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# **Cross - Cultural Korea**



# Village Tutelary Deities as Cultural and Axiological Symbols in Korea and Romania\*

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## Abstract

An artistic creation expressed as a cultural phenomenon symbolizes the characteristics of a nation's soul and mental life. And the cultural heritage of a nation, which shows us the religious symbols and signs in the great nature to be harmonized with the profane and the sacred, is also easily found in the East and the West. Troytsa, Jangseung, Sotdae: these can be taken as representative. Regarding the Romanian cultural heritage of Troytsa, the village tutelary deity conforms very similarly to Korean Jangseung and Sotdae. Jangseung and Sotdae, representative popular sculptured creations of Korean folk beliefs, and which are related to the totem pole, are close to villagers' lives, being the divine protection of the village's peace, as well as functioning as a signpost and a boundary, ensuring a good harvest and preventing misfortune, etc. A Sotdae, which features a bird on top of a pole, is recognized as an object of belief mixed between the "Tree of the World" and the "Bird of the Soul" in northern-cultural Asian shamanism. Unlike them, the Romanian Troytsa, which took root in an ancient faith (the Totem of the Tree), is a divine, sculptured creation mixed with Christianity, generally located at the entrance of a village or at an intersection of roads. These tutelary deities and their variations share functions and characteristics, but their features and patterns are different. Jangseung have angry and fearful countenances in order to turn away diseases and evil spirits, but Sotdae and Troytsa maintain the style of a menhir or a column as one of the folk beliefs related to the totem pole. Even today, Troytsa, Jangseung, Sotdae are being generated and developed as representative cultural prototypes and village tutelary deities.

**Keywords:** folk belief, cultural heritage, tutelary deity, totem pole, Jangseung, Troytsa

## 1. Introduction

Ethnic ideology and folk beliefs, which occupy a prominent place in culture, have a profound effect on the spiritual world and human behavior patterns. Therefore, understanding ethnic ideology and folk beliefs can

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provide a barometer for enhancing nations' self-understanding of their identities and cultures as well as their values of life. The Koreans' and Romanians' religious and cultural identities are based on their inner notions, which follow the laws of nature. The spatial perception of this nature can be implicitly found in folk songs which represent both countries. The space of the *Arirang*, a representative Korean folk song, begins with a place called a "hill," while the space of *The Little Lamb (Miorița)*, a representative Romanian folk song, starts from "the foot of the plateau" which is like "the entrance to heaven," which is a similar image to the Korean hill. If *Arirang's* hill is a symbol of unbearable suffering and how it overwhelms the Korean people, *The Little Lamb (Miorița's)* "plateau" becomes the eternal spatial matrix for the existence of Romanians.

*Arirang* and *The Little Lamb (Miorița)* are situated in the spiritual worlds of the two communities, and are substances that form the spiritual life of the unconscious. Both songs begin in temporal life and reach the spirituality of transcendence, organically linking the problems of everyday life, identity and existence. The emotions of these people are also expressed in daily life and folk beliefs.

An artistic creation expressed as a cultural phenomenon symbolizes the characteristics of a nation's soul and mental life. The house or the church, among the various formative arts, reflects, in many cases, not only a proper and philosophical art, but also religious beliefs and a permanent national identity. The cultural values and heritages which show us the religious symbols and signs in the great nature which are to be harmonized with the profane and the sacred, are also easily found in many nations. First under discussion is Troytsa (Troiuța), the figure of a village tutelary deity grafted with Christianity and which is representative for Romanians; then Jangseung and Sotdae, based on Korean folk beliefs, will follow.

Troytsa (Troiuța) were derived from the Sky Columns which originated at the beginning. It includes the divine sense of the Tree of the World or the Tree of the Cosmos. The near Troytsas (Troiuțe) which we can see today are types made after the acceptance of Christianity. On the other hand, Jangseung and Sotdae reflect the Shamanism which is accepted in Korean culture and the tradition of folk beliefs related to the totem pole in villages. As traditional Korean totem poles standing at village entrances and signifying prayers for a good harvest and a village's peace, Jangseung and Sotdae also have the features of a divine, sculptured creation of the Tree of the World, and they are installed at the entrances of villages or at the intersections of roads, taking the form of a pillar, tombstone, menhir, column, etc. Both Troytsa (Troiuța) and Jangseung and Sotdae generally have the functions of a signpost, a boundary, keepers of a village's peace, ensurers of a good harvest, preventors of misfortune (or evil) and divine protection. An attempt at a comparative study of

Troytsa (Troia) and Jangseung and Sotdae, with points of similarities and differences, will be significant for a cross-cultural understanding.

