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Funeral rites in South Korea based on the movie Chukje

Pohřební rituály v Jižní Koreji vyobrazené ve filmu Chukje

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Abstract

Title: Funeral rites in South Korea based on the movie Chukje

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This bachelor thesis will focus on a movie *Festival* from 1996 by Korean director Im Kwŏnt'aek. I aim to describe the Korean funeral rite that is shown in the movie, and identify each element depicted, that means events and objects used and shown in the whole funeral rite. I will further compare the rite shown in the movie with typical procedure and describe differences.

I will also cover ancestor worship ceremonies, which were not shown in the movie, but still are an important part of the posthumous rituals and therefore Korean culture.

Abstrakt

Název práce: Pohřební rituály v Jižní Koreji vyobrazené ve filmu Chukje

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Tato bakalářská práce se zaměřuje na film *Festival* z roku 1996 korejského režiséra Im Kwŏnt'aeka. Mým cílem je popsat korejský pohřební rituál, který je zobrazen ve filmu a identifikovat každý zobrazený prvek, tzn. události a předměty použité a zobrazené v celém pohřebním obřadu. Dále porovnám rituál zobrazený ve filmu s typickým postupem a popíšu rozdíly.

Zahrnu také obřady uctívání předků, které nebyly ve filmu uvedeny, ale přesto jsou důležitou součástí posmrtných rituálů, a tedy i Korejské kultury

I would like to thank my supervisor, Mag. Andreas Schirmer, Dr., for his time, valuable advices and patience during the process of writing this thesis.

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Transcription

In this thesis, Korean terms used are transcribed in accordance with the McCune-Reischauer romanization, with the romanized terms written in italics. Exceptions are names that are internationally established with a different transcription. The order of Korean personal name is in accordance with Korean conventions, meaning the forename comes after last name.

Introduction

Death has always been an inherent part of people's lives. Therefore, people of every culture have cultivated their own way of dealing both, with the loss of a close person and with their own grief. Realizing the finitude of life, people will inevitably start wondering about afterlife and what happens to the soul after one's death. Giving answers to such questions was mostly the role of religion.

In the case of Korea, it have been various religions, that blended together with the course of time and influenced not only people's beliefs, but also customs concerning death, funerals, burials, and commemoration of the deceased person. As first such religion can be considered shamanism with shamans performing different types of a *kut* ritual, that aimed to cleanse the spirit of the deceased or guard it against evil spirits. It was then Buddhism, that influenced the view on the afterlife, making people believe in reincarnation to a better life according to their karma and the state of mind before passing. With the fall of the Koryŏ kingdom and the succession from the Chosŏn kingdom, Korea underwent a radical switch to a Confucianism, an ideology that served as an extension of the relationships with one's ancestor, allowing them to return the filial gratitude.

Confucianism is so deeply rooted in the culture and life of Koreans that it keeps influencing the society up to these days, despite the freedom of religion and the rapid urbanization, that made it difficult to perform some of the Confucian rites and made them more simplified and adapted to contemporary Korea.

This thesis focuses on funeral ritual throughout the Korean history and after the division of the Korean peninsula, it focuses on the Republic of Korea. The first chapter explains the difference between rite and ceremonies, with the following five chapters concerning the funeral rites from the beginning of the first settlements on the peninsula until present day Korea. Throughout the chapters, various religious influences, and their similarities and also differences can be noticed. The second part of the thesis revolves around a 1996 Im Kwon-taek's movie Chukje, that portraits the funeral process that is performed by an eldest son for his deceased mother. The funeral is described in detail and in the following chapter compared to the most used manual book, namely Zhū Xī's *Family rites* from the 12th century, that determined standard procedure for four family rites, that were commonly practiced both in China, where does the book originate from, and also in Korea, until some of them were slowly abandoned or modified to modern day lives. For comparing the movie with the manual, the 1991 Patricia Buckley Ebrey's translation of the *Family rites* will be used.

1. Rites and ceremonies

The *Otto's encyclopedia* explains ritual (l. *ritus*) as follows: 1) For Romans, a *ritus* denoted a set of a religious customs recorded in the ritual books (libri rituales); 2) in the Catholic Church, the *ritus* means a set of ceremonies of a larger or more extensive sacred act, e.g., Holly Mass, baptism, consecration of a temple or a church liturgy; 3) *ritus* is the doctrine and instructions given to theologians on how to conduct sacred ceremonies (Otto 1904, 834).

The ceremony is, from a religious point of view an act, in which the relationship of a rational creature to a divine being is manifested, but according to the Cambridge Dictionary, it can also be performed on important social occasions, such as wedding or graduation ceremony (Cambridge dictionary, n.d.).

For further clarification and more visible distinction, we can further use the definition from the Merriam-Webster dictionary for both, ritual, and the ceremony. Rite is "a prescribed form or manner governing the words or actions for a ceremony" (Cambridge dictionary, n.d.), while ceremony is "a formal act or series of acts prescribed by ritual, protocol, or convention (Merriam-Webster, n.d.)."

Therefore, ritual shows a difference from ceremony, since ritual is rather a system, or a set of rules for how the ceremony, which is an event, should be performed.

2. Prehistoric Korea

2.1. Neolithic age

The arrival of a neolithic man can be dated at around 5500 BC, after a Mesolithic era during which the Korean peninsula has undergone a climate change. Food source at that time was obtained from fishing, hunting and fruit collection. People inhabited either a naturally formed or manmade dwellings. Neolithic society practiced animism, a belief, that everything, including places objects and people contains an immortal soul. Not only the body, but also items used during the late one's life were buried, and rituals were accompanied by dancing and singing, aiming to cleanse the soul and to bring luck to the tribe. These religious practices are similar in other parts of northeast Asia and are referred to as shamanism (Eckert et al. 1990, 8)

2.2. Bronze age

Bronze age is believed to begin around the 9th or 8th century BC and ended around 4th century BC, both dates being slightly different for various parts of the peninsula. People of this age started farming and lived only in manmade dwellings. Thanks to discovered items we know that the society was stratified – only some of the people could afford bronze products, such as

daggers and mirrors. This stratification can be also seen thanks to the burial style – only those people with authority had a dolmen erected above their tomb (Eckert et al. 1990, 8). The dolmens are a megalithic construction made from stone and had three main shapes, depending on the location on the peninsula, and the burial chamber might be a tiled coffin, box made of flagstone, both of them buried, with some cases where the coffin is situated on the ground and surrounded by the stones. (Nesterkina et al. 2017, 107)

2.3. Shamanism

As was mentioned above, shamanism elements can be found already in neolithic age, where people believed that there are two kinds of spirits – good ones and evil ones, with the ghosts nature depending on the conditions of their death. The first ones, the good spirits are those, who died a natural way at their home, after living a long live. These spirits are influencing the lives of the living in a good way, bringing them luck and protection. The evil kinds or ghosts are remains of people, that died mostly in an unnatural way, such as suicide or by and accident far away from their home. It is believed that they not only bring misfortune to their descendants, but can even harm them. Therefore, people needed third side – the shaman – to protect them from a misfortune, secure good health and success of the family (Eckert et al. 1990, 10–11). Shamanism is not connected with an exact type of burial, rather it is connected to the spirit of the deceased one through rituals called *kut*.

These rituals can be divided into three categories: for the community, for the living, and for the dead. Examples are praying for peace and promoting communal unity in villages, for longevity and good fortune, and for leading the soul of the dead to the underworld, accordingly. However, the most important rites for us are the ones associated with the dead, given that the practices are performed even in the contemporary Korea.

The most important ones are *ssitkimgut (cleansing ritual)* and *chinogigut (ritual of requiem)*.

2.3.1. Ssitkimgut

The name of this ritual comes from the Korean word *ssitkida* meaning *to wash*; therefore, it is known as the ritual of cleansing or purification of the deceased one and it needs to be done, since it is believed, that the dead spirit is impure and will not be able to ascend to the underworld.

This *kut* is performed either at the eve of the burial day, on the second day after the burial or at the eve of the day when the mourning period ends, although it can be as well conducted at the auspicious date determined by the shaman. Each of the individual parts of the *kut* can be carried out at any part of the house, on the contrary the main rites are performed in

a temporarily set up site in the front yard of the house, around which people gather and participate.

