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Aims and Scope

The Journal of Daeseon Thought and the Religions of East Asia (JD TRE A) is the official English language journal of the Daeseon Academy of Sciences, and thus far, it is the only peer-reviewed, English language journal exclusively dedicated to research on Daeseon Thought and the contemporary relevance of East Asia Religions. Daeseon Thought refers to a grouping of native Korean religious concepts best characterized by the Resolution of Grievances for Mutual Beneficence (*Haewon Sangsaeng*) and the Grateful Reciprocation of Favors for Mutual Beneficence (*Boeun Sangsaeng*), and the chief purveyor of Daeseon Thought is Daeseon Jinrihoe, a representative Korean religion the ideological origins of which can be traced back to Kang Jeungsan. Although there is a reasonable level of worldwide familiarity with the major religious traditions of East Asia, Daeseon Thought remains under-researched outside of Korea. As a remedy to this, the Daeseon Academy of Science (DAOS), aims to publish *JD TRE A* twice a year. The editorial board of *JD TRE A* consists of active scholars from over a dozen countries including Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Australia, France, Japan, Korea, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Spain, Taiwan, the UK, and the USA. *JD TRE A* is published to promote global studies on Daeseon Thought and East Asia religion by encouraging wide-ranging research on these topics. The scope of *JD TRE A* includes the following:

- Interpretation and analysis of Daeseon Jinrihoe's religious phenomena in all fields of the humanities and social sciences
- Comparative research on the above in relation to another religion, philosophy, ideology, etc.
- Critical reviews of academic trends, mainly in the arts and humanities, that relate to Daeseon Thought and/or East Asian religions
- New interpretations of and approaches to Daeseon Thought

The types of publications featured in *JD TRE A* will include original articles, research notes, and book reviews. Other types of contributions are negotiable but subject to the approval of the editorial board. All unsolicited articles will be subject to peer review, and commissioned articles are reviewed by the Editorial Board.

About the journal

JD TRE A debuted on September 30th, 2021 with volume 1, issue 1. The journal is set to be published twice annually and special editions may also be published in the future. The number of copies printed will be 500 per publication. The full texts will be freely available at www.jdre.org. No publishing costs will be incurred by authors who submit to the journal.

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Carole M. CUSACK

The University of Sydney, Australia

To be at the beginning of a new scholarly venture – which the establishment of the *Journal of Daesoon Thought and the Religions of East Asia (JDTREA)* undoubtedly is – is a wonderful thing, as the quality of newness creates possibilities that more venerable bodies and publications cannot aspire to. My own journey to becoming Editor in Chief, an honour that I am grateful to acknowledge, began when I attended the “Religious Movements in a Globalized World: Korea, Asia, and Beyond” conference of the Centre for Studies on New Religions (CESNUR), an independent institute based in Turin, Italy from 5-10 July 2016. My partner Donald Barrett and I had been to several CESNUR conferences and were highly enthusiastic about visiting South Korea for the first time and being hosted by the Korean new religion Daesoon Jinrihoe, at Daejin University’s campus outside of Pocheon City near the North Korean border.

The conference was an excellent academic meeting, and Don and I were among old friends and making new friends all the time. The focus of the conference was very much on the struggle for legitimacy in the spiritual marketplace of a range of Korean new religions. My amateur status in terms of the study of Asian religions was something I was willing to admit, every step of the way. It was perhaps a happy accident that the paper I delivered at the conference, “Cult Stereotypes in *Signs and Wonders* (1995),” concerned a British television series that focused on a group that strongly resembled the Unification Church, certainly the best-known Korean new religion in the West at the time.

In addition to Daesoon Jinrihoe, the Unification Church and Won Buddhism hosted us during the tour of religious sites that followed the conference proper. We were fascinated to learn of these faiths and provoked to learn about less well-known Korean new religions that were represented among the delegates, such as Victory Altar, a group that had been on my radar since attending CESNUR at Aletheia University in Taiwan with Donald in 2011, where we met representatives of the Neo-Human Institute, the philosophical arm of what later emerged as Victory Altar.

The first issue of the *Journal of Daesoon Thought and the Religions of East Asia* contains a range of articles by distinguished scholars, including Massimo Introvigne (Centre for the Study of New Religions, Turin), Patrick Laude (Georgetown University), Susan Palmer (Concordia University) and Jason Greenberger (Daejin University), Pochi Huang (Huaan University, Taiwan), David W. Kim (Australian National University), and our revered and greatly missed late colleague, Liselotte Frisk (Dalarna University, Sweden). I am proud to have been appointed editor and to have had the chance to oversee the production of such a strong and diverse collection of cutting-edge scholarship.

I am very grateful to Bae Kyuhan, Lee Gyungwon and Jason Greenberger, from Daejin University, and to all the scholars who have joined the international Editorial Board of this exciting new academic journal. I have confidence that we will produce much valuable scholarship, and look forward to a time when we might all gather again in South Korea to celebrate its contribution to the contemporary religious world, and to share ideas and possibilities with sympathetic and creative colleagues. I end on a personal note; my partner Donald died in February of 2021 and it will be eternally a regret that when I next visit Korea he will not be with me to share the adventure.

Carole M. Cusack

Editor of *JDTREA*
University of Sydney, Australia

PUBLISHER'S REMARKS

BAE Kyuhan

Daejin University, Korea

It is my pleasure to formally announce the publication of the volume 1, issue 1 of *Journal of Daesoon Thought and the Religions of East Asia (JD TRE A)*, the international English-language journal of Daesoon Academy of Sciences. We wish to share our joy with everyone who participated in the founding of *JD TRE A*, all the people around the world who are devoted to academic research in this field, and all of the scholars and readers who have learned about our journal.

Daejin University is a comprehensive university located in Pocheon, on the northern border of Seoul, where North and South Korea face each other on the Korean Peninsula. The Daesoon Academy of Sciences (DAOS) was established in 1992 to seek the truth of the Resolution of Grievances for Mutual Beneficence, the founding philosophy of Daejin University, and to contribute to world peace and human co-prosperity through academic research, educational activities, and moral cultivation based on Daesoon Thought. DAOS is an academic research institute that has been steadily promoting academic research, academic exchanges, research support, and publication projects. Through those endeavors, DAOS has established itself as an international academic institution that conducts comprehensive research on Daesoon Thought via ongoing exchanges with various universities throughout the East and West.

Recently, at the World SangSaeng Forum International Conference, prepared and hosted by DAOS, scholars from all over the world and 500 religious practitioners gathered together to give academic presentations and in-depth discussions on human peace and religious conceptions of an ideal world. Additionally, the Daesoon Academy of Sciences has accumulated quantitative and qualitative foundations for the study of Daesoon Thought and global religious thought through continual exchanges and international solidarity with major academic institutions and scholars in the field of world religions. The accumulation of these efforts and the revitalization of international academic networks has led to a search for new international academic discussions on Daesoon Thought and East Asian religious movements.

I believe that in the future, *JD TRE A* will prove itself to be a world-class journal dedicated to the study of Daesoon Thought and East Asian religions. Our journal will be appraised as all the more valuable given its status as the only English-language international academic journal focused on the field of indigenous Korean religions. I eagerly anticipate the many gems that will be published in this journal by researchers all around the world.

Much like the flowering of a bamboo (which tends to only occur after 60 to 130 years), academic achievement is never easy. This is especially true for academic research based within the humanities. Volume 1, issue 1 of *JD TRE A*, containing six articles, was

completed through constant care and deep passion for Daesoon Thought and East Asian religious thought. In particular, I wish to express my deep respect and gratitude to the late Professor Liselotte Frisk, who left behind her last work in our journal, and much thanks and gratitude are also due to everyone else who provided us with such valuable articles.

The publication of *JDTREA* was made possible through the help of many individuals. First of all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Chairman Yoon Eun-Do of Daejin University and the Steering Committee of our academy for their generous support and encouragement. Thanks are also due to Professor Emeritus Eileen Barker of London University of Political Science and Economics, who helped us all the way from the planning stage to publication of our first issue as the Honorary Editor-in-Chief of *JDTREA*. Many thanks as well to Massimo Introvigne, the managing director of the Center for Studies on New Religions (CESNUR), Professor Gordon Melton, director of the Institute for the Study of American Religion at Baylor University, and Professor Donald Baker of the University of British Columbia.

I likewise thank Professor Carole M. Cusack of the Department of Studies in Religion at the University of Sydney, Australia, who gladly assumed the role of Editor-in-Chief of *JDTREA* despite the complexity of the position and other difficulties. I am also thankful to Professor Holly Folk of Western Washington University who accepted the position of Review Editor and to Professor Bernadette Rigal-Cellard of University of Bordeaux-Montaigne. Thank you also to our other 30-some editors from 15 countries around the world.

Lastly, I wish to thank our Associate Editor, Professor Lee Gyungwon of Daejin University, who meticulously reviewed the practical work for the publication of *JDTREA*. Please allow me to end my remarks by recognizing and thanking our academy's General Manager, Professor Ko Nam-sik, who provided the necessary administrative support for the publication of the journal. Thank you as well to all of our staff at the academy, such as our Copy Editor and Managing Editor, who put their hearts and minds into editing the journal.

Bae Kyuhan

Publisher of *JDTREA*

The Daesoon Academy of Sciences

Daejin University

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- Reflections on Civilization, Modernity, and Religion in Light of
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Jo Jeongsan in Context: “Second Founders” in New Religious Movements

Massimo INTROVIGNE

Massimo Introvigne was born in Rome, Italy, on June 14, 1955. He graduated in philosophy at Pontifical Gregorian University, Vatican City, in 1973, and earned his doctorate in Law at Turin University in 1979. He was Assistant Lecturer at the University of Turin and, until 2016, Professor of Sociology at the Pontifical Salesian University in Torino, Italy. He is the managing director of CESNUR, the Center for Studies on New Religions, and the author of more than 70 books on religious pluralism and new religious movements, including *The Plymouth Brethren* (2018) and *Inside The Church of Almighty God* (2020), both published by Oxford University Press. In 2011, he served as the Representative of OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) for combating racism, xenophobia and religious discrimination.



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Original Articles

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Abstract

Scholars of new religious movements have emphasized the role of “second founders,” such as Judge J.F. Rutherford for the Jehovah’s Witnesses, Brigham Young for the Mormons, or Deguchi Onisaburo for Oomoto. They systematize and structure movements often created by the “first founders” with a minimal organization only. The paper argues that the model for the sequence first founder/second founder described by these scholars is the relationship between Jesus and Paul of Tarsus at the origins of Christianity. It proposes a comparison between Jesus of Nazareth and Kang Jeungsan, who established the tradition leading to present-day Daesoon Jinrihoe. It then summarizes the biography of Jo Jeongsan, recognized by Daesoon Jinrihoe as its “second founder” within the same tradition, and discusses the analogies between his connection to the “first founder,” Kang Jeungsan, and the connection Paul of Tarsus established with Jesus Christ. The paper considers recent scholarship about Paul, often described as the “New Perspective on Pauline Scholarship.” Paul never personally met Jesus Christ, except after the latter’s death through a spiritual revelation, just as Jo Jeongsan never met Kang Jeungsan, except after his death, when he manifested himself to him in spirit. Nonetheless, Paul was able to decisively shape the largest branch among the followers of Jesus Christ, just as Jo Jeongsan originated the lineage leading to Daesoon Jinrihoe, currently the largest religious order among those recognizing Kang Jeungsan as the incarnated Supreme God.

Keywords: Jeungsanism; Daesoon Jinrihoe; Kang Jeungsan; Jo Jeongsan;
 “Second Founders” of Religions;
 Paul of Tarsus; New Perspective on Pauline Scholarship

Religions' "Second Founders" in Comparative Perspective

In 1931, Judge Joseph Franklin Rutherford (1869–1942) changed the name of the international religious movement of which he was president from “Bible Students” to “Jehovah’s Witnesses.” It would take several decades before scholars would pay serious attention to the movement. When they did, they emphasized that the theological reasons for the change of name, i.e., insisting that using “Jehovah” as God’s name was essential for being saved, were less important than giving members the feeling that Rutherford’s was a new, more hierarchical and well-structured organization, with respect to the comparatively unstructured network of believers that his predecessor, Pastor Charles Taze Russell (1858–1916) had founded between 1878 and 1881. Not everybody agreed with the new structure, and several schismatic groups rejected Rutherford’s authority. When one looks at the Jehovah’s Witnesses from a historical perspective, however, Rutherford’s role appears so crucial that he can be called the “second founder” of the religion (Chryssides 2016).

A movement aimed at writing Mormon history beyond mere apologetics, known as “New Mormon History,” developed among Mormon historians after World War II, initially through the efforts of Leonard Arrington (1917–1999), and involved non-Mormons as well (Quinn 1992). New Mormon History explored in depth both Joseph Smith (1805–1844), the founder of Mormonism, and its first successor, Brigham Young (1801–1877), who took the Mormons to Utah. While traditional Mormon apologetics emphasized the continuity between Smith and Young, New Mormon History showed how the structure Young built in Utah went well beyond the simple organization Smith had been able to set up in New York, Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois (Turner 2012). In this case also, Young emerged as the most successful claimant of Smith’s succession, but several others founded competing new religions (Shields 2021). Young’s achievement led some scholars to hail him as the “second founder” of Mormonism (Mason 2015).

There are several similar stories in East Asian new religions. One of the most studied by Western scholars concerns Oomoto. There is little doubt that Deguchi Nao (1837–1918), a simple woman from rural Japan, founded the movement based on the revelations she claimed to receive from a divine spirit called Ushitora no Konjin. However, Oomoto became significantly more organized after Nao’s daughter, Deguchi Sumiko (1883–1952) married in the year 1900 a man called Ueda Kisaburo (1871–1948). He adopted the name Deguchi Onisaburo, wrote the main texts of the movement, organized it, and led Oomoto to become a large and international new religion. He is honored today as “co-founder” of Oomoto, and could also be seen as a “second founder” (Stalker 2008).

Consciously or not, scholars who studied figures such as Deguchi Onisaburo, Brigham Young, or Judge Rutherford as “second founders,” referred at least implicitly to

a category and a model that generated a large international discussion among scholars of early Christianity in the early 20th century. In 1904, German Lutheran theologian William Wrede (1859–1906) published the first edition of *Paulus*, an influential book on Paul of Tarsus (ca. 5–ca. 65 CE), the man mostly responsible for spreading Christianity to Europe. Wrede argued that Paul was the “second founder” of Christianity and indeed the man who exerted “the stronger influence” on how Christianity was shaped. Wrede did not have much sympathy for Paul. He accused the man known to Christians as Paul the Apostle of having converted the original free and utopian community founded by Jesus into a cold, bureaucratic church (Wrede 1904). This stereotype about Paul dominated liberal Protestant academic scholarship for decades (Barclay 2007, 1). It became almost a truism to claim that, while Jesus wanted to establish a loose community of believers awaiting the imminent end of the world, Paul founded the Christian Church as we now know it.

Wrede’s perspective was never accepted by historians writing within an orthodox Protestant or Catholic tradition. In the last decades of the 20th century, liberal scholars who did not write from an apologetic perspective also took exception to it (Barclay 2007, 5–10). Two parallel movements developed from the late 1970s, one called the Third Quest for the Historical Jesus (as two other quests for historically reliable information on Jesus had taken place in the 19th century and in the 1950s–1960s respectively), and the other the New Perspective on Pauline Scholarship, which promoted new studies on Paul of Tarsus. Both labels are not without critics, and it is unclear whether they indicate coherent academic movements. One of the few common conclusions achieved is that, whether Paul had indeed a different attitude from Jesus about what kind of organization Christians should develop, both Jesus and Paul maintained to the end of their life much deeper Jewish roots than was previously believed, and in this, their continuity may lie (Bockmuehl 2007).

These developments notwithstanding, the relationship between Jesus and Paul remains the model for all theories claiming that in several (although not in all) religions, there is not one founder but two (or more), and that the first founder is often a prophet less interested in organization, while the second founder, as sociologists would say, “routinizes” the charisma and builds a more structured organization capable of lasting for centuries if not, as in the case of Christianity, for millennia. Although other cases are also interesting, I believe that the most fruitful parallel for understanding in a perspective of comparative religion the role of Jo Jeongsan (1895–1958), the “second founder” of the tradition leading to Daeseon Jinrihoe, is with Paul of Tarsus, who, as we have seen, is the original model for all discussions about the relationships between a first and a second religious founder.

Kang Jeungsan and Jesus of Nazareth

Discussing second founders implies, to some extent, revisiting the roles of the first founders as well. Both Kang Jeungsan (1871–1909) and Jesus of Nazareth belong to the category of founders of religions believed by their followers to be incarnations of the Supreme God. There are obvious differences between the two; one being that Jesus Christ was executed and Kang was not. There are, however, also significant similarities (see Table 1).

Table 1: Jesus of Nazareth and Kang Jeungsan

Jesus of Nazareth	Kang Jeungsan
Regarded by followers as incarnation of the Supreme God	Regarded by followers as incarnation of the Supreme God
Recognized as precursor the leader of a previous religious movement, John the Baptist, who was executed	Recognized as precursor the leader of a previous religious movement, Choi Je-u, who was executed
Did not write down his teachings.	Did not write down his teachings (except for the short esoteric booklet Hyeonmu-gyeong)
Main teachings were collected in a sacred scripture only several decades after his death	Main teachings were collected in a sacred scripture only more than one decade after his death
Different groups produced competing versions of the sacred scriptures	Different groups produced competing versions of the sacred scriptures
Promoted the poor and women	Promoted the poor and women
Lived under a foreign occupation (Roman), yet did not call for revolution—although the occupiers arrested him	Lived under a foreign occupation (Japanese), yet did not call for a revolution—although the occupiers arrested him

(1) Some would argue that a main difference is that his followers understand Kang as the incarnated Supreme God in a “polytheistic” context, where the Supreme God coexist with other gods, while Christians are “monotheist.” However, the borders between monotheism and polytheism appear to modern scholars more porous than it was once believed. Paul of Tarsus mentioned in *Colossians* 1:16, “things in heaven and

on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities.” The usual Christian interpretation is that “thrones or powers or rulers or authorities” “in heaven” designate different categories of angels, and angels are not gods but (spiritual) creatures of a creator God. However, leading Swiss Catholic theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905–1988) was just one among several modern scholars arguing that, during the first Christian centuries, whether these beings were angels or lesser gods was far from being clear (Balthasar 1983, 47–50).

(2) We know the story of John the Baptist (d. ca. 28–30 CE) mostly from Christian sources, which emphasize his role as precursor of Jesus Christ. Modern scholars, however, dispute that John ever accepted this role, and suggest that he may have been the leader of a separate religious movement, perhaps a branch of the Jewish sect known as the Essenes (Farnes 2011). In South Korea, some Christian new religious movements, such as the Unification Church (Ross and Wilson 1989) and Providence (Jeong and Jeong 2019), believe that John the Baptist did not in fact support Jesus, causing the latter’s mission not to be completely successful.

Kang Jeungsan’s precursor, in a position similar to John the Baptist, according to Daesoon Jinrihoe, was Choe Je-u (1824-1864), who in 1860 claimed to have received a revelation as well as a mystical talisman and a mantra from “the Lord of Ninth Heaven,” the Supreme God Sangje. He went on to establish a new religion, Donghak (Eastern Learning). Like John the Baptist, Choe Je-u ended up being executed (Kallander 2013). Daesoon Jinrihoe believes that, to solve the world’s problems, Sangje came to Korea and entered the golden statue of Maitreya Buddha in the Geumsan-sa Temple at the Moaksan Mountain, North Jeolla Province. There, Sangje revealed his teachings to Choe. Since, however, Choe was unable to overcome the system of Confucianism and open the new era, Sangje withdrew his mandate from him, and incarnated as Kang Jeungsan. Like the story of John the Baptist narrated by Christians, this is Daesoon Jinrihoe’s narrative about Choe Je-u. But the latter still has followers today, in a movement known as Chondogyo, which rejects the narrative of Choe as a mere precursor of Kang Jeungsan. Chondogyo believes that Choe’s mission was indeed successful, and he opened the doors of the Kingdom of Heaven (Beirne and Young 2018).

(3) Jesus did not write anything during his lifetime. His teachings were oral, and put in writing by his disciples only several years after his death. Kang Jeungsan only left a short 25-page text, *Hyeonmu-gyeong* (Scripture of the Black Tortoise), written in 1909, of which different branches of his movement have published different versions. The booklet includes talismans commented with short sentences, and additional texts and poems. It also contains several instances of “mirror image writing” (of Chinese characters), somewhat reminiscent of Leonardo da Vinci’s (1452–1519) mirror writing that he used in his private notes for reasons differently interpreted by historians (Aaron and Clouse 1982).

The *Hyeonmu-gyeong* is not a systematic presentation of Kang's teachings, which are mostly found in *The Canonical Scripture*. The latter, which plays the same role as the Gospels for Christians, evolved from texts written by disciples who relied on their memory after Kang's death.

Christians today recognize four canonical Gospels (*Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*), but it may have taken several centuries before they were selected by the early Christian Church as the only genuine source containing what Jesus had said, while dozens of competing Gospels were discarded. Some of the latter were, however, canonized as scriptures by Gnostic and other religious movements competing with the mainline Christian Church (Ehrman 2003).

Just as it happened with the Gospels, there are different versions of the Jeungsanist scriptures accepted as canonical among different groups (Jorgensen 2018, 363; for a criticism of this text, see however Yoon and Introvigne 2018). For example, Jeung San Do, the second largest movement recognizing Kang Jeungsan as the incarnated Supreme God, has published the English translation of its voluminous holy scripture (Jeung San Do 2016). It is significantly different from Daesoon Jinrihoe's *The Canonical Scripture*, and emphasizes those teachings by Kang Jeungsan that are supposed to support Jeung San Do's current doctrinal position.

(4) Although different versions of Kang's teachings exist, one shared point is that he promoted a "social transformation" where the non-aristocrats, the poor, and the women would be treated fairly in Korean society (Kim 2016, 142–143). This obviously resonates with Jesus' teachings as recorded in the Gospels, teachings that put Jesus in trouble with both the Jewish and the Roman establishments (Crossan and Reed 2004).

(5) The Jesus of the Gospels, like most Jews in his time, was critical of the Roman occupation of Palestine, yet he was very careful not to identify himself with the movements that called for an armed revolution against Rome: "My kingdom is not of this world," he said (*John* 18:36). Kang maintained a similar attitude towards the Japanese occupiers. He asked his followers not to join the armed Donghak uprising, promoted by followers of the executed Choi Je-u (Kallander 2013), predicting, correctly, that the Japanese would intervene, destroy the Donghak movement, and take control of Korea. Later, he made "unfavorable remarks" about the Japanese occupation, but refused to support both the attempts by rebels to raise a "righteous army" against the occupiers and the pro-Japanese Iljinhoe movement. Rather, he tried to reconcile the various factions. Notwithstanding his peaceful attitude, he was persecuted and arrested by the Japanese. It seems it was his detractors, such as Cha Mun-Gyeong, who denounced Kang to the Japanese (Chong 2016), just as Jews hostile to his preaching denounced Jesus to the Romans.

Jo Jeongsan: A Short Biography

Jo Cheol-Je (Jeongsan being his honorific name) was born on December 4, 1895 (lunar calendar), in Hoemun-ri, Chilseo-myeon of Haman-gun, South Gyeongsang Province (present-day Hoemun village, Hoesan-ri, Chilseo-myeon of Haman, South Gyeongsang Province), Korea (non-referenced information in this section comes from oral interviews of members of Daesoon Jinrihoe conducted between 2017 and 2019 and from *The Canonical Scripture [Progress of the Order 2]*, which also includes details about the life of Jo). His grandfather, Jo Yeong-Gyu, was a high state bureaucrat and among those who protested the Korea-Japan Treaty of 1905. Shortly thereafter, he died of heartache, an event that left a profound impression upon the 11 year old Jo. Jo Yong-Mo, Jo Jeongsan's father, continued his father's anti-Japanese activities. Reportedly, he set up a gunpowder plant in preparation for an insurgency, which never happened due to the strict Japanese surveillance of the independentists. In 1909, Jo Yong-Mo had to escape with his family to Fengtian Province, Manchuria (currently known as Liuhe County, Jilin Province, China).

They settled in a village prevalently inhabited by ethnic Koreans. Eventually, Jo Yong-Mo became the village leader, and as he grew up Jo Jeongsan helped him in his tasks. In particular, he contributed in collecting money for the cause of Korean independence, in solving a land dispute between local Chinese and Korean residents, and in defending Koreans (including one of his uncles) who had been unjustly accused by the authorities (Cui 2016).

Kang Jeungsan and Jo Jeongsan never met. However, according to the latter's disciples, when on April 28, 1909, Kang saw a train passing, which had Jo heading to Manchuria, then aged 15, aboard, he stated: "A man can do anything at the age of 15 if he is able to take his identification tag (hopae) with him." Jo's disciples believe that, by these words, Kang Jeungsan was recognizing him as his successor (Ko 2016).

In 1917, Jo married Ye Jong-Rin. In the same year, his father was arrested and taken to Beijing under the false accusation that he was a member of the Royalist Party, whose program was to restore the Qing dynasty. Eventually, his innocence emerged, and he was released.

In the meantime, Jo Jeongsan's main interests had turned to spirituality. He spent long hours meditating in the mountains. On February 10, 1917, while he was meditating at home, as he later reported, a divine being appeared to him and showed him a paper with an incantation, promising that it would save Korea and the world. The words on the paper read, "侍天主造化定 永世不忘萬事知 至氣今至願爲大降" (Si-cheon-ju-johwa-jeong yeong-se-bul-mang-man-sa-ji ji-gi-geum-jiwon-wi-dae-gang, meaning that "in serving the Lord of Heaven and being unified with the divine order, I wish to never forget and to know everything. May the ultimate energy descend abundantly now"). Jo

identified the being with Kang Jeungsan, and claimed that he appeared again to him later and asked. “Why do you not return to Joseon (Korea)? Go to Taein and look for Me.” The indication referred to Taein (currently Taein-myeon, Jeongeup city), in North Jeolla Province.

Due to a storm, Jo and his family landed in Taean of Seosan-gun (currently Taean-gun, South Chungcheong Province). Later, he moved to Anmyeon Island, where about thirty local villagers began to follow him. He reported that Kang Jeungsan asked him, “Go to Wonpyeong, Gimje,” i.e., the area where Kang himself had passed away in 1909.

On January 15, 1919, he met Kang Jeungsan’s sister Seondol (ca. 1881–1942), who gave him a sealed envelope that Kang had left for his successor, asking Seondol to deliver it to a man born in the Eulmi Year (1895) who would visit her on a January 15 (Ko 2016). He also took care of Kang Jeungsan’s mother Kwon (1850–1926) and his daughter Sun-Im (1904–1959). Later, however, Sun-Im left Jo Jeongsan and formed her separate branch.

According to *The Canonical Scripture*, Seondol informed Jo that, “The Transformation Chest (遁櫃, dun-gwei), which was installed by Sangje in the Copper Valley Clinic, is an agent of re-creation and changes of the universe in which a Degree Number of Heaven and Earth is set. In my opinion, we must find it as soon as possible. What do you think?” (*Progress of the Order* 2:14). The chest had been left by Kang Jeungsan in the Donggok Clinic, in Donggok-ri of Jeonju-gun (present-day Cheongdo-ri, Geumsan-myeon of Gimje City), North Jeolla Province, and the place where he passed away. At the time of the conversation between Seondol and Jo, the artifact was in possession of Cha Gyeong-Seok (1880–1936). Cha was the cousin of Kang’s female disciple Goh Pan-Lye (1880–1935, and the founder of Bocheonism, which was at that time the largest among the new religions recognizing Kang as the incarnated Supreme God). Jo recovered the chest from Cha and, according to *The Canonical Scripture* (*Progress of the Order* 2:20), started meditating continuously without eating or sleeping. One day, the chest opened on its own. In the chest, there was a sheet of tiger skin and a painting of a half-bloomed chrysanthemum, and on the inside of it, twenty-four dots of sheep blood were marked, and some symbolic phrases were written.