## 2. Hierophany, the Manifestation of Sanctity

One primitive form that shows an image of a village tutelary deity is the Sky Columns or pillars. They have been perceived as sacred artifacts from prehistory to the Middle Ages, in which human mythical, magical and religious perspectives and interests are concentrated. In this regard, Eliade (2005: 62) understood the human thoughts and concerns about the world to be a human obsession about being at the center of divinity or at the center of heavenly communion.

According to Romanian mythologist Romulus Vulcănescu and his book *The Sky Column (Coloana Cerului)*, the endurance of the sacred monuments of the sky pillar and sky column type, monuments that concentrate the mythological, magical and religious perspectives of the people, was clearly proved and perpetuated by means of succedaneums and simulacra into the 20th century. In the same sense, Arboreal totemism (*Totemismul arboricol*), the Tree cult (*Cultul arborilor*) and Dendrolatry (*Dendolatria*) – which are all consequent stages (and, to a certain point, coexistent) in the development of the magic and religious vision of prehistoric people, and especially the inhabitants of the Carpathians – materialized in ‘the worship of a tree that has acquired a sacred position,’ ‘deification’ and the ‘sanctification of trees,’ that have acquired the status of sacred monuments (Oprișan viii-ix). The spiritual life of the community can be endured only under the symbol of the protection tree, which is the center of the world, corresponding to the ancient point of view. This ‘Protection Tree’ was becoming a totality of a totem that symbolizes an absolute deity or a spirit ruling the tree.

The Tree of Life or the Protection Tree, which itself becomes a microcosmos, is rooted in the celestial sphere, heading up or down the corolla, and imagined as the Giant Tree or the Tree of the Cosmos, connecting the three levels of underground, earth and the celestial (Molyneaux 90). This Tree of the Cosmos becomes the Immortal Tree which stands at the center of the sky and the earth and sustains the universe at the same time as it ascends from the earth to the sky (Eliade 1992b: 388). Meanwhile, the Protection Tree or some particular trees were seen as celestial trees that prevented the sky vault from falling down, or when they were represented with the branches downwards – to prevent the earth from slipping into the abyss (Oprișan ix). Finally, the Tree of the Cosmos is located at the center of the world, its roots stretching to hell, and its branches touching the sky, functioning to unite the three spheres of the universe into one (Eliade 1992a: 42-43).

These manifestations of sacredness begin to manifest themselves in various forms and intangible heritages expressing the deity of a family or the village guardian of faith. The modern acceptance of this phenomenon fit well within the Jangseung and Sotdae or Seonangdang (shrine to the village deity) of Korean culture and the Cruciform Troytsas or Shelter Troytsas of Romanian culture. Human communities can promote the communion of heaven and a divinity through a sacred tree like the Sky Columns, and more recently through the Troytsa (Troiața), the Cross, the Menhir, the Seonangdang, etc. Therefore, people thought that it was possible to exist in an absolute sanctuary where the underground (hell), the earth and heaven (the sky) meet, and these three mythological and religious realms unite into one; in other words, people believed that only it was only in the center of the world that the manifestation of sacredness was possible (cf. Eliade 2008: 19). Furthermore, beside the stylized columns in place of the Tree of the Cosmos or the Tree of Life, there was an altar to offer tribute or sacrifice, and the branches of this tree were hung with objects with a symbolic value or ribbons with a magical function. This cultural ritual corresponds to the Geumjul (a straw rope – to ward off evil spirits) or the Jipguleok (mesh of straw) of Koreans surrounded by sacred objects or places.

The stylized columns and pillars that functioned as the Tree of the Cosmos began to be gradually replaced by the ‘cross type,’ which became a typical model of Christian formations in Romania starting in the 14th century, and in Korea, Jangseung, which have descended from the Intaehyeongsinsang (a statue of the human figure) very early, before the period of the Three Kingdoms,<sup>1</sup> and which have reached modern times as a typical form.