In the beginning and also in the end of the ritual itself several various deities and ancestors of the family are invited, and offerings are made. However, the most important part is focused on the body of the deceased and on his soul. This part of the ritual is focused on three activities, namely the rite of washing the dead body, while reciting Buddhist texts and prayers (Park 2003, 355), the rite of unfastening seven knots, symbolizing relief of the regrets the deceased one had and lastly, the rite of a smooth passage by moving a spirit basket across a long cloth, a symbolic road to underworld.

Through this ritual the deceased one's spirit becomes not only clean and able to enter the underworld, but also gets prepared to leave the living world behind meanwhile the bereaved family becomes ready to send the dead one to the other world. Despite this ritual being shamanistic, we can notice how the religions are intertwined, a sign characteristic for Korean religions.

2.3.2. Chinogigut

Chinogigut (진오기굿, sometimes 지노귀굿) is considered a requiem held in order to prepare passageway to the underworld and for the soul to be accepted by the ten kings of the underworld. As seen in *ssitkimgut*, rites for various deities are held, with the aim to bring health or protect the family of the deceased, hence focused on wellbeing of the living, but in contrast to the rites for the deceased, these rituals are held inside the house, while the latter being held in the yard.

Even though this *gut* consists of numerous rites, the most important are the rite of the division of the cloth bridge, which is also used in the *ssitkimgut*. In fact, this rite uses two long cloth bridges, through which the shaman cuts her way, symbolizing the opening of the way to the ten kings of the hell, a concept blended with a Buddhist beliefs. Each of the kings is required to give his judgement whether to receive the dead spirit or not. It is believed that the deceased spirit is accompanied by Princess Pari[1] (lit. "rejected princess"), who is responsible for the sending of the deceased one to a better place. Again, a rite for the Princess Pari is accompanied by a recitation of an epic song Parigongju ("Song of Abandoned Princess Pari").

[1] Princess Pari is a 7th daughter of a king, who wished for a son – heir of the throne – but only daughters were born. Pari was exiled from the palace, but was taken in by the Buddhist monks, who told her that her father is a spirit of the bamboo, while mother is the spirit of a paulownia tree. Because of her father's illness, she was sent for medicine, crossing high mountains, rivers and even the underworld, praying there for the spirits of the unjustly deceased. In the end the king was healed and Pari herself become a deity.

3. Buddhism

At the time of introduction of Buddhism to Korea, the peninsula was divided into the so-called Three Kingdoms, Silla, Goguryŏ and Paekche, with Silla being formed first and Paekche last.

According to the Samguk yusa, Buddhism was brought to Koguryŏ by the Chinese monk Shun-tao, who was dispatched by the king of the Former Ch'in dynasty to take Buddhist scriptures and images to the Korean kingdom of Koguryŏ. His arrival there in the year 372 is regarded as the official inception of Buddhism to the Korean peninsula. By the sixth century, Buddhism in Koguryŏ became so dominant and with the work of a missionaries able to introduce the religion to Silla, who accepted Buddhism as a state religion almost one and half century later – in year 572 – after Koguryŏ.

Buddhism began blossoming during of Unified Silla (668–935). This period forms together with Koryŏ (918–1392) as the "golden age of Buddhism" (Koo 2011, 1) in Korea. Although Buddhism was dominant, during later Koguryŏ Confucianism began to gain popularity, but still was perceived as orthodox teaching that modified the family relations and determined, how the state should be governed. On the other hand, Buddhism offered inner harmony and salvation, making the two teachings coexist together (Eckert et al. 1990, 52). During the kingdom of Chosŏn (1392–1897), Buddhism was gradually suppressed and replaced by Confucian principles in state affairs.

In Buddhism, it is believed that life is suffering, which can be ended only by reaching *nirvana*, a state of release from the aforementioned suffering. In the moment of one's death it is decided, to which one of the six realms *yukto* (六道) the person will be reborn. The realms are the realms of the gods, demi-gods, humans, animals, hungry ghosts, and hell denizens (Harada 2021).

If the individual does not eliminate for example greed, hatred, or ignorance within himself, he will be reborn in the according sphere and the cycle of repeated death and rebirth will be stopped only after eliminating all of the defilements, reaching the enlightening (Takahashi Brown 2007, 2).

Another important concept is the *chungŭmshin* (中陰身, intermediate state), a state, during one's *yŏngga* (靈駕, spirit) taking place between the death and rebirth. Every seven days, the spirit has to go through seven trials until the spirit is reborn.

When nearing death, it is said that the dying person should be calm and prepared for death, because the state of consciousness before the passing determines the state of consciousness after it. In order to keep a positive thoughts, flowers or images of Buddha can be

laid near the dying person, or otherwise. "If possible, a monk is summoned to the death-bed to perform the rites." (Zemánek 2013, 43–44).

> "The rituals usually contain taking refuge in Three Jewels, chanting of the Heart sutra, lay ordination sermon, reciting the name of the *Amitābha Buddha*, prayer for rebirth int he Western Paradise *Sukhāvatī* and reciting the four great vows. The first and the last play in most Buddhist rites the role of opening and closing formulae. During the rite a five-coloured cord is bound to an index finger of the dying person and the opposite end is connected to a hand of *Amitābha*, who is carved in a small altar. This symbolizes the divine helping power of *Amitābha* descending on the dying person. Bestowing the precepts is supposed to direct the mind towards the Three Jewels. When the person dies, the body is supposed to be left undisturbed for one or two hours so the spirit can leave the body" (Zemánek 2013, 43–44).

The day of person's death also marks the first day of the *sasipkujae* (四十九齋, forty-nine day mourning period), a period, during which a ceremony is held every seventh day for seven times and during which the fate of the deceased will be determined.

After one dies, two set of rites are performed – one focusing on sending off the spirit, the other one focusing on the corpse.

Firstly, the rite focusing on the spirit is called *sidarim*, a last sermon. An altar with banners, a tablet, a photograph, and offerings are set up in *pinso* (殯所, mortuary), where the rite will take place. Not only before death the dying one should be calm, as was already mentioned, but also after the actual death the bereaved should avoid crying, since it might cause rebirth in bad conditions by evoking the feeling of attachment in the *yŏngga.* The founder of Won Buddhism, Sot'aesan, also states that "family members' attachment to the deceased would hinder them from being liberated from the cycle of birth and death" (Park 2020, 10). After setting the altar, a monk recites Buddhist teachings.

Secondly, the rituals concerning the corpse are as follow: shaving head, washing the body and face, shrouding and putting the body in a coffin. This procedure basically follows the same procedure of the *Chujagarye* (朱子家禮, Family Rituals) with the difference that during Buddhist funeral, a Buddhist dimension is added to it by chanting Buddha's teaching and the name of *Amitābha.*

The funeral rite begins after transferring the body to the burial site. According to Buddhist traditions, cremation is preferred, but burial in the ground is also accepted. For the traditional cremation called *tabi* (茶毘) a wood is piled around the coffin and ignited, but it is mainly carried out when an important monk passes away, nowadays cremation in a crematorium is preferred. The ashes are then collected and in the case of the monks, ashes are buried, and

relics are collected and enshrined in stūpas, in the case of ordinary people, urns are enshrined either in a columbarium or in and outdoor urn graves.

Figure 1: Buddhist cremation

Source: GOOD SAMSUN HOSPITAL. n.d. "Choŭnsamsŏnbyŏngwŏn." Www.samsun.or.kr. Accessed June 29, 2023. http://www.samsun.or.kr/samsun/contents/view.do?mId=94.