In September 1921, Jo and the relatives of Kang collected the latter’s remains, which had been buried on the mountain behind the Donggok Clinic in a chobin, i.e., a temporary tomb where the body is not buried underground but placed on a rock or log and covered with straw until it disappears. They enshrined them nearby, in the Tongsa-dong Memorial Room. Subsequently, the fate of Kang’s remains was the object of legal and other disputes between different groups of his followers (Lee K. 1967). Presently, the branch founded by Kang’s daughter, Sun-Im, claims to have buried them at its headquarters.

Jo’s followers believe that a “Decree” that he issued in 1923 has a crucial importance

to understand his thought and mission. It offers a numerological interpretation of history. The basis is the idea that a long historical period, a *won* (4,567 years), is divided into three *tong* (each of 1,539 years). In turn, a *tong* is divided in three *boe* (513 years), each consisting of 27 *jang* (19 years). The *won* considered in the Decree encompasses the time from the mythical Chinese Yellow Emperor to Kang Jeungsan. It shows the progress of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity through a logical sequence through the *boe* and *tong*, leading to the emergence of Kang Jeungsan at the appropriate time.

Jo was now ready to organize his own religious order, which he incorporated in 1925 as Mugeuk-do. He systematized the teachings of Kang Jeungsan in Four Tenets, Four Cardinal Mottos, Three Essential Attitudes, and Aims. In April 1924, Jo bought land for a temple in Dochang-hyeon, Taein of North Jeolla Province (currently Taein-myeon, Jeongeup, North Jeolla Province), the original location Kang's revelations had indicated to him as his destination in Korea. There, in 1925, he built Yeongdae, a sacred hall where he enshrined Kang Jeungsan as the Supreme God, and the Dosolgunng Palace, where other divine beings were enshrined. Yeongdae was a three-story building which appeared two stories high. Dosolgunng was a four-story building that appeared three stories high from the outside, just as the present-day Bonjeon of Daesoon Jinrihoe in the Yeosu Headquarters Temple Complex, is a four-storied building that outwardly appear to be only three stories high (Introvigne 2017).

From 1925–1926, Jo organized among his disciples a “group of workers” (*Jineopdan*) engaged in land reclamation works, which expanded to include four tidelands in Anmyeon Island and Wonsan Island. Weather conditions, however, allowed only two tidelands to be successfully developed. In 1935, the Japanese seized the lands and handed them over to the Japanese company Aso and to Boryeong's local government. According to *The Canonical Scripture (Progress of the Order 2: 35)*, Jo kept a small plot in Anmyeon Island and a saltern in Wonsan Island, which helped the poorest among his followers. He claimed the land reclamation work had achieved its aim, and never took action to reclaim what had been confiscated.

Due to both a 1936 edict aimed at disbanding Korean new religious movements, labeled by the Japanese as “pseudo-religions,” and the Maintenance of Public Order Act of 1941, Jo was forced to dissolve Mugeuk-do in 1941 (DIRC 2016, 203-205). Jo had continued gathering his followers clandestinely for a while, but he ended up ceasing all public activities and returning to his hometown, Hoemun-ri, where he continued to engage in self-cultivation.

With the defeat of the Japanese and the independence of Korea, religious liberty was restored. In 1948, Jo built a Temple Complex in Bosu-dong of Busan City, South Gyeongsang Province (present-day Bosu-dong, Jung-gu of Busan Metropolitan City). In 1950, he incorporated again his religious movement as Taegeuk-do.

Because of the Korean War, in 1950, several disciples escaped from the North to the South of Korea, and settled in the mountain hills near Bosu-dong. In 1955, with support from the Busan government, they were moved to Gamcheon-dong, Seo-gu, Busan, later nicknamed the Tageukdo village. In April 1957, Jo bought new land for a Temple Complex in Gamcheon-dong and built a Great Hall where Sangje was enshrined in the top floor (Yeongdae). Jo also established the Jeonhakwon school for the children of the war refugees. After Jo's death, Jeonhakwon will become Cheondeok Civic School, and serve the elderly in the community lacking elementary education.

As he had done in the Mugeuk-do period, Jo used Tageuk-do as a tool to define religious practices, rituals, and regulations, continuing the transformation of Kang's rhapsodic teachings into a well-organized system of theory and practice. *The Canonical Scripture* insists on the importance of his self-cultivation based on the Degree Numbers, carried on without sleep from November 21, 1957 to March 3, 1958, which concluded his fifty years of holy work (*Gongbu*).

When the end of this significant time approached, Jo designated Park Han-Gyeong, later known as Park Wudang (1917–1995 according to the lunar calendar, or 1918–1996 according to the solar calendar), as Prime Dojeon in the Gamcheon-dong temple and, according to Daesoon Jinrihoe, indicated him as his successor before he passed away on March 6, 1958. Jo was divinized by his followers as Okhwang Sangje, i.e., as an incarnation of the Jade Emperor of the Chinese tradition.

Park Wudang was born on November 30, 1917, in Banggok-ri, Jangyeon-myeon of Goesan-gun, North Chungcheong Province. He worked as a schoolteacher but was forced into labor during the Japanese colonial period. He joined the movement in 1946. After Jo Jeongsan's death, Taegeuk-do continued as a united religious order under the leadership of Park for ten years. In 1968, however, some executive members at the headquarters disputed Park's authority, and these conflicts led him to leave Busan in 1968 and reorganize the movement in Seoul under the name of Daesoon Jinrihoe in 1969. Headquarters were built at Junggok-dong, Seongdong-gu (present-day Junggok-dong, Gwangjin-gu) of Seoul. The name Taegeuk-do remain with a faction led for a few years by one of Jo Jeongsan's sons, Jo Yongnae (1934–2004), who maintains its headquarters at the Gamcheon-dong Temple Complex, where Jo Jeongsan's remains are also buried. Thanks to Park's effort, Daesoon Jinrihoe experienced a rapid expansion and became the single largest new religion of South Korea (Pokorny 2018, 248).

Jo and Paul

Even when the fact that they lived in very different historical contexts is considered, the similitudes between Paul of Tarsus and Jo Jeongsan are indeed impressive, and it can be argued that they are more relevant than the differences (see Table 2).

Table 2: Paul of Tarsus and Jo Jeongsan

Paul of Tarsus	Jo Jeongsan
Was born in a family seeking freedom of his land from the Romans	Was born in a family seeking freedom of his land from the Japanese
Became involved in the local independence movement	Became involved in the local independence movement
Never met Jesus personally	Never met Kang Jeungsan personally
Received a revelation from Jesus that changed his life	Received a revelation from Kang Jeungsan that changed his life
Encountered the Jesus movement when it was divided and loosely organized	Encountered the Kang Jeungsan movement when it was divided and loosely organized
His role was accepted by those who had been closest to Jesus	His role was accepted by those who had been closest to Kang Jeungsan
Was more interested in the divine role of Jesus than in mundane details about his life	Was more interested in the divine role of Kang Jeungsan than in mundane details about his life
Gave to the Jesus movement solid and long-lasting structures	Gave to Kang Jeungsan’s movement solid and long-lasting structures
Defined Jesus message as universal, not limited to Jews	Defined Kang Jeungsan’s message as universal, not limited to Koreans
Was opposed and persecuted by the Roman colonial power	Was opposed and persecuted by the Japanese colonial power
Not all Christians accepted him	Not all Jeungsanists accepted him
After he died, further schisms occurred	After he died, further schisms occurred

One problem of this comparison is that, of course, Paul lived two thousand years ago, and Jo Jeongsan died in 1958. Our sources for Paul are less reliable than those about Jo. Most of what we know about Paul comes from apologetic Christian sources. However, the work of the New Perspective School may help us establish some facts, which are in turn relevant for the comparison.

(1) The New Perspective school has dismissed ideas that Paul was not even a Jew as

unfounded, if not anti-Semitic, conspiracy theories. We do not know much about Paul's family, but the most believable hypothesis, based on the Apostle's education and early attitudes, is that it was a traditional Jewish family, unhappy with the Roman domination and looking for opportunities to overthrow it—although prepared to deal with the Romans when it was needed (Bockmuehl 2007). We know more about Jo's family, which was deeply involved in the national Korean anti-Japanese resistance.

(2) Every Christian is taught that Paul was part of the Jewish establishment that persecuted Christians as heretics, until Jesus appeared to him and asked why exactly Paul was engaged in the persecution. Recent scholarship builds on this incident to emphasize the Jewishness of Paul. It claims Paul never believed he had abandoned Judaism, nor the struggle for his land's independence, by embracing Christianity. Only, he had come to believe that Christianity was the best chance for reviving the Jewish national movement. A controversial but influential representative of the New Perspective school, John Dominic Crossan, even wrote that Paul as a Christian became "Rome's most dangerous opponent" (Crossan and Reed 2004, 9).

Similarly, Jo, when he embraced Kang Jeungsan's teachings, did not believe he had abandoned his family's ideals of a Korea freed from the Japanese, but insisted he had learned how to formulate them in a better, more spiritual way.

(3) Paul never met Jesus personally during Jesus's life on earth. Jo never met Kang personally during Kang's life on earth, although according to Daesoon Jinrihoe he came close to meeting him in the train episode.

(4) While Paul's path never crossed that of Jesus before the latter's death, he reported that one famous day, which historians place in 34 CE, while he was traveling to Damascus on his horse, Jesus appeared to him and asked him to work on his behalf. According to Christian scriptures, Jesus appeared endowed with divine power and the experience was so strong that Paul fell from his horse and became temporarily blind. In 1917, Jo also experienced the divine power of Kang Jeungsan, who appeared to him while he was in Manchuria and told him to work on his behalf. Both experiences completely changed the lives of the two men and determined their further course.

(5) Jesus told Paul to seek the Christian community, and Kang Jeungsan told Jo to seek his surviving relatives. It was not obvious that these encounters would be fruitful and that Paul and Jo, who after all had never personally met the founders of their new religions, would be accepted as men who had received a mission from divine revelation. These meetings were not easy. However, eventually Peter, Jesus's closest disciple, and James the Brother of Jesus did accept that Paul's mission was from the Lord, and Kang Jeungsan's mother, daughter, and sister accepted that Jo was the true successor of Kang in the religious orthodoxy.

(6) German Lutheran theologian Rudolf Bultmann (1884–1976) famously claimed that Paul was utterly uninterested in historical details about the life of Jesus. He

regarded as his main job to define theologically the divine status of Jesus as God and savior (Bultmann 1966). Among the New Perspective scholars, James Dunn has devoted considerable attention to criticizing Bultmann's theory, which in the meantime had been widely accepted (Dunn 1997, 84–85). Obviously, Paul's main focus was on building a theology of Jesus as the Son of God whose incarnation had brought salvation to humanity. However, when Paul started preaching and writing in 34 CE, most of those who had known Jesus were still alive. Paul was keen to insist that it was *that* Jesus of Nazareth they had met who was God incarnated. Jesus' life was important, not as a curiosity but as a way of grounding the Christian message in solid historical reality (Dunn 1997, 188).

Jo Jeongsan saw as his mission to clarify and explain why the Lord of the Ninth Heaven had to incarnate on earth as Kang Jeungsan exactly when and where he did, and how and why he performed the *Cheonji-gongsa* (Reordering Works of Heaven and Earth). However, to do this, Kang Jeungsan had to wander through Korea, gather disciples, talk to them, perform miraculous events, and establish institutions such as the Donggok Clinic. All this was not foreign to the *Cheonji-gongsa*, and its story had to be collected and told while those who had known Kang Jeungsan in its earthly incarnation were still alive.

(7) On one point those who follow the “old perspectives” dating back to the first quest for the historical Jesus in the 19th century and New Perspective scholars agree. The Christian Church as we know it would not exist without Paul. Jesus did appoint twelve apostles, a number based on the traditional division of Israel in twelve tribes, but never created a full-fledged hierarchical structure for his movement. His was a typical early charismatic phase, in needs to be consolidated after him by somebody willing and capable of routinizing Jesus' charisma and solidifying it into well-defined structures.

This somebody was Paul, although some scholars now claim 20th-century academic have dismissed too quickly other early Christian leaders, including Apostle Peter and James the Brother of Jesus. The latter created structures for Christians who had converted from Judaism, while Paul took the Gospel to Gentiles, i.e., to non-Jews. That Paul was phenomenally successful, while only a minority of Jews embraced Christianity, explains why later historians focused mostly on Paul. And, since the geographical scope of his mission was immense, Paul needed to create much more complicated structures.

For reasons of his own, Kang Jeungsan never really created a stable and strong organization. He did not even designate a successor during his lifetime. His was a loosely organized band of followers, which explains the competing claims to succession and leadership after his death. Jo was not the only one who tried to give solid structures to those recognizing Kang Jeungsan as the incarnated Supreme God. His work, however, proved to be the most solid and long-lasting. “Jeongsan played a major role in founding Daesoon thought by assimilating Confucian ideas with the teaching of

Kang Jeongsan, shamanism, and other religious traditions in Korea. Indeed, Jeongsan developed it into a distinctive form of ethics and spirituality in 1925” (Chung 2016, 86). “Jeongsan completed a systematic foundation through realizing the need for creating a new religious group. Jeongsan’s work provided a basic form of faith in God Sangje and established a discipline of study and spiritual cultivation” (Lee G. 2005, 266).

(8) All scholarship on Paul has among its main focuses his heated discussion with Peter, which at one stage threatened to destroy the young Christian Church. Paul’s converts were mostly Gentiles, i.e., non-Jews. He had proposed to them to become members of a new religion, Christianity, not to become Jews. Peter and others believed that all Christians should honor the Jewish matrix of the movement by submitting to circumcision and Jewish dietary laws. After a long discussion, Peter realized that this would have halted the sustained growth of Christianity among non-Jews, since some of them were hostile to Judaism for political reasons and would never accept to adopt typically Jewish practices. He accepted Paul’s point of view, with the result that Christianity, once and for all, was defined as a new religion rather than as a sub-sect of Judaism (Bockmuehl 2007).

Jo Jeongsan also insisted that his religion was not only for Koreans. Kang Jeongsan had reordered and saved the whole universe, not just Korea. On the other hand, Jo’s movement maintained several quintessentially Korean distinctive traits. Just as Paul, his successors in Daesoon Jinrihoe would struggle to make it into a truly universal movement, through a process that is still going on today and perhaps has not yet been completed.

(9) When local Jewish leaders tried to kill Paul as an apostate who had betrayed Judaism to join Christianity, the local Roman authorities saved him. He might have been pro-independence, but his family had connections and he had obtained the prized Roman citizenship. It is probable that Romans saw at that time Christianity as a sect of Judaism and an internal problem of the Jews.

When, however, it became clear that Paul was converting Romans by the thousands to a new religion with universal claims, challenging the Empire’s official religion of the traditional Roman gods, Imperial authorities became more alarmed. Christianity was persecuted and Paul eventually arrested and executed in Rome at a date around 65 CE.

Another colonial power, Japan, was similarly alarmed by Jo’s activities, and dissolved Mugeuk-do after having harassed its devotees in various ways. Although, unlike Paul, Jo was not executed, there is little doubt that the Japanese tried to put a halt to his movement (DIRC 2016, 205).

(10) The authority of Paul as an Apostle speaking in the name of Jesus was not unanimously accepted. A completely alternative view of Christianity, Gnosticism, started developing during his lifetime. A subset of studies about Paul is called Corinthian Studies, and focuses on the seven years he spent mostly in Corinth, in present-

day Greece, from 50 to 57 CE. In that city, there were different factions recognizing alternative leaders as authorized to speak in the name of Jesus, and the original Apostles, who were far away, and were not able to control the situation (Burke and Elliott 2003).

Just as it happened to Christianity, the movement recognizing Kang Jeungsan as the incarnated Supreme God went into an extremely complicated story of divisions and schisms. Some believe it divided into more than 100 religious orders. While Jo is at the origin of the largest order, his role was by no means unchallenged.

(11) Schisms within Christianity became even worse after Paul's death. At least among Gentile (non-Jewish) converts, Paul's authority was widely, although not unanimously, acknowledged. After he died, the late first and the second century CE saw a profusion of new schisms. As mentioned earlier, some years after Jo's death, his followers divided between those who recognized Park Wudang as his successor (Daesoon Jinrihoe), and those who kept the name Tageuk-do and claimed Jo's mantle had been passed to his son Jo Yongnae. Further schisms followed, continuing after Park's death (see Introvigne 2018, 31–33).

Conclusion

We should, once again, note that Paul of Tarsus and Jo Jeongsan lived in very different historical contexts. Some distinction should be made to avoid anachronisms. For example, the Jewish resentment against Roman domination was not expressed through the category of "colonialism," which certainly did not exist at this time. Jewish and Christian rituals were different from those prevailing in Kang Jeungsan's and Jo Jeongsan's Korea, and so on.

Yet, our starting point has been the sequence first founder/second founder as articulated by modern scholars of religion. I argued that the model inspiring these sequences, even when applied to figures of the 19th and 20th centuries, is the relationship between Jesus and Paul, which from the early 20th century had become a frequent theme of discussion and controversy for Western historians of religions.

Rather than comparing Jo Jeongsan to other "second founders," I found it more interesting to look for parallels, while not ignoring the differences, with the original model for all "second founder" theories, Paul of Tarsus. I believe the similarities I identified to be significant.

The question is what we learn about Jo Jeongsan from this parallel. The emic view of religionists tends to emphasize the uniqueness of each religion's sacred history (Pike 1999). Emic perspectives should not be lightly dismissed by scholars. We learn a lot from them, and may identify what in each tradition devotees regard as essential, which may well coincide with what makes a new religion successful (Stark and Finke

2000, 257–258). Yet, etic perspectives by outside scholars may also contribute to understanding a religious tradition. Emic views rarely include comparisons, except to absorb previous religious figures as “precursors” of the founders. Christians assumed in this way John the Baptist into their sacred narrative, and Daesoon Jinrihoe did the same with Choe Je-u. Jesuit Catholic missionary to Asia, Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), also found a place in Jeungsanist sacred history leading to the advent of Kang Jeungsan (Chong 2016, 50). In his 1923 “Decree,” Jo also mentioned Confucius, Buddha Shakyamuni, and Jesus in his numerological history of the world culminating in the incarnation of Sangje as Kang Jeungsan.

All these, however, are not comparative analysis of a tradition, and are typical of emic narratives where previous religions, when not dismissed, are presented as “preparations” for the revelation of the fullness of truth. Scholars, unlike religionists, use a value-free and theologically neutral comparative method, emphasizing similarities between different traditions and learning from them. In a way, all religions are unique. From another point of view, none is, as they include elements from older traditions and interact with society along patterns that tend to repeat themselves in history.

In the comparison between Jo Jeongsan and Paul of Tarsus, we find a confirmation that many if not most religions proceed from an early charismatic phase associate with the founder to what some have called a post-charismatic period after he or she dies (Miller 1991), and the Jeungsanist tradition leading to Daesoon Jinrihoe is no exception. But “post-charismatic” may not be the right term, since figures such as Paul of Tarsus and Jo Jeongsan (or Deguchi Onisaburo or Brigham Young) are in themselves charismatic, although in a different way from the founders they succeeded.

Jo Jeongsan’s trials, tribulations, and successes confirm that second founders are often essentials in systematizing and institutionalizing (which is more than “routinizing”) the charisma of the first founder. Without an effective second founder, new religions may decline or disappear. That Daesoon Jinrihoe also had a “third founder,” Park Wudang, is a matter deserving further and separate investigation.

Conflict of Interest

Massimo Introvigne has been a Honorary Editor of *JDTREA* since July 2021 but had no role in the decision to publish this article. No potential conflict of interest relevant to this article was reported.

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Reflections on Civilization, Modernity, and Religion in Light of the Fellowship of the Truth

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Abstract

This essay analyzes the meaning of “modern civilization” and the ways it relates to religion conceived as a “The Fellowship of Daesoon Truth (Daesoon Jinrihoe).” We take the expression “Fellowship of Truth” in the broadest sense as indicative of a human companionship with the true nature of the Real. We therefore understand the term to be practically equivalent with the concept of “religion” as connoting the ideas of bond, relationship, debt, and duty toward the Ultimate Reality, toward fellow human beings, and toward the cosmos in general. On this basis, our intent is to assess the nature and limits of the relationship between religion as a fellowship of the Truth and the tenets of modern civilization. Within this overarching perspective, the case of Daesoon Jinrihoe is particularly significant and fruitful for two sets of reasons. Firstly, this is so because Daesoon is typically branded a “new religious movement” open to modernity while it is also true that at least some of its representatives are wary of the negative implications of the modern world. Secondly, the significance of a study of Daesoon in light of the notion of religion as a “The Fellowship of the Truth” lies in that it asserts being rooted in tradition, which raises the question of its relationship with modernity.

Keywords: Modernity; Religion; Civilization; Individualism; Tradition;
Fellowship of the Truth; Ecology

Introduction

The purpose of this essay is to analyze the meaning of “modern civilization,” its main features and principles, and the ways it relates to religion conceived as a “fellowship of the Truth.” This is a crucial and pressing matter as there cannot be a consistent and effective religious positioning in the contemporary world that does not strive to understand the principles and values of the latter. Moreover, in order to be fruitful, the inquiry into this relationship must be made within the framework of the fundamentals of both modernity and religious consciousness. The following pages are therefore focused, first of all, on a definitional analysis of both terms. We take the expression “Fellowship of Truth” in the broadest sense as indicative of a human companionship, and even kinship, with the true nature of the Real (Dobbs 1991, 444).¹

We therefore understand the term to be practically equivalent with the concept of “religion” as connoting the ideas of bond, relationship, debt, and duty toward the Ultimate Reality, toward fellow human beings, and toward the cosmos in general. The notion of fellowship obviously points to commonality and unity, and includes everyone and everything within the all-encompassing circle of existence and meaning. On this basis, our intent is to assess the nature and limits of the relationship between religion as a fellowship of the Truth and the tenets of modern civilization. Within this overarching perspective, the case of Daesoon Jinrihoe (The Fellowship of Daesoon Truth) is particularly significant and fruitful for two sets of reasons. Firstly, this is so because Daesoon (Olson and Wilson 1984, 214)² is typically branded a “new religious movement” open to modernity³ while it is also true that at least some of its representatives are wary of the negative implications of the modern world (Ko YW 2021). Secondly, the significance of a study of Daesoon in light of the notion of religion as a “Fellowship of the Truth” lies in that it asserts being rooted in the Far-Eastern traditions -although not being limited to them-, the perspective of which is undoubtedly religious in the most general sense of a metaphysics of Transcendence providing the foundation for a sense of universal and cosmic unity.

This essay will be divided into two parts. The first section is devoted to a thorough elucidation of the concept of “modern civilization.” This is a methodological imperative since the term “modernity” has accrued all kinds of denotations and connotations that must be closely and critically analyzed in order to do justice to its meaningful use in a historical and religious context. Thus, this section offers extensive definitional, historical and critical developments. Secondly, we will analyze some of the ways in which Daesoon Jinrihoe relates to modern civilization as understood through the substantial analyses unfolded in the first section. The case of Daesoon Jinrihoe is highly relevant and meaningful in so far as it provides, among contemporary religious movements, a particularly rich array of integration of modern ways and means of action and social

presence, as testified by the academic and medical contribution of its institutions within modern day Korea, while being grounded in a theology that builds upon the Far-Eastern traditional spiritual movements from the past, as demonstrated by its creative assimilation of the architectural and aesthetic Korean heritage. Our inquiry will lead us, in this second section, to meditate upon some of the challenges and opportunities that arise from this dual character of Daesoon Jinrihoe.

1.a. Is There a Modern Civilization?

First of all, it is necessary, methodologically, to examine the possible meanings of the words "modern civilization." It must be admitted, in this regard, that the expression is something of a question. In point of fact, while one routinely refers to a Hindu civilization, a Christian civilization, a Greco-Roman civilization, one may justifiably wonder what is meant by modern civilization. A civilization is ordinarily identified with a particular area of geographical expansion, whether within a region of the globe or sometimes even across continents, and secondarily with a historical period during which it has flourished. Civilizations grow and reach a state of maturity and perfection. They can also die, as many civilizations from the past which utterly disappeared from human history. Whatever might be its geographical and historical extension what makes a civilization unique derives from a specific worldview, and from recognizable cultural productions deriving from it more or less directly. The Alhambra is a recognizable emblem of the Islamic civilization as the Forbidden City is one of the Chinese civilization. Indeed, the identity of civilizations has always been connected to a religious or an ethico-spiritual tradition; hence references to a Buddhist civilization, an Islamic civilization, a Confucian civilization, and so forth.

In this regard, the concept of "modern civilization" is one of a kind: it does not appear to entail specific or exclusive geographic or ethno-cultural areas, nor does it seem to be associated with a particular religion or spiritual ethics; in fact, it will be argued further on that one of its chief characteristics lies in its secular character. It may be defined in time, but not in space, since modernity, as a set of values and practices, while being arguably born in Europe, has by now reached virtually the entire world. In writing "modernity," however, one must be careful to specify that this term is not necessarily synonymous with "modern civilization." In other words, it could be argued that modernity may simply be one of the components of a given civilization, or perhaps merely a late accretion to it, without characterizing it exhaustively. Most of the Confucian world today, in China, Korea, Japan, for instance, has gone through a process of modernization; this means that many if not most of the cultural and social practices of these parts of world have "modernized" and that their economy and way of life has met or exceeded the standards of what we call today "development." However,

it is fair to say that many people in East Asia would not consider that this modernization has necessarily amounted to losing their Confucian civilizational identity; as is shown, for instance, with Singapore's ideological distinction between "modernization" and "Westernization." (Zhang W.B. 1999). To the extent that modernization may be conceived as a primarily instrumental or functional process, some would argue that it does not essentially impact the moral and spiritual tenets of a particular civilization. Thus, in such a view, industrialization and democratization, while being part and parcel of the modern model, do not in and of themselves run contrary to Confucian tenets, or Hindu or Islamic principles. According to this way of seeing, there is a danger in mistakenly equating Westernization with modernization simply because the latter has its historical roots in Europe, and inasmuch as Europe and the West have been the standard bearers of specifically modern values and practices.

1.b. The Advent and Unfolding of Modernity

Notwithstanding this fact, it is undeniable that the origin of what is called modern civilization is to be found in Western Europe, and most specifically in post-medieval Europe. A number of historical stages may be outlined in this process: the 15-16th century Renaissance and Reformation, the 16th-17th century Scientific Revolution, the 18th century Enlightenment and the 19th century Industrial Revolution, together with the 19th and 20th century revolutions and socio-political upheavals that led to the gradual dominance of democratic principles and values.