### **3. Korean Folk Beliefs and the Nature of Village Tutelary Deities**

As the basic religion of Korea, folk beliefs are the main energy source for religious culture as well as the spiritual element of the national culture. The diverse types and objects of belief in folk beliefs have been mentioned as the sky god, the mountain god, household deities, shamanism, divination, omens, Fengshui (divination based on topography), magic,

1 The periods that the Three Kingdoms existed on the Korean peninsula: Goguryeo (BC 37-AD 668, an ancient country developed on the northern Korean Peninsula and China), Baekje (BC 18-AD 660, a country located in the southwest of the Korean Peninsula, and it had a great cultural influence on Japan) and Silla (BC 57-AD 935, located on the southeast of the Korean Peninsula, conquered Baekje and Goguryeo, which unified the Three Kingdoms).

and natural objects. Nonetheless, in terms of everyday life, beliefs are largely divided between the community beliefs of the village unit and the individual beliefs of the household unit.

The goal of folk beliefs is to obtain wealth and health as the fundamental requirements of survival, and they include the regenerative meaning of changing the unfortunate reality of illness and poverty into a new reality of wellness and riches. However, the newly obtained 'being' becomes wasted and worn out as time passes, and a new being must be obtained. In other words, there is a double-sided disposal and regeneration of reality, and the significance of this cycle is the regeneration of being. According to Eliade (2008: 55-66), regeneration, otherwise referred to as the idea of the repeated creation of the universe, indicates a periodicity in which the creation of the world is repeated every year, effecting the periodic renewal of time. Past time must be discarded for a new beginning, and a purification ceremony is needed, such as an exorcism, that indicates 'the restoration of time.' Thus, in general, most ancestral rites of folk beliefs are held regularly in accordance with seasonal customs. The riches obtained from the ancestral rite are discarded after a certain amount of time; thus, they are intended to obtain permanent viability through periodic regeneration.

For Koreans, villages are communities of life, labor and entertainment, as well as communities of beliefs and rituals. 'Village beliefs,' the manifestation of a community that prays for peace and prosperity, exist to perform ancestral rites using a form of the 'village ritual,' which is an ancestral rite for the village god that protects the village. If this ancestral rite is held according to the ancestral ritual formalities of Confucianism, it is called a 'village ritual' or 'village god ritual'; if a shaman participates, it is called a 'village exorcism.' Unlike seasonal ancestor-memorial rites or memorial services held beside a grave and based on blood ties, the village rituals, the harvest ceremonies of agricultural rituals that became folk beliefs, are representations of village beliefs held mostly in farm and fishing villages in January under a regional unity.

Village rituals hold different objects of belief for worship, such as the village god and the mountain god (both types of tutelary deities), as well as the dragon god, through ancestral rites, putting up Jangseung and Sotdae (two different types of totem poles - the former having carved faces and the latter a bird at the top of a wood or stone pillar)<sup>2</sup> - for a

2 There are many opinions about the origins of Jangseung. Generally, Jangseung originated from the Intaehyeongsinsang (statue of a human figure) of the Neolithic Era, and Sotdae is a figure arising from the origins of the agricultural patterns of the Bronze Age (a bird sitting on each side of the ends of a bifurcated tree) (Lim et al. 352; 366). Jangseung, Sodo (the sacred area for a sacrifice to God) and Nunseokdan (a stone walled temple), which were sacrificed to the gods of heaven, were formed in a deep relationship with North Asian folklore (Lee, Jong-ho 174-177).

good harvest next to the location of the ceremony. These ceremonies are usually held in spring and autumn, and many places hold ancestral rites at midnight at the beginning of January or during the year's first full moon. Representative village beliefs include tutelary deity beliefs, represented by mountain god beliefs and Jangseung' and Sotdae' beliefs. Tutelary deities are worshipped for such utilitarian purposes as village protection, prayer, fortune seeking and cures. The mountain god is the tutelary deity in mountain areas, the sea god in fishing villages and the village guardian in homes; these also act as travel gods that guard travelers when they are away from the village. Thus, a shrine is located at the entrance of the village, along the street or on a hill, which acts as a sanctum. The tutelary deity belief is presumed to have been influenced by Mongolia's Ovoo belief<sup>3</sup> and China's Sunghwang belief.<sup>4</sup> It can be interpreted that the vertical movement system of gods: sky god - mountain god - other tutelary deities, may have been subsumed into folk beliefs.<sup>5</sup>