The photo or memorial tablet, representing the spirit are either moved to the main hall of the temple, or enshrined in a clean room (Park 2020, 10) and seven days later, a first ceremony of the *sasipkujae* is held. It is believed that the deceased's spirit remains in the above-mentioned intermediate state for approximately 49 days before being reincarnated according to its karmic condition. The services and rites held during this period of time are meant to guide the deceased in maintaining a clear mind, break down any attachments and help deepen the spirit's affinity for a favorable rebirth, or better, reaching nirvana. A Hundredth Day Deliverance Service may also be conducted on the 100th day after the passing to bid farewell to the spirit, but during this period celebratory activities should be avoided. The 100th day service is held up to this date, with the most recent one commemorating the Itaewon incident from October 2022. (Lee and Lee 2023)

The *sasipkujae* consists of carrying bodhisattvas to a ritual space in a palanquin called *yŏn*, the spirit concerned is then invited and offered a simple food offering while basic teachings are recited to him and afterwards his bad karma is washed away in a symbolic bath. For this bath, a special bathroom in form of a folding screen is established and the spirit is provided with a paper clothes and basic hygiene supplies, later followed by chanting various mantras. This ritual is repeated seven times up to the final 49th day, when the paper clothing and other properties used are burned, marking the end of the mourning period.

4. Confucianism

The foremost thing to help us understand Korean behavior, traditions and beliefs is to grasp at least the basics of Confucianism, which played an important role in establishing the foundation of every matter not only China, but also Korea, Japan, and Vietnam. It is also important to mention that rather than a religion, Confucianism is a system of belief that puts emphasis on learning, self-cultivation, ethics, and human relations. It cannot be considered as a religion for the fact, that there is not a god-like figure to be worshipped, rather it puts an emphasis on worshipping one's ancestors.

Confucian elements goes a long way back to Korean history, when it was first introduced to one of the Han commanderies, namely Lelang (108 BC–313 CE), located around modern P'yŏngyang. The most prominent artifact is a basket covered with many groups of figures illustrating a story of filial piety (Yang and Henderson 1958, 82), an important element to be mentioned later in this text. During the Koguryŏ and Unified Silla period Confucian educational institutions were established, but the teaching still did not have a great impact on the Korean people as during later periods. As I have mentioned, Buddhism blossomed during the Koryŏ period, however, the end of this kingdom saw a switch. It was after a Mongol conquest era, when a classics student An Hyang travelled to Dadu, present-day Beijing in 1290, where he came into contact with the commentaries of Zhū Xī, bringing a copy of his *Collected Commentaries* back to Koryŏ. Not only An's urging, but also a decline in the moral and spiritual legitimacy of Buddhism, whose monks started to neglect their spiritual and moral duties and as a spiritual leaders failed to provide requisite conviction and faith, progressively led to a switch to Confucianism. (Yang and Henderson 1958, 86). With the relegation of Buddhism to the countryside and also out of the state councils after the beginning of the Chosŏn kingdom in 1392, it was Confucianism, that became the dominant state ideology that has spread through Korean history for more than 500 years, and whose practices persisted up to today modern Korea, influencing behavior and relationships in everyday life of Koreans.

With Confucianism becoming the state ideology in Chosŏn, other religions, especially Buddhism and shamanism, and from 18th century also Christianity, were labelled as heretic and were suppressed.

4.1. Confucian society

Confucius believed, that by organizing the society in the correct order, everyone will be able to live in peace. Thus, as was previously mentioned, one of the aims of Confucianism was to create a harmonious society, with a help of establishing the so-called Five Relationships: ruler and

subject, parent and child, husband and wife, between siblings and between friends. Ruler, parent, husband, older sibling or friends and senior colleagues are in the prior position, whereas the ruler, child, wife, younger sibling, friend, and junior colleague are in the posterior position. These relationships are based on the principle of reciprocity stating, that the former mentioned ones should show benevolence and protect the latter ones, that should respect their superiors and collaborate with them (Chung 2015, 77).

The family relationships were further developed on the core value *hyo* (孝, filial piety), which in practice consists of respecting one parents and elders. Nonetheless, the filial piety also encompasses ancestors and for this reason, observance of ancestral rites holds a significant role in life of every Korean. It is also a way of repayment for the parental love and care (Kim et al. 2022, 3).

4.2. The four rites of passage

The fact, that Korea has become the most Confucian-oriented country is reflected mainly in its custom and national traditions. Especially the four rites of passage have been based on Confucian system and all of them were observed up to 20th century. The rites are namely coming of age, marriage, mourning and ancestral worship rites, which were done according to the rules. The first rite to abandon was the coming-of-age ceremony mainly because of Kabo reforms in 1895, when men were ordered to cut their hair short. The ceremony consisted of young boys putting up their hair into the adult's topknot, which they could not do after the reforms, leading to a slow drift away from the ceremony (Kyu 1984, 168).

The second ceremony to slowly change were marriages – although the traditional ones are still occasionally performed, most people prefer the so-called "new-style weddings," which gained popularity thanks to its more couple-oriented ceremony (Kyu 1984, 175).

The remaining two ceremonies – that are funerals and ancestor worship rites – are said to remain the least untouched and are performed up to this day (Kyu 1984, 169).

All of the abovementioned practices were collected and recorded in *Chujagarye* (朱子家禮, Family Rituals of Zhū Xī), written by Confucian scholar Zhū Xī (1130–1200) in 12th century, forming the guidelines for practicing rituals during the Chosŏn kingdom. Along with *Chujagarye*, *Yegi* (禮記, Book of rites) and *Ŭirye* (儀禮, Book of Etiquette and Ceremonial) were the books on which various private and also public rites were based on. Even though many Chinese scholars attempted to write and compile several volumes on family rites, consisting either of just a few of them or all four, the *Family Rituals of Zhū Xī* were still the most influential book both, in China and also in early Chosŏn, since Zhū Xī tried to make the

ritual practice easy for all. However, in late Chosŏn Korean scholars also made various attempt to make compilations with own commentaries and adjustments for Korean environment, probably the most widely distributed books are thought to be the *Kyŏngmongyogyŏl* (擊蒙要訣, Essentials on Expelling Ignorance) by Yi I (pen name Yulgok; 1536–1584) and *Saryep'yŏllam* (四禮便覽, Handbook of the Four Ceremonies) by I Jae (1680-1746) (Horlyck 2008, 39).

Despite all of the efforts made by the Chosŏn scholars at compiling or modifying the *Family rituals,* it still remained and important guideline for the rites and funerals, with some people being reluctant to give up their local traditions.

4.3. Ancestor worship[2]

During Chosŏn, numerous ancestral worship ceremonies were held. They did not serve only to pay respect to the deceased and fulfill the filial duty, but the shown devotion to one's parents also helped to strengthen the family and also neighbor relationships.

Moon Seung-gyu classified the ceremonies into three categories: funeral, mourning and non-mourning ceremonies. The first category includes at least five ceremonies beginning from the *imjong* (deathbed) of a parent and ending with the *hagwan* (下棺, lowering the casket into the ground). The second category begins with the return of the funeral procession from the burial service and ends with the ceremony after the second anniversary of the death. The third category is not related to the funeral nor the mourning ceremonies, rather, it consist of other major ceremonies held either at the clan shrine or graveyard. These ceremonies include spring and autumn ceremonies, ceremony for the founder of the clan and ceremonies on national holidays such as New Year's Day and Thanksgiving, called *Ch'usŏk.* Despite all these ceremonies, *kije* is considered to be the most important one and is held annually at midnight on the anniversary of death after the mourning period is over.

Lee Kwang-kyu classifies the ceremonies in a different three categories: *ch'arye* (茶禮, tea rites), *kijesa* (忌祭祀, household rites) and *sije* (時祭, seasonal rites), collectively referred to as *chesa* (祭祀, ancestral rite).

Origin of the name *cha'rye* can be traced back to the kingdom of Koryŏ, when a tea was served during the ancestral rites, but during the kingdom of Chosŏn, it was changed to alcohol, in order to remove the Buddhist legacy. In the past, *cha'rye* was performed on Lunar New Year, *dano* (端午, first fifth), celebrated on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month, Chus'ok and *dongji* (冬至, peak of winter), also referred to as winter solstice. Nowadays, it depends on each

[2] This chapter is based on Moon (1974: 74-77)

household if they prefer to perform all of the ceremonies mentioned, or if they choose to simplify it and perform only on the two national holidays, that is Lunar New Year and Chus'ok.