First, moving away from the theocentric universe of meaning of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance was characterized by a shift toward humanism. The specific meaning of the term in the Renaissance connects it to a desire to return to the Antiquity conceived as a kind of antidote to the Middle Ages. More broadly conceived, however, the term humanism is difficult to define, and has had a long history of complex semantic transformation. However, it is reasonable to characterize it, with Stephen Law, as encompassing a belief in science and reason, a this-worldly focus free from religious commitments, an emphasis on social morality, and a faith in the moral autonomy of humans and the democratic institutions that are thought to foster it (Law 2011, 1-2). In parallel to this humanist move of focus on the human qua human, the Renaissance also highlighted a shift toward the individual as locus of the newly discovered sense of independence from God and His cosmos. Thus, the great historian of the Renaissance Jakob Burckhardt considered that the chief value of the Renaissance era was individualism (Black, 2001, 1),⁴ an individualism that what consonant with what Jules Michelet called "the discovery of the world and man." It was therefore, according to Michelet, "a rediscovery of his [man] own self. (Caferro 2011)" This does not mean, of course, that the world and man were not known before, but they were rarely if ever

envisioned irrespective of their metaphysical, theological and cosmic context. What was new with the Renaissance, therefore, was simply that the world was for the first time explored for its own sake, and not as a mere symbol of God's qualities. It also meant that the affirmation of human accomplishments grew increasingly independent from a sense of metaphysical dependence upon the order of the Biblical God. Geographical exploration and conquest were not simply instantiations of the human potential anymore, they became symbols of a new posture vis-à-vis the universe, and in a way also vis-à-vis God and other human beings. The Renaissance initiated a totally new perspective on the world and mankind, one that implied an indefinite exploration of the possible in the name of the unconstrained individual. With it, Europe arguably parted way with virtually the entire prior history of mankind, one that had been consistently predicated upon a sense of close and necessary interdependence between metaphysical realities and terrestrial experience. It is not exaggerated to say, therefore, that the Renaissance opened the way to an utterly new era in the history of mankind.

Needless to say, as it is always the case in times of major paradigm shift, not the whole of European Renaissance is reducible to such a radical severance from the past. The renewed focus on the pre-Christian heritage of Ancient, and particularly Greek, culture and thought involved, for instance, a revivification of Platonic philosophy and spirituality that reconnected with a sense of perennial wisdom. Such instances, illustrated by the works of Marsilio Ficino (1443-1499) and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494), were indicative of the depth of influence of the metaphysical and sapiential tradition and the complexities of a time when a resourcing into the Antiquity had more than one meaning and implication. Although it was in several ways quite antithetic to humanism in its emphasis on the fallen nature of mankind, the Reformation has also been credited, or indicted, for fostering a spirit of individualism in religious matters, as testified by its critical stance vis-à-vis the traditional and institutional aspects of the Church. In this connection also modern individualism began manifesting itself in the religious order in a way that ushered new specifically modern types of understanding religion.

Most often considered by historians to cover a period that runs from Nicolaus Copernicus' publication of *On the Revolutions of the Celestial Spheres* in 1543 to Isaac Newton's *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy* in 1687, the Scientific Revolution was undoubtedly another major step in the advent of modernity. Although some historians, like Betty Jo Teeter Dobbs (1991),⁵ have argued that the Scientific Revolution was not so much a revolution as a gradual and partial transformation that carried in its wake much of the previous metaphysical and epistemological paradigms of the past, most analysts consider this period to be marked by scientific breakthroughs that redefined science and paved the ground for the modern concept of science. Richard S. Westfall sees in the Scientific Revolution a new way of thinking about science and the world, one in which modernity is deeply steeped and without which one can

hardly understand its underpinnings and development. (Osler 2000, 3-4) Copernican heliocentrism and philosophical mechanism were undoubtedly the two most important breakthroughs in that regard. They redefined the status of the universe by supplanting traditional cosmology and the primacy of Divine causality. In his *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe*, Alexandre Koyré (1957) has carefully described the ways in which the finite and God-centered world of Galilean cosmology, with its spherical fixity and its qualitative archetypes, was replaced by the infinite time and space that have since then and until recently characterized the modern scientific imagination. The Scientific Revolution was moreover crowned by the ideological project of the 18th century Enlightenment. The metaphor of Light was here primarily connected to the symbolism of reason as casting out the darkness of unexamined religious prejudices and political arbitrariness. In his *What is Enlightenment?* Immanuel Kant saw Enlightenment as a metaphor for the maturity of mankind breaking away from laziness and cowardice; the laziness of passive ignorance and indifference to the truth, and the cowardice keeping one from going beyond the sphere of one's comfort. He encapsulated the whole Enlightenment project in the Latin motto "*sapere aude!*", "dare to know!" (Kant 2009, 1) The passivity of pre-Enlightenment mankind had led human beings to rely on others without critical examination. This was the "curse" of tradition. As a response, the rational investigation of reality became a duty for all individuals inasmuch as every human being is endowed with reason. However, Kant recognized that only a few were ready to make the effort to actualize their rational abilities: so, the Enlightenment project needed be universal in its scope but elitist in its modalities of development. Besides human laziness it is the lack of freedom that had hampered human development. Freedom was therefore deemed to be the condition of the growth of human maturity: "The public use of man's reason must always be free, and it alone can bring about enlightenment among men" (Kant 2009, 3). Thus, the philosophical and scientific dimensions of the Enlightenment met with political requirements. The ideal of the enlightened prince was introduced in this respect as the best guarantee of this freedom, curbing as it could "religious immaturity [which] is the most pernicious and dishonorable variety of all" (Kant 2009, 7).

The breakthroughs of the Scientific Revolution and their ideological contextualization within the context of the Enlightenment led to the full emergence, in the 19th century, of what could be called their practical translation, i.e., the Industrial Revolution. The latter contributed to alter the socio-economic structure of Europe in a radical way, with the appearance of the industrial proletariat and the 20th century gradual transformation of Western Europe from an agrarian society into an industrial one. The rural exodus experienced by many European societies had all kinds of socio-cultural consequences that were instrumental in promoting modernity. Needless to say, the 19th century was also the time of the emergence of democracy as an ideal and as a system of government.

The notions of liberty and equality that were championed by the French Revolution, and exported throughout Europe, left an indelible mark on the modern project. They became indeed, although not without tensions between their respective implications, the ideological foundations of modern societies. The advent of democracy as a political ideal, and further on a kind of political norm, has been part and parcel of what modernity is thought to entail.

Modernity, with its emphasis on rationality and experimental sciences, focus on socio-political progress toward civil equality and liberty, meant therefore a rupture from traditional representations of the world and socio-political practices. A new concept of the world emerged that marked a moving away from traditional cosmologies based on the principle of a divine and intelligible order of the universe, to a world of quantifiable and experientable physical reality. Observation and quantification were substituted to a prior apprehension of reality primarily founded on the intuition of symbolic qualities. In parallel to this cosmological upheaval, the socio-political revolutions of the modern era were also designed to break the molds of the hierarchical orders of the past. It must be added that one of the major consequences of the Industrial Revolution was the expansion of the colonial enterprise. That which was originally motivated, among other factors, for the exploitation of natural resources needed to fuel the European industrial impetus did not only, at a first stage, result in the subjection of many African and Asian countries, but also at a later stage to the modernization of those parts of the world – both in terms of industrialized development and the modification of mentalities –, particularly following their rise to political independence. This, among many other factors, accounts for the fact that what we call “modern civilization” is obviously not confined to Europe or North America. There are modern ways of being, creating and acting on all continents. Let us take the example of skyscrapers, which are architectural emblems of modernity: they are to be found everywhere in the world, in New York, Shanghai, Johannesburg and Dubai.

1.c. The Values of Modern Civilization

The concept of a modern civilization represents, therefore, a break from the ordinary understanding of the term civilization, and it may even suggest a new understanding of what the word itself means. Etymologically the adjective “modern” derives from the Latin expression *modo bodierno* which can be literally rendered as “according to today's way”. The term does not imply principles or values of any kind, but simply refers to circumstances of time. To say that a principle is modern signifies, in this etymological sense that it belongs to today's world. One difficulty with this, of course, is that today's world also includes remnants of civilizations that would not be characterized as modern, but rather as archaic or traditional. Who is to say that the ways of the indigenous

people of Borneo, for instance, are not “modern” in this later sense? And still very few people would count these cultural ways as modern in the ideological sense of the term, or even less so as “modernist.” Another obvious difficulty is that the past itself used to be “today.” It means that any period in human history could be characterized as “modern” inasmuch as it experiences reality in conformity with its current assumptions. However, some would object that such an understanding of the term makes it virtually meaningless. It does not allow us, most importantly, to understand the specificity of our modernity, and the impact of the various ideologies that have coalesced around it. Past eras might have been literally “modern” in their own time, but they most often did not conceive of themselves as fundamentally different from other historical periods, or if they did so, it was not on account of their time but in terms of their principles, values and practices. Thus, even when a radical chasm appeared between past and present, such as happened at the time of the appearances of Christianity and Islam, for instance, the difference was not thought in historical terms, but in religious or philosophical ones.

Modernity, therefore, may be characterized as a way to value the state of affairs, sensibilities and ways of thinking and living of the present inasmuch as the present is conceived as axiologically superior and morally preferable to the past. In other words, the modernist valuing of the present is based on a sense that it is fundamentally different from the past, and that the changes it involves are the very marks of its positive eminence. In this view, time is in truth a measure of progress. Indeed, the modern understanding of civilization is generally informed by progressivism that is by the view that the direction of human history is primarily ascending. To wit, in most modern representations the past is conceived as relatively unenlightened, and as constricting human possibilities. By contrast, modern civilization is conceived and felt as a catalyst for changes and for a full development of human potentialities. Now, obviously, the concept of any betterment presupposes, in any domain, a specific understanding of the good, and such an understanding, in its turn, entails a set of priorities in life. The good can be defined in very various ways depending on one’s philosophical vantage point: the good of a Marxist is likely to differ, for instance, from that of a Christian.

As a way to sum up the previous considerations on modernity, it is fruitful to mention, as a powerfully representative modern characterization of the progressive good, Auguste Comte’s notion of “positivism” (Lenzer 2009, 74).⁶ The 19th century French philosopher defined modernity as the “positive age” that follows the “theological” and “metaphysical” eras. Modern civilization, in that sense, is founded on the outgrowing of past beliefs in the transcendent, whether in religious or philosophical terms, and on an exclusive reliance on reason and experimental sciences as “positive” ones, that is as ways of knowledge that bring about progress for humans and society. Furthermore, the term “positive” entails verifiable knowledge and the rejection of what are conceived as mere

metaphysical hypotheses or beliefs. This is, for Comte, as it was for Kant, the attainment of philosophical maturity. Thus, in the wake of the Enlightenment and the 19th century faith in science and progress, a trust in rationality as the supreme tool of human knowledge became a definite marker of modernity. For thinkers of the Enlightenment reason was essential in debunking obscurantism and what they considered to be the unexamined and unchecked power of religious dogma and phenomena.

As we have seen, another major aspect of modern civilization has appeared in the quest for socio-political equality and liberty. As the belief in science, the faith in democratic values is based on a view of rationality as foundation of human progress. Each individual is an independent locus of reason, which he or she has a right – and in a sense a duty – to exercise. Society must not be founded on mere traditions and collective conventions; it must not seek the good of society at the expense of individuals. Each individual is endowed, as an instance of deliberative reason, with unalienable rights that place him or her at the center of the socio-political structures and values. Trust in reason is connected to individualism in so far as only rational deliberation can provide a philosophical foundation for the primacy of the individual, while the latter is, in return, a guarantee of the free exercise of the former.

2.a. Religion, Modernity and the Fellowship of the Truth

Having laid solid historical, philosophical and critical foundations for our inquiry into modern civilization we are now in a position to address the question of its relationship with the religious and ethical ideals of Daesoon Jinrihoe. How does religion relate to modern values, and what can we learn about this relationship through the principles and beliefs of Daesoon Jinrihoe? The first point to make in this respect, is that Daesoon Jinrihoe, like many new religious movements, does not appear to experience any sense of conflict with the ideological premises of the modern belief in experimental sciences. Some may wonder why it is so, or whether this should be counted as an intrinsic aspect of its identity. A first possible way to understand this position is by considering one of the main principles of Daesoon, *Boeun-sangsaeng*, a fundamental virtue that amounts to cultivating gratitude for the gifts of life. It may be that Daesoon Jinrihoe beliefs entail a religious celebration of “modern civilization” in the way of being grateful for the positive contributions of modern sciences and technology; the progress of medicine, for instance, could not but inspire a sense of thankfulness that is aligned with the fellowship of the Truth. Moreover, in this view of things, the technological applications of science would be means of providing enhanced service to mankind on the way to *Haewon-sangsaeng*, the rectification of the world for mutual beneficence. Thus, Sangje held that “the facilities of civilization invented by the Westerners [...] have been modeled after those in Heaven.” (*Reordering Works* 1: 35)⁷ Is this statement to be understood literally,

meaning that technological devices exist in a higher way in Heaven, or is it simply meant to refer to the principle that any technical device has a given intelligibility and a practical utility that have their source in the transcendent world, in the way nothing good cannot but be present in the Good? This would be akin, in a different philosophical context, to Plato's idea that all realities must have archetypes in the Realm of Divine Forms, since they are but reflections of higher realities (Cornford 1951, 82-83). At any rate Sangje's assertion would seem to suggest that no human invention is negative in itself, since its discovery is founded on a positive aspect of reality. The only question, pertaining to ethics, lies in knowing whether mankind makes a good or a bad use of it.

Besides this religious sense of gratitude for existence, there is another way in which Daesoon might be deemed to reveal affinities with some aspects of the modern ethos; i.e., the principle that all humans should be regarded with respect irrespective of their social standing. This is deeply grounded in the ideal of *Haewon-sangsaeng*. (Baker 2008, 88).⁸ This principle may be considered to echo the modern democratic ideal, if by democracy is meant a fair and just socio-political treatment of all. As we have seen earlier, democracy as a set of values -which is not always synonym with a specific political regime- has been an integrating part of modern ways of thinking. The fact that civil and social justice might not be the privilege of democratic institutions, as is shown by the cases of apostolic religions in their early phases, and that such modern institutions may even fall short of their own ideals, can undoubtedly serve to qualify the aforementioned connection. It remains nevertheless true that no other civilization has ever been as concerned with matters of socio-economic equality as the modern world. Traditional religions would certainly highlight the principle of justice and call for a charitable treatment of the poor and the oppressed, but they would also insist on the fact that social inequalities are part and parcel of the world below such as it is, and that only spiritual elevation or interiorization can free humans from evil, including socio-political evil. Furthermore, even though traditional civilizations recognized the principles of justice and the need for a fair treatment of all in social matters, they not uncommonly sacrificed the rights of individuals to collective, organic or transcendent imperatives. By contrast, modern individualism does not suffer in principle any such *de facto* tolerance of socio-political evil, even though it can hardly eliminate it from society in practice.

There is, finally, in Daesoon Jinrihoe, a millenarist view, that is the expectation of a redeeming future that, as a consequence of this view of history, places great emphasis on the present and on individuals as agents of realization of the Good to come. In this view, the present is the necessary starting point of a brighter future, and only the individual can carry out the spiritual and ethical changes needed for the fulfilment of *Haewon-sangsaeng*. Even though the ideal of the moral culmination of history lies ahead in the future as a collective and cosmic reality, its realization is contingent

upon an active focus on the present, and therefore requires a full engagement of one's individual responsibility. The seeds of the future are planted in the present, and the latter must therefore be recognized as pregnant with positive potentialities.

2.b. Traditional Roots of the Fellowship of Truth

While the three characteristics of Daesoon philosophy that have just been sketched may be deemed to reveal some zones of convergence with important aspects of modernity, this recognition should not prevent one from highlighting some significant differences in their respective context and meaning. In the sections that follow, we would like to suggest that the affinities between Daesoon Jinrihoe and “modern civilization” must not lead one to ignore some important questions, not to say challenges, tensions and contradictions, that a careful consideration of modernity cannot but reveal when confronted with religion as a “Fellowship of the Truth.”

Let us note, first of all, that Daesoon Jinrihoe asserts its being “rooted in tradition.”⁹ This means that it fosters principles and ways of being that are common to the traditional religions of the Far East.

This traditional heritage is quite visible in the ways in which Daesoon Jinrihoe has been keen to integrate the aesthetic values of the Korean traditions. Thus, for instance, the architecture of Daesoon religious edifices reflects the principles, forms and colors of the Korean norms as exemplified in Buddhist temples. Ceremonies are performed with strict ritual physical postures that are in consonance with East Asian devotional forms, and the celebrants wear the traditional *hanbok* rather than the Western suits originating from the European bourgeois culture of the 19th century. Moreover, the Daesoon view of the universe is parallel to the East Asian view of a hierarchy of degrees of reality, with Kang Jeungsan being the supreme God of the Ninth Heaven. The “ninth heaven” (九天, *jiūtiān*) is indeed the highest heaven in traditional Chinese cosmology. This Heaven had also a very central position in traditional Korean eschatology, as it was thought to be the domain of Sangje, the Supreme God (Rhee HB 2007, 37).¹⁰ For our current purpose it is enough to stress, therefore, that Daesoon metaphysics and Daesoon cosmology postulate the existence of higher realms of being behind or beyond the physical domain investigated by experimental sciences, and therefore out of their epistemic reach.

Grounded in this metaphysical view of reality and the cosmos, Daesoon Jinrihoe envisions a spiritual goal that echoes the Daoist view of “the true state of ‘Self as Dao and Dao as Self,’” that is the perfection of enlightenment and the key to all knowledge. It is called *Dotong-jingyeong* (道通真境) (*Progress of the Order* 1: 41).¹¹ “Rooted in tradition” also means that Daesoon Jinrihoe strives to “rectify the disorder” of the world, since it aims at reestablishing norms of being that used to be prevalent before the world went awry by forgetting them. This is in consonance with the Buddhist view of Maitreya

Buddha, a future Buddha, who is actually identified by Daesoon with Kang Jeungsan. The latter Buddha's coming is understood as a restoration of the order and harmony that had been destroyed (*Prophetic Elucidations* 1: 79).¹²

Moreover, as a means of the aforementioned rectification of the world, Daesoon Jinrihoe provides a contemporary version of the values at work in the ethics of the Three Bonds and Five Relationships, which is parallel (or similar) to Confucian ethics. This appears very clearly in the two key-notions of *Haewon-sangsaeng* (*Reordering Works* 1: 3)¹³ and *Boeun-sangsaeng*, Grateful Reciprocation of Favors for Mutual Beneficence.¹⁴ The word *sangsaeng* is actually the positive counterpart of cosmic and human pathology, which is referred to as *Sanggeuk* (Baker 2008, 88).¹⁵ This term refers to human competition and strife that lead to conflict and oppression. By contrast the core reality of *Sangsaeng* lies in reciprocal relationship and interdependence, both so central also in Confucianism, which sees the self, in the words of Tu Wei Ming, as “far from being an isolated individuality, (being) experientially and practically a center of relationships” (Tu 1984, 243) Thus, fundamentals that have been incorporated and assimilated from Eastern traditional religions inform Daesoon Jinrihoe's perspective on reality: Divine transcendence and a cosmology founded on degrees of terrestrial and celestial reality, a spiritual goal of union with the Supreme, and beneficent reciprocity as a key to perfecting the world in harmony with mankind, the cosmos and the Divine realms.

2.c. Modernity and the Fellowship of the Truth: Challenges and Tensions

How do these traditional elements relate to modern civilization? The modern world that arose in the 19th century has been characterized first of all by a growing secularization of modes of thinking and being. It is distinguished secondarily, and in parallel, by a move from holistic to individualistic values. On the one hand, the God-centered universe was largely shattered, the traditional cosmological hierarchy of states of being, including hells and heavens, was deemed to be a superstitious remnant of an obsolete and unenlightened past. On the other hand, the utter dependence of the individual upon the cultural and social whole was called into question while its autonomy was stressed. In a way these two general developments may define the central tenets of modern civilization. If modern civilization can be characterized as secular and individualistic, then it is not exaggerated to suggest that the basic tenets of Daesoon Jinrihoe may be deemed to be in tension with modern civilization. We will briefly examine some of the aspects of this tension through a meditation on *Haewon-Sangsaeng* and *Boeun-sangsaeng*.

As we have highlighted earlier on, both terms involve the notion of *Sangsaeng*,

“reciprocal life-giving.” Life is defined in terms of giving and reciprocity in giving. In other words, giving is a human duty lived within a network of relationships. It is by giving that the self is perfected and participates in the whole. It can be argued that such an ethics differs from modern ethics based on individual rights. In her book entitled *The Need for Roots: Prelude to a Declaration of Duties towards Mankind* Simone Weil argued that the predicament of mankind and society should not be understood and resolved in terms of human rights, but in terms of human duties (Weil 2005, 18).¹⁶ Human duties are intrinsically relational, because they are necessarily oriented toward others – whether human others or society, nature, the cosmos –, they are “duties towards”, whereas rights remain self-centered – whether for individuals or groups – and may actually crystallize a sense of individualist affirmation and resentment. In a way, the accumulation of grievances is nothing else than the sedimentation of such individualistic claims. Thus, today's world tends to be one in which identities are increasingly experienced in terms of grievances, and exacerbated into states of frustration, depression or violence. Modernity is actually characterized, among other phenomena, by struggles for the resolution of historical and socio-political grievances which have to be settled through external legal and governmental means: class struggle, identity grievances, gender conflicts and many others.

How can modern mankind resolve this seemingly unending accumulation of grievances and resentment? According to Bae Kyu-han “*Haewon* is the resolution of the enmity and grievances that have accumulated in the realms of humanity and deities” (Bae 2018, 30). In Korean shamanism already, *Haewon-sangsaeng* has been a ritual response to Han, sorrowful rancor. It amounts to a spiritual treatment of the resentment and helplessness of grievance, one in which the individuals feel irredeemably left with their own misery and suffering. The *Minjung* theologian Younhak Hyun defines *Han* as a:

Feeling of unresolved resentment against injustices suffered, a sense of helplessness because of the overwhelming odds against one, a feeling of acute pain in one's guts and bowels, making the whole-body writhe and squirm, and an obstinate urge to take revenge and to right the wrong—all these combined (Kim and Ro 1984, 101).

This concept and all its emotional and moral implications are essential for reaching an understanding of Korean religion in general, and Daeseon Jinrihoe in particular.

Some may argue, along these lines, that the notions of reciprocal relationality and resolution of grievances are contrary to the individualism that characterizes modernity, at least in some of its concomitant features. On this point, the sociologist Louis Dumont's analyses can be useful. The originality and fruitfulness of Dumont's interpretation is that it defines individualism as a secularization of the Christian

“individual-outside-of-the world” (Dumont 1992, 27)¹⁷ For Dumont, to say that early Christians were centered on the love and worship of the God of Jesus-Christ, means that they were individuals “outside-of-the-world”: they did not belong to the Roman pagan world not only because they did not share its values and practices, but also because they were intrinsically independent from the world itself through their faith: “My Kingdom is not of this world.” (*John* 18:36). Christians' relationship with a transcendent God was the crux of their identity. Thus, they did not define themselves primarily as a member of a social whole, as did the Romans and other Ancient people. Dumont argues that this shift towards the individual in relation to transcendence has continued to provide a pattern for further individualistic values even after its religious foundations have collapsed. The modern individualistic concept of the self might be bereft of a sense of divine transcendence, but it rests on a higher value placed on the individual than on the socio-cultural whole. It is therefore a secularized version of the Christian perspective.

Now let us consider Daesoon Jinrihoe's principles in light of this distinction between individualism and holism. The first principle to invoke here is *Eumyang-hapdeok* (陰陽合德), or the harmony of *yin* and *yang*. As is well known, yin and yang are the two complementary cosmological principles which, in East Asian traditional thought, embrace and sustain the whole range of existence. These two principles lie at the foundation of all relations, which means that the whole range of cosmic and social realities is relational. Relationship, the essence of relative existence, is never one-sided, and never confined to the individual and its aspirations. It presupposes an ideal of mutual dependence in which the self cannot be realized simply in its own terms. This appears furthermore in the principle of *Boeun-sangsaeng* that entails not disregarding the favors offered to you and promoting the betterment of others. It means literally to repay with gratitude. This is depicted symbolically by the painting of a son who “hurries out on bare feet to welcome his father coming back from work in the forest.” This sense of gratitude for the gifts of nature and culture is to be found, in one way or another, in all religions. *Au contraire*, many religions understand ingratitude and lack of contentment as the causes of sins and suffering in so far as it amounts to a form of atheism in action, since it does not recognize the Giver in the gifts. By contrast, gratitude for the gifts of God is particularly emphasized, for instance, in the three Abrahamic traditions. In the Bible the Prophet David dances out of joy for the graces received from God, and more specifically in celebration of the Ark of God. (*2 Samuel* 6)¹⁸ In Islam, shukr or thanking God is considered one of the chief virtues, and indeed the deepest meaning of religion (Numani 1999, 369).¹⁹ Even God is thankful or appreciative, one of His Names is *ash-Shakur*, the Appreciative (Cragg 2009, 63).²⁰

Daesoon Jinrihoe makes *Boeun-sangsaeng* particularly central to its perspective because it is an ethical and spiritual key to the resolution of grievances. *Boeun-*

sangsaeng is connected to a sense of debt towards the Divine, and by extension towards fellow humans and the whole of creation. *Boeun* (報恩) begins with the smallest things and extends to the entire universe. It links all the degrees and realms of humanity and reality. It works as a powerful and necessary contribution to *Haewon-sangsaeng*, as it is the key to the harmonious transformation of the relationship between the Divine and the human, *Sinin-jobwa* (神人調化). The four Chinese characters that form *Sinin-jobwa* refer respectively to God, mankind, tuning and change. They indicate the need for a modification in the way mankind and the Divine relate. This suggests that it is by resolving the disorder of society and the world that mankind plays a central role as cosmic mediator (王) and reaches spiritual perfection, thereby actualizing a kind of universal Jubilee. This ideal of universal balance through just and appropriate interactions is ultimately grounded in the patterns of *yin-yang* cosmology: "Every affair in Heaven and Earth is accomplished amid *yin* and *yang*; the order of all things is achieved amid *yin* and *yang*. Heaven and Earth makes change happen through *yin* and *yang*; Gods and humans make creation happen through *yin* and *yang*" (*Progress of the Order* 2: 42). This is nothing else than the realization of the Fellowship of the Truth in its wider cosmic context.

We would like to conclude these considerations by a brief consideration of one of the domains in which this harmony with "the spirit beings of the universe" has been shattered, and in relation to which Daesoon Jinrihoe is presented with remarkable cultural and spiritual opportunities: the relationship with nature. Indeed it can be argued that the contemporary environmental crisis is an urgent invitation to consider the necessity of a restoration of the Fellowship of the Truth. Cosmic harmony and the treatment of nature are profoundly linked, and a serious meditation on the former can offer keys for the current ecological challenges. *Haewon-sangsaeng* is a universal principle that encompasses all beings, even beyond the confines of mankind, it must therefore be placed at the forefront of any serious reflection and plan of action in relation to the ecological crisis. In this inclusive sense, religion entails not only a fellowship of mankind and Heaven, and one of humans in relation to each other, but also one with the cosmos, including nature. Gratitude and respect for *Tian* (天) also means gratitude and respect for *Di* (地). On the one hand nature is one element in the chain of beings, on the other hand it is a fellow of mankind. Investigating the historical roots of the environmental crisis would lead one to unveil a forgetfulness of these two principles as mankind has moved away from a holistic experience of the world. As E.F. Schumacher put it in his *Small is Beautiful*: "Modern man does not experience himself as a part of nature but as an outside force destined to dominate and conquer it. He even talks of a battle with nature, forgetting that if he won the battle, he would find himself on the losing side" (Schumacher 1999, 4). Thus, the urgency of the environmental crisis might be a pressing invitation to revisit the foundations of modern civilization in light of the "Fellowship of the Truth."

Conflict of Interest

Patrick Laude has been on the Editorial Board of *JDTEA* since July 2021 but had no role in the decision to publish this article. No potential conflict of interest relevant to this article was reported.

