



Hybrid Spiritualities

The Development of Second Generation Korean American Spirituality

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Abstract: This study focuses on the inventive ways in which second generation Korean Americans are carving out new institutional niches to accommodate the intersection of race, generation, and ethnicity in the context of their Christian faith. Situated on the margins of multiple cultures, second generation Korean Americans are engaged in a struggle to articulate a hybrid spirituality by appropriating elements of Confucianism, Korean Christianity, and various expressions of American Evangelicalism. Second generation Korean Americans, by forming their own ethno-religious institutions, are saying that they can be fully “American” without having to denounce their ethnic identity and difference. They are asserting that the definition of “American” identity is not fixed but is rather fluid and has the capacity to be redefined and reshaped by minority groups. By neither assimilating into mainstream churches nor remaining in the ethnic churches of their immigrant parents, second generation Korean Americans, through establishing their own independent religious institutions, are communicating the fact that in today’s American society, there are third territories, or hybrid borderlands, to inhabit.

Cradled in one culture, sandwiched between two cultures, straddling all three culture and their value systems, la mestiza undergoes a struggle of flesh, a struggle of borders, an inner war. Like all people, we perceive the version of reality that our culture communicates. Like others having or living in more than one culture, we get multiple, often opposing messages. The coming together of two self-consistent but habitually incompatible frames of reference causes un choque, a cultural collision.

—Gloria Anzaldúa

The dominance of a Western, Euro-American Protestantism in the United

States has meant that racial minorities and their religious institutions have had to operate from the borders. However, in the minds of second generation Korean Americans, existing on the borders is viewed as an advantageous position for it affords them with a unique vantage point from which they can view and incorporate diverse cultural expressions of Christianity in forming their own hybrid spirituality. In multi-cultural Los Angeles, second generation Korean Americans do not see themselves or their ethnic institutions as inside or outside of American society. Rather, they are carving out and inhabiting a rapidly ex-

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panding third territory—an ethno-religious borderland. The development of second generation churches is a recent and rapidly growing phenomenon in the Korean community of Los Angeles with the planting of over forty six new second generation Korean churches in the past ten years. My research focuses on the inventive ways in which second generation Korean Americans are carving out new institutional niches to accommodate the intersection of race, generation, and ethnicity in the context of their Christian faith.

Spiritual borderlands are physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races and cultures occupy the same territory (Anzaldúa 1987). Arenas of change and experimentation, second generation Korean American churches, as they emerge within congregational spaces, draw from a variety of cultural and spiritual resources as they develop their own unique spiritual expressions and visions. Within these newly developed churches, the ministers hope to create a hybrid second generation spirituality by appropriating and fusing together elements of Confucianism, Korean immigrant Protestantism, and various expressions of American Evangelicalism. In their quest to invent an independent second generation spirituality, the leaders of these new churches aim to adopt what they perceive to be essential beliefs, symbols, and practices from diverse sources and to re-anchor them in their newly formed churches

Second generation churches are not identical to one another. There are marked differences as well as similarities in their philosophies, styles, and approaches. While documenting many of the common themes and convictions among second generation churches, the disagreements among them are also highlighted in their process of inventing a hybrid second generation spirituality.

KOREAN PRAYER

When asked which aspects of Korean Christianity are important to preserve within their newly formed churches, almost all the ministers expressed that they wanted to embrace the “Korean” way of praying. The Korean way of praying is a unique historical product of Korean Christianity that is marked by intense passion, fervency, and urgency. American missionaries introduced Christianity to Koreans during the latter half of the nineteenth century and more so than in other Asian countries, Christianity was widely embraced by Koreans. This was due to the fact that during the years of greatest growth of Christianity (1895-1910) in Korea, two major wars were fought in the country, there was a widespread famine in the land, and the country was forcibly annexed by Japan. It was in the context of such national suffering that Koreans embraced Christianity and the hope of a God who upon hearing their desperate cries for help would put an end to their suffering. One minister explains, “The Korean way of praying has its historical roots in the sufferings of the past. We reject the Western passive, purely cerebral approach to prayer. We Koreans are a passionate people and this passion has been stoked through centuries of national oppression.”