Kijesa is performed after the end of the mourning period, on the anniversary of the ancestor's death. During this ceremony a food offerings are placed on a ritual table in a specific position, such as *ŏdongyuksŏ* (魚東肉西, fish in the east, meat in the west) and many others, each for one of the rows of offering food. However, each household can decide the position or even type of the drinks and foods placed on the table according to what the deceased one liked during his life, but the procedure of the ritual does not change. The first step is invoking the ancestor spirit with a prayer and offering them liquor three times and a meal on the offering table as a second step. Meanwhile the spirit partakes the offerings, the participants can wait either inside or outside the room. Third and last step is sending off the spirit and the offerings can be consumed by the participants afterwards. During *kijesa*, ancestors up to four generations are memorated.

Figure 2: Offerings table

Source: Han, Sanghyŏng. 2019. "Chesasang Ch'arinŭn Pŏpkwa Chesa Chinaenŭn Naltchat'pshigant'psunsŏ, Chibang Ssŭnŭn Pŏp, Chesasangch'arim Ŭmshikŭn?" Han'gukkangsashinmun. July 13, 2019. https://www.lecturernews.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=21980.

On the other hand, during *sije* fifth and beyond generations are being memorated. It is held once a year at the ancestors grave, but when the grave is either lost or cannot be reached, an altar can be set instead. Given that *sije* is held outside, the procedure differs a bit from the *kijesa* held inside. First of all, the gravesite needs to be cleaned and the grass cut, so the food offerings can be comfortably placed on a mat in front of the grave. Then. The ancestral spirit is evoked, and reverence is being paid, followed by the three offerings of liquor and the food. The attendants give enough time to the spirit to eat, sending of the spirit afterwards. On top of that, a ceremony to Mountain God is performed in order to express gratitude to the mountain god

protecting the graven and mountain, on which the grave is located. The ceremony is similar as for the deceased one, but simplified, because an incense is not burned, and some bows are not omitted.

5. Christianity

5.1. Beginning of Christianity in East Asia

Christianity is not as deeply rooted in Korea as Confucianism already is, but it also came from China. It were Jesuits, who had introduced Christianity to East Asia through Japan, but after noticing the authority of China, they were determined to enter the Chinese mainland and hoped to spread the religion first in China and then to other countries. In 1583, a first group of missionaries entered China, with Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) being one of them. He published book that became very influential in East Asia, *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* (天主實義), maintaining that Christianity is compatible with Confucianism.

On the Korean peninsula, Christianity – Catholicism, to be precise, was introduced through local Confucian scholars, rather than through foreign missionaries. Park states that the first Catholic community in Korea was established in 1784 by a group belonging the Confucian elite, whereas it was not until the 1830s that the first Western missionaries entered the Korean peninsula (Park 2008, 195). Christian ideas were introduced primarily thanks to annual diplomatic envoys to Beijing, where the Koreans were gifted several Jesuit publications on technology, science and religion, by which they were intrigued, but found major Christian tenets such as the existence of personal deity, incarnation, miracles, paradise and hell absurd. Moreover, they looked down on the Christian teaching of reward for the good in paradise and retribution for the evil one's in hell, seeing it as a disguise of Buddhist teachings (Park 2008, 195).

Eventually some Confucian scholars began to practice Christianity, specifically Yi Sŭng-hun, who accompanied his father to Beijing in 1784, was baptized there and baptized his friends back in Korea, with the year 1784 regarded as the beginning of Catholic Christianity in Korea (Buswell and Lee 2006, 9). As the Korean Christians were self-taught within the Christian ideas, it was only natural to start questioning the legitimacy of their self-taught knowledge and made enquiries to Beijing. One of the most important questions concerned the practice of traditional Confucian ancestral rites, its answer being negative, leaving the whole Christian community shocked and wavering between Christianity and Confucianism.

5.2. Christian persecutions

The first prosecution in Christians in Korea took place 1791 and triggered several waves of persecutions against Christians. As the papal instruction forbid ancestral rites during Christian funeral, Yun Chi-ch'ung and his cousin Kwon Sang-Yŏn had to decide between Confucian and Christian funeral for Yun's mother. They decided for the latter one and not only did they not make an ancestral rite for the deceased mother, but they even burnt all of their existing ancestral tablets. Reported to local authorities, they faced an interrogation followed by execution. They had not only violated the filial piety by burning the ancestral tablets, they also had displayed disloyalty to the king by reading Christian books despite the king's ban (Löwensteinová 2019, 38).

Despite this incident the number of followers of Christianity was growing as well as the anti-Christian sentiment that went hand in hand with the nationwide persecutions in 1801, 1815, 1827, 1839, 1846 and 1866.

5.3. Protestant and their attitude to ancestral rites

The beginning of Protestantism in Korea is very similar to the one of Catholicism counterpart – Koreans in the northern parts of the peninsula were influenced through the contact with Western missionaries in China, before these even managed to enter to the country. But the first protestant church in Korea was established considerably later, in 1885 with a help of mainly American missionaries, most of them being Presbyterians.

Protestants, just like Catholics were, against ancestral rites, labeled it as idolatry and prohibited and set up conditions to be met before any convert was baptized. The first one was abandoning traditional ancestral rites and burning or burying the ancestral tablet or handing it to the missionaries. Secondly, they were prohibited to eat, let alone touch the food offered during traditional ancestral rites. However, it had quite an impact on the Korean Christians, who did not participate in their family ancestral rites – whether it being a negative attitude from their relatives or getting beaten by them.

5.3.1. Ch'udoyebae

Even though ancestral rites were prohibited, they have been long rooted in the Korean nature, meaning it will be nearly impossible for some to drop the rites off completely. As an alternative, Protestant came up with *ch'udoyebae*, a memorial service that emerged at the end of the 19th century, when a convert along with other two Christians got together on the night, when the ancestral rites were supposed to be done, but instead of food offerings, he burned up the tablet

and together they prayed. Another more specific and more described example can be mentioned. This memorial was held by a convert on his mother's first death anniversary but not in order to worship the spirits, but as a sign of filial piety (Park 2008, 210). As in the example mentioned earlier, they did not offer any food, but rather lit candles, prayed to God for the soul of the late mother and sang a hymn, thus laying the foundations for all of the memorial services.

6. Post-Confucian Korea

After a streak of victories in the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars Japan achieved dominant position over the Korean peninsula, laying a firm base for its future annexation. The Japan-Korean Treaty of 1905 made Korea a protectorate of Japan, slowly relieving Korea of its power, enabling it to be annexed in 1910 (Kim 2011, 28). As the Confucianism supporting Korean empire was abolished in the same year, the influence of Confucianism in state affairs disappeared and since the dynasty fall, there were no longer issues between the state and the Christians concerning the Christian ban of Confucian ancestral rites. However, the issue remained relevant in familial, social, and ecclesiastical terms.

Namely in 1920 a series of debates over the ban of the ancestral rites was published. As a response to a story of a wife who committed suicide in order to compensate for her convert husband, who did not perform the ancestral rite for his deceased mother and according to her he had failed to observe filial duty, Yi Sang-jae published an answer in another article, that sparked further debates. As his main point, he stated that Christianity should allow the traditional ancestral rite if it is being held as an expression of a filial duty and not as a means of receiving good luck, which he deemed as superstitious. Although his thesis encouraged development of more debates, they were stopped due to the suspension of the newspaper by the Japanese imperial government, one of the reasons being labeling the Shinto shrine rituals as an example of idolatry (Park 2008, 215).

In 1910 Japan annexed Korea, starting a 35 year long lasting colonial period, during which they tried to implement a few changes in Korea in their favor. The changes were a reintroduction of the cremation and a system of public cemeteries, which were not a common occurrence in Korea. Nonetheless, the legalization of the cremation was a necessity only to the Japanese population in Korea, while Koreans kept their own custom by burial to the ground, since ancestor's bones were sacred, and the body should not be damaged in any way as a sign of filial piety. In addition, Koreans were unwilling to cremations as a sign of rejection to the coercive policy set by the Japanese.

The absence of the public cemeteries was another matter, that caused annoyance to the Japanese imperialists since there was not much of an arable land left. As there was no existing system in placing new graves, they were scattered everywhere across the country and pretty much restricted imperialist pursuit of industrialization. It was not only impossible to open mines in mountains, but it was also inconvenient to build roads and railroads, set areas for military use and also hard to manage landholding rights. Another drawback was the deforestation to clear up space for new graves followed by a shortage of wood (Biontino 2020, 32).