Notes

- ¹ We take the words “the Real,” in the wake of theologians such as John Hick, to refer to the Ultimate and Transcendent Reality that sub-rates any other reality and is sub-rated by none: “Such terms as the Real, the Ultimate, Ultimate Reality are commonly used to refer to this supposed *ne plus ultra*. None of them will suit everybody’s linguistic taste. Accepting this I propose, arbitrarily, to speak of the Real, corresponding as it does in some degree to the Sanskrit *sat*, the Arabic *Al Haqq*, and the Chinese *zhen*.”
- ² In fact, the word *Daesoon* denotes the idea of circle and connotes the all-encompassing circles of co-dependence that bind the entire universe and are entirely “surveyed” and “visited” by the Divine Reality. This central idea echoes Shamanistic concepts, as we find its equivalent in primordial religions such as those of Native American Indians, and this should come as no surprise since Taoism, one of the traditional soils of Daesoon, is sometimes taken to belong to the Shamanistic family of tradition, given its emphasis on nature and transformation.
- ³ This is the case especially, but not exclusively, in terms of the integration of science and technology in the service component of the Daesoon ethics.
- ⁴ “The spirit of the age in Renaissance Italy was easy for Burckhardt to identify. Its distinguishing stamp was individualism, a quality which he proceeded to relate to the various aspects of Italian culture from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century.”
- ⁵ Dobbs (1991) was primarily known for her study of Newton’s alchemical thought.
- ⁶ “The human understanding, slow in its advance, could not step at once from the theological into the positive philosophy. The two are so radically opposed that an intermediate system of conceptions has been necessary to render the transition possible. It is only in doing this that metaphysical conceptions have any utility whatever.”
- ⁷ “One day, Sangje said to Gyeong-Seok, “You have followed My words before, but I will follow yours when conducting today’s Reordering Works. Thus, think carefully and answer My questions as you are asked.” Sangje asked him, “Which one is right, between leaving the facilities of civilization invented by the Westerners as they are or getting rid of them?” Gyeong-Seok answered, “To be left just as they are will be good for the people.” Sangje said he was right, adding that “Their machines have been modeled after those in Heaven.” He asked him more questions and then decided on the Reordering Works.”
- ⁸ “*Haewon* means relieving the resentment human beings past and present have felt because they were treated unfairly. Particularly aggrieved are women and the poor, because, according to Daesun Jinrihoe, Confucianism and other hierarchical, patriarchal philosophies have forced them to subordinate their own wants and needs to the desires of their overlords. To alleviate such resentment, members of Daesun Jinrihoe are told to treat women and the poor of today with respect and to conduct appropriate rituals to relieve the resentment of the spirits of those mistreated in the past.”
- ⁹ <http://eng.daesoon.org/app/en/introduction/aboutus>. (Accessed June 9, 2020).
- ¹⁰ “Ancient Koreans believed that human spirits returned to the Ninth Heaven after death. In East Asia, including China, the belief that nine is a very important number for destiny originated in ancient Korean millenarian teaching. Ancient East Asians believed that there was 上帝 (*Sangje* in Korean, *Shangdi* in Chinese), or God. The Ancient Chosŏn Korean millenarian belief influenced Asian millenarism, including the later values of the Taiping and the Tonghak, to an important degree.”

- 11 “Sangje spoke [...]: I will send the line of Dao-unification (道通, *dotong*) to the great head. He will instruct people in the ways of Dao-unification. When it is the right time, all the gods of Dao-unification from Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism shall gather enabling people to achieve unification with the Dao, according to their degree of individual cultivation.”
- 12 This Messianism even extends to Jesus-Christ's second coming: “One day, Sangje said to Gong-Wu, ‘Believers in Eastern Learning are waiting for the resurrection of Choi Suwun (Choe Je-u). Believers in Buddhism are waiting for the coming of Maitreya. Believers in Christianity are waiting for the second advent of Christ. If a divinity comes into this world, everyone will follow him as their master.”
- 13 “Sangje said [...]: To save all the people in the world, I will resolve the grievances and grudges accumulated from time immemorial by recalibrating the Degree Number of Heaven and Earth, harmonizing divine beings, and establishing the Later World's paradisiacal land of immortals which will be based on the principle of mutual beneficence (相生, *sangsaeng*).”
- 14 The third tenet of Daesoon doctrine is “the resolution of grievances for mutual beneficence” (解冤相生, *Haewon-sangsaeng*). Grievances were the principal problem of the Former World, and they extended to all three realms, as well as to divine beings (Baker 2016, 10; Kim David 2014, 2015). Through his Great Itineration, Sangje opened a road to resolve the grievances of the three realms, which had been accumulated for ages. However, in order to enter into a world free of conflict, humans shall now cooperate by cultivating and propagating the truth, and avoiding the creation of new grievances” (Introigne 2018, 36).
- 15 “The term “*sangsaeng*” is the opposite of the term “*sanggeuk*,” literally “mutual overcoming” *Sanggeuk* refers to the traditional belief that the universe is filled with conflict that constantly generates winners and losers, reflected in an ever-changing hierarchy. *Sangsaeng* is the way to put an end to such conflict and the inequality it produces.”
- 16 “The notion of obligations comes before that of rights, which is subordinate and relative to the former. A right is not effectual by itself, but only in relation to the obligation to which it corresponds, the effective exercise of a right springing not from the individual who possesses it, but from other men who consider themselves as being under a certain obligation towards him. Recognition of an obligation makes it effectual. An obligation which goes unrecognized by anybody loses none of the full force of its existence. A right which goes unrecognized by anybody is not worth very much.”
- 17 “There is no doubt about the fundamental conception of man that flowed from the teachings of Christ: as Troeltsch said, man is an *individual-in-relation-to-God*. For our purposes this means that man is in essence an outworldly individual.”
- 18 “Wearing a linen ephod, David was dancing before the Lord with all his might, while he and all Israel were bringing up the ark of the Lord with shouts and the sound of trumpets.”
- 19 “The performance of all forms of worship in Islam is *shukr* [thankfulness], doing a good turn to others and conducting oneself righteously is *shukr*, a rich person giving part of his wealth in the way of Allāh is for his riches.”
- 20 “This strange interface of meaning between God and humanity belongs even more with Names like *Al-Shakur* and *Al-Shakir* from the root *sh k r* denoting gratitude, which is, surely, a human offering. Since there is no indebtedness in God to call for thankfulness, these Names can only mean that He is ‘cognisant of human gratitude’, that there is acceptance of *our* cognisance, and that, therefore, human atheism is somehow divine pain.”

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Daesoon Jinrihoe in Perspective: New Religions and their Development over Time

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Abstract

In this study, Daesoon Jinrihoe is compared with five international new religious movements (The Church of Scientology, The Family International, The Hare Krishna Movement, The Family Federation, and the Osho Movement) concerning the development of charisma and institutionalization, as well as organizational changes and relationship to society. The material consists of previous research about Daesoon Jinrihoe and two interviews with representatives for the group. In many respects the development of Daesoon Jinrihoe has similarities to the international groups. Since its inception, it has changed from a group with charismatic authority to a rational-legal authority, through a development of organizational complexity, initiated by the three consecutive charismatic leaders. Today there is no charismatic leader, but a president who has an administrative function. Similar to several of the international groups, there have been charismatic challenges in Daesoon Jinrihoe on several occasions. Differences to the international groups are mainly related to macrosociological factors in the shape of the occupation of Japan. Daesoon Jinrihoe was against the occupation, but in spite of that worked to keep the tensions with society low, even though the organization at times was forbidden. In the international groups, the tensions to society were generally high, and had different reasons. In several of the international groups the final arrival of children influenced organizational changes: this was not the case with Daesoon Jinrihoe as there had always been children in the group. As in the Church of Scientology, the children are not much engaged in the religious life of Daesoon Jinrihoe, but can join as adults. Today, Daesoon Jinrihoe works as a denomination, with a positive relationship to society partly due to many welfare projects.

Keywords: charisma; institutionalization; organizational changes;
tension with society

Introduction

All religious groups change over time. In new religious movements, the changes are often quite fast. In a project funded by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond between 2004-2007, I investigated five of the new religious movements with origins between the 1950s and 1970s, and what happened to them over time. These groups were all international groups with centers in, among many other countries, Sweden: The Church of Scientology, The Family International (The Children of God), The Hare Krishna Movement, The Family Federation (The Unification Church), and the Osho Movement (Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh). Two areas of change, discussed in the project, will be discussed in this article in relation to Daesoon Jinrihoe. These areas are: charisma and institutionalization; and organizational changes and relationship to society.

Daesoon Jinrihoe¹ is a native Korean movement and is so far not much spread in other countries. An interesting question which will be discussed in this paper is if Daesoon Jinrihoe shows similar sociological patterns as the five international movements previously investigated, or if there are other patterns concerning Daesoon Jinrihoe due to national or other circumstances. Material used is previous research about this group, as well as two interviews with representatives. The interviews were planned to take place in Korea in May 2020, but were instead conducted via Skype due to the Covid-19 pandemic.²

The interviews concerned the historical development in Daesoon Jinrihoe, and did not concern individuals' beliefs. Thus, no ethical permission was needed for the study. As usual, however, the ethical principles of the information requirement, the consent requirement, the confidentiality requirement and the utility requirement were followed. The informants were informed that participation was voluntary and that they could terminate participation at any time without explanation. They were also informed that the interviews would be used for research purposes only. The material was treated confidentially, and audio files and transcripts are archived and stored at Dalarna University. All information about identifiable persons was recorded, stored and reported in such a way that individuals cannot be identified. According to the Archiving Act, it will be decided after ten years if the material is to be destroyed.

Daesoon Jinrihoe – a very short introduction³

Daesoon Jinrihoe, founded in 1968, derives, as several other Korean new religious movements, from the charismatic leader Kang Jeungsan (1871-1909). Daesoon Jinrihoe includes, like several other Korean new religions, the basic teachings of the traditional religions (Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism). Also, sources of Christianity and Korean shamanism are sometimes used (Kim 2014, 177). Korea's new religions are

typically faith-based communities, which differ from other religions mainly by the unique god they worship, distinctive doctrines and special sacred texts (Baker 2008, 79).

An important doctrine in Daesoon Jinrihoe is the one about an earthly paradise through the renewal of human beings and the transformation of their spirits (Kim 2014, 174). Some important principles are that the member should spiritually pursue the harmonious reunion of human beings with divine beings (Kim 2014, 188), and that the practitioners should solve previous grievances and not cause any harm to other people, in order to perform the mutual beneficence in life (Kim 2014, 182). Thus, ethical perspectives are emphasized (Baker 2008, 87). While there are no rules telling members that they should not smoke, drink, or eat meat, they are, however, taught to act in accordance with traditional Confucian moral principles, like being filial to their parents and loyal to their country (Baker 2008, 88).

Charisma and institutionalization in a theoretical perspective

The majority of new religious movements are initiated around a person who expresses a new teaching, a new interpretation of an older teaching, or a mixture of older teachings. This person normally occupies a special position in the group. He/she is believed to have a special relationship to the divine, which legitimates his special authority and position. The term “charisma” is often used about this person. The well-known sociologist Max Weber defined the concept “charisma” as a special quality in a person, by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers of qualities. The focus is on how the charismatic person is regarded by his followers or disciples (Weber 1964, 358-9).

In different religious groups, the charismatic leader’s position and role look different, due to different ideologies legitimating the leader’s position in various ways. Because the leader occupies such a special position in the group, there is often a critical period after his/her death. New forms for leadership and authority have to be developed. As change is most of the time based on the leader’s revelations, the possibilities for ideological change decrease. Additionally, a structured organization usually becomes more important than before, which means that the movement is “institutionalized”. The development of institutionalization, however, often starts already during the life time of the charismatic leader.

According to Max Weber, charisma and institutionalization are opposites to each other. He saw charisma as a challenge to all institutions as charisma tends to change, undermine and destroy them (1968, 51-52). Charismatic authority, however, can only be upheld during a relatively short period, as it is unstable (1968, 22). The process when charisma is transformed to a permanent organization, Weber called the routinization of

charisma. The charismatic character is, to a certain extent, transmitted from the unique person to the structured institution (1964, 363-73). This process usually happens when interests in social and economic security become predominate among the followers, and is often strengthened when the charismatic leader dies (1968, 54-55). According to Weber, who wrote about charisma of the office and hereditary charisma, these are examples of how charisma to a certain extent may stay in the organization (1964, 369-70). Weber further differentiates between three ideal types of authority and how authority is legitimated. First, the charismatic authority which is discussed above, second the rational-legal authority, when the order is legitimated through a system of rules, and third the traditional authority, when the order is legitimated through traditions and habits (1968, 46).

In the beginning of the 1980s, the sociologist of religion Roy Wallis investigated the processes of charisma and institutionalization, based on empirical material from The Children of God (The Family International). His findings were that it is common that new religious movements oscillate between charisma and institutionalization, and that the process of institutionalization is initiated already during the charismatic leader's life time. Wallis suggested that there are four possibilities for the leader to respond to the institutionalization process: 1. *acquiescence* (in spite of the limitations the institutionalization process causes), 2. *encouragement* (developing and actively controlling the process), 3. *displacement* (the leader does not understand that his authority is undermined and that the control of the movement is moved to the administrative leaders), and 4. *resistance* (actively trying to stop the institutionalization process by continually changing the teaching, practice and administrative leaders) (Wallis 1982).

Charisma and institutionalization in some new religious groups

Starting with the Church of Scientology, the founder L. Ron Hubbard is by his followers conceived of as a liberated thetan, and thus is definitely considered a person with exceptional qualities. An interesting fact with the Church of Scientology is that Hubbard actively encouraged institutionalization of his religion very early, probably because a rational and effective organization is inherent in the teaching. Although Hubbard withdrew early from the organization, charisma was to a great extent routinized in his teachings, techniques, and organization. Long before Hubbard's death, in Weber's terms, authority in the church moved from charismatic to rational-legal. Because of that, his death did not affect the church much (Frisk 2007, 182-183).

The leader of the Family International/The Children of God, David Berg, is by the members considered a prophet, and his teaching is conceived of as revealed by God. However, the teaching may be changed by new revelations, and Berg's teaching has

in some parts been modified after his death. When Berg was still alive, the group was oscillating between charisma and institutionalization. Berg sometimes encouraged charismatic renewal and sometimes encouraged institutionalization. In 1978 he, as an example of charismatic renewal, almost dissolved the organization. After his death the movement became more institutionalized and different parts of the movement were led by different boards. The charismatic leadership was partly transmitted to his wife Maria, but she never achieved the same status as Berg had. Thus, the authority in the movement is a mixture: partly the charismatic authority is routinized in an office, and partly there is a rational-legal authority (Frisk 2007, 183-184). Since a few years back, the Family International has reorganized to be only an on-line community (Borowik 2018, 59-86).

Bhaktivedanta Swami, the founder of ISKCON, had a very strong charismatic position. The guru should, according to the vaishnaitic tradition, be viewed as God by the disciples (Sardella 2005). A Hindu guru should, traditionally, appoint a successor during his life time, thus transmitting charisma to an office. However, Bhaktivedanta Swami attempted to apply a mixture of a rational-legal and a charismatic structure in his appointment of the administrative GBC (Governing Body Commission) and eleven spiritual gurus. This could maybe also be called a traditional authority as the guru office is legitimated by a succession for generations back. ISKCON was, however, challenged by both internal and external charismatic gurus. After the guru reform (1984-1987) (Frisk 2007, 71) there are several gurus in the movement, but with less power and status than before, and Bhaktivedanta Swami's position as well as the position of GBC has been strengthened (Frisk 2007, 184-185).

In the Unification Church, there was until a few years ago two historical persons who were considered to have a unique spiritual position: Jesus and Reverend Moon. The position of Reverend Moon was, and still is, very strong. Reverend Moon died in 2012, but already before his death his wife and some of his children were engaged in the leadership of the movement. The tendency at that time was that the group might adopt a kind of hereditary charisma, which would make sense with the group's emphasis on the family. Over time, the group has undergone several big changes, initiated by Reverend Moon. These changes could, possibly, be seen as attempts of charismatic renewal. The majority of the changes have been orientated towards institutionalization and encouragement of part time engagement, at the same time as the number of children and family life increased in the group (Frisk 2007, 185-186). After the death of Reverend Moon, the movement has divided into three main fractions. The two smaller groups are led by two of Reverend Moon's sons, while the biggest group is led by Mrs Moon, who has arisen as a charismatic leader on a par with or even being more important than her deceased husband (Barker 2018, 51-52).

Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh (Osho) had a unique position in the Osho movement.

He had no successor after him, and no guru succession behind him as for example Bhaktivedanta Swami had. His position has, however, varied over time, and has been partly deemphasized after 1985. The movement had two communes, in Pune and Oregon respectively, and in these communes the institutionalization process was encouraged, as no communes could be built without it. But Osho also used several methods for charismatic renewal as he often changed his teaching and positions of the members. In the middle of the 1980s, the institutionalization process reached a peak in Oregon, and the tension with society increased to the extent that criminal acts were carried out. After Osho's death in 1990 the group is led by a board, thus making the authority structure rational-legal. The group was challenged by external charisma in the 1990s and early 2000s, as some of Osho's disciples claimed that they were enlightened, and gathered people around them. On one level the Osho movement is today quite institutionalized, as the same rules apply to all Osho centers around the world, but on another level there is a resistance towards institutionalization which is also seen in the developments outside the movement with the challenge of external charismatic leaders (Frisk 2007, 186-187).

In Daesoon Jinrihoe, there has been three successive charismatic leaders. The first one, Kang Jeungsan (1871-1909) has definitely a very special status, not only in Daesoon Jinrihoe. He is considered to be an incarnation of the supreme god Sangje (Kim 2014, 168), who lives in the ninth heaven, and descended to earth to save every divine being and humankind by taking a human body in 1871 (DIRC 2016, 201). He is also considered to be Maitreya (Kim 2014, 188). According to Daesoon beliefs, he became spiritually enlightened in 1901, and started an organization in 1902. He practiced healing and is said to have performed all kinds of miracles (Chong 2016, 30). He is said to have opened the Great Dao of Heaven and Earth through a 49 days retreat (Introvigne 2017a), and established the earthly paradise by reordering the Universal (Kim 2014, 175). After his death, Jeungsanism was divided into more than 120 organizations (Introvigne 2017a). There were several charismatic leaders in these organizations, but the one interesting to us is Jo Jeongsan (1895-1958), who in 1917 claimed to have received a revelation from Kang Jeungsan, had awakened to the Great Daesoon Truth, and thereby had succeeded him (Introvigne 2017b). Allegedly, this should have been after he entered a mountain to cultivate himself in the hope of saving the world with Dao. After several years, it is told, he finally realized Daesoon Truth through a revelation of Sangje (DIRC 2016, 204).

Jo Jeongsan had never met Kang Jeungsan, but according to the Daesoon history, in 1903 Kang Jeungsan had told his disciples that divine spirits had sought for his successor, but that the successor at that time turned out to be only nine years old, a description which fit Jo Jeongsan who was nine years at the time (DIRC 2016, 203). In 1909, Kang Jeungsan saw a train passing, which had Jo Jeongsan, then aged fifteen,

aboard, and stated “A man can do anything at the age of 15 if he is able to take his identification tag with him.” This statement was interpreted by the disciples of Jeongsan to mean that Kang Jeungsan recognized him as his successor (Introvigne 2017b).

In 1919, Jo Jeongsan searched for Kang Jeungsan’s family, and found his younger sister, who Kang Jeungsan had told ten years earlier that his successor would visit her on that specific day, and she handed over a sealed envelope which Kang Jeungsan had told her to give his successor. From that time on, Jo Jeongsan began to establish Sangje’s teachings and perform the true dharma. He founded a temple in 1925, and also a religious order (DIRC 2016, 204). He formulated a doctrinal system of tenets, creeds, aims, various methods of cultivation, and ceremonial procedures, which continue to guide the members also today (<http://eng.daesoon.org/app/en/introduction/aboutus>, April 27 2020). Between 1919 and 1925, Jo Jeongsan’s claim to be the successor of Kang Jeungsan was disputed by other followers of Kang Jeungsan, who established other branches of Jeungsanism (Introvigne 2017b).

The Japanese authorities at that time oppressed all activities related to Korean religions, and this religious order was also stricken (DIRC 2016, 204-5). Japan started to suppress the order in 1936, and banned its religious activities in 1941, and finally the order was dissolved. In 1945, when Korea was liberated, Jo Jeongsan resumed his religious activities. He established the headquarters of another religious order in 1948. He also made rules for training and cultivation for followers, a work which was finished in 1957. After expressing that Park Wudang would be his successor, he died in 1958 (DIRC 2016, 205).

Park Wudang (1917-1995) joined the religious order of Jo Jeongsan in 1946 (DIRC 2016, 205). Around 1954, he began to closely serve Jo Jeongsan. In 1958, just before his death, Jo Jeongsan appointed him to be in charge of managing the religious order. Park Wudang is known for founding a lot of organizations, as schools and hospitals, and running them for free (DIRC 2016, 206). According to DIRC, there was some kind of conflict in 1967, where some people began to follow one of Jo Jeongsan’s sons, instead of Park Wudang (Introvigne 2017a). Park Wudang left the temple in Gamcheon in 1968, and built a new temple complex in 1969, changing the title of the religious order to Daesoon Jinrihoe, and also reorganized the internal structure. In 1995 he passed on to Heaven, and since then there has been no living charismatic leader in the group (DIRC 2016, 206). The lineage is seen as concluded with these three leaders. Noone had the perfect knowledge after Park Wudang (interview with Mr. Oh, April 27 2020). After Park passing away in 1995, a conflict developed between minority advocating and majority rejecting his deification. The majority won this conflict (Introvigne 2017a).

Kang Jeungsan definitely had a very special position in Daesoo Jinrihoe, as he declared the Great Dao of mutual beneficence and is conceived of as having reordered the universe. On the website, it says that members of Daesoon Jinrihoe worship Sangje,

the highest celestial deity and supreme God of the ninth heaven who exercises absolute authority over the universe (<http://eng.daesoon.org/app/en/introduction/worship>, April 27 2020). As we remember Sangje was born as a human being in the shape of Kang Jeungsan. This makes his position unique.

The other two charismatic leaders are, however, also considered important. The second leader is said to have solidified the religious orthodoxy and created the principles of Dao to open the Later World, and the third one propagated the principles that the second leader had built. Based on this, Daesoon Jinrihoe calls Kang Jeungsan's teaching as the Will, the second leader's teaching as the Principles, and the third leader's teaching and activities as the Instruction and Mission respectively (Daesoon Institute 2016, 201). The third leader, Park Wudang, created the organizational structure as it looks like today (interview with Mr. Oh, April 27 2020).

Kang Jeungsan is not only considered a representative of the divine, but as an incarnation of God himself, Sangje. In the five comparison groups, the charismatic leaders played a bit of different roles and had different kinds of authority. In Daesoon Jinrihoe, Kang Jeungsan, as the incarnated God, is occupying the highest possible position. He is also said to have performed miracles, a criteria of Max Weber for a charismatic leader. His death caused charismatic challengers to arise, and a conflict about who was the right leader resulting in several different organizations. This pattern we recognize from some of the five comparison groups. The death of the first leader often causes turbulence, and an insecurity about who will take over the leadership. In the case of (the future) Daesoon Jinrihoe, Jo Jeongsan became the successor. Both Jo Jeongsan, and the next leader, Park Wudang, were considered special in the group; however, not to be compared with Kang Jeungsan. Jo Jeongsan appointed his own successor in 1958 when he also died, Park Wudang. As he appointed his successor there seems to have been no conflicts about that choice at the time; however, in 1968 arose again challenging charismatic leaders, and in that situation Park Wudang started Daesoon Jinrihoe. In 1995, when he died, there was a last conflict in the group concerning Wudang's divinization. It ended with that in Daesoon Jinrihoe, he is not considered divine. After him, there is no charismatic leader.

Regarding institutionalization, already Kang Jeungsan started an organization in 1902, thus starting the institutionalization process. Jo Jeongsan continued to encourage the institutionalization process, as he founded a temple in 1925, as well as a religious order. He also formulated a doctrinal system of creeds, practices, and ceremonies. Park Wudang then followed this up, and created the institutional organization that is still in Daesoon Jinrihoe today. Thus we can see a relatively constant process of institutionalization, which is also what we typically find in the five comparison groups. A rational-legal authority has replaced the charismatic authority. This development is even more evident as there is no charismatic leader in the movement today.

What differs for Daesoon Jinrihoe, is the occupational power of Japan, which forced the organization to close several times. None of the comparison groups experienced something similar. The relationship to society was often characterized by high tension also in the comparison groups, but the reasons were, however, totally different. In the case of Daesoon Jinrihoe, the tension with society disappeared as Japan left the country. It is also important that Daesoon Jinrihoe has built different welfare institutions like schools and hospitals, which has greatly increased the group's public image (Introvigne 2017b).

Organizational changes and relationship to society

In sociology of religion, the classification of religious organizations in the categories cult, sect, denomination, and church is basic. The discussion in this article will be based on the representation of these categories by Meredith B. McGuire (2002). For a deeper discussion, see Frisk (2007).

For McGuire, two criteria, which have also historically been key themes in classification of religious organizations, were important. These criteria are *degree of tension with society* and *degree of self-conceived legitimacy*. McGuire represents churches as considering themselves uniquely legitimate as well as existing in a positive relationship with society, while sectarian groups are represented as also considering themselves to be uniquely legitimate, but to be in a relatively negative relationship with the dominant society. Typically, sects also emphasize high levels of commitment. According to McGuire's approach, denominations have a positive relationship with society and they also have a pluralistic perspective, accepting the legitimacy claims of other religious groups. The fourth organizational type, cults, is characterized by acceptance of the legitimacy claims of other groups and they also have a relatively negative tension with the larger society. As they have a pluralistic stance, their social dissent is, however, likely to be less extreme (McGuire 2002, 155-158).

Over time, religious organizations change. Often, they change in standard directions, although there are other possibilities as well. Cults are in general more unstable than other types of religious organizations, because of their lack of authority, the individualistic and segmental mode of commitment, and their indistinct and pluralistic doctrine. Typically, the transformation for a cult is to develop towards a sect. The key feature in this transformation is the change of authority. The leader clarifies the boundaries of the belief system and membership, and also claims strong authority. Sects, however, mostly change towards denomination through routinization of charisma. Sects give up their claim to exclusive legitimacy and reduce their tension with society. Often cultic groups first become more sectarian, and later move towards denominations (McGuire 2002, 177-181). In some cases, as we see in some of the groups below, this

development coincides with the addition of children in the groups, which changes parents' attitudes and possibilities to engage fulltime in the religious organization.

A typical example of change from cult to sect is The Church of Scientology. The founder, L. Ron Hubbard, created a foundation for Dianetics in 1950. Simultaneously there existed other practitioners of Dianetics. Some of these wanted to change parts of the practice and combine it with other teachings. This displays the pluralistic legitimacy and the unclear authority connected with a cult. However, the Church of Scientology, founded in 1954, was more authoritarian and controlled by Hubbard, and also demanded higher degrees of engagement. Dianetics had already at that time a certain tension with the society, but this tension increased immensely during the following decades, because of the Church of Scientology challenging the mainstream culture in different ways. The ideology of Scientology has also partly encouraged increased tension with society, as their strategy has rather been to attack enemies than a willingness to compromise. Because of this, the high tension with society was maintained for several decades. However, since the 1990s the group has developed towards a denomination. As the tensions with society have diminished, the church has been acknowledged as a religion in several countries. In contrary to some other new religions, the arrival of children does not seem to have influenced the church much, probably because the main part of it always has been part time engagement (Frisk 2007, 197-198).