Within Korean churches both in Korean and in the United States, there is a noticeable emphasis on passionate, emotive prayer. At one prayer meeting at a Korean immigrant church, after the pastor gave a brief message reminding his members that God heard their earnest prayers, the people instinctively knelt on the ground for a time of *tongsong kido* (unison prayer). Inside a dimly lit sanctuary, some wept, others pounded the ground with their fists, and still others shouted “Jesus” and “Lord” at the top of their voices. The themes of “deliverance” and “blessing” resonated through

most of the pleading with members petitioning for physical well-being and for material success for themselves and their children. Within Korean immigrant spirituality, there is a sense that the more earnestly and desperately you pray to God, the more likely he will answer you. This perspective is embraced and communicated by the majority of Korean Christians both in Korea and in the United States. Yonggi Cho, pastor of the 700,000 member Yoido Full Gospel Church in South Korea, when asked by American Christian leaders to share his secret of church growth, simply answered "passionate prayer moves the hand of God." Korean Christians adamantly reject a *laissez faire*, purely cerebral attitude toward prayer. Rather, prayer first and foremost "moves the hand of God" and secondly it is an exercise that involves the individual's body, emotions, mind, and spirit.

MAINSTREAM EVANGELICALISM

Many of these churches consciously borrow and incorporate elements of mainstream evangelical Christianity. In particular, the style and form of worship at second generation Korean churches mirror many of the same characteristics that Don Miller (1997) identified in his study of "new paradigm churches." At all the churches, contemporary worship is led by a band of musicians on electric guitars, drums, and synthesizers with lyrics projected onto large overhead screens. At many of the churches, physical expressions such as dancing, clapping, and the lifting of hands are common at Sunday worship services.

The new churches are also influenced by the seeker sensitive models popularized by rapidly growing mega-churches such as Willow Creek Community Church in Illinois and Saddleback Community Church in Southern California. One of the central tenets of the seeker sensitive model is that churches should create an environment

within their worship services that are not threatening and alienating for non-Christians. Newlife Church, a second generation church in Orange County, aims to create a comfortable and inviting atmosphere for non-Christians and this desire is reflected in their building, dress code, language, and informal style of relating. They meet in a converted warehouse in Irvine where the worship hall, devoid of stained glass windows, pulpits, crosses, candles, or robes, looks more like a hotel convention room than a traditional sanctuary. The bulk of the sermon is the retelling of personal stories and events that have happened in the speaker's life along with repeated references to pop cultural events and icons. Most of the congregants come to church dressed informally most commonly in jeans and T-shirts. In the worship services, they eliminate all churchy phrases, or as one member described as "Christianese," such as "blood of Jesus," "Hallelujah," and "praise the Lord," because they feel that these types of religious expressions alienate nonreligious people.

RECLAIMING COMMUNITY

Second generation ministers lament the influence that certain Western values which they feel are inconsistent with Biblical Christianity has had on Korean Americans. They hope that within their newly formed churches, they will be able to reeducate and influence younger Korean Americans to renounce "unchristian" thinking and behaviors. Most importantly, many believe that immigrant Koreans better understand and practice the key Biblical concept of community because they come from a Confucian society that stresses the importance of the collective over the individual. Rejecting the American cultural paradigm of individualism and the ways in which that paradigm has shaped American Christianity, second generation churches aim to

embrace the centrality of community.

One minister expressed that the American ethos of individualism has seeped into the church and has adversely shaped the ways in which the second generation practices its faith,

I went to a youth conference in New York where 6,000 high school students attended. I was asked to lead the prayer time and had to change the entire plan that was assigned to me. I didn't like their plan of first praying for the world, then their country, their city, then their family, then themselves. I said that every time you focus inward, you become so self-centered and individualistic. At the end of the prayer time, you are essentially praying about yourself. This should not be. You should pray for yourself briefly at first, and pray more for others.