Therefore, the imperial government announced the "Ordinance to control graves, crematories, burials and cremation," that introduced the above-mentioned cremations and public cemeteries, aiming to improve health and hygiene and solve the problems with the occupied land. Later amendment made it legal to own private cemetery not exceeding a certain area, but only the Korean elite could afford such a thing. For that reason, other Koreans not only did not adhere to cremation, but they also carried out secret burials, did not register new gravesites, or registered a new public cemetery, that was in reality used only privately.

Although cremation was legalized already in 1912, it was still a taboo until 1990s mainly because of the three following reasons. First of all, it was seen as a violation of filial duty, secondly it was seen as remains of the Japanese colonial period and the third reason was mainly aesthetic, since the unattractive buildings of crematoria left a negative impression (Park 2010, 29).

7. Funeral customs in contemporary Korea

Even though Korea went through various religious influences, the funeral procedure remained comparatively the same, with just a few differences, especially due to the urbanization and industrialization, that will be discussed in the following chapter.

7.1. The emergence of the funeral halls

When Confucianism was still prevalent in Korea, one own's house was the place where the lazing-out and the mourning took place. Dying at home with the family members around was considered as a good death with the funeral rites also taking place at one's house. Only the burial was done outside of the house either at a family cemetery or a public cemetery. In the case of a bad death, that is dying somewhere else than one's house, instead of moving the body home, the decease was buried without any ceremonies (Lee 1996, 50). This was true up until 1980s, when mainly the funeral venue and the method of the corpse disposal undergone some changes.

To begin with, one of the main reasons for the change of the funeral venue concerns change of the housing situation, that was caused by rapid industrialization. The preferred type of a house switched from detached house to a terraced house with up to four floors and to an apartment with more than five floors, both became popular in the late twentieth century followed by quick urbanization. These two housing types were promoted by the South Korean government, as they were suitable for the population density, but they became less suitable for holding a funeral, because some of the earlier Confucian traditions were nearly impossible to execute, whether its *ch'ohon,* (招魂, calling the soul) that requires climbing up the roof and invoking the deceased person's spirit, carrying the coffin in the funeral bier to the place of the burial or any other part of the traditional funeral. On top of that, with the emergence of the multi-floor housings, the traditional Korean *madang*, a flat empty yard attached to a stand-alone house became a very rare commodity, influencing the funeral undoubtedly the most, as many parts of the funerary preparations and ceremonies had relied on the existence of such a madang.

Since the mid-1980s hospitals became a preferred institution by the urban upper and middle class for both, dying and holding the funeral. As these classes were financially able, they could afford to use hospitals when ill, making it more likely to also die in one. The upper and middle class lived primarily in the apartments, making it difficult to hold a funeral at their house, they favored the hospital mortuaries, however, after some time passed, the frequency of mortuary funeral concentrated only at a few prestigious hospitals (Kyu 1984, 177).

In the later 1990s, a new phenomenon has occurred that is so called funeral halls, that are either run by hospitals, private companies, or religious institutions. As a result of the government efforts in 1996, more of the hospital mortuaries were given a chance to transform into the hospital funeral halls, that were more preferred. It is said, that by 2003, there were 502

hospital funeral halls and 121 private funeral halls around South Korea, expanding to total amount of 714 halls by 2005 (Park 2008, 129) and then to 839 in 2008 (Kim 2011).

Figure 3: An example of present-day funeral hall

Source: Im, Yunsu. 2020. "Tabi: Chedaero Chŏnsŭnghagŏna Wisŏnŭi Chŏnt'ongŭl Pŏtkŏna." Pulgyojŏnŏl. July 15, 2020. http://www.buddhismjournal.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=20542.

7.2. Funeral procedure in the funeral hall

The funeral hall consists of two main parts – the funeral area and the dining area. The dominating part of the funeral area is undoubtedly the altar with the photo of the deceased. Nevertheless, the first action the guest is supposed to do is to sign the guestbook on the right side of the hall right after the arrival. One should also prepare a condolence money with amount starting with an odd number and ending in zero, the closer was the guest to the family, the higher the amount, which is used for covering the funeral expenses. The condolence money is not only important for the bereaved family but also for the guest, who should then expect the same or at least similar amount to be gifted to him from the current bereaved family later on if also hosting funeral.

The second step for guests is to pay respect to the deceased by bowing to his photo with an emphasis on hand placement – woman place their left hand on top of the right hand and man do the opposite, this hand placement is also the opposite of how the hands are placed during the *sebae*, a Korean New Year bow. The bow is followed by lighting the incense and putting it out by either fanning or shaking the incense and placing it into the bowl. After putting out the incense, one should bow both to the deceased and to the mourners afterwards. The male mourners are standing on his right side, the women are on the left. As soon as he bows to the

bereaved, he then offers the condolence money at the entrance of the hall and may leave to the dining area.

In Confucianist Korea it was customary to wear the mourning attire made from undyed hempen cloth, but due to influence from the West, the bereaved now wear black suits and the chief mourner, s*angju* (喪主), might wear at least a hemp hat, that used to be part of the traditional mourning attire and is made from the same cloth the deceased's body is wrapped in. The chief mourner can be recognized by a light-yellow armband with two black stripes, while the other male family members have only one stripe. When it comes to accessories for women, they should avoid accessories such as earrings or bracelets, let alone even makeup, but they are expected to wear a white ribbon hair pin and a black costume or a dress.

Currently, as the hospitals and even private funeral halls provide every service needed for funeral, these two types of funerals are preferred over the traditional one at home, primarily in the urbanized areas. The service provided is not only the two mentioned areas – dining and funeral area, but some more prestigious facilities can even offer a room for rest, they can also prepare the body for funeral by washing it, cutting its nails etc. It is also possible to rent both, the traditional or the modern formal mourning clothes, instead of having to buy an own clothing.

Because food is still and integral part of the funeral, the funeral halls also offers a dining area, where the guests can chat while enjoying either food served by the funeral hall staff or a takeout food.

7.3. Methods of corpse disposal

From a *p'ungjang* (풍장, aerial funeral), or simply leaving the corpse exposed to the nature elements, that dates back to the kingdom of Puyŏ in 3th century AD, to a burial inside a dolmen tombs or simply to the ground or by the disagreement inducing cremation, Korea went through various ways of body disposal. But still, the prevalent way was a burial in the ground, without damaging the body, according to Confucianist beliefs. Even though the originally banned cremation was again legalized by the Japanese it was not at all successful when it comes to Koreans.

It was only from the late 1980s that Koreans started to realize that their funeral customs were becoming a major issue, above all because of the increasing shortage of possible burial sites. After realizing this problem, the government introduced a new funeral policy that on one hand promoted cremation, but on the other restrained burials. Koreans started to abandon their negative perception of cremation This shift gained momentum in the 1990s. In the year 1994

the cremation rate had already reached 20.5 per cent, in the year 2005 52.6 per cent and jumped to a surprising 82.7 per cent in the year 2017 (Lee 2023).

There were several reasons for substituting traditional burial with cremation, the shortage of space being only one of them. Another reason that made many Koreans rethink their views on cremation were the heavy rains during the summer of 1998, during which countless graves were irretrievably lost. Other reasons for reconsideration were difficulty in maintaining a grave, which requires cutting grass frequently, then the cremation of leading figures, causing at first a sensation and on top of that, people took environmental concerns into consideration and did not want to take up even more of the already scarce land. Moreover, the impracticality of the graves was a factor, as they were usually located in the mountains, far away from the cities, making visits a burden (Lee 2023).