As part of the tutelary deity belief, the mountain god belief is especially important. Mountains are the foundation of life as well as the shelter of life for Koreans. As can be seen in *The Heritage of the Three States*, Dangun became the mountain god of Asadal when he died. Thus, because mountains were thought to be the habitation of gods who came down from heaven, they were sacred territory, places of reverence and objects of worship. People believed that there was a god with a personality in the mountains, so they held an ancestral rite called 'the mountain god ritual,' through which they prayed for the peace of the village and asked for protection from tigers. There are various names for the shrines of gods: thus, the place for worshipping the mountain god was called 'the mountain god shrine' or 'the village deity shrine,' and the place for worshipping other tutelary deities at the entrance of the village was called 'the tutelary deities shrine.'<sup>6</sup>

Next to these sanctums stand the Jangseung and/or Sotdae, which are also objects of belief. Jangseung and Sotdae beliefs are directed at the lower gods among the village guardians, which are worshipped around

3 The Ovoo, which is similar to Korea's stone tower, acts as a signpost, a boundary, or an object of belief.

4 Sunghwang means building a castle in an important place. This is a Chinese belief of accepting the sunghwang god, which is the god of the castle town, as the city's guardian.

5 The Ovoo belief primarily entered the Korean Peninsula where it was mixed with the beliefs of the mountain god and the sky god, forming the tutelary deity belief. Here, China's Sunghwang belief was also mixed in. Thus, tutelary deities may have originated from the beliefs of the sky god and the mountain god (Kim et al. 136).

6 It is located at the entrance of the village or a sanctum, and even though it is not a shrine, piles of stones or wood created for worship are also generally referred to as tutelary deities shrines (Lee et al. 8).



the time of the village rituals. The popular belief of Jangseung or that of Sotdae is a part of the native cultural heritage and fruit of the rural faith being evaluated as a typical Korean natural feature for a long time, together with the ritual of the ancestral shrine, the convention of the totem pole, shamanist customs, etc. Being a low-ranking god among the village's gods, Jangseung was long-before called Beoksoo, Jangsaeng, Jangjoo, Daehoo, Sohoo, Deoseung, Jyangseung, etc. (cf. Kim, Doo Ha 12-17; Kim et al 2003: 141; Kim, Tae Kon 186).



Image 1. An example of Jangseung  
(from Cheong 35)

Jangseung are generally divided into 'seok-jangseung,' which are made of stone, and 'mok-jangseung,' made of wood. At first this is a kind of simple wooden column or a standing stone, and later it generally has the feature of a fearful warrior mixing with the popular religion or the folk belief of a mountain god, the Taoist (or Buddhist) faith consecrated to the Big Dipper (the Great Bear),<sup>7</sup> the Four Devas,<sup>8</sup> etc. Thus, the faces are carved with fierce expressions, the male jangseung is painted in red, while the female in yellow. The names vary according to where the jangseung stands; for example, the 'temple jangseung' is at the entrance of a Buddhist temple, the 'byeoksa (to drive away evil spirits) jangseung' is at the entrance of a village, the 'road sign jangseung' along streets serves as a signpost as well as a deity, the 'bibo (fulfilling insufficiency) jangseung' is to protect weak places and the 'chief gatekeeper jangseung' stands in front of a castle gate like the 'harubang' of the island of Jeju.

As mentioned before, these Janseung are also different in figuration,

7 It is also called the personified gods of the Big Dipper (the Great Bear) which manage humanity's agriculture, life and death, fortune and misfortune, etc.

8 They are the four heavenly guardians of Buddhism which stand at the right and left side of the main gate in the temple.

type, significance and symbolism according to different regions and periods. The representative roles among the the principal functions of Jangseung are divine protection, as in preventing misfortune when same disaster or disease comes to the village, and as the signpost at the entrance of the village, the intersection of roads or at the border between villages. We guess that this tradition originated in ancient religious beliefs based on the village's peace and welfare, good harvests and superstitions regarding the prevention of misfortunes. All kinds of Jangseung which are still standing are generally evaluated as products of folk culture as well as part of a representative heritage of village beliefs that have been with us for a long time, along with shamanism.