At these new ethnic churches, there is an attempt to reclaim what the leaders view as "biblical community." They argue that within American individualism, the self becomes the central, if not the only, reality. Increasingly, second generation Korean Americans, influenced by American individualism, are not asking "is this wrong or right?" or "will this affect others adversely?" Rather, they are more concerned with the questions, "how is this going to benefit me?" and "is it worth it?" Commitment to churches and to ministries is determined largely through a self-centered, cost/benefit analysis. Harbor View Community Church's Pastor Lee who's been ministering to Korean Americans for over two decades, expressed that the most difficult part of ministering to the second generation is their lack of commitment and their individualistic mindsets,

The second generation has a real

independent spirit. They don't want to commit to the leadership with one mind and one thought to make a solid, winning team. They tend to calculate more and they always want to see what's in it for them. That's their mentality. Rather than wait and sacrifice, if they see that it will not personally benefit them, they will take off. They are basically looking out for themselves...very individualistic...very frustrating for me. They have no loyalty. After they get what they want, they will just take off when they don't see more personal benefits. That's the American mindset.

American individualism coupled with the proliferation of choices in religious organizations has created an environment where, in employing the language of economic markets, church members view themselves as consumers and churches as providers. Further, product loyalty does not exist. Without any commitments to a particular church community, second generation Korean Americans will quickly move from one church to another. In describing the constantly shifting composition of their membership, one minister observed,

The young people's spirituality matches their general worldview and lifestyles. Their commitments are very short lived, passionate in the moment, and very flighty. People will quickly change their commitments. Our generation will jump ship for the smallest reasons. They'll change companies, churches, they'll move to new locations. We have a huge migration every year in our congregation. 50% of our members will probably leave this year and we'll have another

new group of people to fill the pews. Their spirituality is basically the same way...inconsistent and uncommitted.

Recognizing this trend toward individualistic thinking and the toxic influence of American values, the pastors of the new churches are determined to transform self-centered thinking and living among the second generation and to replace it with a God-centered worldview that expresses itself in a greater level of concern and commitment to the community of believers. In addition, many are highly critical of modern, consumer-driven approaches to evangelizing that focuses on creating comfortable, user-friendly church environments. They argue that seeker sensitive churches are making the mistake of feeding into the self-centered, individualistic mindsets of Americans rather than challenging them to reorient themselves to embrace a Biblical version of Christianity which is essentially a God-centered and community-centered religion.

Although all pastors aim to create "spiritually" strong and mature churches, there are marked disagreements and tensions among the pastors with respect to how to accomplish this. There are those pastors who argue that the church, if it wants to effectively reach out to non-Christians, needs to appropriate cultural forms without having to embrace its values. These pastors embrace seeker sensitive paradigms and aim to make their churches as comfortable to the members as possible. They believe that this in no ways takes away from the power of their message or forces them to compromise their central mission. In contrast, other pastors argue that they should not just imitate the latest and newest trends in American Christianity but has a unique God-given responsibility and opportunity to serve as a prophetic voice, challenging America's individualistic practice of Christianity.

Robert Bellah, in his book *Habits of the Heart* (1985), asserts that American individualism "may have grown cancerous...threatening the survival of freedom itself." He argues that Americans are increasingly measuring their marriages, families, careers, and churches by such standards as utility, self-expression, or self-realization. Institutions, such as the church that were intended to mediate private experience have been reduced to private experience. Rejecting American individualism and the privatization of Christianity, some second generation leaders have called Korean Americans to embrace and reconnect with their Confucian cultural worldview, which they believe fosters a greater level of awareness and appreciation for community, family, and group. According to one pastor,

Koreans inherently understand the concept of community better. In traditional Confucian thought, the family is the central unit. This emphasis on the family enables Koreans to understand that the group is more important than any single individual. I really think that second generation Korean Americans need to embrace this Korean understanding of community in order for us to truly be the kind of church that God wants us to be.

