heaven, the King, and the Teacher imparting his vision of the ideal world and the important pillars of ideology. Whether that could have been realized in his time, almost five millennia ago, is dubious, but now the global era has come, with our Korean nation, the inheritors of Dangun's legacy and lineage, in a globally central position.

What is the calling of our time? It is to unite our nation centered on True Parents' peace ideology, and what's more, to unite the scattered races of mankind, leading them to the peaceful ideal world. Thus the True Parents, who have come to this land of Korea, complete the missions of Adam and Eve, of Dangun, and of Christ together with the promised Bride, the Mother of Peace. True Parents realize the ideal world that King Dangun, our first founder, envisioned.

God in the Christian faith is the Trinity—Three-in-One: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He is the same God that the Korean people have believed in since thousands of years ago. For the God of ancient Korea is also Three-in-One: Hwanin, the creator and parent; Hwanung, the teacher and son who came down to earth; and Hwangeom, the sword and master of peace.

According to legend, Hwanung the teacher longed to live on the earth with people, so his father Hwanin allowed him to descend from heaven. He came down to the land of Korea, and there he sought a wife. A bear and a tiger came to him, both desiring to become human beings. These symbolize rough women of two barbarian tribes who lived here in Korea. He ordered them to enter a cave and eat nothing but garlic and bitter herbs for one hundred days. Only the bear, whose name was Ungnyeo, endured the torment patiently, emerging as a beautiful woman. She became Hwanung's wife, and they bore a son, Dangun, who was the first king of Gojoseon in Korea. In this legend there are lessons which we Korean people take to heart nowadays. These are the roots of our culture, which can unite our people currently.

Dangun, the "Son of Heaven," king and founder of Gojoseon, is the origin of much of what we call Korea's tradition and legacy. South and North Korea both celebrate the founding of his kingdom of Asadal 4,300 years ago. The ancient tradition of Gojoseon, the first united Korea, was established by their great king: "Love God, Love Humanity, Love Nation."

Dangun's teachings are an important signal for our time, and the theory of Heavenly Unified Korea is built upon the same three pillars. Gyeongcheon means Revere Heaven, which translates today as "Love God" or Aecheon. Second is Hongik Ingan or Benefit Humankind, which we interpret as "Love People"—Aein. The third pillar of his teaching, Gwangmyeong, is rendered as Resplendent Nation, implying the same as "Love Your Nation"—Aeguk. These teachings are eternally applicable. Moreover, they correspond to the Christian ideals of "Love God and love your neighbor as yourself." Dangun is best known for his slogan "Hongik Ingan!"—Live to benefit all people! This means to reach out with love to all nations without enmity. With the love of God, Aecheon, as the basis, here we find the true spirit of "Open Nationalism" in Korea. We are proud of our nation, called by God for such an eternally valuable purpose, and with this love we embrace all the world's people in peace. This transcends man-centered secular humanism; it brings joy to God and brings peace to our world.

The Korean shimjeong or warm heart rooted in God's love is extended to humanity and manifests in the cultural treasure of hyojeong. To love God and to love our neighbor and even those furthest away is the very essence of hyojeong. Then if we live for the sake of all the world's people, what of our vaunted Korean selfish nationalism? Here we must resolve an issue among our people, for nationalism can be narrow, and go too far. In our Korean people's true spirit, expansively loving,

welcoming and embracing humankind and other nations, we cannot be exclusive and narrow-minded. The true nationalism that can unite our people into one, and at the same time respect and inspire the world's people—is open nationalism in contrast to egoistic, selfish nationalism.

Dangun in Korean traditional legend stands in the position of Father, Teacher, and Master-King to his people. This is the image of the Triune God we are familiar with. What's important is that the Three Persons of God become One. Here we find the origin of the Korean tradition of "Woori"—We, our culture, the "We" culture. We are not primarily individuals but our identity and consciousness lie in the oneness of all that we are as a people. This is reflected in the united team spirit when a million soccer fans sing one song together on the ground. We Koreans always say, "Our teacher, our parents, our home," not "My parents, my teacher, my school." In the same way, when we identify "my wife," we call her "our wife." This is very difficult to understand for Western people. Our culture, the "We" culture, is very specially unique to our Korean people. This collective consciousness has emerged again today in BTS, the pride of Korean people, producing hit songs that reached the top of the charts in America and around the world, and also in the landmark movie *Squid Games*, that challenged today's cut-throat competitive individualism that has dominated business, politics and school education.

A great civilization has been built on the Han River. The miracle of the Han River, called "Hallyu," occurred in this century. Rising from the ashes of the Korean War like a phoenix, this miracle of recovery testifies to the ardent passion, faithful perseverance, cleverness and gumption of our people. Korea's time has come, upon the solid legacy and good tradition inherited from our first founder. Now the Republic of Korea is a G-11 nation, one of the top economic powerhouses of the world! As a country that was recently at the bottom, Korea is now moving all humanity. How did that happen?

Many countries have gone through difficulties, and somehow climbed up to a mediocre stable position, but Korea was able to rise and shine, to where we're producing popular cars for America, Europe and other countries of the world; BTS songs like "Fake Love"—I don't know it, but I just listened to it one time—became popular even for President Trump, who quoted it in his "Fake News" speech; and Korea has the world's best 5G internet system, totally wired everywhere.

I should not understate the progress North Korea has made too, though in a much different area. Can you imagine such a poor country manufacturing nuclear weapons and launching rockets every week? These are the same Korean people, though under a different political, social and economic system. We are, after all, one people with a common destiny.

Based on the teachings of our ancient founder, Dangun, we have woven a strategy to reconcile our divided nation, the two halves. He was wise beyond his time, undoubtedly inspired by God, for his teachings remain true today. Sun Myung Moon, who rose from a rural village in North Korea, inherited the tradition of Dangun and the calling of Jesus Christ to become a world-renowned teacher, Messiah, and True Parents. He has carried this torch all the way to completion. So the identity of Sun Myung Moon is the second advent of the Asian Dangun.

Finally, we now have at our helm Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, his wife, succeeding his mission, who now stands as the Mother of Peace. She is visiting nations around the world, spreading God's Blessings and message of peace and hope in one of the most troubling times in history. What's more, the North Korean Chairman Kim Jong-un has also recognized the Moon Family and sent annual gifts and large bouquets in honor of their achievements for reconciliation of our Korean peninsula.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have much more to share, but my time is limited. Behind all this is the great

providence of God, which brings the olive leaf of peace to the nations of our world, a calming down of the ideologies and religious faiths in conflict, and resolution to the problems of immorality ravaging our youth. Hope is here and now, in our hands, and before you! Thank you very much.