The Sotdae, a carved bird sitting on a pole or stone pillar, is perceived in North Asian shamanism culture as an object of belief with a long history, combining the Tree of the World with a bird. With one to three wooden bird(s) or iron bird(s) placed at the top of a pole, a Sotdae sometimes stands alone, but usually it stands with a Jangseung at the outskirts of a village. Judging from the image of a bird pole engraved in relics from the Bronze Age, it is presumed that Sotdae may have been used in religious ceremonies since 6 B.C. (Kim et al. 144-145), and this type of Sotdae can be found in Siberia, Manchuria and with the northern ethnic group of Mongolia. Naturally, a Sotdae has had the function of the divine protection of a village, preventing evil, well-timed rains and winds, a good harvest, etc., since the beginning of the Agricultural Age.



Image 2. An example of a Sotdae (from Lee, Pil-young 47).

The opinions of what kinds of birds are put on the top of a Sotdae's pole are very diverse, they are either a duck or a sacred ibis related to the symbols of abundance, the (life-giving) water, or a crane, a dragon or a phoenix related to rising up in the world and gaining fame. But, according to Kim, Ui-suk's opinion (145-146), this bird is considered to be a crow. Just like a tiger as a mountain god or as a spiritual and mysterious being of mountain, a horse as a tutelary deity, a big snake as a household mascot or a luck animal, a cow as a worshiped ancestor, a pig as a god of the earth, a dog as a ghost of a person who died while staying abroad,

the crow is regarded as an object of sanctity, a good omen, the help of Heaven and renewal.

As such, there are various views about the bird on the pole. It may be perceived as a water bird or a migratory bird related to water among the three symbolic icons of richness (moon, women, water). A representative view is that it is a duck;<sup>9</sup> a duck (or a wild goose) is a migratory bird that brings the wind and water necessary for farming, connoting a symbol of agricultural water and the religious symbolism of a desire for change in village life (Lee, Pil-young 12; 40). Moreover, ducks consider the sky, ground, and water - heaven, earth, and the underground (underwater) - as their ecological territories. As migratory birds that appear and disappear on a regular cycle, they imply seasonal changes and supernatural travel. They hover between the transcendental world and the human world, as well as the worlds of death and life, taking on the meaning of revival with a strong religious symbolism (Lee, Jong-ho 180-181; Choi et al. 416-417). The Jangseung and Sotdae culture, similar to north Asian folklore, was naturalized as folk culture in the mid-Joseon Dynasty (17th century) period, later being settled upon as the lower gods that protect a village, or boundaries and signposts.

The person who presides over shamanism is the shaman; it is individualistic, but the transmitters of universal folk beliefs are communities, such as tribes and villages, and they are utilitarian. As can be seen from village beliefs, Korean folk beliefs have the strong characteristic of community beliefs.

#### **4. Romanian Village Tutelary Deities: Troytsas (Troiața)**

The sculptured art called Troytsa (Troiața) can be found in many places in Romania, such as at the entrance or the center of a village, an intersection of roads, a well side, at a church or monastery, on a bridge, at a border between villages, at a public cemetery, etc. With the function of a road signpost or a boundary, a Troytsa (Troiața) signifies a prayer for the villagers' peace, for those who come in and out of the village, and it is a divine protection preventing misfortunes and the evil. The Troytsas of our days follow a typical pattern after the acceptance of Christianity, being sculptured and painted with cruciforms or icons. Besides, they are also decorated frequently with

9 On the contrary, there is a view that the bird in the sotdae is not a duck but a crow (magpie). Just as people considered the tiger as a mountain god and a mystical creature, the horse as a tutelary deity, and serpent as karma, the cow as an ancestral spirit, the pig as the earth god, and the dog as the ghost of those who died abroad, they may have considered the crow a sacred object and a symbol of a godlike bird or the sun. (Kim et al. 145-146)

the forms of a roof, arch, lattice, semicircle, or circle.

Some Troytsas (Troite) adopt the pure symbolic designs of Christianity (Orthodox) and others are geometrically decorated with figures of plants or animals inspired by nature, and there are also various patterns which are supposed to be under the influence of ancient religious shapes such as the sun, the Tree of the World, the Tree of the Cosmos, a dragon, 'the bird of the soul',<sup>10</sup> etc. The decorations of these various patterns which are sculptured into Troytsas appeal to ethnic feelings and in many times Romanians have also adopted them in their household goods and even in churches. In fact, these contain artistic characteristics for the expression of beauty. On the one hand this is a divine religious instinct, but on the other it is an incantatory mark of popular belief.