Taking a critical stance against American individualism, which they perceive to be a destructive ethos, many second generation pastors through their sermons, teaching, and writing, have instructed their congregants that individual goals, identities, and viewpoints are secondary to the group's goals, identities, and viewpoints.

Biblical community is also forged through the development of deep, caring, and mutually edifying relationships within a spiritual community of "brothers" and "sisters." At all the churches, alongside the

main Sunday worship services, a variety of mid-week small groups gather together in homes where members worship, study the Bible, pray, socialize, and support one another. These weekly meetings provide the members with a sense of family and community that they would not get from just Sunday worship services alone. The American culture of rugged individualism discourages individuals from being transparent and sharing honestly about themselves. In these small groups, the churches hope to forge intimate communities in which individuals communicate honestly with each other, feel free to take their masks off, and develop a deep commitment to support, weep, and rejoice with one another.

CLERGY AND LAITY DISTINCTIONS

Second generation leaders reject sharp distinctions between clergy and laity and have made conscious efforts to blur these lines within their churches. Embracing the notion of the priesthood of all believers, at these new churches, lay members are encouraged to serve the church body in practical ways by exercising their spiritual gifts. The churches place a high priority on its members discovering, developing, and deploying their spiritual gifts with many of the churches offering special classes or seminars on the topic. To ensure all that all members are actively engaged in some form of ministry, the churches offer a variety of ministries ranging from sports outreaches, women's ministries, homeless ministries, to drug rehabilitation ministries. Repeatedly from the pulpits, members are encouraged to be contributors to the church body and not just consumers. At a majority of these churches, nearly 80% of the members are actively involved as volunteers in some form of church sponsored ministry.

At Newlife Community Church, a new ministry group typically emerges within the congregation as two or three members

begin meeting together around their shared interests. These shared interests, whether sports, cooking, or helping the elderly, provides the common ground for the development of new ministries. Without layers of administrative red tape that works to discourage and dampen individual initiative, churches like Newlife have been successful in encouraging creativity and a greater level of involvement among its members. The church offers a wide array of options for its members with specialized ministries in guitar, tennis, volleyball, swing dancing, rock climbing, and cooking to cater to the wide variety of interests among the different segments of the congregation. According to one member of Newlife, "basically, if you have a passion for something. There's nothing stopping you at this church. You can make it a reality and use it for God's glory."

Through sermons and teaching, the church members are encouraged to use their education, talents, and resources for the advancement of the "kingdom of God" and not for personal advancement. They emphasize the point that personal resources are given by God for the purpose of doing "God's work." In a plea for more volunteers in the church, one pastor urged,

Among our congregation, I sincerely believe we have some of the most gifted people around. We have people with skills in music, creative arts, technical skills, and teaching. They are treasures that are needed in our church for us to be what God wants us to be...for us to be an effective community that impacts our world, everyone of us needs to step up and serve. So don't just sit there!!! Get involved and serve.

The rapid growth and vitality of second generation churches is due to the fact that they are effectively tapping into the

large pool of talent and resources within their church membership.

Hoping to model that all Christians are called to be ministers, at three of the churches, the senior pastor of the congregation also works full-time in a secular profession. John Lee, a full-time engineer and pastor of a second generation church, believes that he is setting a good example for the members of his congregation to define themselves not by their occupation but rather by their identity as ministers,

The people in our church know that if they don't serve, this church will not survive. I'm just like them...in the workplace and serving God full time. They have no excuse for not doing ministry. They can identify with me because I work in the secular marketplace just like they do and still, I'm fully committed to God's work.