The number of people that have chosen cremation rose from 20.5% in 1994 to 49.2% in 2004 and in the year 2016 even up to 82.7%, prompting already existing columbaria to expand, or created an opportunity for new ones to emerge, creating competition (Lee 2018). Originally the columbaria consisted of just a repository space with glass doors, small enough for storing only the urn with ashes, photo of the deceased and some flowers, but with the emergence of new crematoria, they needed to appeal to the customers. For example, the *Home, House of Memory and Eternity* crematoria provides a free café and instead of the simple repository with glass doors, they decided to store the ashes and some personal belongings into a book-shaped forms (Lim and Baker 2023). These public columbaria can be called substitutes for public cemeteries, with the private cemeteries having their counterpart in private columbaria. Remarkably, these columbaria are similar to the traditional graves but with the difference that they can store larger number of the deceased, but in an urn.

A second way to dispose the ashes, besides the columbaria is the burial of the ashes in the nature. It can be done either by simply scattering the ashes in the nature or burying it in a container made of natural material such as wood, felt or earthenware, that later decompose. The ashes are not placed anywhere, but a tree or a shrubbery is preferred (Schaffer 2020). The amount of the natural burial areas jumped from 37 in 2011 to 106 by 2016, almost a three-fold increase in just five years (Lee 2018). In 2018, the Ministry of Health and Welfare expressed their hope to reach 90 per cent by the year in the number of creations, and at least 30 per cent of the cremated ashes being buried in the nature as an eco-friendly nature.

8. Funeral process in the movie

In this part of thesis, I will describe the funeral process and each of its steps as can be seen in the movie. I will refer to the deceased woman as a mother, from the eldest son's – Chun-sŏp – point of view, since he holds the role of the chief mourner.

This part will be divided into three sub-parts, based on the three days during which the funeral took place.

8.1. The first day

The first day of the funeral starts after the supposed death of the mother, when the eldest daughter starts calling the remaining family members to the house in order to start preparing for the funeral. She also mentioned that they moved the body to the main hall of the house and tied her body up, so it doesn't twist after death, but the mother surprisingly came back to life, so they had to untie her, but still leaving her in the main hall.

While the family members are coming to the house, wailing, and crying for the mother, displaying sorrow as sign of the filial piety, the rest of the woman in the house immediately start preparing food for the funeral guests.

As the eldest son, Chun-sŏp is obliged to observe the filial duty, by staying at his mother's side attending hers deathbed *imjong* (臨終). To confirm her passing, Chun-sŏp does *sokkoeng* (屬紘), checking her breath by placing a cotton pad under her nose and waiting, if it moves, while being surrounded by the family members, who managed to come.

The eldest daughter climbs up the roof in order to carry out *kobok* (皐復), shouting „Kim Ok-nam of Hwangsan has passed away!" followed by shouting *pok* (復), literally meaning „return" three times, accompanied by *ch'ohon* (招魂), waving deceased mother's jacket in hope that after seeing own piece of clothing, the mother's spirit will return back to life.

Since it is believed that a death messenger called *saja* (使者) will lead the dead's spirit to the underworld *cho'sŭng* (저승), a table called *sajasang* (使者床), literally *table for death messenger* is set up next to the house gate. But since the mother was on the poor, we can see that the family uses a straw mat instead of actual table. On the top of the mat in three rows are placed following items: three pairs of straw shoes *chipsin*, three plates with the coins in the middle and in the front three bowls of rice, each one of them with a smaller bowl of soy sauce on the right side. Items from the first row – rice and soy sauce – are a gift for the death messenger, while the money and straw shoes are for the soul of the deceased to be used on its way to the underworld.

While the table is being set, one person is chosen to write and send the obituary *bugo* (訃告) and a funeral director *hosang* (護喪), whose role is to watch over the funeral process, is also chosen. The funeral director also has to supervise a chief mourner *sangju* (喪主), who is the eldest son, however in this case, the oldest son committed suicide a long time ago, so Chun-sŏp has to take over elder brother's responsibilities as the second oldest.

In front of a village elders, consisting of former school principal, village chief and head of the village farm guild Chun-sŏp appoints firstly a *hosang,* secondly butler *chipsa,* whose role is to usher the funeral guests and collect condolence money from all of them upon their arrival, and lastly a geomancer *chikwan*, who will determine an auspicious site for the grave.

Another funeral guests can be seen bringing a cloth strip and a bags of cotton, which are going to be used during the preparation of the body for placing it in the coffin. Since the mourners received the cotton and cloth, they can move on with further arrangements of the body. The following is *susi* (收屍), binding the body so it does not twist after death. To start with, the neck is wrapped with a piece of cotton, eyes are covered, and body cavities are also filled with the cotton. Legs are straightened and tied together, as well as shoulders and arms. The body is then moved onto a white cloth, in which it is wrapped and the family gathers around for a round of wailing *palsang* (發喪), which informs about the death of a family member.

In the meantime, remaining family members prepare a funeral parlor next to the door house. In front of a hanging folding screen on a higher step stands a low table with two lit candles, and on a lower step stands a taller table with incense sticks and holder. On the right side from the parlor are standing three funeral wreaths with white chrysanthemums, a typical condolence gift even these days.

Waiting for a calligrapher, Chun-sŏp's younger brother can be seen kneeling on a wide mat in front of the funeral parlor, dressed in a white mourning dress put on top of his suit, having right sleeve undone. As soon as the master calligrapher arrives, he goes to pay a respect by burning incense, giving a bow to the altar, and a deep bow to the mourning son.

As the funeral is prepared, mothers tied and wrapped body is moved behind a paper screen with a table in front, and two candles and incense burner on top of it. Since the calligrapher already came, he can prepare a funeral banner *myeŏngjŏng (銘旌)* made from vertically suspended rectangle from red silk. Surrounded by onlooking family members, it is explained to the children, that with a white ink he scribes the abstract of their grandmother's census register for her afterlife, in hanja. Through the banner we can notice mothers given title, *yuin* (孺人), meaning "ordinary person," which she received after her late husband. The banner

will stay displayed in the funeral parlor outside the house and after carrying it in the procession will be buried simultaneously with the coffin.

8.2. The second day

On the second day of the funeral, it is needed to prepare the body for placing it in a coffin. Therefore, two family members, one from each side and one staying by the head, can unwrap, undress, and cover the body with a wide white fabric. Underneath, she is washed and again wrapped in a new piece of white cloth with stripes to be tied later. Hands are placed on triangular shaped fabric, nails are cut and collected into a small pouch placed under the palm of the hand. Then the triangular fabric is wrapped, right side overlapping the left and tied with the stripes, hands are put together and tied too, not using single knot.

Once the body is tied, the same three people carry out *panham* (飯含), feeding the deceased three spoonful's of rice. One man is holding her mouth open, another one is holding a bowl with the rice and third person is feeding the mother with a wooden spoon while saying "100 sŏk[3] of rice, 1000 sŏk of rice, 10 000 sŏk of rice" in between each spoonful. The mouth is closed, and face is covered by a thick piece of cotton.

The following process, called *yŏm* (殮), will be discussed later, because it is closely related to a process of bathing and shrouding, *yŏmsŭp* (殮襲), which the movie didn't picture in its entirety. However, it showed at least a part of the process, namely the shrouding. The body is once again wrapped in a cloth and from head to toe binded by several pieces of fabric stripes, while the entire family is watching and wailing. The head is wrapped by a white cloth and then by the same cloth as the rest of the body and the deceased is prepared to be put into a wooden coffin *kwan* (棺), the inside being covered with white fabric. The act of putting the body is called *ipkwan* (入棺, enter-coffin) and is done by the same three men, who washed and tied the body at the beginning of the second day of the funeral, and also conducted *panham*, feeding rice. At that time, gifts are put into the coffin, namely money, hairpin, that once belonged to her, necklace, and a box with paper amulets, that she collected in order to ward off evil and illnesses from her children. The lacquered coffin is closed with a lid and sealed with a pins in it. For fastening, the pins are hammered, and the coffin is tied in the upper, middle and bottom part horizontally and one time vertically by long strip of cloth.

Held by the knots, the coffin is carried out by eight people, breaking a gourd on the threshold on their way out, using the coffin, and the bereaved change into mourning garments

[3] A unit of volume for counting grains, 1 sŏk = 144kg

sangbok (喪服) and receive short walking sticks to be used during the funeral procession. The stick reaches only up to one's knees, so people carrying it have to walk leaning forward, as they are sinners responsible for their parents' death.