The Children of God/Family International started as a cult as well, but after a short period of time the tension towards society increased and the group developed towards the sect category. In the beginning of the 1970s the borders between the mainstream society and the group became sharper, and as the ideology was radicalized the tension with society increased even more. Later, from about the end of the 1980s, however, the group again approached society. My interpretation is that a reason for this change was that the tension with society had become too high, and the relationship to society was close to a collapse as the group had been accused of child abuse. The group was, in this situation, more or less forced to change. It was also during a time when the second generation numerically began to dominate the movement. It is clear that the demographic change of many children in the movement, in the case of The Family International, has been of great importance for the development of the movement towards a denomination. From 1995 there is also a possibility to be part time engaged. The recent changes toward an internet community, have further accentuated the interpretation of the group being a denomination. There is a membership fee, distinguishing members from nonmembers, and a few requirements related to sending in reports. The group is more and more being conceived of as a Christian group among other Christian groups and there is no visible tension with society. Thus the category denomination is more suitable than the category cult, which could have been another possibility (Frisk 2007, 198-199).

ISKCON was also during the first few years a loosely structured cult, formed around the leader Bhaktivedanta Swami. From the end of the 1960s, the group became a full time engaging sect with community living and a raising tension with society. However, from the middle or end of the 1980s the tension with society gradually diminished. In ISKCON, as in some other groups, did this change coincide with a changed demographic profile. From around 1990 nuclear families had replaced the communities as the base for ISKCON. Families had to live in society and support themselves for economic reasons. Therefore, part time engagement became common, which also decreased the tensions to society. During the latter years, this development has increased, making the group move towards a denominational status. ISKCON also deliberately tried to decrease the tensions to society through, for example, engaging Hindu migrants (Frisk 2007, 199-200).

For a long time, the Unification Church was a small cult. In the 1970s it started to grow and changed towards a sectarian status. The tension with society increased because of the challenging ideology of Reverend Moon as the new Messiah and the controversial habit of arranged marriages. Children started to arrive during the 1980s, and there was a gradual development towards part time engagement. Reverend Moon encouraged members to live in nuclear families from 1991. There have been further changes towards a non-controversial movement working for family values, peace and interreligious work from 1996. Today the group works as a quite ordinary denomination. As other groups, it faces the challenge of getting the now adult children engaged in the group (Frisk 2007, 200-201).

The pattern of starting the movement as a cult is similar in the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh (Osho) group. It moved towards a sect status from 1974 when the ashram in Pune was initiated. At that time, the borders to society were sharpened, the charismatic authority increased and the tension towards society rose. One reason for that was the ideology of the movement, which challenged the norms and traditions of mainstream society, and the controversial habit of teaching through provocation. The group developed towards a denominational status with part time engagement and low degree of tension with society from 1985. In this group, the tension with society increased to the degree of a collapse. A difference towards the other groups investigated in this article is that, as the group did not encourage having children, there are few second generation members. Today, the group works as a low engagement denomination, parts of it more like a cult (Frisk 2007, 201-202).

Jeungsanism originated in a politically and socially troubled time in Korean society (Kim 2014, 173). The second half of the 19th century was marked by a gradual decline of the ruling dynasty, a loss of confidence in the Confucian value system because of incompetence and corruption in the government, oppression and exploitation of the common people, and political pressures by foreign powers. This was followed by

Japanese occupation for many years, with further suppression and exploitation of the Korean people (Prunner 1980, 4-5). Japanese colonialism lasted from 1910 to 1945 (Chong 2016, 21). Also, the Western encroachment in the East was a challenge. This resulted in Korean nationalism, which also influenced the new religious groups at the time (Chong 2016, 22). The Jeungsan movement was disbanded in 1941 due to Japanese policy (Chong 2016, 21). After the war Korea reached independence, although divided in two (Prunner 1980, 5).

The forerunners of Daesoon Jinrihoe, however, seem to have been careful to not increase the tensions with society more than necessary. They sought a religious solution to the societal problems. According to Daesoon Jinrihoe history, Sangje was urged by all the divine sages, Buddhas, and bodhisattvas to come down from the ninth heaven to earth to save the human world, earthly world, and spiritual world (Kim 2014, 173). There was a peasant rebellion in 1894, which was defeated by the government with the help of Japanese troops, after which a bloody repression followed with many deaths (Introvigne 2017a). Kang Jeungsan predicted that the rebellion would fail, and persuaded his followers not to participate in it (Introvigne 2017a). Jeungsan preached peace and prosperity to his followers who would live in the forthcoming paradise which would soon be realized on earth through his teachings and religion. The problems in this world would be solved by his “reordering of the universe”, not by violence and protests. (Chong 2016, 32-33). However, Kang Jeungsan also did protest in mild ways to the Japanese occupation, through for example wearing opposite colors than the Japanese in his dress (Chong 2016, 37-38). Kang Jeungsan is also described as a Korean nationalist. He believed that Korea would be the top world leader, and rule the other countries by means of persuasion and not coercion, taking advantage of Korea’s spiritual strength and superiority (Chong 2016, 48). He was mainly negative to Christianity (Chong 2016: 50), but believed that Western science and technology originated initially from the heavenly kingdom in the East, so Korean people could well use Western inventions (Chong 2016, 51).

Although Kang Jeungsan tried to avoid all troubles with the authorities, and proclaimed non-violence (Chong 2016, 32), at the end of 1907, Kang Jeungsan and his followers were arrested by the Japanese police on charges that they were raising an army of rebels against Japan. They were, however, later cleared of all charges and released from prison in February, 1908 (Introvigne 2017a).

During the last few decades, Daesoon Jinrihoe has been very active in promoting public service. Daesoon Jinrihoe has established Daejin University and six high schools, as well as a general hospital, founded in 1998 (Baker 2016, 1-2). Two other hospitals are under construction. In 2009, a senior medical center started to operate. Almost all social facilities of Daesoon Jinrihoe have been funded only by the members’ financial support. Every month the members make a monetary contribution, and more than 70

% of the money goes to relief and charity, social welfare, and education. More than 560 million USD was used between 1975 and 2013 (DIRC 2016, 199-200).

Today, the Daesoon Jinrihoe is organized in a complex organization. Above all parts of the organization is the “Holy leader” (<http://eng.daesoon.org/app/en/introduction/organization>, 27 April 2020). The position of Dojeon has been discontinued, and while there is a president, this position is more accurately understood as an administrative post. (interview with Jason Greenberger, 4 April 2020). Immediately below the Holy leader is the Central Council and the Central Council Steering Committee (<http://eng.daesoon.org/app/en/introduction/organization>, 27 April 2020). The Central Council consists of upper clergy members and has the authority to change the Dao Constitution. Some issues are decided by voting of registered members (Dao Constitution). Below these are six institutes – Educational Enterprises, Institute of Instruction in Daesoon Theology, Institute of Auditing and Inspection, Institute of Religious Services, Institute of Proper Guidance, and Institute of Propagation and Edification, which are further divided in several departments (<http://eng.daesoon.org/app/en/introduction/organization>, 27 April 2020). Members of these institutes normally receive a salary. New members of the institutes are elected by election committees within the institutes. Members of the institutes normally consist of clergy at a higher level (interview with Mr. Oh, 27 April 2020).

A comparison between Daesoon Jinrihoe and the five comparison groups displays both differences and similarities. A striking difference is the relationship to society. Basic conditions that are different are macrosocial circumstances, as Korea was occupied by Japan for a number of years. Striking is also Jeungsan’s attitude to the occupation, in spite of being a Korean nationalist he seems to have tried to diminish the tensions with society as much as possible. During the last few decades, Daesoon Jinrihoe established itself in Korean society, and among other things built important educational and medical institutions.

It is difficult to put Daesoon Jinrihoe into the scheme of cult, sect and denomination, due to the special circumstances of the Japanese occupation. During the first year of Jeungsan’s work, there was no organization, which might classify the group as close to a cult. After that there were many years when there was an organization, but the group does not seem to fulfill the criteria for a sect: high tension with society and high degree of commitment. I have not succeeded in getting any information about the legitimacy claims of the group at the time of its development. What is clear is that it today works as a denomination, with part time engagement and positive relationship to society, although there are people engaging more with the organization, as the people who work in the institutes. The organization seems to have become more complex over time. It is possible to get excluded from the organization due to nonethical behavior (Dao Constitution, <http://eng.daesoon.org/app/en/teachings/books>, 27 April 2020).

Another interesting feature which differs Daesoon Jinrihoe from the comparison groups is the attitude to children. All the comparison groups, except the Church of Scientology, had times in their history when children were not very welcome. Originating in Hinduism and Christianity, there were teachings of the importance of celibacy, or teachings about the high significance of the group, which made having children an unnecessary complication. In the Osho movement, the members hardly had children at all. In most of the other movements, however, the arrival of children was important for the development of the groups. In Unification Church, the Hare Krishna movement, and The Family, the arrival of children changed the basic conditions for the groups, making part time engagement and making the economy work important features. Daesoon Jinrihoe, on the other hand, had, as is common in Korean society, a positive attitude to children all the time. As the Church of Scientology, they do not seem to involve the children very much in the religion, except that they have voluntary Youth camps where they teach the children some basic things about the religion. Chanting and prayer seem to be activities only for the adults (interview with Mr Oh). As in many other religions today, some of the children leave the group, which is accepted by the parents (interview with Mr Oh).

Conclusion

In comparison with the other five groups, the first conclusion to draw is that the first charismatic leader had a very exceptional status as being God (Sangje) himself. Charismatic leaders can, as we have seen, have different kinds of status, but in the five groups none of the charismatic leaders had a similar status. Closest would be Bhaktivedanta Swami in the Hare Krishna movement, who according to tradition should be seen as God by the disciples.

As in the other five groups, institutionalization started to happen in Daesoon Jinrihoe quite early, as the organization started and developed over time. After three charismatic leaders, appointed by each other, there is no charismatic leader in the group any more, but the organizational power is completely rational-legal in Max Weber's terms. This development follows what could be expected in new religious movements. Similar to some of the other five groups, there were also charismatic challenges to the charismatic leader in Daesoon Jinrihoe at different times in the development of the group.

One of the biggest differences between Daesoon Jinrihoe and the five comparison groups is the relationship to society. In the case of Daesoon Jinrihoe, the macrosociological factors were completely different because of the Japanese occupation of Korea. In spite of the leaders and the group apparently being against the occupation, it seems that they tried to hold the tension with society as low as possible. The organization was at times forbidden, but resumed the activities as soon as it was possible.

This factor also makes it difficult to sort Daesoon Jinrihoe into the scheme of cult-sect-denomination. The tensions with society had completely other reasons than for the other five groups, and there were attempts to keep them down. I could not find anything about high levels of commitment, also characteristic of sects. What is clear is that the group has developed to a denomination during the last decades, with a positive relationship to society. A reason for this is that Daesoon Jinrihoe constructed several free welfare institutions like hospitals and universities, which were positively welcomed by society and the public.

Finally, the group also stands out in comparison to some of the other groups concerning the attitude to children. In for example the Hare Krishna movement and Unification Church, the attitude to children became more positive over time, which also changed the groups structurally into become part time engagement groups instead of fulltime. In Daesoon Jinrihoe children have always been welcome and part time engagement has been the normal all the time. This said, of course there are some members who are pastors and hold other important positions in the group, who are more engaged than the common member. The attitude to children's engagement in religious activities, however, is quite similar to the Church of Scientology. The children in Daesoon Jinrihoe are not involved in the adults' religious activities like prayers and incantations, as the children in the Church of Scientology are not as well. Some children, however, do become involved in the religion as adults. This is the case both for Daesoon Jinrihoe and the Church of Scientology.

Acknowledgement

Liselotte Frisk, Professor of Religious Studies (Dalarna University, Sweden), passed away in late October of 2020. Most recently, Professor Frisk served as co-editor of *Aura*, a Nordic journal dedicated to the study of new religious movements and also as the vice director of FINYAR, the Nordic society for the academic study of new religions. Upon its release, *Children in Minority Religions: Growing up in Controversial Religious Groups* (2018), which she co-authored with Sanja Nilsson and Peter Åkerbäck, received high praise from many scholars including Eileen Barker, Professor Emeritus of Sociology of Religion, London School of Economics. In her final year of life, Professor Frisk was said to be happy and deeply engaged in her work and her intellectual passions. Journal of Daesoon Thought and the Religions of East Asia is profoundly honored for her contributions to the study of Daesoon Thought and the academic study of Daesoon Jinrihoe as a new religious movement.

Conflict of Interest

No potential conflict of interest relevant to this article was reported.

Notes

- ¹ In this article, the development of Daesoon Jinrihoe will be followed from its precursors in the beginning of the 20th century, although Daesoon Jinrihoe, as a religion with that name, was not founded until 1968.
- ² Thanks to Jason Greenberger who arranged the interviews and also acted as a translator. Thanks to Susan Palmer for my being able to participate in the interviews, which mainly had the purpose of being a part of her Canadian research project “Children in sectarian religions and state control” (where I am one of the collaborators). With Susan Palmer’s agreement to the arrangement, I added a few questions to the interviews for my research project.
- ³ This summary of Daesoon Jinrihoe will be held very short, as many articles about Daesoon Jinrihoe will be published in the same journal. For a full description, see other articles in the journal.

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The Role of Children in Daesoon Jinrihoe, a Korean New Religion

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Original Articles

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Abstract

This study attempts to investigate the role of children in the Korean new religious movement, Daesoon Jinrihoe. The research method combined archival studies with qualitative research; interviews with two members involved in educating youth through the establishment of Youth Camps and *Donggeurami*, the order's youth magazine. Our four research questions were:

1. Do children play a central role in the millennial vision of this NRM?
2. Are children separated from the world?
3. Have Daesoon childrearing methods been challenged by secular authorities or anticult groups?
4. Are there procedures to educate children in the religious beliefs and values of their parents and the community?

Our results found that Daesoon Jinrihoe appears to be a religion designed for adults. Children do not usually participate in religious activities. On the other hand, since 2005 there has been a strategic effort to educate the children in the faith of their parents, through the establishment of Youth Camps and the youth magazine, *Donggeurami*.

Keywords: Daesoon Jinrihoe; religious youth programming; childrearing; *Donggeurami*; Spiritual Childhoods

Introduction

In this study our purpose is to attempt to understand the role of children in the Korean new religious movement (NRM), Daesoon Jinrihoe. Typically, researchers who have undertaken to investigate childrearing in NRMs in the past have encountered an array of daunting challenges (Palmer and Hardman 1999; Van Eck Van Twist 2015; Frisk 2018; Nilsson 2019). This study is no exception, except that the obstacles to research are of a different nature (these will be outlined below).

This study is part of a broader (2017-2021) research project called “Children in sectarian religions and state control” at McGill University in Montreal, Canada (www.spiritualchildhoods.ca).¹ The research project has two objectives:

- 1) To explore the ways different minority religions raise their children.
- 2) To study conflicts in different countries between minority religions and local secular authorities over alternative childrearing methods.

Within the framework of these objectives, the research questions we bring to this study of Daesoon Jinrihoe are the following:

- 1) Do children play a central role in the millennial vision of this NRM?
- 2) Are children separated from the world? Are they insulated/protected from secular society?
- 3) Have there been criticisms of this new religion’s childrearing methods from secular authorities or anticult groups? Have there been any state interventions on behalf of the children?
- 4) Are there procedures to educate children in the religious beliefs and values of their parents and the community?

According to our results, the answer to questions 1, 2 and 3 are “No”. The answer to question 4 is “Yes” (or more accurately, “to some degree”). The implications of these answers will be explored in terms of what they tell us about Daesoon Jinrihoe’s status as a new religion, and the broader issues raised concerning the role of children in NRMs.

Methodology and Obstacles to Research

It is important to note at the outset that, in fact, very little is known about children in NRMs. This was the main rationale in applying for funding from the Social Sciences and the Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) for the “Children in sectarian religions” project. There are sound reasons for this lack of knowledge, and the

researcher encounters three sources of obstacles.

One set of obstacles was posed by the university administration. Canadian and U.S. research ethics boards have banned researchers' access to children as "vulnerable human subjects". Ironically, one condition for administering this grant to study children was that no children would be interviewed.

A second set of obstacles was posed by the religious communities themselves typically involve secrecy and lack of documentation. Many groups that experienced conflict with the larger society tend to be secretive towards journalists, social workers and researchers. Moreover, their utopian childrearing methods tended to be experimental, rapidly changing and part of an oral tradition, hence undocumented.

The research confronts a third set of obstacles at the level of the state and its various state agents or authorities; data collected by the police, social services or school boards are often inaccessible to researchers, sealed, and/or privileged to the court.

In the case of Daesoon Jinrihoe, this researcher encountered quite a different set of obstacles. First, there was the Korean language and Asian culture. Aside from the writings of a handful of scholars (Baker 2016; Introvigne 2017; Kim 2015) Daesoon Jinrihoe is still quite unknown to the West. For this reason, this researcher (Palmer) chose Jason Greenberger as translator, consultant and co-author on this project.

Second, the unforeseen obstacle of the coronavirus pandemic curtailed our plans for field work in South Korea this Spring, which would have enriched the research base for this article. Third, statistics regarding children, membership, conversion and attrition rates were unavailable to this researcher. Requests to the Daesoon administration were met with the response, "We do not keep this kind of information."

The Research Findings

Although Daesoon Jinrihoe has been described as a millenarian religion by Introvigne (2017); Baker (2016) and Kim (2015), our interviews with our two informants indicate that children have no special role in this process.² It appears that in Daesoon Jinrihoe, the vast, long-term expectation of the earthly paradise, for which there is no specific date, somehow makes children's participation irrelevant.

Daesoon Jinrihoe's millennial vision is contained in the fourth principle, "The perfected unification with Dao" (*Dotong-jingyeong*, 道通真境). According to Baker (2016, 10-11) this refers to the realization of earthly immortality in an earthly paradise through the renewal of human beings and the recreation of the world. Introvigne notes, "In fact, the world will become one clan or family, and all humanity will be governed without force and punishment, according to divine laws and principles. Officials will be moderate and wise... humans will be free from worldly desires... three disasters coming from water, fire, and wind will disappear from the world. Humans will

be given freedom (i.e., eternal youth and immortality).

“And the whole world will be an earthly paradise filled with bliss and joy.” (Kim 2015, 187-94)

Palmer and her research assistants involved in the “Children in Sectarian Movements” project found in our study of NRMs that qualify as “millennial movements” (e.g. Unification Church, The Children of God, David Koresh’s Branch Davidians of Waco, Ogyen Chogyen Kunzang, The Nation of Yahweh, the Solar Temple, the Ant Hill Kids) that the Millennial Kingdom was anticipated to arrive *within the lifetimes* of the current devotees and their children. In these NRMs, children were raised to participate in the groups’ millennial goals. They were trained, variously, to become an elite cadre in the society of the future; or trained to fight as warriors in the impending cosmic battle; or they were educated to become “the 24 Elders” (*in Revelations*) or kings’ councilors, destined to advise the new rulers in the Millennial Kingdom.

In 2017, Jason Greenberger conducted a survey of 119 members of Daesoon Jinrihoe in which he asked, “What is your timeframe regarding the arrival of the Later World?”. 70% of his informants responded that it was ‘underway,’ 15% said it was ‘imminent,’ and 15% said it was ‘eventual.’¹³ He notes that, in his best estimate, it is just the social hierarchy of leaders and followers that is described in the Later World does not appear to inspire or frighten members to prepare to be future leaders. Scripture states that there will only be 12,000 leaders (far fewer than the current number of devotees) and says nothing about the role of children. Some of Greenberger’s informants indicated they felt “comfortable” with the notion that they would be part of the noble populace rather than a Dao-empowered sage. Thus, it appears that “being ordinary” is seen as neither a problem nor a punishment.

Other apocalyptic NRMs have demanded a higher level of commitment from its members when the End Time is perceived to be imminent. A good example of this pattern would be Aum Shinrikyo, the Japanese new religion, whose prophet Shoko Asahara demanded that his followers move into the group’s compound in Mount Fuji and devote themselves full time to religious rituals and physical austerities in preparation for “Harumageddon” (Mullins 1998).

Thus, it would appear the nature of Daesoon’s vision of the earthly paradise is quite consistent with the absence of pressure on children to play an active role in the process of ushering it in. Once adults, they can hasten the coming of the Later World through holy works (gongbu, an intensive communal incantation practice held at the headquarters) if they choose to do so.

The answer to our second research question (whether children in Daesoon Jinrihoe are separated/insulated/protected from secular society) was again “No”.

There are no restrictions concerning children in Daesoon Jinrihoe playing with other children who do not share their religion. If anything, their playmates are probably unlikely to know that their family is in Daesoon Jinrihoe. Children in minority religions in Korea are, in general, unlikely to draw attention to it; doing so could alienate them from their neighbours.

We were told that Daesoon Jinrihoe does have its own schools. Daesoon Jinrihoe operates four High Schools (Daejin High School, Daejin Girls High School, Daejin Electronic Communications High School, and Daejin Design High School). There is a level of higher education at the Daejin University (located in Pocheon, South Korea with two campuses in China, in Suzhou and Harbin). But we were told that the majority of members' children attend regular secular schools that are unaffiliated with Daesoon Jinrihoe.

These research findings are quite consistent with the observations of scholars who have studied Daesoon Jinrihoe. David Kim notes that Daesoon Jinrihoe “has grown large and respectable enough to become a major component of Korea’s religious landscape” (Kim 2020, Preface). Massimo Introvigne notes. “In 1998, Bundang Jesaeng Hospital was opened, followed in 2007 by the Daesoon Jinrihoe Welfare Foundation. The educational and charitable activities of Daesoon Jinrihoe greatly benefited the public image of the movement, which is increasingly regarded in Korea as a legitimate part of the country’s religious pluralism.” (Introvigne 2017)

The two scholars concur that Daesoon Jinrihoe has become well-integrated into South Korea’s democratic society. This would be consistent with the parents’ wishes for their children to be well-adapted to function in the larger society.

The responses to our third question (concerning whether there are any criticisms of Daesoon Jinrihoe’s childrearing methods by secular authorities or anticult groups, or any state interventions regarding the safety of the children) was also negative.

David Kim (2020) and Massimo Introvigne (2017) each refer to the kind of criticisms of Daesoon Jinrihoe that have emanated from anticult groups or detractors who are members of other Korean religions. These critics tend to regard Daesoon Jinrihoe as a “heresy” or as a “cult”. In his “Preface”, David William Kim states, “Daesoon Jinrihoe is a new religion and so it has had to endure the criticism that new religions receive.... True to its teaching [regarding *Cheok* or grievances] Daesoon Jinrihoe has not engaged in arguments with its detractors. Instead it has let its history prove its detractors wrong.” (Kim 2020).

However, none of Daesoon Jinrihoe’s Korean detractors have criticized, or indeed even mentioned its child-rearing methods.

In contrast, North American and European news stories on the child victims of “cult-related” violence (OTS mass suicides 1994, Jonestown 1978, Waco 1993) have been proliferating in the mass media ever since the 1978 tragedy at Jonestown. Currently, the

newspapers have featured many reports on police investigations after children died of medical neglect or refusal of blood transfusions; as well as recent trials of Hasidic rabbis, Pentecostal pastors, Catholic priests or Hindu/Buddhist gurus as alleged “pedophiles”.

A new genre of memoirs; autobiographies by angry apostates who were raised in alternative spiritual communities has become popular. Websites of “cult awareness”/ anticult groups (UNADFI, FECRIS, ICSA) are tending to portray NRMs as places where children are trapped, indoctrinated, deprived of education, exploited and abused. But whereas in the West, “Children in Cults” has become a popular theme in the mass media, it appears to be a non-issue, a non-topic in the East; in Asian societies.

The Founding and Development of Youth Camps

According to our informants, whom we will call “Subject A” and “Subject B”, there is no equivalent to a puberty ritual in this NRM. Nor is there a ceremony equivalent to a baptism or christening. Until 2005 there was no “youth programming” in Daesoon Jinrihoe; neither the concept of educating children in the faith of their parents, nor the materials needed to instruct children in the history, values and doctrines of the faith.

Subject B, in his role as “Head Edifier” (which involves religious instruction for members) felt a concern about the children, having two pre-school children of his own at the time. He therefore convinced Daesoon Jinrihoe’s administrators to support him in setting up the first Youth Camp in July 2005.

This Youth Camp lasted for three days and two nights. There were 16 Camp Counsellors (many of them parents) and 800 students, boys and girls between the ages of 11 to 18. The Camp was split up and organized into seven separate mini-sessions to accommodate the numbers and the age groups.

The Youth Camp received enthusiastic responses from the children and parents and has continued as an annual event until 2019.⁴ A daily schedule has evolved that includes sports and field trips. There was little formal religious education and no supervised prayers or chanting at the Youth Camps, but there was some instruction about the history of Daesoon Jinrihoe and the lives of its three founders. The most overtly “religious” activity took place in the evenings when the Counsellors would put on performances for the children in which they would dress up and act out stories that dramatized some of the core precepts of Daesoon Jinrihoe. On the third day, the children would spend time with their assigned counsellors in informal discussions. The youth at the camps were on excellent terms with the counsellors, and many of them, after becoming university students, would volunteer to work as camp counsellors.

The Daesoon Jinrihoe summer camps produce a youth magazine, *Donggeurami*, that features articles on the campers’ experience. On the basis of translated excerpts from the article, “Impressions from the Winter Camp: Our Stories” (Issue 2, 2008) two

patterns are apparent: 1) that the youthful campers enjoy a rich social life and form strong friendships at the camp, and 2) that the theme of each year's camp is based on a precept or point of doctrine. For example, the precept "promote the betterment of others" was emphasized in 2008's Winter Camp.

Ryu Seunghui (Primary School, Fourth Grader, Group 1) writes:

What I remember most was the saying "Promote the Betterment of Others"... "If I think of others before myself, I think I will become closer with my friends.... I learned so much during the winter camp, and it was a really happy experience for me. Now as I leave to head back to Seoul, I am sure I will miss all of my fellow campers and our camp counselors. Campers and counselors, I love you! :-)♥

Kim Yeji (Middle School, Freshman, Group 1) writes:

Ever since I was a fifth grader in primary school, I have never missed a camp. Even on my first day, the counselors did such a great job that I easily became familiar with everything and had a great time. During the talent show, everything was well done, all the dances, songs, plays... everything was really interesting. That was the reason I kept coming back year after year.

This camp, the coolest programs were Everland, the talent show, and edification; all of which were very memorable. On the first day, we made rice cakes, and I thought mine were gonna turn out well, but later, I noticed that the colors had all kind of blended together, and it didn't look that great. That will end up a lasting memory for me nevertheless. On the second day, we went to Everland Amusement Park, and I cheerfully played around, rode rides, and felt my stress melt away while having a ton of fun. On the third day during edification, suddenly a scary thought popped into my mind, and I knew I should live my life with greater kindness. This year's camp was really a blast!

Kim Seulgi (High School, Year Three, Group 1) writes:

I kept attending camp, and in the blink of an eye, it was my sixth time to go. I am basically an adult now, and this marks my last camp... This camp's theme was 'Promote the Betterment of Others.' Although it is something that is always in the back of my mind, and I know I should live a life of promoting the betterment of others and feeling grateful to them, the truth is that this is no easy matter. However, based on what I have learned from this camp, I know that I can start off by just being incrementally kinder and

better to others. That is something I will work hard at achieving. For high school juniors like me, this is our last camp, but I don't think of this as an end. Instead, I will regard it as the new beginning of my new life going forward. I am profoundly thankful to all of the counselors and fellow campers with whom I made such fond memories. I wish you all the best of health, and I will sincerely devote myself to living in accordance with the precept, "Promote the Betterment of Others."