Emphatically, second generation ministers have communicated through teaching and through their life examples, that the distinction between clergy and laity is a man-made distinction that needs to be replaced by the reality that all Christians are called to be ministers. The effort to dissolve the clergy/laity distinctions is vividly illustrated in an incident communicated by Pastor Kim who was invited to be a guest speaker for a retreat at a second generation church whose senior pastor also worked full time as a cardiologist. A great deal of confusion arose among the members of the congregation when he gave an invitation after his sermon for those who wanted to dedicate themselves to full-time ministry. Kim remembers,

On Saturday night of the retreat, after I gave the invitation for salvation, I gave an invitation for those who wanted to go into full-time ministry. I think about 60% of the

people stood to indicate that they wanted to pursue full-time ministry. I thought to myself, 'wow!! These many people want to be pastors and missionaries?' It was later in the evening while speaking with some of those who had stood up that I more clearly understood what they were committing to. In their minds, the concept of "full time ministry" was very broad and fuzzy. In their minds, full-time minister could include someone who worked in a secular profession and served God in the local church...kind of like their pastor, the cardiologist.

At this church, all members understand that the work of the ministry is not primarily for those who hold a ministerial title. Rather, they embrace and practice one of the central tenets of the Protestant Reformation that all believers are called to minister and that each person has a divine "calling." Embracing the theological concepts of "priesthood of all believers" and "divine calling," second generation churches aim to mobilize the talents and giftedness of their members in forging a ministerial team that will band together to corporately share the work of the ministry.

Hoping to redefine the role of the senior pastor, second generation ministers emphasize the point that their main responsibility is to train and equip their members to carry out the work of the ministry. At immigrant Korean churches, the work of the ministry falls squarely on the shoulders of the senior pastor and the highest levels of respect are often reserved for those pastors who possess the strongest work ethic and the most sacrificial lifestyles. In immigrant churches, the senior pastor's first and most important priority is his congregation; they are expected to place the needs of their ministry and congregation above themselves and their families.

At many immigrant churches, the pastors do all the work of the ministry and the members find ways to reward or show their appreciation for the sacrifices that he makes. One member at Newlife Community Church remembers the relationship between the senior pastor and the members at an immigrant church that he attended during his youth,

The pastor met with people, drove them around, and was essentially a slave to the congregation. This is how he gained respect from the church members. The people in turn would give the pastor gifts to show their appreciation. I remember one incident when a member gave the pastor's wife a fur coat and made a big deal of it.

In the minds of second generation pastors, a ministry in which the senior pastor does all the work is neither ideal nor Biblical. They hope to build a church where the bulk of ministry is not carried by one individual but is rather shared by the entire congregation. "The concept of teamwork is foreign in the minds of the first generation," expressed one minister who served in a large first generation church, "in the second generation, we need to embrace the concept of teamwork and instill in the people that the senior pastor's primary responsibility is to equip the members of the congregation to serve and to minister." Generational and cultural clashes immediately surfaced at the immigrant church when the younger minister proposed hiring another pastor with a different set of giftings from his so that the two could complement and work together: "The first generation leadership could not understand why I would want another pastor to help me with my work. In first generation churches, the senior pastor does everything. They don't appreciate or understand teamwork." Because they did not embrace the concept of

team ministry, they saw his request as a sign of laziness rather than greater efficiency.

In immigrant churches, respect and honor are oftentimes given automatically to the senior pastor just by virtue of the title. However, for the second generation, titles do not necessarily ensure respect. Rather, pastors have to earn respect through spending time with church members and proving that they genuinely care about them. According to one member, "the pastor has to be real...a person you can trust. He has to get to know me and understand where I'm coming from." Respect is not something that is just handed out on the basis of a title at second generation churches. In fact, at a few churches, they have eliminated titles altogether and refer to their pastors solely by their first names. This is in sharp contrast to immigrant churches where titles matter to the extent that Korean churches that decide to affiliate with American Protestant denominations have encountered difficulty, because Korean pastors insist on maintaining leadership titles that do not exist in American congregations (Chai 1998).