Being dressed in the mourning clothes, the bereaved install funeral parlor called *pinso* (殯所, mortuary place), with a *yŏngjwa* (靈座, spirit seat). The spirit seat is a low chair with mothers' portrait, standing on top of a table for offering sacrifices. The portrait is slightly bigger than the back of the spirit seat and has black ribbon across the top corners. The sacrifices in front of the *yŏngjwa* are a plate of rice cakes *tteok* and a plate of chestnuts, three pears and three apples, each fruit with its top cut off. There are also two candles on each side of the table, and a lower table with an incense burner and an incense, in front of the table, on the ground stands a jar of sand called *mosagi*, a grass and sand vessel.

The sacrifices are now to be offered. The bereaved are seated on both sides of the funeral parlor, women on one side, men on the opposite side, kneeling and slightly bowing their head. Only the funeral director and chief mourner are actively participating, funeral director by beginning the sacrifices by offering a liquor, while Chun-sŏp bows three times.

Meanwhile his niece Yong-sun, who is rebelling against old conventions, dressed in a pure white *hanbok,* decides to offer sacrifices for her late father. Her sacrifices are also unusual – a chocolate Snickers bar, Danish butter cookies, French cognac Hennessy offered in a paper cup, two pears packaged in a plastic, white chrysanthemums, also in plastic wrap from supermarket, jerky, and a cigarette instead of an incense.

Upon her return to the house, a feng shui[4] expert, who is needed to choose an auspicious site for the grave also arrives. First thing after his arrival is offering condolences and bowing to the altar. He offers a liquor to the mother's spirit by circling it three times over an incense holder and bowing three times, while the male bereaved stand on his right side, leaning on the walking sticks.

It is usual to pay respect at night, but instead of five times, the invited singer decides to reduce it to only two times, because it is modern to simplify the rites and because of cold weather. Therefore, they will pay respect at 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. and the funeral guests spend their time playing craps, traditional Korean cards *hwatu,* game of *yut* or just eating and drinking alcohol in the meantime.

At 9 p.m. the first paying of respect, *ch'okyŏng* (一更) starts by the singer announcing in front of the funeral parlor the time and then singing, accompanying himself on the bell, while

[4] Called *pungsu* in Korean

the rest of the male guests slowly join him, and women watch them. In the lyrics, they mourn the loss of the mother and wish for her comeback by singing "Guanyin[5] bodhisattva! When will we see you back? Tell us when you will return. Guanyin bodhisattva! Apsan is layered…" [6]

Before *samkyŏng* (三更), between 11 p.m. and 1 a.m., guests continue eating and playing games, and one of the bereaved sons is seen eating a rice porridge *chuk.* The process is the same as during *ch'okyŏng*, except that in the movie we can see the women kneeling in front of the funeral parlor and the men along the parlor, bereaved in the first row and on the left side of the parlor's point of view, respectively.

The now drunk singer again starts to gather the guests by announcing the time, eleven in the evening, and ringing the bell. The guests slowly join the singer, but the funeral elegy slowly turns into drunk dancing and singing, while bereaved still kneel around the funeral parlor and pay their respect. Yong-sun, who came back from her father's grave, raises yet another commotion by making offerings to her grandmother by a giving her a can of Pringles and another bottle of foreign alcohol and cookies, sacrifices similar to her fathers'. While Chun-sŏp only watches, his wife intervenes and calms the argument.

8.3. The last day

The third day starts by preparation of the funeral bier, that will carry the coffin to the place of the burial. The bier is made of two main parts – a logs, where the coffin will be placed, and a wooden structure covered with cloth, that will be put over the coffin. The bottom part, the catafalque, consists of two large logs lengthwise and three shorter ones widthwise, that are tied together with a piece of white cloth. The top is covered by a cloth with one red and one blue stripe horizontally and a yellow, red, and blue alternating stripes vertically, hanging over the two-colored cloth. The cloth and the stripes are sewed together by a colorful hem with white ornaments above it.

Following the completion of the bier, guests and pallbearers gather to perform *palinje* (發靷祭), a memorial service before the bier departs from the house of the deceased. This time, a full *jesa* table is set in order to honor the deceased mother.

The table can be divided into four rows, set up from point of photo's view. Therefore, the first row contains chopsticks and a spoon placed over a bowl, a glass of alcohol and pork, from right to left. The second row consists of two types of rice cake *ttŏk,* grilled skewered beef, fried tofu, and fish. Third row is made of dried pollack, seasoned spinach, bracken, seaweed,

[5] Chinese version of Avalokiteśvara, bodhisattva of compassion
[6] 관암보살. 이제 가면 언제 오시나요. 오실 날이나 가르쳐 주오. 관암보살. 앞산도 첩첩

and bellflower roots. In the fourth row, closest to the bereaved, we can find jujube, chestnut, dried persimmon, pears, apples, and traditional honey cookies *yakgwa*. The dried fruit, cookies and chestnut are piled up from several pieces, and fruits are stacked in three stacks, each made of three pieces with the top cut off. In front of the table is still standing the small table for incense burner and incense lying on its right side. Next to the incense, on the floor is lying a whole box of incense, and on the opposite side of the table is places a jug with alcohol. In front of the table, on the left side of the bereaved is placed and empty bowl and next to it is the *mosagi*.

Before the alcohol is offered by spinning it three times clockwise, the funeral director, Mr. Kim recites a poem, bereaved bow and the eldest daughter offers the food by placing the chopsticks on the fish.

After the *palinje* rite, moving the casket from the funeral parlor to the main house, *chŏngu* (遷柩) follows. The first person in the procession holds the spirit seat with the photograph, while a singer leads the 7 coffin bearers, who place the coffin on the bier.

Then, *noje* (路祭), a memorial service outside of the house on the way to the place of burial is held. The guests gather outside and once again feast, being served by the bereaved. Once finished, people start to form a procession leading to the gravesite. Leading the procession are bearers of the banners, first one being the red funeral banner with the mother's name and status, then a white, pink, yellow ang green one, then the bier carried by 20 men and lead by the singer ringing a bell. Behind the bier, leaning on the walking sticks are Chun-sŏp, his brother and then the rest of the bereaved, accompanied by some of the funeral guests.

Upon arrival to the gravesite, where the hole for the grave is already dug, six people lower the casket into the ground, *hagwan* (下棺). In order to bury the coffin according to the feng shui, the coffin has the character meaning "up" (上) on the top and also on the side, where the mother's head is. The red *myeŏngjŏng* is spread on the top of the coffin, and the banner is covered with wooden sticks. After covering the grave, Chun-sŏp bows and makes an offering of alcohol by pouring it three times on the grave. He also symbolically covers it with a handful of dirt, so the rest of the men can do *silto* (實土), covering the grave using shovels.

The spirit tablet – in this case a photo – is then carried on the spirit seat to the deceased's house, where the women clear the table for death messenger by burning everything, except the bowls. The returning procession is led by a man carrying the spirit seat, Chun-sŏp following second with the remaining bereaved men behind him. At the time of their arrival, all the women come out and start wailing loudly, the closest ones leaning on the walking sticks while the returning men hold the sticks, having their head lowered.

Lastly, a *ch'ouje* (初虞祭), a first memorial service after the funeral is held. This time, only modest sacrifices are offered. Namely dried fish, alcohol and two other plates with food. Finally, Chun-sŏp is seen bowing in front of the parlor, while other bereaved bow and wail at any part of the house but facing the named parlor.

9. The movie compared to Zhū Xī's Family rites

In this part of thesis, I will describe the funeral process as was shown in the movie to the one of the Zhū Xī's manual in Family Rites, since it was the first book if its kind, and also the most relied on. The funeral process is divided into 21 main parts, with 14 parts concerning the steps before the burial and the remaining 7 regarding the steps after the burial.