The Youth Magazine, *Donggeurami*

As a young but rapidly expanding new religion, Daesoon Jinrihoe, as part of its new initiative to place emphasis on religious education for its youth, established the youth magazine, *Donggeurami* (동그라미) which has its winter, spring, summer, and fall issues. This magazine is not dissimilar to the adult magazine, *Daesoon Hoebo* (大巡會報), but its contents are clearly simplified; written for younger readers, it is presented in such a way as to appeal to children and young teenagers.

In the earliest issues of *Donggeurami* (2007-2009), the format was clearly in an experimental phase, but by the sixth issue, released in 2012 (after a two-year hiatus) the magazine emerged with a well-developed format that has been consistently maintained over the last six years (Greenberger 2018).

Donggeurami has become a successful vehicle for the religious education of youth through its articles on culture, history and the Order, and through its entertaining children's comics that offer a narrative about Daesoon's founders.

Since 2012, *Donggeurami* had featured at least one article per issue on culture, and this usually involves introducing Korean tourist attractions or historical landmarks that possess historical and cultural significance (e.g. 수원 화성 (Suwon Castle)⁵, 인의예지를 품은 서울 4대문 (The Four Gates of Seoul that Carry Humanity, Benevolence, and Wisdom),⁶ 죽 이야기 (A Story about Porridge),⁷ and 겨울의 절기 (The Solar Terms of Winter).⁸ 'A Story about Porridge' is a Chinese folktale that instructs readers in some of the popular varieties of porridge. 'The Solar Terms of Winter' introduces the nine solar terms that occur during the season of winter. None of these articles relate directly to Daesoon Jinrihoe, but indirect connections might be made.

For example, 'The Solar Terms of Winter' covers all nine of the solar terms of winter, but two of these, The Initial Day of Winter (立冬) and The Winter Solstice (冬至) might be interpreted as referring to the Chiseongs (致誠, Devotional Offerings) in Daesoon Jinrihoe. By reading articles such as these, the youth of Daesoon Jinrihoe are reminded that the magazine that they are reading is not exclusively focused on Daesoon Jinrihoe, but that it demonstrates the broader connections between their parents' faith and traditional Korean culture (Greenberger 2108).

Articles on Korean history are often featured in *Donggeurami*. Some articles focusing heavily on the tragedies and injustices brought by foreign invaders (임진왜란, The Japanese Disturbance of 1592),⁹ 청주 고인쇄박물관 (The Cheongju Museum of Ancient Printing),¹⁰ and 청나라 침략에 조선의 왕이 얹드려 항복하다 (The King of Joseon on the Verge of Chinese Invasion).¹¹ But here again, the articles do not necessarily apply or refer to Daesoon Jinrihoe. For example, the article about ancient printing is echoed in a mere footnote in *The Canonical Scripture (Jeon-Gyeong)*, rather than being a substantial topic. However, both the Imjin War and the Qing Invasion are major historical events that are discussed in *The Canonical Scripture*.

Articles that focus specifically on Daesoon Jinrihoe in the youth magazine are less common than one might expect. Articles of this nature include: 상생이란 무엇인가요 (What is Sangsaeng?),¹² 『전경』은 어떤 책이에요 (What Kind of Book is *The Canonical Scripture*?),¹³ <6> 부산에도 본부를 설치하시다 (Part 6: He Also Established a Headquarters Temple Complex in Busan),¹⁴ 지영이의 입도치성 (Jiyeong's Initiation Offering Ceremony),¹⁵ and 입도치성이 뭐예요 (What is an Ipdo Chiseong)?¹⁶ It is important to note that this category includes many articles on what might be called 'Proto-Daesoon Jinrihoe' period (before the founding of Daesoon Jinrihoe in 1969). This kind of article describes what can be referred to as 'the community of disciples who served Kang Seong Sangje' or 'the earlier religious orders of Doju Jo Jeongsan.' Examples of such articles would be 'He Also Established a Headquarters Temple Complex in Busan'; and another article about Doju creating a headquarters for his religious order, 'Mugeuk-Do' in Busan. There are also articles written to accompany and explain a comic story, such as the comic 'Jiyeong's Initiation Offering Ceremony' which leads directly into the explanatory article 'What is an Ipdo Chiseong?' (Greenberger 2018).

Comics are also a popular staple in *Donggeurami*. Example of the comics' titles include 진묵대사와 김봉곡 (Master Jinmuk and Kim Bonggok),¹⁷ 손빈과 방연 (Sonbin and Bangeyon),¹⁸ 끝까지 신념을 지킨 충신 (Observing One's Faith to the Very End),¹⁹ and 북창 정림 (Master Jeongnyeom of Bukchang).²⁰ All the comics, according to Greenberger's informal survey, conclude with a verse from *The Canonical Scripture*. The only exception to this pattern is found in the Sixth Issue of *Donggeurami*, where the comic tale, 'Master Jinmuk and Kim Bonggok,' does not conclude with a verse from *The Canonical Scripture* at the end. If the corresponding verses had been included for that story about Master Jinmuk and Kim Bonggok, they would have been Reordering Works Chapter 3 verses 14 and 15. The reason for this exception might be that this was the first comic in this series, and the content creators were still determining their format. These comics help young readers visualize stories from *The Canonical Scripture* and also show them how those stories might be directly related to the lives of young devotees (Greenberger 2018).

The magazine, *Donggeurami*, presents the young devotees of Daesoon Jinrihoe with quality reading material that makes theology, history, practice, and culture more accessible than it would be through articles written for adults. The magazine is attractive, features enjoyable comics in the style secular Korea children often read, and the writing opts for spoken Korean over literary Korean. *Donggeurami* encourages its readers to interact by sending in drawings and writings which are published in the magazine. This publication, which began in its first five issues as basically an advertisement or an annual report of Daesoon Jinrihoe's youth camps, has evolved into a substantial and respected religious publication for youth. Moreover, Daesoon Jinrihoe's charitable institution, DIVA, is considering using some of the articles generated by *Donggeurami* in their Korean classes for foreigners.²¹ The language used in *Donggeurami* is more approachable and less intimidating than the articles in the adult magazine, Daesoon Hoebo, and thus might be quite useful in a foreign language classroom.

Family Values in Daesoon Jinrihoe

Could these findings be explained within the framework of Buddhism's traditionally atomistic, individualistic, "anti-family" approach to enlightenment/Nirvana? Unlike Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism, however, Daesoon Jinrihoe fosters marriage and family life, as well as gender equality for its clergy and laity alike. These family values are emphasized in *The Dao Constitution* (The Regulations of Daesoon Jinrihoe) and *The Guiding Compass of Daesoon* (Daesoon Jichim).

The Dao Constitution outlines "The Three Bonds and Five Relationships" which are the founders' vision of the moral foundations that enable harmonious relationships and sustain order in society. These include: "Maintain filial piety toward your parents" and "Create a peaceful family by achieving harmony in your marriage."

The Guiding Compass of Daesoon (Daesoon Jichim) is a collection of writings from the period when Dojeon (Park Wudang) first presented the teachings. The following quotes from this text clearly indicate Daesoon Jinrihoe's priorities regarding religion and family life:

Accomplish harmony in your family and devote yourself to educating your children (I.4.1.).

Each Dao cohort should dedicate themselves to harmonizing their family on a basis of concordance and unity. (The 3rd day of the 1st month, 1980)

Dao cohorts whose family do not live in harmony should prioritize familial harmony (The 17th day of the 7th month, 1980).

Merit can be achieved in harmonious households. Therefore, edify people about familial unity and harmony (The 23rd day of the 9th month, 1980).

All female executive members including seongam (Head Propagator) and gyogam (Head Edifier), if also housewives, should devote themselves to the simultaneous fulfilment of their duties and the keeping of their household responsibilities (The 26th day of the 4th month, 1982).

The Canonical Scripture says, “As there is no filial piety, no loyalty, and no fidelity in this world, the whole world is ailing.” Therefore, keep that firmly in mind (The 26th day of the 4th month, 1982).

Executive members should strive to support the achievement of harmonious families for the devotees who belong to their branch by taking good care of their family circumstances (The 26th day of the 4th month, 1982).

Divine Heroes and Sacred Role-Models for Children

Children in Daesoon Jinrihoe are sometimes taught episodes from the life of Kang Jeungsan (spoken of as Sangje, the Supreme God), the human incarnation of the object of worship in Daesoon Jinrihoe, Gucheon Sangje (the Supreme God of the Ninth Heaven). These stories focus on Kang’s childhood and relationships with his parents and with other children. Feminist Christian (and “post-Christian”) theologians, Rosemary Radford Ruether (1983) and Mary Daly have made the point that in the same way that Catholic women throughout history could never truly aspire to emulate the Virgin Mary who was free of sin and performed the miracle of by giving birth to God’s only begotten son while remaining a virgin, the children of Daesoon Jinrihoe cannot be expected to perform miracles like Kang. Nevertheless, these divine figures, with their attributes of physical and moral strength, provide inspiration and role models of kindness, love and compassion.

The Canonical Scripture (Acts 1: 5-1: 18)²²

The following verses recount the miraculous nature of Sangje’s birth:

5. Sangje, the Supreme God of the Universe, was incarnated on Earth at Guest-awating (Gaekmang) Village, near the auspicious mountain, Mount Steamer-on-Cauldron (Siru-san, Jeungsan 甌山). Sangje was born into the Kang family lineage, six generations after the time of Jin-Chang, who was the eldest son of the Kang family of Primordial Hill (Gobu). At the time of His incarnation, Sangje’s family name was Kang and His personal name was Il-Sun (一淳)... The birthday of the incarnated Supreme God is recorded in history as the 19day of the ninth month of the Shinmi Year,

the eighth year of the reign of King Gojong of the Joseon Dynasty, or the Year 4204 of the Dan Era. The birthday of the incarnated Sangje fell on the Western calendar date of November 1, 1871 CE.

8. The first name of Sangje's father was Mun-Hoe, with the courtesy name, Heung-Ju. With a tiger-like countenance and a booming voice, his knowledge of his great demeanor stretched from his neighbors to even the Eastern Learning (Donghak 東學) peasant militia.
9. The surname of Sangje's mother was Kwon, her personal name was Yang-Deok. One night when she visited her parents who had lived in Book Mountain (Seosan) Village of Pear Plains (Yipyeong) Township, she dreamed that the sky had been torn in half. From the fissure in the sky, north and south before her, a massive ball of flame emerged and covered her body. After that, she showed signs of pregnancy and after 13 months, Sangje was born.
10. On the day Sangje was born, the delivery room was filled with light; two celestial maidens descended to Earth from Heaven. They entered the delivery room, which was aglow with their presence, and the maidens attended the newborn Sangje. An effervescent, mysterious fragrance filled the entire delivery room. An auspicious vapor enveloped the entire house in which Sangje was born, and its light, extending up into the sky.

These following verses speak of Sangje's prowess as a student, his prodigious physical strength, his moral qualities, and his compassion for all living things:

11. From His youth onward, Sangje exhibited a good-natured and generous personality and a remarkably brilliant mind. Even as a little boy, Sangje possessed the great virtue of respecting all life; for instance, He enjoyed planting trees but never broke off even a single branch or harmed any insects no matter how small. Sangje was loved and revered by all who knew Him.
12. Sangje visited a village school at the age of seven. He was asked to compose a verse in Chinese. After being given the prompt '驚 (gyeong, frighten)' by the teacher, He wrote: "Taking a great stride, I hope that I do not demolish the Earth. Shouting with a big roar, I worry I may frighten Heaven [遠步恐地坼 大呼恐天驚]."

13. When Sangje was a student at the village school, He immediately understood what He had been taught by the master and, as such, always ranked first. There is an amusing anecdote about Him: one day, the teacher intended to promote the second-ranked pupil to first place, feeling sorry for that pupil's parents. To do this, he gave his class a test; however, Sangje received the highest score once again. Sangje had discovered the teacher's plot ahead of time and altered His style of writing and lettering so His teacher would be unable to distinguish between Himself and the second-ranked pupil.

14. One day, at the age of 13, Sangje went to the open market held in Wellspring-Town (Jeongeup) County with His older neighbor, Yu Deok-Ahn. The brothers had gone to town to sell some rolls of ramie fabric which had been woven by Sangje's mother. Deok-Ahn had some business of his own to attend to, so he left Sangje and the rolls of fabric behind. Though Sangje was standing right next to the fabric, when He looked away for just a moment, the fabric was no longer there. Deok-Ahn soon returned, and the brothers diligently scoured the market looking for the missing rolls of fabric. They searched all afternoon. As night approached, they still had not located the fabric. Sangje declined Deok-Ahn's offer to accompany Him back home and instead sent Deok-Ahn back alone. Sangje did not want to give up on the lost rolls of fabric. He knew another open market would be held in the distant county of Stand High (Gochang) the next day. Sangje walked through the night to arrive at the market. There, while looking through various fabric stores, He finally came across a man selling the rolls of ramie fabric which He had lost in Wellspring-Town. Sangje came back home after fulfilling His task of retrieving the rolls of fabric and selling them.

15. In His youth, Sangje was an active, playful boy. Two of Sangje's relatives, Kang Yeon-Hoe and Kang Gi-Hoe, were solidly built, powerful men. They enjoyed devising contests and measuring their strength against Sangje's. For His part, Sangje enjoyed taking opportunities to display His strength. On one occasion, Sangje bit down on the metal joint-connector at the bottom of a millstone with His teeth and lifted the heavy stone off the ground. His remarkable feat startled nearby onlookers, who were spellbound. On another occasion, Sangje jump-kicked the edge of the eaves of the high roof from a standing position in the yard without even taking a running start. And yet another time, He threw from the ground

heavy thatched roofing materials onto a house's rooftop with one hand. Sometimes He would get down on all fours while a dozen or so strong men would attempt to hold Him down. The grown men completely exhausted themselves, but Sangje's body did not move down, not even an inch. Kim Gwang-Mun passed on a story telling of a time he witnessed Sangje playfully amusing a group of children by putting a stone mortar on His head and spinning it so effortlessly that it looked like a streamer twirled from a hat (*sangmo*) when dancing.

16. Sangje's brilliance became known to many people, and He was often invited to village schools, near and far, one after another. When He was asked to compose epigrams, He always left one or two empty spaces at the end of the final verse.
17. Sangje learned that His father had been agonizing over the debt of several hundred nyang which he had borrowed from a rich man, Park of Wellspring-Town (Jeongeup) County. Sangje wanted to relieve His father of his worry, so He asked His father for 50 nyang. With that, He visited Park, and paid back part of the debt. While He was there, Sangje made friends with the pupils studying at Park's private school. While He was staying at the schoolhouse, the teacher had all the pupils write poems. Sangje also asked the teacher for a one-word prompt so He could compose a rhyme. His poem was so refined and exquisite; the teacher and the pupils greatly admired it. Park also felt very curious about Sangje and asked Him to stay for a while to study with his own children and nephews. Sangje reluctantly decided to stay there for a few days. After telling Park about His father's difficulties, Park was deeply touched by His filial piety and canceled the debt by burning up the promissory note.
18. One day in the Jeonghae Year (1887), while Sangje was headed to visit His maternal grandparents at their home, Sangje encountered a drunken man who hurled abuse at Him for no reason. Wisely, Sangje did not react to the man. Suddenly and out of nowhere, a big stone mortar flew overhead and covered the drunken man's head. Stuck in the mortar, he could not get away. Sangje turned from him and headed on his way.

The following excerpts from *The Life and Philosophical Thought of Jeungsan* depict Kange Jeungsan as hero possessing precious wit and amazing strength.²³

▪ Remarkable Physicality and Generous Nature

Jeungsan had a countenance that would have garnered honor from everyone, due to His bold features and round facial structure. He had a burly frame, but was gentle in character. There is a story from the period after Jeungsan had reached adulthood. The concubine of Baek Namshin's younger brother had been a courtesan. One time, Jeungsan had opted to stay at Baek Namshin's younger brother's home as a guest, and she was taken aback by His elegant wit and she came to His room in the middle of the night and made a pass at him. In addition, the adults in the village were said to have poured their hearts into Jeungsan even more than they had their own children. His nature was such that He exhibited goodwill to all creatures, did not cut so much as a blade of grass, and did not hurt even the smallest of insects. Throughout the course of His life, He never cursed at anyone even a single time and perpetually maintained an amicable and magnanimous character. One year in autumn, a young Jeungsan saw farmers pitilessly engaging in the act of busily chasing birds away from the grain they had harvested. With a warm heart He questioned, "How could you possibly feed human beings if even the occasional bird's pecking at a single grain brings you so much displeasure?"

One day, He saw His father chasing some birds and chickens, and He attempted to dissuade His father from continuing. His father disregarded this and persisted in chasing the birds and chickens. Suddenly, lightning struck and heavy rain began to pour even in the brightness of mid-day. The previously dried grain floated away in the fallen rain. As father and Son, they looked upon one another face to face and speechless. Jeungsan, who possessed the traits of being as remarkably strong outwardly as He was remarkably generous inwardly, was venerated to such a high degree that He was called a divine child in regards to His wisdom.

▪ The Great Learning, Wisdom, and Knowledge of a Prodigy

At age seven, Jeungsan began formally learning the ways of the world. His father invited a village tutor to come to their house and teach Jeungsan the Thousand Character Classic. Tutor pointed to the character 'cheon' meaning Heaven, had Him read it, and then read the character 'ji' meaning Earth and had Him memorize it. The tutor continued to the character 'hyeon' meaning black, but Jeungsan did not read along. The tutor asked Him why He did not read, but He did not answer. Instead He told His father, "I have found the profundity of Heaven within Heaven, and I have penetratingly gazed into the mysterious truth of Earth. There is nothing more to learn; so send the

tutor back.” His father found himself at a loss with nothing to do but dismiss the tutor. He built a master's quarters in the backyard for his Son to live by Himself. There was no one who was not awestruck by the wisdom of young Jeungsan.

Although He was endowed with wisdom and exercised control over winds, rains, lightning, and thunder, He was still a child of only seven years. On the way to His maternal grandparents' home one day, a drunkard began hurling abuse at Him in a threatening manner. But Jeungsan did not say so much as a word. Suddenly, a stone mortar was flung into the air and then landed over the head of the drunkard trapping him. Jeungsan thereby continued on His way with no further impediments.

During His youth, Jeungsan liked to play around. One day He bit down the metal joint-connector at the bottom of the millstone with His teeth and lifted it off the ground. His strength was simply magnificent and His manner of speaking and fortitude of character likewise left villagers spellbound wherever He went.

Sometimes He, without even needing a running start, would launch Himself into the air to jump kick the edge of eaves from a standing position in the yard.

Other times, He would throw heavy thatched upper roofing onto a house's rooftop with a single hand. Other times still, He would position Himself on all fours and keep His body up while strong men tested their might by attempting to hold Him down. They never succeeded in forcing Him down to the ground. There was also a story of Him putting a stone mortar on His head and spinning it so effortlessly that it looked like a ribbon twirled from a hat during a folk dance.

These sacred stories concerning the boyhood of Sangje convey some idea to outsiders of the values of this new religion and how they shape the lives of children growing up in Daesoon Jinrihoe.

The Significance of this Study

What is the significance of this study for the microsociology of children in new religious movements? In 2017, the Chinese government introduced new regulations that banned children from attending religious events. In Shangrao, an area of Jiangxi, more than forty churches have signs over their entrances that read, “Non-locals are prohibited from preaching; no underage people allowed in church.”²⁴ According to the international non-profit Christian human rights organization, China Aid, regulations

introduced in 2017 by the Chinese government place new bans on unregistered church worship and on teaching Christianity to children.²⁵

In Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province on the eastern coast, children were specifically prohibited from attending church services, with local officials ordering churches to cancel all activities involving teenagers. Elementary and middle school staff members told parents not to allow their children to attend Sunday worship services or other church events. These restrictions also apply to Muslims. In Linxia, a predominantly Muslim county in the province of Gansu, the Chinese Communist Party increased the control of religious education and the district's education bureau announced in a notice online that all school students in the area were prohibited from entering religious buildings over their holiday break.²⁶

South Korea, in contrast to China, is a democratic country. The Republic of Korea 2018 International Religious Freedom Report states, "all citizens have freedom of religion, and that there shall be no discrimination in political, economic, social, or cultural life because of religion. Freedoms in the constitution may be restricted by law only when necessary for national security, law and order, or public welfare, and restrictions may not violate the "essential aspect" of the freedom." The constitution also states that religion and state shall be separate.²⁷ While there have been some legal cases and public debate over the issues of conscientious exemption from military service²⁸ and the practice of deprogramming,²⁹ but generally speaking, South Korea provides a "favorable ecology" for new religious movements (Stark 1996).³⁰

Researchers in the field of new religions in Europe and North America have thus far tended to choose the more sectarian and controversial groups (NRMs) that exhibit radical, experimental patterns of sexuality, family and childrearing (Palmer and Hardman 1999; Van Eck Duymaer Van Twist 2015; Frisk 2018; Nilsson 2019). The mass media, in reporting on religion, especially alternative religions, tends to focus on conflict, as James Beckford has noted (Beckford 2004). But in the case of Daesoon Jinrihoe, we find an example (and no doubt there are many others) of a new religion that is clearly not "sectarian"; whose children cannot be described as "indoctrinated" – in fact they appear to lead "normal" lives, in terms of their orientation to the larger society.

Conclusion

Daesoon Jinrihoe appears to be a religion that is designed for adults. Our research found that children do not usually participate in religious activities. Chanting and prayer are understood as "adults-only" activities. Our informants explained this situation as follows: "The prayers and series of incantations are a 'hard sell' on children." There is a surprising absence of rites of passage, of coming of age rites, such as the equivalent of baptisms, christenings, and puberty initiations which appear to be an almost universal feature of religion, from ancient to indigenous to early modern.

But the new religion of Daesoon Jinrihoe is currently Korea's largest indigenous religious organization, and since 2005, through the establishment of the Youth Camps and the youth magazine, *Donggeurami*, there has been a strategic effort to educate the children in the faith of their parents. At the same time, children are awarded the power of choice. There appears to be no such thing as "forced indoctrination" or "shunning" in Daesoon Jinrihoe (practices that other religious minorities, notably the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Amish and the Bruderhof, have been accused of).³¹ One of our informants who is a parent spoke of his openness to the prospect of their children not choosing to follow in the Daesoon Jinrihoe faith. The Daesoon father noted, "the children are taught the history of Daesoon Jinrihoe, and some of them, like my son, develop a research interest in its history, even if they choose not to become active members as adults."

Conflict of Interest

Susan Palmer has been on the Editorial Board of *JDTREA* since July 2021, and Jason Greenberger has been Managing Editor during that same time period. However, neither had a role in the decision to publish this article. No potential conflict of interest relevant to this article was reported.

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Notes

- ¹ It is funded by the Social Sciences and the Humanities Research Council of Canada.
- ² Our two informants are members of Daesoon Jinrihoe. One of them was the chief editor and co-founder of the youth magazine, *Donggeurami*, and the other is a Head Edifier and founder of the Youth Camps.
- ³ Jason Greenberger presented his findings via a presentation titled, “Are We There Yet? Differing Views from Daesoon Jinrihoe Devotees as to Whether the Later World is Underway, Imminent, or Eventual”, at 79th Annual Meeting of Association for the Sociology of Religion in 2017. The theme for that year's meeting was Religion and Division: Causes, Consequences, and Counters.
- ⁴ The July 2020 Youth Camp is not held, due to the vagaries of Covid-19.
- ⁵ *Donggeurami* 2012. Winter. Issue 6, p. 38-43 『동그라미』 2012. 겨울. 제6호, p.38-43
- ⁶ *Donggeurami* 2014. Spring. Issue 13 『동그라미』 2014. 봄. 제13호
- ⁷ *Donggeurami* 2016. Autumn. Issue 23 『동그라미』 2016. 가을. 제23호
- ⁸ *Donggeurami* 2018. Winter. Issue 28 『동그라미』 2018. 겨울. 제28호
- ⁹ *Donggeurami* 2012. Winter. Issue 6, p. 18-21. 『동그라미』 2012. 겨울. 제6호, p.18-21
- ¹⁰ *Donggeurami* 2016. Autumn. Issue 23, p. 4-9 『동그라미』 2016. 가을. 제23호, p. 4-9
- ¹¹ *Donggeurami* 2018. Winter. Issue 28, p. 56-63 『동그라미』 2018. 겨울. 제28호, p. 56-63
- ¹² *Donggeurami* 2012. Winter. Issue 6, p. 102-105 『동그라미』 2012. 겨울. 제6호, p. 102-105
- ¹³ *Donggeurami* 2014. Spring. Issue 13, p. 51 『동그라미』 2014. 봄. 제13호, p. 51
- ¹⁴ *Donggeurami* 2016. Autumn. Issue 23, p.20-23 『동그라미』 2016. 가을. 제23호, p. 20-23
- ¹⁵ *Donggeurami* 2018. Winter. Issue 28, p. 30-35 『동그라미』 2018. 겨울. 제28호, p. 30-35
- ¹⁶ *Donggeurami* 2018. Winter. Issue 28, p. 36-37 『동그라미』 2018. 겨울. 제28호, p. 36-37
- ¹⁷ *Donggeurami* 2012. Winter. Issue 6, p.6-17 『동그라미』 2012. 겨울. 제6호, p. 6-17
- ¹⁸ *Donggeurami* 2014. Spring. Issue 13, p.20-33 『동그라미』 2014. 봄. 제13호, p. 20-33
- ¹⁹ *Donggeurami* 2016. Autumn. Issue 23, p.24-37 『동그라미』 2016. 가을. 제23호, p. 24-37
- ²⁰ *Donggeurami* 2018. Winter. Issue 28, p.42-55 『동그라미』 2018. 겨울. 제28호, p. 42-55
- ²¹ DIVA (Daejin International Volunteers Association) is an affiliated body of Daesoon Jinrihoe which is the biggest Korean ethnic religious organization and has its three major works: Charity Aid, Social Welfare and Education.
- ²² Translation by members of Daesoon Institute of Religion and Culture (including Jason Greenberger).
- ²³ Greenberg notes the translations of these texts are still an ongoing process.
- ²⁴ <https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/stories/china-forbids-children-from-churches-as-religious-rights-diminish>
- ²⁵ <https://anglicanplanet.net/china-bans-children-from-church-services/>
- ²⁶ <https://www.newsweek.com/atheist-china-bans-children-religion-muslim-province-783798>
- ²⁷ <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/KOREA-REP-2018-INTERNATIONAL-RELIGIOUS-FREEDOM-REPORT.pdf>
- ²⁸ <https://www.osce.org/odihr/94564?download=true>
- ²⁹ <https://www.iirf.eu/news/other-news/conference-on-forced-change-of-religion-in-seoul/>
- ³⁰ Rodney Stark, “Why Religious Movements Succeed or Fail: A Revised General Model” *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, Volume 11, Issue 2 May 1996, pages 133 - 146
- ³¹ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/religious-shunning-jehovahs-witness-1.3767074>

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Haewon-sangsaeng as a Religio-Ethical* Metaphor

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Abstract

This paper deals with figurative meanings of *Haewon-sangsaeng*. It is an investigation which is both semantic and diachronic. In the first part, important implications of *sangsaeng* (or *xiangsbeng* in Chinese) in the context of correlative cosmology are extensively explored. Among others, *saeng* (in Chinese *sheng*) as a powerful metaphor and its related Chinese compounds are broadly discussed. In the second part, the evolution of ideas of *yuan* (or *won* in Korean) in Chinese history is explicated. Above all, in the traditional Chinese cultural milieu, wrongful treatments which make victims feel themselves aggrieved are socio-politically orientated. *The Scripture on Great Peace (Taiping Jing)* is used as reference point to elucidate the essential points of *yuan* and its knots. However, the advent of Buddhism in East Asia adds a new dimension to the understanding of *yuan* (*won*). Accumulated *yuan* as karmic bond thus gives a new identity of *yuan* as predetermined animosity. Widely recognized idioms like “adverse relatives and karmic debtors” and indigenous Chinese Buddhist rituals like *Repentance Ritual of the Emperor Liang* bear witness to this transformation of the meaning of *yuan* in East Asia. The fruitful yet correlated meanings of *yuan* also make the endeavor of untying *yuan* deeply significant and important to human society. *Haewon-sangsaeng*, as a religio-ethical ideal, brings out an amicable and harmonious relationship among myriad beings in the cosmos.