At several of the second generation churches, there is also an intentional attempt to equalize the standard of living between the pastors and the members of the congregation. At immigrant churches, the pastors are expected to live far below the standard of living of their congregation members. In many ways, the immigrant pastors purchase and measure their level of spiritual authority by their humble and sacrificial lifestyles so much so that one pastor remarked, "in immigrant churches, the poorer you look, the more respect you get." Tae, who currently serves as an elder at a large first generation Korean Church, believes that pastors need to live humble lives and in so doing prove to their congregation that they are free from the grip of materialism. Song currently works as medical doctor and his high income has enabled him to

enjoy a comfortable standard of living complete with a large home in an affluent neighborhood, luxury cars, and private schooling for his children. The pastor of his church, however, does not share the same privileges and instead lives with his wife and two children in a small two bedroom apartment. When I asked Song, what he respects most about his pastor, he replied, "Our pastor is a truly spiritual man. He leads this large church and yet he remains so humble in attitude and in every other way. He is free from worldly loves and concerns." Recognizing this "double standard" in immigrant churches, many younger pastors feel that they need to instruct the second generation to reject the double standard and embrace a Biblical standard of living that does not distinguish between clergy and laity. According to a second generation pastor who serves in an immigrant church,

The first generation is very critical of how pastors live and spend money. One immigrant elder criticized me because he saw my son's wearing a shirt with the polo logo on it. He came up to me and said, 'pastors' kids should not be so fashion and status conscientious [sic]. Why does he [my son] always wear such expensive clothes?' This is so wrong. We need to teach our people that we are all accountable to God and that in God's eyes he will not distinguish between pastors and non-pastors. I think this type of differentiation is very hypocritical and self-serving for the laity and in some twisted way for the pastors too.

Sarah, a practicing attorney and member of a second generation church, suggested that although she and her husband earn higher incomes, they aim to live at the same standard of living as their pastor,

Financially, we try to live at the same level as the pastors. We don't expect them to drive a lesser car and we drive a better car. We don't expect them to not spend money on their kids and we spend all sorts of money on our kids. For me, my whole philosophy is simple living. We do whatever we need to do so that most of our money, time, and resources can be spent on Christ.

VALUE SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

At the new ethnic churches, there is an emphasis on fighting against the materialistic impulses of second generation Korean Americans who are increasingly well educated and upwardly mobile. Their attitude and stewardship of their material resources are of central concern at these churches. The younger ministers are quick to reject certain aspects of mainstream evangelical Christianity, in particular the influence of materialism and comfort, which they feel are inconsistent with their understandings of true Biblical Christianity. For example, Pastor Park of Agape Church reflected on the dangers of modeling second generation churches after mainstream American churches,

American Christianity is a ghetto Christianity. The American church is not globally minded but is a comfort religion that is concerned primarily with the here and now. Historically, Christians used to look forward to the future and to heaven. Today in American churches, most of the teaching is about marriage, healing, time management, budgeting...I don't think this is pleasing to the Lord. The reference point is wrong. Second generation Korean Americans need to be more globally minded. They

need to be more militant. I don't want the second generation to drive to church in their Volvos with their 2.5 children all neat and comfortable. American churches are so non-threatening...I think it's sickening.

Pastor Park encourages his members to live sacrificially, be globally minded, and radical in their commitment to God. In a similar vein, Pastor Pak rejects what he sees as the "Americanization or domestication of the Christian Faith" and argues that American religion is more concerned with comfort and preoccupied with what God can do for us. Pak's goal is to "bring out that uncomfortable aspect of following God" which he describes as a lifestyle that is marked by "going beyond ourselves...reclaiming the centrality of the cross."