The oldest wooden Troytsa (Troita) was made in the 18th century and a stone one is presumed to have been crafted in the 14-15th century (Oprişan viii). Use of the Troytsa (Troita) overcomes the long tradition of being buried and smoked. It keeps the sacred above the profane, in the substance of the reconstructed material, and it is possible to engage in self-awareness and a self-examination of religion by looking at the Troytsa (Troita) as 'sacred murals in fresco'<sup>11</sup> in the monastery of Moldova province. Systematic studies and classifications regarding the sacred monuments of pre-Christian structure such as the Sky Columns and those of a Christian structure like the Troytsa (Troita) were accomplished by Romanian scholars such as R. Vulcănescu, I. Oprişan, etc.

The Sky Columns, the predecessor of the initial Troytsas (Troite), are based on the Totem of the Tree, which are similar to the Tree of the World or the Tree of the Cosmos. This tradition in an ancient people's myths, religions and mystique are grafted together, represents the Troytsas of nowadays through the acceptance of Christianity.



Image 3. An example of the Circle Cross Troytsa (Troita) (from Oprişan 74).

10 We can find this 'birds of the soul' in funerary slabs from the province of Transylvania. This bird symbolizes that the human spirit continually lives in the world of death when the human being dies (Kim, Ui-suk 300).

11 The explanation about 'sacred murals in fresco' in the monastery of Moldova province is introduced in detail in Prof. Ho-chang Lee's paper (104-105).

If the Sky Columns are representative monuments of pre-Christian structures, the sacred monuments of Christian structures are generally classified into three Troytsas (Troite): the Cruciform Troytsa (Troita), the Icon-form Troytsa (Troita) and the Shelter (Church Porch, Pergola, Fountain, Gate, Catacomb, etc.) Troytsa (Troita). Among them, the Cruciform Troytsa (Troita), which is made of wood and stone, is easily found, being a widely distributed type of Troytsa in Romania. In some areas, the Cruciform Troytsa and the Icon-form Troytsa create a complex ensemble, making religious values even more sacred.



Image 4. Troytsas in the forms of the Sacred Cruciform and the Icon-form (from Opreșan 185).

The Troytsa (Troita) is generally well preserved in mountainous and hilly areas. Their preservation originated in Romanian traditional life, which comes and goes from the plain to the mountainous areas for stock farming. The highland where the two areas meet has the role of reconciling the various and different features of life, to unite them into one, and it is also a symbolic place which shelters inherent traditional conventions from aggressive and industrial civilizations.

## 5. The Lower Deities as Cultural Heritage and Axiological Symbol

The Romanian cultural heritage of Troytsa (Troita) conforms very similarly, in a word, to the Korean cultural heritage of Jangseung and Sotdae. Jangseung and Sotdae, the representative popular sculptured creations of folk beliefs related to the totem pole, are close to villagers' lives, being a low-ranking god among the village's gods. These deific creations have the functions of the divine protection of a village's peace, a signpost, a boundary, the defense of the constitution, a good harvest, preventing misfortune, a prayer for children, etc. The Sotdae, which has birds on a pole or stone column, is recognized as an object of belief mixed between the Tree of the World and the Bird of the Soul in the cultural area of North Asia shamanism. Unlike them, the Romanian Troytsa, rooted in

ancient faith (the Totem of Tree), is a divine, sculptured creation mixed with Christianity.

A Troytsa is located generally at the entrance of a village or the intersection of roads. Moreover, one constructed in the center of a village contains the symbol of an intersection, in which whole imaginative roads meet; another, set on the border between neighboring villages, has the function of a signpost. The sacred tree of pre-Christianity, the Sky Columns, is the center of the life of the community in ancient times, and nowadays the Troytsa is recognized as the center of a community. A Troytsa has the significance of the Tree of the World which links the land with the sky and the underground in the conception of religious mythology. This is not only the consecration of a place, but also the prevention of all misfortune and evil; the Troytsa is the religious signs and cultural symbols which unite the ground and the underground, the profane and the sacred, continuance and discontinuity. From this point of view, Jangseung and Sotdae are raised on places such as the entrance of a village, an intersection, a boundary, a monastery, a gate through which supernatural beings or villagers come in and go out, where contact between the interior and exterior takes place.

