
EDITOR'S PREFACE

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It is difficult to believe that we have reached the fifth issue of *Journal of Daesoon Thought and the Religions of East Asia*, as it seems only yesterday that we began the journey of producing a new academic journal. Over the past two years *JDTREA* has developed a strong profile for publishing material on Asian religions, chiefly new religious movements and contemporary Asian religious phenomena, and also has become a key channel for disseminating research on the Korean new religion of Daesoon Jinrihoe in the English language. The Editorial Board has been generous with its time and academic expertise, the team has learned a lot about academic publishing and each other's strengths as scholars, and the modest success we are enjoying is a bright spot in today's troubled world.

This issue contains six articles, three of which address research on Daesoon Jinrihoe and three of which explore the contemporary Asian religio-spiritual scene. The opening article is by Massimo Introvigne (The Center for the Study of New Religions, Italy) and is titled "Every Picture Tells a Story: The New York Unicorn Tapestries and Daesoon Jinrihoe's Simudo Paintings." This is a comparative study that brings the medieval Christian unicorn tapestries (which can be interpreted in theological terms with the unicorn as Christ or as an allegory of romantic love) into conversation with the distinctive Daesoon Jinrihoe version of the traditional Buddhist ox-herding paintings, focusing on the motif of a sacred animal that is pursued and tamed.

The second contribution is by Ko Namsik and Jason Greenberger (Daejin University, South Korea) and investigates the relationship between Kang Jeungsan and Jo Jeungsan, the foundational figures in Daesoon Jinrihoe whose relationship has been compared to that of Jesus and Paul in early Christianity. This research goes beyond previous English-language efforts to explain the lineage connections and institutional religious importance of the relationship, which distinguish Daesoon Jinrihoe from other Korean new religions that revere Kang Jeungsan as the Supreme Deity. Next is David W. Kim's (Harvard University, USA) historical examination of groups that revered Kang Jeungsan, "The Post-Jeungsan Grassroots Movements: Charismatic Leaders in Bocheongyo and Mugeukdo in Colonial Korea." This study provides detailed information regarding the differing styles of charismatic leadership in Bocheongyo and Mugeukdo.

The fourth article is "Confucianism in Vietnam: A Hauntology-based Analysis of Political Discourse" by Linh Trinh Ngoc (Ho Chi Minh National University, Vietnam). This research traces Confucianism in Vietnam and the associated political discourse of Sinicization (the introduction of bureaucratic civil service examinations and other forms of cultural dominance), and the struggle of the Viet people to resist Confucianism, such that it was changed and acclimatised to Vietnam. Next is Kai Shmushko's (University of

Amsterdam, Netherlands) “The Modern White Horse Temple and Online Reconfiguring of a Buddhist Heritage Space” which examines White Horse Temple in Henan Province in light of the Chinese Communist Party’s recent heritage policy.

The final research contribution is by Mohammad Jahangir Alam and Injamam Mahbub Mojumder (University of Dhaka, Bangladesh), and is titled “Sikh and Cao Dai Understandings of Interfaith Harmony: Promoting a Culture of Peace and Understanding.” This research returns to the comparative religion approach that the issue began with, and makes a strong case for commonalities between two very different faiths in the area of human flourishing and religio-spiritual communication.

The journal issue is completed by reviews supplied by the Review Editor, Professor Holly Folk (Western Washington University, USA). As ever, gratitude is due to Bae Kyuhan, Lee Gyungwon, Jason Greenberger, and Choi Wonhyuk from Daejin University, and to the authors and referees who made this issue happen. We are very happy with the progress of *JDTREA*, and hope that this issue will continue to win a diverse and appreciative readership.

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