Convinced that there is a vacuum in spiritual leadership in the second generation, Berkland Baptist Church aims to influence the brightest, most ambitious segment of the second generation to live their lives not as slaves to materialism but as radical, uncompromising, servants of Christ. Intentionally, they have planted churches near prestigious universities around the nation to capture what in Pak's words is the "cream of the crop" of the second generation,

Given the American affluence and the ease with which you can be co-opted by materialism, I think we do lose some of the best, most brilliant Christian students to secular profession out there. So we need to reclaim that. We've tried to start a church where the best students come.

Currently, Berkland has planted churches near fifteen different universities including UC Berkeley, UCLA, Harvard, Stanford, MIT, NYU, and Columbia. Im-

pacted by the message that all material blessings are given by God for the purpose of blessing others, significant numbers of Berkland members are actively investing their educational and material resources for the sake of furthering the ministry.

Sarah Park, a member of Berkland and graduate of UC Berkeley and Harvard Law School, aims to live her life radically committed to Jesus. Since joining Berkland Baptist Church during her undergraduate years at U.C. Berkeley, Sarah's life goals and perspectives have radically changed. She and her husband, also a graduate of Harvard, now define themselves not by their occupations but by their identity as "ministers of the gospel" and this identification as ministers has radically shaped their day-to-day decisions. Underscoring the fact that ministry is their top priority and their occupations and personal comfort are a distant second, Sarah and her family have willingly relocated from city to city to fill the need for more workers in various Berkland chapters.

In the past eight years, Sarah, her husband, and her two children have lived in seven different cities. In 1995, they moved from Boston to Los Angeles, because the L.A. Berkland branch needed more committed workers. Hoping to start a campus ministry at UCLA, they first settled in Santa Monica but after a series of staff meetings at the church, the leadership team decided that it would be more strategic for all the core members to move to the Fullerton area. So they bought a house in Fullerton. A year later they moved to Irvine because the church decided to relocate there to reach out to UC Irvine students. Then a year later, Sarah and her husband were needed in Berkeley to serve in the ministry. Immediately, she sold her house in Southern California and moved in faith back to the Bay Area. She remembers that they couldn't find housing right away so she and her family lived for a month with a fellow church staff member in the Berkeley area. Soon after

settling down in their own home in Berkeley, they packed up once again and moved back to LA because the church was opening up another new branch in the Torrance area. She shared in a comically exasperated tone, "I sure hope this is our last move!" During these series of moves, both Sarah and her husband have had to quit jobs, find new jobs, and oftentimes were unemployed. She believes that the work of God is more important than climbing the corporate ladder or her personal comfort.

These days many are willing to relocate for a job promotion or for educational purposes. However, churches like Berkland are challenging the younger generation to denounce materialistic, self-centered living and embrace a life that is motivated and directed by spiritual concerns. One minister insisted that every individual has some motivating drive that governs his life and for the second generation, it's primarily materialism and the quest for a comfortable life, "the majority of second generations' lives are motivated by the drive for a comfortable life with a good job, big house, and nice family. All they want is to be comfortable. This is wrong. This is not Biblical." At the majority of the churches covered in this study, there is an intentional effort to raise counter-cultural Christians whose lives and decisions are shaped not by material concerns but rather spiritual ones.

Repeatedly in sermons, pastors point out that identities should not be defined or tied to socio-economic status. At these churches, there is a concerted effort to counteract the first generation's over-emphasis on status and materialism. Many immigrant parents have experienced downward mobility in the United States and hence have had to defer their hopes and dreams for upward mobility to their second generation children (Lie 1995). This reality has fostered a high level of pressure upon the second generation to attend elite universities, find high paying jobs, and prove to their immigrant parents that their sacri-

fices have paid off. The emphasis on educational and occupational success permeates throughout the entire immigrant church sub-culture. For example, at many immigrant churches, attending a prestigious university is viewed as a sign of God's favor and blessing upon that individual. I have heard of non-Christian Korean Ivy League graduates who, upon returning home to Los Angeles, were immediately asked by church pastors to serve as Sunday school teachers for their youth departments. Regardless of whether or not they were Christian, first generation Koreans want their children to be influenced by Ivy League graduates with the hopes that their children would also follow in their footsteps. At immigrant churches, the topic of conversation during many informal fellowship gatherings is about whose son or daughter got accepted to which prestigious university. The parents of these children are highly respected in the churches and are often regarded as role models for other parents of aspiring Ivy League students. Viewing educational and economic success as signs of divine blessing, the sub-culture of immigrant churches supports and validates materialistic lifestyles and the push toward upward mobility.