The first difference I will mention is an absence of servants in the movie. During Koguryŏ and Chosŏn, servants were a common occurrence and Zhū Xī assigned several tasks in the preparations to them, but in the movie, there are none, so the family members do all the preparations themselves. A servant is supposed to take an outer garment, that the deceased used to wear, climb the roof and prefer *ch'ohon* (招魂), facing north while holding the collar of the clothing in the left hand and the waist in the right. However, the eldest daughter is the one doing this rite, holding the mothers long sleeved jacket by its shoulders. It is also impossible to tell which way she is facing, since we have no way of determining the world sides. The world sides are also important when placing not only the deceased body, but also the utensils that are used during washing, and also for positioning of the mourners when offering oblations. Therefore, the world sides are a trope running through the whole movie, but we have no way of determining if the positioning according to the world sides is correct. The help of the servants was also required during washing of the deceased, dressing, and moving his body.

The second difference is altering one's clothing. The manual required to take the outer garments and let their hair down, but since the way of the clothing switched from the traditional hanbok to a westernized clothing, the mourners could not take of any outer garment. The mourners were also required to let their hair down, both man and woman. Man used to wear their hair tied in a top knot *sangtu*, while woman used to wear their hair tied in braids. As can be seen in the movie, the mourners all wear the modern hairstyles, man having their hair cut short and woman having either perm or a ponytail secured by rubber band or a hair clip.

Another difference is visible during the *panham* (飯含, feeding the deceased three spoonful's of rice). It is said that the chief mourner should place the rice to the right side, then left and also in the middle, always putting a coin, but in the movie another family member is

putting the rice, placing it just in the middle of the mouth without placing the coins. After *panham,* the face is covered, and the body is dressed and shrouded. Following this, a funeral banner shall be made, nonetheless, in the movie it was inscribed before the shrouding of the body.

The Family Rituals mention a "preliminary laying out," which requires preparing binding strips to tie the body, binding the mourner's hair with a hemp cord or making a headdress and setting a bier on top of which the deceased body will be placed. Pillow should be placed under his head and his clothing rolled up and put between the lower legs to keep them straight. The body should be covered with clothing and shrouded, but still untied and face uncovered, in the case the deceased comes back to life. If the body does not revive in three days, it never will and the final laying out can be done, by placing the body to the coffin with woman being behind curtain. However, in the movie, the mothers' body is shrouded and tied up immediately after washing, eliminating the preliminary laying out. On top of that, she is placed in the coffin with all of the female mourner in the same room, watching the process.

The mourning attire is yet another thing, that will be discussed. In spite of Zhū Xī suggesting dressing into the mourning garments fourth day after the death, the mourners dress already the second day, with a third day being the last day of the funeral. The mourning attire material and quality is determined by the grade of mourning. According to the Family Rites, there are five grades with different lengths of mourning period and style of clothing. The longest period of three years for one's parents requires the mourner to wear extremely coarse, unprocessed, and unhemmed hempen dress. The fifth grade is worn for brothers and sisters of great-grandfather, children of the brothers of great-grandfather and other very distant relatives. The garment are made from processed hemp and very fine processed cloth. The less processed and modified attire material, the deeper the grief of the mourner. In the movie, the daughters and Chun-sop's wife can be seen wearing the first-grade attire, made from the unprocessed hemp, with hemp cord around their waist and other one securing their hat made out of square cloth. Other woman, whose relation to the mother was not mentioned are seen wearing attire from processed hemp, meaning they were more distant relatives. They also do not wear the hat nor the cord around their waist. The same goes for the male mourners. Chun-sop and his brothers also wear the first-grade mourning attire with cords around their waists and hats, also wearing a piece of cloth over their shoulders. The remaining male mourners are wearing similar attire as the deceased mothers' sons except that their attire is made from processed hemp and are not wearing the cords around their waist and hats.

For the period of three months before the body is buried, the mourners are supposed to make offerings every day at dawn and evening, also wailing any time during the day, dressed in their appropriate garment. This could not be done in the movie, since the mother was buried on the third day.

When the actual burial takes place, a charcoal fragments should be spread on the bottom of the grave, with a layer of lime, fine sand, and yellow earth, later creating a hard cement. A coffin bigger the tone where the body is placed should be placed inside the grave, filling around with the same mixture and a pine resin to protect the coffin not only from tree roots and water, but also from robbers. Moreover, wooden goods such as statues of servants of horses should be carved and put into the grave, the objects should be resembling those used in real life. The grave in the movie didn't have any lining nor another coffin to protect the coffin with the deceased mother, however a similar step as putting the carved statues in the grave was already done after the *ipkwan* (入棺, enter-coffin), when the sons and daughters put money, hairpin, necklace and the paper amulets into the mothers coffin.

Family rituals mention female mourners wailing on the west side of the grave, nevertheless, nevertheless, the women stay at home, burning the items used during the funeral, not attending the burial.

As was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Zhū Xī divided the funeral process into 21 steps, however, the movie shows only up to the fifteenth step, that is the return of the mourners from the place of the burial while wailing. The remaining six steps are sacrifice rituals performed after some time has passed after the burial.

Conclusion

Korean funeral traditions were rich and the change of the rituals and even the view on the afterlife kept changing, but we can see, how each of the religions blended together, creating unique funerary traditions.

In the first chapter I described funerary rites during the prehistoric Korea, when people simply buried the deceased or erected a stone tomb, proving the wealth of the deceased, which is a common sign up to these days. Then I introduced shamanism, which aimed at cleansing the deceased one's spirit and to protect both dead and the living against evil spirits.

The second chapter is focused on Buddhism, which despite its oppression during the Chosŏn kingdom is still and important religion up to today. One of the reasons of oppression was holding cremations, since it was against the filial duty, an important element of the Confucianism. Confucianists believed that cremation was a sign a sign of failure to observe the filial duty and also a sign of disrespect towards the deceased, because his body was not preserved intact. Nevertheless, Buddhism has certain similarities with Confucianism, that took over during the Chosŏn period. These similarities were washing the body, taking care of the deceased one's look – in Confucianism by just cutting the hair, in Buddhism by shaving it – and the existence of the memorial tablet, that represented the spirit during the whole funeral.

The fourth chapter, concerning the above-mentioned Confucianism, discussed the beginning of the flourishing period of Confucianism, after a copy of Chinese scholar Zhū Xī was brought back to late Koryŏ. The Korean funerary scene was greatly influenced by also one of Zhū Xī's book, namely *Family rites*, where an exact procedure of the funeral was described. Moreover, it explained the choice of mourning attire, length of the mourning period and behavior during this period. Besides funerals, the book also described another three important ceremonies, namely capping which is a coming-of-age ceremony, marriages and also ancestral rites.

The Ancestor worship subchapter showed the worship rites, that are held after one passes away. In the past, these rites were regularly observed, but with the urbanization and modernization of Korea during the last the centuries, the rites were significantly simplified.

The topic of following chapter was Christianity, that also experienced conflicts with Confucianism, labeling Confucian ancestral rites as an act of idolatry, worshipping another figure than a God. Christianity also brought a ban to perform such rites, thus weakening the position of Confucianism. The following annexation of Korea by Japan led to yet another series of conflicts, caused by the promotion of cremations, which have nevertheless been increasingly

carried out since the 1980s as a reaction to modernization and also a shortage of burial land. The ashes are then either stored in columbaria, buried in a natural material or scattering it.

Aim of this thesis was to describe the funeral process as shown in the movie Chukje and further compare it with the manual book, that was used through the period of the Chosŏn kingdom, and several compilations were made. During the period of three days, during which the funeral took place, the way of conducting the funeral is detailly observed. We can also notice quite a boisterous mood, that is supposed to help to overcome the mourner's sadness. We can notice the main mourner, Chun-sŏp being rather an onlooker during the preparations of the body to the burial, but later he also participates, primarily in the ritual offerings of the food and offering of liquor after his mother's body is buried.

In the last chapter, only the differences between the movie and the book of *Family rites* are pointed out, with most of the differences being caused by the modernization and urbanization. The first difference was an absence of servants, which were required to help with the preparations, however, in present South Korea servants simply do not exist. Second difference caused by the modernization was the impossibility to let the participants hair down, after the mother has died, since short hair for men, and permed hair for women came into fashion. After comparing we can conclude that the process in the movie took place largely in accordance with the process described in the book, only with a few differences, that were covered in the appropriate chapter.

Despite the switches in religions during the history of Korea, we can see how they blended together and created a specific part of Korean culture, that adapted to and persists until present day Korea.

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