Keywords: saeng; sangsaeng; yuan (won); yuanjie; jieyuan

All of us are living now in a period of opposition; it is important that we may hope for the transformation of opposition into fellowship.

(Richard Wilhelm 1979, 25)

Na hi verena verāni/
sammanādhā kudācanam//
averena ca sammanti/
esa dhammo sanantano//

(Never ever are enmities ceased through enmity in this world.

They are ceased through non-enmity. This is the eternal dharma.)

(Dhammapada, *Yamakavagga*, 5)

Introduction: Ideals of Daesoon Jinrihoe

In *The Canonical Scripture* of Daesoon Jinrihoe, the relationship among modalities of existence in the universe is powerfully articulated in the four tenets with four-character phrase each, that is, *Eumyang-hapdeok* (陰陽合德, Virtuous Concordance of Ying and Yang), *Shinin-jabwah* (神人調化, Harmonious Union of Divine Beings and Human Beings), *Haewon-sangsaeng* (解冤相生, Resolution of Grievance for the Mutual Beneficence) and *Dotong-jingyeong* (道通真境, Perfected State of Unification with the Dao). The first three tenets – Virtuous Concordance of Ying and Yang, Harmonious Union of Divine Beings and Human Beings, Resolution of Grievance for the Mutual Beneficence – express a meaningful relationship that is not in dualistic opposition, but mutual complementarity. The last phrase-the pervasiveness of Dao in the universe-summarizes an ideal world when the above goals are fully accomplished.

Clearly, what is proposed above for an ideal world sketches out a striking feature of East Asian way of thinking. In this mode of thought, opposites constitute harmony, i.e., the relationship between male and female, divine being and human being, grievance and beneficence is cooperative. To reach harmony is to avoid dualistic discord. Thus, man and woman are not antagonistic but supportive to each other. Divine being and human being can be unified. Animosity will be untangled by benevolence. Ultimately, truth prevails and humanity manifests.

Moreover, there are three phases of coordination in terms of cosmic efforts before a state of perfection is achieved. The male-female relationship is the first one to be reconciled. The inseparable tie between divine world and human world comes next. The third stage is the dissolution of enmity among beings in the universe. This is decisive and the final step before the renewal of cosmic order. Terrestrial paradise would emerge once reordering of the universe is complete.

Sangsaeng and Correlative Cosmology

In East Asia, especially in China and Korea, the above mode of thought is prevalent in their cultural orientations. It is a way of thinking in which the perfection of cosmic order is predicated on the excellence of human order. There is a correlative relation between human world and cosmic order. Human order and comic order are organically connected and interdependent. This mode of thought is generally termed correlative cosmology. Schwartz defined correlative cosmology in the following way:

It is a kind of anthropocosmology in which entities, processes, and classes of phenomena found in nature correspond to or “go together with” various entities, processes, and classes of phenomena in human world.¹ (Schwartz 1985, 351)

In other words, human world and natural world are participating in an organic progression to make an interconnected cosmos. However, the cosmos is not created but self-generating without an ordainer. There is no cosmogony in the strictest sense of the term in ancient China as god on high (上帝) is not the creator of the universe but the guardian of the world. Most important, it is a process in which a closed and definite correlation between human order and natural order is posed. Schwartz also argued:

The essential preoccupation lying behind the correlative cosmology seems to be that of finding in the homologies between human and natural phenomena a means of controlling human civilization as well as human individual life by “aligning” them with cycles, rhythms, and patterns of the natural realm. (Schwartz 1985, 355)

The correlation and coordination between the cosmic order and human realm constitutes a fundamental principle of the universe. It is a definitive law which regulates the universe. In the end, this cosmic process of spiritual development also leads to great peace or harmony. Moreover, in this correlative mode of discourse, an opposing relationship between two modalities of being becomes inseparable companionship to make the whole possible. It is a paired relationship which forms a complementary binary. Thus, male and female are not antagonistic but keep company with one another to make a meaningful ensemble.² Clearly, this mode of thought is based on the principles of complementarity. To be sure, it is not a way of thinking in which transcendence of dualistic opposition is overcome by encompassing the opposite. Rather, it is a holistic sort of thought and concordance is achieved by making opposites conjointly complementary. Male and female surely display a polarity. However, what distinguishes this polarity is that the grouping of two opposites makes an integral

whole. Bodde pointed out that the harmonizing of opposites is one of the distinguishing features in Chinese philosophy. He said:

It should be evident that basic among Chinese thought patterns is the desire to merge conflicting elements into a unified harmony. Chinese philosophy is filled with dualism in which, however, their two component elements are usually regarded as complementary and mutually necessary rather than hostile and incompatible. (Bodde 1981, 272)

Consequently, the metaphor concerning these two opposites is a harmonious union of *yin* and *yang* which gives birth to myriad beings. The metaphor of “giving birth” (生, *sheng*) or procreation is central in the cosmic unfolding.³ It is said in the *Tao Te Ching*:

The Tao gives birth to One. One gives birth to Two. Two gives to Three. Three gives birth to all things.

All things have their backs to the female and stand facing the male. When male and female combine, all things achieve harmony.”⁴ (Chapter 42, trans. by Mitchell)

It is the metaphor of procreation rather than that of creation which provides the central meaning of *Tao*. *Tao* (Dao) or cosmic order is not created *ex nihilo* in traditional Chinese cosmology. The union between the male and the female establishes a harmonious bond and procreation begins. It is a relationship of two-in-one. In fact, this mode of thought is clearly articulated in the *Book of Changes* (《易經》, *I Ching*, *Yijing*). Wilhelm called this mode of discourse “opposition and fellowship” in his exploration of the philosophy of the *I Ching*:

Opposition and fellowship complement one another; opposites are necessary for the individual to comprehend himself, and fellowship is necessary for the individual to find his sphere of activity. By complementing one another, a work that continues the past and passes something on to the future is completed. In this sense, what is to come is not mere illusion, and time does not merely elapse, but becomes *Kainos* [turning point, the moment of decision], meaningful time—that is, time capable of asserting the moment in reality when contrasted with eternity. (Wilhelm 1979: 23)

Opposition and fellowship are basic principles of life and cosmos. They are integral to a fruitful life and meaningful cosmology. It is opposition which makes harmonious

union (fellowship) possible. Here, *sheng* is an absolutely key notion. Closely related to this idea is the concept of continuity of being (or engenderment and re-engenderment, *sheng-sheng*: 生生). It is said in the *Appendix of the Book of Change* 《周易·繫辭上》: “Continuity of being is called the process of change.”⁵ The growth and transformation of the cosmic process begins with the metaphor of *sheng*. Chou Tun-i added some comments on above passage in his *Diagrammatic Explanation of Tai-chi* (《太極圖說》, *Tai Chi Tu Shou*): “The interaction of these two *ch’i* (Yin and Yang) engenders and transforms myriad things. The myriad things produce and reproduce, resulting in an unending transformation.”⁶ (Tu 1985, 44) Tu in his essay on “The Continuity of Being: Chinese Visions of Nature” argued:

An obvious consequence of this basic belief [continuity of being] is the all-embracing nature of the so-called spontaneously self-generating life process. Strictly speaking, it is not because the Chinese have no idea of God external to the created cosmos that they have no choice but to accept the cosmogony as an organismic process. Rather, it is precisely because they perceive the cosmos as the unfolding of continuous creativity that it cannot entertain” conceptions of creation *ex nihilo* by the hand of God, or through the will of God, and all other such mechanistic, teleological, and theistic cosmologies.” The Chinese commitment to the continuity of being, rather than the absence of creation myth, prompts them to see nature as “the all-unfolding harmony of impersonal cosmic functions.” (Tu 1985, 36)

The idea of continuity of being also gives rise to the connection between the self and others, and this mutual relationship eventually expands to Heaven and Earth. It is a cosmological correlation and in this process of extension, human beings partake a certain reality of the divine. Also, it involves a process of mutual interaction among all cosmic beings. This vision of the continuity of being is vital for us to understand the gravity of the metaphor of *sheng* in Chinese intellectual tradition, both Confucianism and Taoism. (cf. Tu 1985, 35-50) Witnessing from the ideal of *haewon-sangsaeng*, continuity of being as a cosmological metaphor is also utterly fundamental in Korean intellectual history.

It has to be pointed out that the idea of *sheng* (生 or *saeng* in Korean) gives to that of *xiangsheng* (相生 or *sangsaeng* in Korean) and from *xiangsheng* to *xiangke* (相剋 or *sanggeuk* in Korean). Evidently, *xiangsheng* and *xiangke* are two situations antagonistic to each other to make the cosmological order (生序, *Sheng-xu*) a complete whole. *Xiangsheng* is a situation in which two elements of natural force reinforce each other. *Xiangke* is a state of affairs in which two elements of natural force counteract each other. *Xiangsheng* could be translated as mutually supportive or reciprocal

engenderment and *xiangke* could be translated as reciprocally restricting or mutual conquest. These two ideas or metaphors are always jointly accompanied in nature and human history. The ideas of mutually supportive or reciprocally restricting of natural force first appeared in the doctrines of five elements or phases (五行) of cosmic force. There are five elements of natural force in the universe, that is; water, fire, metal, wood and earth. Relations among them could be either mutually supportive or reciprocally restricting.

Basically, the five elements theory is as the following. There are five material elements or phases and their cyclical progression produces dynamic movements of human history. In conjunction with natural phenomena and seasonal changes, the five elements or phases as mentioned above which, form two parallel cycles: the cycle of reciprocal engenderment and the cycle of mutual conquest. In the cycle of reciprocal engenderment, one element engenders its successor by following a prescribed pattern of succession that accords with natural interconnections. For example, water nourishes the trees (wood), and then burning wood makes fire. By contrast, in the cycle of mutual conquest, one element destroys its predecessor. For example, water extinguishes fire, and then fire melts metal.⁷ Schwartz said:

Within the material elements series, the concept of “mutual conquest” [*xiangke*] relation among earth/wood/metal/fire/water was...probably based on simple natural observation such as the observation that vegetation “overcomes” earth by drawing its sustenance from it; that metal overcomes wood as when a sharp ax can be used to fell trees; fire melts metal; water extinguishes fire; and earth can somehow conquers water (by drainage or absorption?) The correlates in the realm of nature associated with each of the elements may include colors, seasons, or cardinal directions and in the human realms such categories as ethical qualities, departments of governments, the governing principles of a dynasty, and even various aspects of individual life. (Schwartz 1985, 362)

Evidently, both *xiangsheng* and *xiangke* here are not merely manifestations of relation among natural forces, but also metaphors for human affairs and ethical consequences. Analogically, relation among modalities of being could also be expressed either in mutual subjugation or reciprocal engenderment. Mutual conquest or subjugation, is the situation in which a conflict of interest arises among them. Mutual engenderment is a state in which harmony is reached among members concerned. It is important to note here that reciprocal engenderment is not a state of purely co-existence, but more positively as a state of mutually supportive or reciprocally flourishing. It is an age of peace and harmony. Mutual conquest or subjugation is the

situation that conflicts dominate. This is a time that the world and human condition are in chaos. According to Daesoon Jinrihoe, an age of suffering and adversity is characterized by *xiangke* which preferably is to be superseded by that of *xiangsbeng* (or K. *sangsaeng*) forever. It is said in *The Canonical Scripture*:

The world has been filled with grievances and grudges because mutual contention has prevailed over human affairs in the Former World. Accordingly, the Three Realms of Heaven, Earth and Humankind have been obstructed from contacting one another, which has led this world to wretched calamities. This is the reason for the lack of renewal of the Three Realms. (*Prophetic Elucidations* 1: 8)⁸

As the “Former World” (先天, *seoncheon*) is an age of chaos characterized by sharp and bloody conflict, the “Later World” (後天, *hoocheon*) is distinguished by harmony and mutual beneficence. The pervasion of Dao in the paradise is the time when knots of enmity and resentment are untangled and reciprocal engenderment of all life is achieved.⁹ It is also said in *The Canonical Scripture*:

Sangje said to Kim Hyeong-Ryeol: “In the Former World, as all creations were ruled by mutual contention (相剋, *sanggeuk*), grievances and grudges have been accumulating, condensing, and filing up the Three Realms. Heaven and Earth, losing the constant Dao, are overwhelmed with all kinds of disasters and calamities, and the world has fallen into wretchedness. To save all the people in this world, I will resolve the grievances and grudges from time immemorial by recalibrating the Degree Number of Heaven and Earth, harmonizing divine beings, and establishing the Later World’s paradisiacal land of immortals which will be based on the principle of mutual beneficence (相生, *sangsaeng*). The grievances must be resolved by the Dao of gods in every small and large matter. If first I solidify and harmonize Degree Numbers, then human affairs shall naturally unfold in accordance with that action. This is indeed the Reordering Works of the Three Realms.” Then Sangje undertook part of Reordering Works of Myeongbu (the spirit world). (*Reordering Works* 1: 3)¹⁰

Clearly, the Former World is allied with way of *sanggeuk* and the Later World is linked with *sangsaeng*. This new perspective of *sangsaeng* and *sanggeuk* is different from the original correlative cosmology in traditional China where *sangsaeng* and *sanggeuk* inexorably take turns in the unfolding of universal political history. In correlative cosmology, it is the circulation of different phases that explains the changes of dynasties

and this rotation seems inescapable. Schwartz discussed Tsou Yen's (c. 305-240 BCE) ideas of correlative relation between different Chinese dynasties and five elements and said:

Tsou Yen's most well-known theory was his correlation of five elements with the cyclical patterns of history. According to this theory, under the Yellow Emperor the "dominant" prevailing element had been the element of earth, together with all its concomitant homologies. Under Yü, the founder of Hsia Dynasty, there had been an ascendancy of wood (or vegetation); under the Shang Dynasty, an ascendancy of metal; and under the Chou, an ascendancy of fire. (Schwartz 1986, 362)

It is clear here that correlative cosmology carries strong political implications. There is a political theology behind correlative cosmology. (Schwartz 1986, 362-3) Nonetheless, if the situation of mutual conquest or contention continues, that is, wood conquers earth, metal conquers wood and fire conquers metal, then the world would never have real harmony or true peace. This world is perpetuated in mutual contention. Humanity would not attain salvation. Unfortunately, this had been a typical situation in Chinese history where a later dynasty had to overthrow previous dynasty to begin a new era. Although it is called a revolution in name, is a continuation of mutual conquest and hostilities in reality. The era of great peace (大同) would never emerge in human history as mutual conquest rather than reciprocal engenderment dominates political history.

If history repeats itself in this way, then it is imperative for humanity to go beyond the cyclical patterns of history to find salvation. Only mutual engenderment could end this cycle and bring us salvation. For Daesoon Jinrihoe, the inescapable rotation of the age of *sangsaeng* and that of *sanggeuk* in human history would only result in disruptions of humanity. *Sangsaeng* and *sanggeuk* should not take place in rotation. To ensure eternal peace or everlasting harmony, a permanent substitution of *sangsaeng* for *sanggeuk* in human history is extremely important and urgent.

Haewon and Asian Thought

A. Ideas of *yuan* (冤) and *yuanjie* (冤結) in indigenous Chinese thought

In exploring the meaning of *bae won* or *yuan jie* in Chinese, we also have to go back to China to trace its development in East Asia. The meaning of *yuan* or *won* is the crux for us to understand the import of *bae won* or *yuan jie*. However, there are two cultural origins for the idea of *yuan*. One is from indigenous Chinese thought and the other from Chinese popular Buddhist culture. I will first explain traditional Chinese ideas on *yuan* and then tackle problems related to *yuan* in Chinese Buddhism.

On the other hand, it is intellectually rewarding for us to explore related metaphors of *yuan* semantically. At this juncture, it is important for us to grasp contrasting metaphors between *bae won or jie yuan* (解冤 in Chinese) and *yuan jie* (冤結) or *jie yuan* (結冤) first so that the implications of *won or yuan* can be explored. It has to be pointed out that the metaphor of *yuan jie* (冤結) belongs to traditional culture shared by Confucianism and Taoism. The second one, *jie yuan* (結冤) is the indigenization of Mahayana Buddhism in China. I will discuss *yuan jie* (冤結) first for its historical precedence and then *jie yuan* (結冤) in Chinese Buddhism so that fruitful ambiguity of 冤 can be cleared up.

Yuan jie (冤結) figures prominently in the early history of Chinese and East Asian literature. (Liu 2016) In fact, *yuan jie* as a very striking metaphor in traditional Chinese culture has undergone many vicissitudes in history. *Yuan* (冤 or 怨) is often compared to twisted knots (結, *jie*). Unless twisted knots are completely untied, *yuan*, or grievance or bitterness will continue to be deep-rooted in one's mind and heart. There will be no outlet for deep resentment if knots remain tightly tangled. Only when knots are fully undone, could one's accumulated resentment be overcome. Grievance is an intense anger filled with sentiments of unjustness and desperation.

Yuan jie became an important concept related to community life in one of the early Taoist scriptures, *The Scripture on Great Peace*. (*Taiping Jing* 《太平經》, hereafter TPJ) which was codified between 2nd and 6th century CE. (Hendrischke 2006, 31-42) Conditions for personal salvation are elaborated in this important text. Among others, to get rid of resentment in society is considered to be imperative in this scripture. Hendrischke pointed out one of the main concerns of TPJ:

An important element of personal as well as public life is the avoidance of resentment. Individuals must be careful not to become resentful, and men in a leading position must make sure that their subordinates are satisfied. Whatever causes men to bear a grudge must be avoided...officials and their apparatus must not cause resentment among the people by disregarding their plight or imprisoning the innocent. The need to avoid resentment also plays a role in the prohibition of infanticide, a cruelty that all women resent and that for this reason alone is bound to create *cosmic upheaval*. The prevention of resentment is also behind a fastidious process of selecting and supervising officials and clerks. Superiors must make sure they assign their subordinates to jobs they are well able to handle, lest they become desperate. (Hendrischke 2006, 53, italics mine)

Here, resentment is a rendering of Chinese *yuan* (怨). It is a strong and adverse sentiment among the ruled if a sense of being wronged by the superior is generated.

To avoid accumulated resentment, the ruler must pay attention to what is needed of his subjects. Basically, it is politically orientated and has much to do with public order and social life. Moreover, it has to be indicated that female infanticide was widely practiced when TPJ was composed, and this apparently caused grave concern because it was an offence against harmony between yin and yang. The author of TPJ warned against this callous practice and contended that the murder of a fetus, a heinous crime against women, would eventually cause *yuanjie-qi* (冤結氣) in the cosmos:

Now if one family kills one female: how many hundreds of thousands of family are there all over the world? Sometimes one family kills dozens of females or a fetus injured before birth. Grief-stricken *qi* rises up to move heaven. How can these acts not be disorderly?¹¹ (Hendrichske 2006, 75)

It is remarkable here that the *qi* (or 氣, *ch'i*) of *yuanjie* is so prevailing that it could move heaven. It means that accumulated resentful and grievous souls could have cosmic effect. This cosmic repercussion has much to do with correlative cosmology, but it also shows redemptive power of collective suffering. Heaven which is moved by *yuanjie-qi* will surely cause catastrophe on earth. In the footnote to the above passage, Hendrichske pointed out the grave implications of *yuan* in traditional Chinese culture:

Yuan Jie (冤結, grief-stricken) seems to occur in the Chu ci...where it describes a woman's undefined sadness. Throughout the text [of TPJ], the character *yuan* (冤, grievance) is also used as in the meaning of *yuan* (怨, resentment). *Yuan Jie* as well as *yuan* (冤 and 怨) often indicates the resentment felt by those who see themselves as maltreated and suffering without cause. This resentment, which reaches beyond death, amount to a major cosmic force because it stimulates heaven to cause disaster.¹² (Hendrichske 2006, 91 n. 45)

Although 冤 and 怨 are often interchangeable in Chinese culture as shown above, it seems that resentment (怨) is caused by grievance (冤) and not vice versa. Grievance comes first and a deep and intense grievance becomes bitter resentment. Seeing from its pictorial ideograph, the word 冤 refers to a rabbit confined in a house without exit. It is because of such wrongful confinement that people are driven crazy. One feels victimized, which fosters a grievance, and a terrible bitterness arises in one's heart. Like entangled knots have to be untied dexterously, deep-rooted resentment has to be untangled pertinently lest it should facilitate more resentment. Eventually, *yuanjie* as a striking and powerful metaphor left an indelible mark in Chinese culture. Liu explained the nuances of *yuanjie* (冤結) lucidly:

This metaphor is derived from the experience of tying knots such as wearing fragrant grasses. Referring by analogy, emotional entanglement accumulated by the wrongful treatments (冤屈, *yuanqu*) is compared to what is suitable to tie but difficult to untangle. It [*yuanjie*] becomes an imaginary cultural symbol. (Liu 2016, 1)

Indeed, images of tangled and untied are important for us to understand significant weight of *yuan* carried in traditional Chinese culture. These knots are easy to tie but difficult to untie. In the TPJ, it is because of the *qi* of *yuanjie* gets tangled that victims are eventually noticed from on high. The collective *yuanjie* of wronged innocents should be taken seriously and dealt with properly by a ruler. It is also important for the general public to distinguish rumor from the truth so that truth is not veiled and knots of resentment are not accrued:

Should a large number of words from various traditions support each other, they would become irrefutable and be considered standard language. This goes back to one single person having missed the truth in what he said. But in turn this made all these men miss the truth, which upset the validity of the correct texts revealed by heaven. This would be the reason why customs would be altered and habits changed. Although the world might see all this as a great ill, they would be unable to bring it to a halt. It would be worse over because distress would be transmitted from one generation to the next. [However], these later generations would not know that the point from which it came lay in distance. Instead they would hold contemporaries responsible, therefore intensifying the resentment between them. This in turn would not allow the knots which *qi* gotten tangled to be untied but would make them daily more resistant.¹³ (Hendrischke 2006, 143-144)

The intensification of resentment among the suffering people would make tangled *qi* even more tied. “Distress transmitted from one generation to the next” is translation of the term “*cheng fu zhi e*” (承甫之厄). *Cheng fu* is an important concept in TPJ. Semantically, *cheng* (承) means reception and *fu* (甫) transmission of “[evil].” (Hendrischke 2006, 141). As shown from the above passage, there is an accumulation of resentment from past generations to later generations if resentment is not untied. What is received will be transmitted if the knots are not untangled. Obviously, this generational reception and transmission of resentment is different from the Buddhist idea of karmic retribution. Karmic retribution is a religio-ethical persuasion in which the present state of an individual is the result (karmic effect) of his or her past deeds. Here, it is the whole society that bears the responsibility. In contrast, it is the principle of retributive justice that accounts for this and next life of a person in Buddhism.¹⁴

Also, the discourse that *qi* got tangled in knots when resentment is intensified is worth noting. Resentment among ordinary people obstructs the free flow of universal *qi*. Dissonance of *qi* will cause cosmic disorder. This surely explains a correlative relation between humanity, society and the cosmos connected by the omnipresence of *qi*. The existence of *qi* is vital for us to understand the knots of resentment:

Should primordial *qi* not cooperate, the spiritlike man without bodily form will not arrive, and if heaven's *qi* does not do so, the man of great spirit will not come. Problems with earth's *qi* will prevent the perfected from coming. Disharmony of four seasons will prevent the arrival of the transcendent. Should the five phases lack harmony, the man of great *dao* will not step forward. If Yin and Yang are not in cooperation, wise men will not appear. Should what the texts say not be true, officials of great worth will not come. Should they not be able to harvest the ten thousand crops, the common people will be in disorder, there will be few goods and commodities, and serfs will run away. Men will ignore their responsibility in all their activities. This is precisely the damage [that results from a disharmony of *qi*]. Should you wish to deliver heaven from disorderly *qi* you have to work hard unremittingly at creating balance.¹⁵ (Hendrichske 2006, 208-209)

Ultimately, it is *qi* which provokes *yuanjie* to its cosmic consequences. It will bring disorder not only in the realm of nature but also to that of humanity. An impending disaster seems inevitable. Correlative cosmology is the basis of the discourse. Apparently, returning to balance or harmony is the only way to save the cosmos from chaos.

B. Buddhist contribution to the understanding of *yuan* and *jie yuan* (結冤) as universal karmic connection

On the other hand, the concept of *jie yuan* (結冤 or 結怨) has much to do with Buddhism in East Asia. Through the dissemination of Buddhism in East Asia, Indian thought has immeasurably enriched Chinese and Korean understandings of the spiritual realm. When Buddhism came to East Asia around the Christian era, it also brought new religio-ethical orientations to this area. Among others, the introduction of thoughts related to karma is worth noting. Karma as a novel idea provides a powerful impetus for a more sophisticated explanation of human conduct. Human conduct is seen not merely from a moralistic perspective. A new religio-ethical vision of humanity has opened up. The significance of human conduct acquired a broad dimension through the propagation of Buddhism in East Asia.

One of imported ideals related to karma is a novel sense of 冤 or 怨. Different from the indigenous East Asian mode of thought, the Buddhist concepts of 冤 or 怨 (*śatru* in Sanskrit or *sattu* in Pāli) represent a religio-ethical imaginary of karmic retribution and bondage rather than tangled knots because of social and political injustice. It is not deep anger because of wrongful treatment. Neither is it related to political or social injustice in its nature. Rather, it is animosity or enmity because of intricate karmic connection. Here, ideas of an inexorable karmic bond to lend themselves to the Chinese religious spirit. The word 冤 or 怨 in Chinese acquired a new sense of identity.

The word *śatru* or *sattu* subtly expresses the rich meaning of the antagonistic relationship: a destroyer, an enemy, foe, rival, a hostile king or a neighboring king as a natural enemy and so on. In Buddhism, it also characterizes a collective yet adverse human relationship from time immemorial because of predestined conflicts. Thus, father and son could become adverse to one another because of estrangement. Princes would commit regicide to usurp the throne. Neighboring countries could become rivals for the sake of conquest. Owing to quarrels, friends could become strangers or even foes. Indeed, human relationships could easily become antagonistic due to some ensnared karmic bonds.

To be sure, the ideal of *sattu* is powerfully embodied in King Ajātasattu of Magadha (reigned c. 493- 461 BCE) who committed patricide for the consolidation of his throne in ancient India.¹⁶ As an ambitious and merciless king, Ajātasattu (or in Sanskrit, Ajātaśatru)¹⁷ is profoundly connected with *sattu*. In fact, Ajātasattu is not only a deadly foe of his father, but also of neighboring kings because of his outright ambition and aggression. He not only committed the heinous crime of patricide, but also fought fiercely with other neighboring kingdoms for political hegemony. He is the enemy of his own kinsmen as well as of many other kings. How do we make sense of this cold-blooded, overbearing political personality?