Generational conflicts over differing expectations of educational achievement abound in Korean American churches. Sunny, an associate pastor at Faith Presbyterian Church who works with second generation Korean American youth commented that many struggle with the issue of whether they ought to please their parents or please God,

I see numerous conflicts between immigrant parents and their children in term of the value that parents place on what type of college you attend. The parents at home are telling their children to study hard but these students are coming to church and learning that their

first priority should be God. At home they are learning that their first priority should be their school work. This creates a lot of stress for many young Korean Americans.

Korean parents direct their children to go into fields that provide high paying and high status positions. Among second generation Korean Americans, medicine and law are the most popular occupations, followed by engineering and business. According to the 1987-88 Korean Students Directory at the University of California at Berkeley, 29% of the university's Korean students declared their majors in the three science fields—Chemistry, Biological Sciences and natural Resources—that are generally considered pre-med. (E. Kim 1993). Another 20% declared their majors in Engineering. Many second generation Korean Americans feel torn between honoring God and honoring their parents.

Second generation churches are making an intentional attempt to encourage their members to not limit themselves to traditional money making career options. The atmosphere at Newlife Community Church encourages the church's members to develop, express, and pursue their creative and artistic sides. The church's musicians come up with original praise music, much of it centering on pain, healing, recovery, and reconciliation. Carl Kim, who works full time on staff at the church to oversee its large and growing celebration arts ministry, expressed that there are many in the church who's creative talents are stifled by their parents who pressure them to give up their art or music to pursue high paying careers,

There are so many creative second generation Koreans at our church but their creativity is stifled because their parents want them to make money. They want them to be doctors and lawyers and do the

music and art things as hobbies on the side. The bottom line is that they want their children to make money...I have some people in my ministry who struggle because they want to go to Pasadena Art Center but their parents are like, 'what you're going to be a cartoonist? I came to America so that you can be a cartoonist?'

For the immigrant generation, financial success is a tangible expression of success in the United States. Although highly educated, many first immigrant Koreans due to language and structural barriers took on low-skilled, low paying jobs with the hopes that their children will be able to achieve the American Dream. Nonetheless, second generation ministers define success not as economic advancement but rather obedience to God's call upon an individual's life. They aim to construct an alternative church culture that esteems and rewards spiritual and ministerial activity rather than educational or occupational mobility. They do this by redefining what it means to engage in "significant work." At one church, the preacher in his sermon encouraged the members to "invest your life in truly significant work...God's work, not man's work...what you do for a living doesn't matter a bit to God. He's not impressed. But he's impressed by your faith and the work that flows out from your life of faith."

CONCLUSION

The development of second generation Korean American spirituality is a project in self-definition. In the words of Gloria Anzaldúa, "we perceive the version of reality that our culture communicates...having or living in more than one culture, we get multiple, often opposing messages...which causes a cultural collision (1987:100)." Hybrid spirituality is a product of cultural col-

lisions. In their quest to define second generation spirituality, the pastors of these newly developed churches have appropriated and fused elements of Confucianism, Korean immigrant Protestantism, and various expressions of American evangelical Christianity. The innovative energies of the second generation who exists in a state of marginality, expresses itself in a level of freedom and creativity within these newly formed churches. As individuals who are coming of age between two colliding worlds, second generation Korean Americans are managing to achieve a creative synthesis of exclusion and belonging within the confines of their self-constructed "imagined spiritual communities."

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