The Troytsa, Jangseung, Sotdae and their variations share functions and character, but their features and patterns are different. Jangseung have angry and fearful countenances to turn away diseases and evil spirits, but Sotdae, consisting of a totem pole and the Bird of the Soul, intend to be the symbol of the Tree of the World. If Troytsa and Sotdae maintain the style of a menhir or a column as one of the folk beliefs related the totem pole, Jangseung are preserved in the forms of an iconolatry, column and tombstone.

A Jangseung is generally made generally of wood and stone, and a Sotdae is constructed in the same manner. These materials are accepted through an outlook on the world in which the divine spirits encompass all things which is a process in which the wood and the stone become the living place of gods. Troytsa is also made with wood and stone. The pre-Christian Troytsa is a type of Column, but after the acceptance of Christianity, it adopts the pattern of the crosses. Different to Troytsas and Sotdae, Jangseung are distinguished by gender. The masculine Jangseung is painted in red color and the feminine one is painted in yellow.

In some Romanian regions, Troytsas can be a complex form between the Cruciform Troytsa and the Icon-form Troytsa. This is also very similar to the Koreans' ensemble of the Jangseung and the Sotdae. In addition, when Romanians pass in front of religious buildings or structures such as a Troytsa or a church, they mostly draw the heart of the Trinity over their hearts. Koreans throw rocks (or pile them up), spit, or even offer colourful ribbons to trees for a personal Bison (rubbing the hands prayerfully) and/

or community rites, when Koreans pass in front of Jangseong (Lee et al. 108-109; 116). This can be said to be a manifestation of personal faith in the well-being of individuals and communities, the safety of travel and passage, the prevention of diseases and the making of wishes. These cultural heritages share a functional commonality among the functional elements of the signpost, a border, peace, richness, an amulet, prosperity and patronage. This confirms that a universal cultural prototype coexists in human life and in the values of the cultures of the East and the West, without origins or cultural differences.

## 6. Conclusion

The cultural phenomenon and the folk creation, which symbolize the characteristics of divine nature and spirit, and which are immanent in the life of a nation, are also an ethnic "result," which sublimates daily life and the religious notion in art and philosophy over a long time. As an axiological symbol and a village tutelary deity which reflect the whole physical and mental substance of a nation, Jangseung and Sotdae and Troytsa (Troita) show an aspect of eternal culture and value. This paper is the minimal case that meets this statement, and it will be a turning point in explaining the possibility of identity in terms of comparing the religious cultures of the East and West and their patterns of acceptance.

Traditionally, the totem poles in the center, at an intersection, or in the fields of a village have the function of the sanctification of space, an amulet for warding off evil auras and boundary markings, are the result of human imagination. From an ancient point of view, these places are where the energy of the universe is extensively increased and they were often perceived as the dominion of the souls of evil, darkness and the underworld. There is a wide variety of evil aura appearing in these places, including conflicts between stability and anxiety, yin and yang, prosperity and decline. Humanity has been troubled in the removal of the disorder of the universe, which is caused by the energy and agitation of evil, and it has attempted to reestablish goodness over evil. As a result, humans established the Sky Column or the altar, which is the symbol of heaven, the sun and divinity, and it has the function of magic and religious offerings from ancient times, located at the optimal center where universal peace would not be inhibited; and again, these took the shapes of a menhir, pillar, etc., as a primitive sculpture mixed with the folk customs and shamanism inherent in folk beliefs. Nowadays, these various totem poles have been transformed into Troytsa, Jangseung or Sotdae with the passage of time.

The Troytsa, Jangseung and Sotdae are the popular beliefs of communities

and they have various functions such as the divine protection of village peace, a signpost, a boundary, preventing misfortune, divine protection, etc. For example, the combination of the Tree of the World (the Cosmos) and the Bird of the Soul, as seen in Sotdae, creates the foundation of a folk belief related to the totem pole. This is a manifestation of the sacredness of a cultural prototype, and at the same time, it is a reflection of the modern reconstruction of totem and shamanism and the folkloristic acceptance of cultural values.

If the Troytsa is a real value that shows that the universal symbolism of the Tree of the World is located in the middle of secular life, which is called the space of *The Little Lamb (Miorița)*, Jangseung and Sotdae are a prototype of a culture built on the crossroads of life and *Arirang's* hill as one stage of Korean life. The symbolic traditions of folk beliefs, which are transmitted in various forms even today, are still being generated and developed as the representative cultural prototypes and motifs that form the basis of each nation's culture of the concurrent period.

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