It appears that the compound “ajātasattu” is likely to mean “one whose adversary is present before his birth.” Incidentally, the commentary of the *Dīgha Nikāya* refers to Ajātasattu’s destiny as “the enemy of his father even before he was born.”¹⁸ If this is the intention of the designation for an unprecedentedly dominant and pitiless king in an age of great political transformation, it powerfully articulates the destiny of a political hero: he has to wipe out any enemies on his way to becoming universal monarch. At this particular historical epoch in ancient India, a king of the Ajātasattu type was at war with adjoining kings all the time. A potential universal monarch was at enmity with all internal and external rivalries and his father-the reigning king-is the first archrival.

In the Sāmmññaphala Sutta, King Ajātasattu who committed patricide in due course paid the Buddha a visit to overcome his compunction and bewilderment. He confessed before the Buddha what he did to his father and sought forgiveness for his unpardonable crime. The Buddha did not condone his patricide and declared before

the Saṃgha: “This king, monks, is uprooted; this king, monks, is destroyed.”¹⁹

King Ajātasattu is translated semantically in Chinese as 「未生冤王」 or 「未生怨王」. 「冤」 and 「怨」 here are substitutable, indicating the Chinese understanding of this compound as an expression of an inexorable karmic bond. Here, its meaning is better understood as animosity or enmity rather than grievance or resentment in the pre-Buddhist Chinese context. Translators of Buddhist Sūtras used existing Chinese vocabulary to give it new religio-ethical connotations. Consequently, *sattu* as embodied in King Ajātasattu eventually leads to the assimilation of animosity or enmity as the meaning of 「冤」 and 「怨」 into Chinese religious culture through the translation of Buddhist texts and the propagation of Buddhism in East Asia. The type of political personality represented by King Ajātasattu acquires a new sense of *sattu* in China as well as other East Asian countries.²⁰

This new idea of 冤 or 未生冤 not only enriches the Chinese understanding of the human existential situation, but also adds a new dimension to the omnipresence of enmity or animosity in a cosmic sense. This kind of predetermined karmic bond transformed Chinese religious culture when Mahayana Buddhism reached China. The Chinese understanding of this 冤 also introduced a new religio-ethical perspective of humanity in Chinese Buddhism. In the long run, it leads to a new understanding of human karmic adversary as “incurring enmity” (結冤 or 結怨). As seen from King Ajātasattu, karmic bondage is deeply embedded in human relationships, especially among close relatives. Eventually, ideas of “adverse relatives and karmic creditors” (冤親債主)²¹ gradually developed in Chinese popular Buddhism.

In a fundamental sense, this new religious climate in China may have something to do with ideas of affection (in Pāli: *sineba*, *sneba*) in Buddhism. Affection, especially love between family members, creates attachment (*saṅga*). However, attachment leads to greed (*rāgā*), anger (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*). A mendicant should abandon affection - as a tangible token of attachment -, so that he can walk proudly on the path to purification. It is said in the *Dhammapada*:

Cut off one's affection like a person plucks an autumn lotus with one's hand.²²

The lotus withered away in autumn. Its beauty is decayed and should be discarded for lacking of any ornamental value. Likewise, the bond of intimate relationship should be discarded so that the spirit of freedom from bondage can be obtained. In fact, affection is a fault (*sinaba-dosa*) in itself. It is also said in the *Suttanipāta*:

Without any dependence, having cut off the fault of affection, one should wander alone (like a rhinoceros).²³

The above verses show the importance of discarding affection for a world renouncer. However, for ordinary people, affection generates mutual dependence. It is because of intimacy and mutual dependence between family members and close friends that causes a bond of affection. Conversely, bonds of affection easily harbor bitterness and hatred among family members because of jealousy, covetousness, anger and other vices. They quarrel with one other and bear a grudge against their loved ones. They become enemies in the end.

This new sense of 冤 and its related ideas eventually lead to the codification of Buddhist ritual texts related to penance in China. The most famous one is *Repentance Ritual of the Emperor Liang* (《梁皇寶懺》). This is a penance ritual text attributed to Emperor Wu of Liang (464-549 AD) for his wife who was allegedly being reborn as a python and suffered constant pain. It's said that her bad karmic retribution has much to do with her jealous and cruel treatment of other members of the harem when she was alive. The emperor asked eminent monks of his court to help him out. Eventually, this penance ritual text was composed and a ritual of confession was performed for his dead wife. (Yü 2001, 208) It has become a popular text chanted for the dead in Chinese Buddhism since the Sung Dynasty (960-1279 AD). The text itself is recited and related rituals are performed in many temples even nowadays in Taiwan, usually during the Tomb Sweeping Day or the Ghost Festival. Together with *Shuilu Fabui* (水陸法會, ritual for the deliverance of creatures of water and land),²⁴ these two rites of penance became most important rituals for the deliverance of the dead in China:

These are two of the most popular Buddhist mortuary rituals and they are still widely performed today. Because the rituals consist of chanting sutras (*ching*) and performing penances (*ch'an*), they are called *ching-ch'an* for short. According to Buddhism, due to the evil karma people commit while alive, they become hungry ghosts after death. As such, they perpetually suffer from hunger and thirst. Only food and drink offered by monks at properly performed rituals can relieve their suffering. Although no one wants to believe that his dead family members have become hungry ghost, there is always a possibility that this might be the case. And even if it is not so, the sponsoring of such rites will unfailingly generate a great deal of merit, which can be transferred to the dead relatives to help them receiving a good rebirth. (Yü 2001, 205)

In fact, there is another important goal for the performance of mortuary ritual: to resolve enmity incurred among all sentient beings. All sentient beings in the universe

are interconnected through karmic bond of rebirth and easily become “adverse relatives and karmic creditors” in the cosmic process of interconnection. Through penance rituals, all karmic debts could be discharged and deep-seated animosity would be resolved. The religio-ethical concern of “untangling animosity and resolving knots” (解冤釋結) for all adverse relatives and karmic creditors is the motive for the performance of mortuary ritual. It is said in the chapter “untangling animosity and resolving knots” of *Repentance Ritual of the Emperor Liang*:

Six kinds of close relative and all family dependents are roots of one’s animosity in three generations. All enmities begin with relatives. Animosity would not come up if one has no relatives. Being separated from relatives is deprived of animosity. Why so? If two relatives stay far away from each another, animosity would not arise between them. It is because people are close to each other that animosity takes place.²⁵

This new concept of “adverse relatives” runs against Confucian ideals of family values at first glance. In Confucianism, the family is an ideal locus to cultivate humanity (仁, *jen*). Harmonious relationships between family members is confidently expected and filial piety is highly praised. It seems that ideas of adverse relatives are in conflict with traditional Confucian values. Since these mortuary rituals, even if they are inspired by Buddhism from India, are aiming at releasing departed close ones from suffering, the ideal of filial piety is still preserved. Even more, it is for the benefit of all sentient beings in the postmortem world. In the end, to release all sentient beings from the abyss of animosity incurred in the past and the present is what is intended to occur through the rituals. This is in accordance with the aspiration of the bodhisattvas in Mahayana Buddhism: for the deliverance of all sentient beings from the suffering of *samsāra*.

Concluding Remarks

Haewon-sangsaeng is arguably the most important and noble ideal in Daesoon Jinrihoe. It is a powerful religio-ethical metaphor as can be seen from the above investigation. Clearly, this ideal has its long intellectual history in East and South Asia. It is a fully embodied religio-ethical ideal with profound concern for the spiritual welfare of humanity. In its essence, *Haewon-sangsaeng* can be divided into two parts: *haewon* and *sangsaeng*. *Haewon* conveys an important message of reconciliation for the future of humanity. *Sangsaeng* expresses an earnest hope for the sustainability and beneficence of humanity. It is through the practice of *haewon* that lofty ideals of *sangsaeng* can be realized. To live together harmoniously with others without grievance or enmity in this world is the noble ideal of *haewon-sangsaeng*.

In pre-Buddhist East Asia, *baewon-sangsaeng* has much to do with correlative cosmology and political life related to public and social welfare. It's more socio-politically orientated, though ethical and apocalyptic aspects also are implied. Buddhism gives *yuan* a new perspective. Karmic animosity and enmity add to the original meaning of grievance and resentment. *Yuan jie* (冤結) as knots of grievance, gives way to *jie yuan* (結冤), incurring enmity because of karmic connection.

In Chinese popular Buddhism, repentance rituals are performed to resolve animosity accumulated in many previous lives among sentient beings. As mortuary rites, these repentance rituals have been widespread since the medieval period in China. However, for Daesoon Jinrihoe, *baewon-sangsaeng* is probably not to be taken merely as a ritual practice or curative value in our lives. Rather, it should be taken as an ideal of permanent value, a moral practice to resolve enmity and grievances which hopefully will bring perpetual peace and harmony to this world.

From a self-cultivation viewpoint, everyone has to resolve his or her grievances or animosity to reconcile with others for mutual beneficence. Therefore, a sense of human fellowship has to be nurtured so that the spirit of forgiveness and amity can prevail in this world. *Haewon-sangsaeng* is the first step for us to develop a meaningful and enduring relationship with others. As the world now is torn apart by various conflicts, *baewon-sangsaeng* is the moral imperative most needed in the present situation.

Conflict of Interest

Huang Pochi has been on the Editorial Board of *JDTREA* since July 2021 but had no role in the decision to publish this article. No potential conflict of interest relevant to this article was reported.

Notes

*The expression “religio-ethical” designates one of the prominent elements on the tenets of Daesoon Jinrihoe, especially the ideal of *haewon-sangsaeng*, which combines religious persuasion with ethical practices. Moral observances are predicated upon religious commandment and derive their worth from it. This does not necessarily imply that ethics is the lesser, but it is an element of religious value system. While religious deliverance provides the ultimate point of reference for what a meaningful existence should be, it is ethical comportment which commends people in their practices. Whereas religion provides its adherent with a *Weltanschauung*, moral injunction renders life in this world consequential. Hence, ethics and religion are integrated and must be treated as a whole.

¹ For a detailed explanation of correlative cosmology, see Needham (1956, 279-303); and Graham (1989, 313-358).

² “The *yin-yang* dualism ... is based, not upon mutual opposition, but upon natural harmony. The feminine *yin* and masculine *yang* are equally essential if there is to exist a universe. Each is complementary to the other, and neither is necessarily superior or inferior from a moral point of view.” (Bodde 1981, 135) Descombes’ ideas of structural holism are also worth quoting here: “[It] would be difficult to speak about holistic properties without saying that they are a class of relational properties: they are relations that have as their distinctive trait to depend on one another, to from a *structure*.” (Descombes 2014, 116)

³ *Sheng* as the dominant metaphor in early Chinese conscious life may have something to do with ancestor worship. Also, ideas of *sheng* may contribute to the rise of correlative cosmology in the Spring and Autumn Period (770-221 BCE). Schwartz posed the following absorbing questions which are worth pondering: ‘Does the fact that in later Chinese high-cultural accounts of the origins of mankind or cosmos, the dominant metaphor is that of procreation or “giving birth” (*sheng*), rather than that of fashioning or creating, have anything to do with the centrality of ancestor worship with its dominance of the biological metaphor? Does this in turn have something to do with the predominance of what some have called “monistic” and “organismic” orientations of later high-cultural thought?’ (Schwartz, 1985, 26)

⁴ 「道生一，一生二，二生三，三生萬物。萬物負陰而抱陽，沖氣以為和。」

⁵ 「生生之謂易。」

⁶ 「二氣交感，化生萬物，萬物生生而變化無窮焉。」

⁷ 「相生者乃：金生水，水生木，木生火，火生土，土再生金。相剋者乃：金剋木，木剋土，土剋水，水剋火，火剋金。」 For a detailed account of correlation of nature forces, see Needham (1956, 253-261). As pointed out by Schwartz, the idea of five elements can be traced back to that of six storehouses in early Confucian classics like the *Book of Documents* (Shangshu 《尚書》). (Schwartz 1985, 358) It is said in this classic: “The virtue (of the ruler) is seen in (his) good government, and that government in the nourishing of the people. There are water, fire, metal, wood, the earth, and grain, -these must be duly regulated.” (Legge 1966, 47)

⁸ 「唯先天相剋支配人間，世間累積冤恨，天地人三界相隔絕，世間災禍橫生之故也。」

⁹ Or “resolution of grievances for the mutual beneficence of all life” as officially translated by Daesoon Jinrihoe, see DAOS (2016, 10: 59) and so on.

¹⁰ 上帝對金亨烈道：「在先天，人與世間萬物皆為相剋之理所支配，世間怨恨日積月累，錯綜複雜地充斥於三界之中。天地失其長道，各種災禍叢生，世間暗無天日。因此吾欲整理天地度數，調化神明，以解萬古怨恨，以相生之道建後天仙境，濟度世間蒼生。」說完，隨即行了冥府公事的一部分。

¹¹ 「今天下一家殺一女，天下幾億家哉？或有一家乃殺數十數女者，或有姪之未生出，反就傷之者，其氣冤結上動天，奈何無道理乎？」(Wang 1960 vol. 1, 36)

- ¹² In the *Chu ci* (or *Cb'u tz'u*: 《楚辭》), the stanzas referring to *yuan jie* (冤結) are in the *Bei hui feng of chapter jiu Zhang* (Grieving at the Eddying Wind of the Nine Pieces, 〈九章·悲回風〉):
Grieving at the eddying wind that shakes the orchid blossoms, My heart sorely troubled, and within me sorrows. (悲回風之搖蕙兮, 心冤結而內傷。(Hawkes 1985, 180)
Hawkes translated Yuan Jie as “heart sorely troubled.” The phrase “heart sorely troubled” actually expresses a feeling of bitterness by a court functionary (probably not suggested by Hendrichske above). He thought his unswerving loyalty to the king was politically unjustly treated by him because the king listened to a calumny of a wicked official. The king no longer trusted him. He suffered a grievance of injustice.
- ¹³ 「又言者大眾, 多傳相徵, 不可反也, 因以為常說。此本由一人失說實, 過反都使凡人失說實核, 以亂天正文, 因而移風易俗, 天下以為病, 而不能相禁止, 其後者劇, 此即承負之厄也, 非後人之過明矣。後世不知其所由來者遠, 反以責時人, 故重相冤也: 復為結氣不除, 日益劇甚。」(Wang 1960 vol. 1, 58)
- ¹⁴ Maeda considered that the idea of *cheng fu* might have Buddhist influence such as karmic retribution. (Maeda 2006) For this, Hendrichske said: “The origin of *cheng fu* is not so much individual guilt as society’s general lack of concerns for heaven’s rules (TPJ 50.70) and *dao*’s intentions (TPJ 58.96), that is, the departure of humankind from the simple and primitive life of early antiquity. The crimes committed must be imaged as the faults mentioned throughout the TPJ: for example, the killings of females, chastity, the digging of wells, and the concern for culture and ornament.” (Hendrichske 2006, 147) The Confucian moral concerns for the welfare of the community rather than that of individual are clearly visible in *cheng fu*. In fact, the Buddhist idea of karmic retribution brings new meaning to 冤 in China, as I should show later in this paper.
- ¹⁵ 「元氣不和, 無形神人不來至; 天氣不和, 大神人不來至; 地氣不和, 真人不來至; 四時不和, 仙人不來至; 五行不和, 大道人不來至; 陰陽不和, 聖人不來至; 文字言不真, 大賢人不來至; 萬物不和得, 凡民亂, 財貨少, 奴婢逃亡, 凡事失其職, 此正其害也。今真人既欲救天亂氣, 宜努力平之, 勿懈怠, 慎之。」(Wang 1960 vol. 1, 90).
- ¹⁶ For an early account of Ajātasattu related his patricide, see the Sāmmānāphala Sutta of the *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Vinayapīṭaka* 2, 191-193.
- ¹⁷ Ajātasattu rather than Ajātasātru is used here as Pāli text represents the early narrative of this king.
- ¹⁸ Ajāto yeva rañño sattu bhavissatīti. Sumaṅgala-Vilāsini, vol. 1: 133.
- ¹⁹ Khatāyaṃ bhikkhave rājā, upahatāyaṃ bhikkhave rājā. Dīgha Nikāya, 1:86. In the Chinese Dirghāgama we read: 「此阿闍世王過罪損減, 已拔重咎。」(“This King Ajātasattu’s crime is reduced, [his] weighty crime is uprooted. “Taishō shinshū daizōkyō 1, 109b). The narrative of Ajātasutta also found in Jainism. (Wu 2014; Wu 2019).
- ²⁰ The narrative of Ajātasattu’s patricide underwent many vicissitudes in Buddhism, and there are many versions of this incident. The crux is whether Ajātasattu’s contrition is pardoned by the Buddha, and he obtains salvation. As a whole, the later narrative tends to see Ajātasattu’s patricide as pardonable from the viewpoint of karmic retribution. For the history of the Ajātasattu narrative through translation in East Asia see Radich (2011).
- ²¹ The concept of 冤親債主 is also found in religious Daoism, on which I am unable to elaborate here. However, I wonder if Buddhism might have contributed to the formation of Daoist ideas and rituals of 冤親債主.
- ²² Uccinda sineham attano kumudaṃ sārādikam va pāṇinā. (Dhammapada. Maggavaggo13, a-b)
- ²³ Anissito chetvā sinehadosaṃ eko care [khaggavisāṇakappo] (Suttanipāta. vs.. 66 cd)
- ²⁴ Stevenson (2001).
- ²⁵ 「又復六親, 一切眷屬, 皆是我等三世怨根。一切怨對, 皆從親起。若無有親, 亦無有怨。若能離親, 即是離怨, 何以故爾? 若各異處, 遠隔他鄉, 如是二人, 終不得起怨恨之心。得起怨恨, 皆由親近。」(Liangwudi 2017, 343)

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Jin-gyeong and Sin-ingan: The Prophecy of the Later World in *The Canonical Scripture* of Daesoon Jinrihoe

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Original Articles

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Abstract

The core tenets of Daesoon Jinrihoe in Jeungsanism are encapsulated in the teachings of Eumyang-hapdeok (陰陽合德, Virtuous Concordance of Yin and Yang), Shinin-johwa (神人調化, Harmonious Union between Divine Beings and Human Beings), Haewon-sangsaeng (解冤相生, Resolution of Grievances for Mutual Beneficence) and Dotong-jingyeong (道通真境, Perfected Unification with Dao). Among them, the first three teachings eventually turn towards the prophetic thought of Dotong-jingyeong, which is the process of man becoming a divine figure. While these principles are considered crucial advice for overcoming an unstable life, there are many curious questions that help for better comprehension. What is the reality of Jin-gyeong (真境) for their followers? How can one reach the ultimate stage under this belief system? Is this ideological concept different from similar perspectives of other major religions? How is this concept related to the idea of Jisang-cheonguk (地上天國, earthly paradise)? This paper analyses these issues of Jin-gyeong from the historical and social narratives of Haengnok (行錄, Acts), Gongsa (公事, Reordering Works), Gyoung (教運, Progress of the Order), Gyobeop (教法, Dharma), Gwonji (權智, Authority and Foreknowledge) and Yesi (豫示, Prophetic Elucidations) in *The canonical scripture* of Jeon-gyeong and also from the ontological approaches of East Asian faiths in order to identify alternative notions of Daesoon cosmology. The paper, based on the sayings of Kang Jeungsan, particularly his philosophy of the Later World, argues the insight that the Jin-gyeong world can be interpreted as created through the Cheonji-gongsa (天地公事, Reordering Works of Heaven and Earth) project in terms of Gaebyeok (開闢, Great Opening) and the earthly paradise as open only for those who achieve the condition of Sin-ingan (新人間, literally means 'new humans' but symbolizing 'being a human-god') by the personal cultivation of Dotong (道通, the unity with Dao).

Keywords: jin-gyeong; daesoon; Jeon-gyeong; gaebyeok;
Reordering Works of Heaven and Earth

Introduction

Every religion has creative revelation, doctrine and method of achievement. For the blueprint of a utopian society, Neo-Confucianism generally focuses on *Daedongsaboe* (大同社會), a society with no private property, no family relationships, and no certain authorities. Mahayana Buddhism describes the popular worlds of *Geungnak* (極樂, the Pure Land), *Yeolban* (涅槃, *Nirvāṇa*), *Seongbul* (成佛, buddhahood), and *Yonghwasegye* (龍華世界, Tuṣita Heaven) as places people desire or expect to go after death. The teachings of Christianity, likewise, provide the opportunity to go to heaven through believing in Jesus, the Son of God, after death, or at his second coming (再臨, *Jaerim*). The concepts of fairylands (仙境, Seon-gyeong, 'realm of immortals'), *Sinseonbapdo* (神仙合道, the united world of deities), *Cheoninbabil* (天人合一, the harmonious ideology of heaven and human, Yoo 1998, 465-477), *Dongcheonbokji* (洞天福地, the land of deities surrounded by ideal mountains and rivers), and *Sogukgwamin* (小國寡民, a small popularity in a small nation representing Lao's philosophy of antiwar, peace, humble life, and submissive to nature) are applied in Taoism (Lee GW 1998, 31-32; Kim HC 1998, 60-82). In Islam, the term, 'Jannah جَنَّات' is used to explain the most beautiful world, unlike this materialistic world. To be a person of Jannah, individual Muslims are encouraged to perform two activities; keeping the faith and practicing it in life (Kim JD 2016, 253-284). Further, the Korean new religious movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries not only challenged the fundamental mentality of these traditional religions as well as shamanism and folk religions but also introduced a new aspect of utopian space which attracted the minds of ordinary people who were experiencing socio-political insecurity in the colonial era. The vision of an alternative space was commonly found in the notion of a 'present heaven' that could be unveiled at the present time, rather than a place in the future. This ideological approach convinced many people who desperately searched for new religio-philosophical confidence.

Among these new religions was Donghak (東學, 'Eastern Learning'), founded by Suwon Choe Je-u (水雲 崔濟愚, 1824-1864) in 1860, which arose as a reaction to Seohak (西學, 'Western Learning'). It originated as a reform movement and revival of Confucian teachings, but gradually taught the theory of returning to the 'Way of Heaven (天道).' Believers venerated Cheon (天, Heaven) as the ultimate principle of good and justice, referring it with the honorific term *Haneolnim* (하느님), or 'Divine Master.' The term *Haneol* (하늘) does not only mean heaven but also indicates the whole universe. The founder argued the *Innaecheon* (人乃天, human is God) and thought that heaven is within one's own mind [= *Sicheonju* (侍天主, God exists in human body)] and that one can attain it by improving one's nature (Young 2014). They did not have to wait until death for heaven. Daejonggyo (大倥敎) follows a shamanistic tradition related to the ancient history of Korea. The adherents sustain that Daejonggyo is a 'religion

of the God-Human Being' (檀君天祖神, Dan-gun Hanbaegeom) (An BR 2006, 173-178).¹ As the subject of worship is the same with Donghak, *Haneol* ('Heavenly God'), or *Haneolnim* ('Heavenly King'), they keep the thought that when human beings are born, they naturally possess the heavenly character of *Haneol* (Won WJ 2001, 31-50). However, since they lose it as they live on earth, they need to recover their divine character in order to return to *Haneol* (Kang DK and Ko BC 2002, 171-196). The two methods of *Sambeop-subaeng* (三法修行, Three Principles of Cultivation) and *Doksongs-subaeng* (讀誦修行, Reading Cultivation) are designed to help them. They believe that if people complete *Seongtong-gongwan* (性通功完), they can sit next to God, and above the position of saints (An BR 2006, 190-194). They then revert themselves into the form of a divine figure and unite with their God (Lee CH 2017, 7-37).²

Daejonggyo supports the view that if any devotee satisfactorily performs the cultivation of *Sambeop-subaeng*, they will eventually reach *Cheongung* (天宮, the heavenly palace) which is taught as being both in the future heaven and on the present earth. Daejonggyo divides the concept of the heavenly palace into three dimensions: heaven, earth, and human (Lee CH 2017, 7-22). The earthly palace indicates Mount Baekdu (near the border with China), while the body of a human is the human palace, and the head bone of humans is recognized as the heavenly palace (Lee CH 2017, 23-37). This doctrine teaches that if one transforms their body and world into the heavenly palace, s/he would eternally enjoy it after death (Lee CH 2018, 101-122).

Similarly, Won Buddhism (圓佛教) teaches that the human mind is none other than that of heaven; hence, if one's mind is concentrated and completely devoid of selfishness, its virtues will become as one with the virtues of heaven and earth (Park KS 2010, 1-41). Therefore, they consider that the mind of each person possesses an element that can move the will of heaven. They incorporate several different schools of Buddhist thought into their doctrine and daily practice, such as practicing meditation (*samādhi*), studying scriptures (*prajñā*), and applying various precepts (*śīla*) (Chung BK 1988, 425-448). Pak Chungbin (朴重彬, 1891–1943, aka Sotaesan) introduced the concept of 'the Fourfold Grace,' in which the Grace of Heaven and Earth includes the nature of air, ground, sun, moon, wind, clouds, rain, dew, and so on. The members are instructed to pray to heaven and earth with single-mindedness and utmost sincerity, for their attitude may inspire the will of heaven. Given this similarity, how is Daesoon Jinrihoe unique in comparison with the current heavenly descriptions of other Korean NRMs? How do they perceive the concept of a utopian society? Why, when, and how was it (re-) created? What does their canon, *The Canonical Scripture* (典經, Jeon-gyeong) imply in regards to this?

Concept of Gaebyeok (Great Opening)

Daesoon Jinrihoe proposes ‘the *Jin-gyeong* (眞境) world’ as the best world. It is interpreted as *Jisang-cheonguk* (地上天國, the early paradise) instead of a space after death. They, like other Korean new religions, adopted the concept of *Gaebyeok* (開闢, Great Opening) thought in which the universe is divided into two forms of *Seoncheon* (先天, Former World, or ‘an apriority’) and *Hucheon* (後天, Later World, or ‘a posterior’) (Ro KM. 2009, 83-114). According to Hyang-Ok Jeong (2016, 151-177), the mystical term, the abbreviation of ‘*Cheongae Jibyeok* (天開地闢),’ was initially recorded in Chinese literature, such as in Sima Qian (司馬遷)’s *Shiji* (史記, Records of the Grand Historian, BC 91) and *Houbanshu* (後漢書, 5th Century *Book of the Later Han*). For Korea, Iryeon (一然, 1206-1289), a monk of the late Goryeo dynasty (918-1392) used it in the book of *Samgukyusa* (三國遺事) in 1281 (Ha JY 2006, 371). The root of Gaebyeok thought is asserted as an ascetic practice in ancient and medieval times (Jeong HO 2016, 151-177).

In the modern era, Suwon Choe Je-u adopted the term in the book of *Yongdamyusa* (龍潭遺詞) in which the word has two meanings, ‘the first opening of the past’ and ‘Gaebyeok Again: the opening of the future’ (Jeong HO 2016, 156-157). Pak Chungbin taught about *Jeongsin Gaebyeok* (精神開闢, ‘Great Opening of spirit’) through which people experience unity with truth. On the other hand, Daesoon publicized the *Haewon-sangsaeng Gaebyeok* (解冤相生開闢) (Jeong HO 2016, 153). This unique promotion was performed during Kang Jeungsan’s (姜甌山 Kang Il-sun, 1871-1909) nine-year campaign, called “*Cheonji-gongsa* (天地公事, Reordering Works of Heaven and Earth)” which was an operation said to advocate harmony between the human world and divine world: “Presiding over the Three Realms with great power, I will recalibrate the Degree Number of the Former World and open the destined pathway to limitless divine immortality in the Later World to establish a paradise (*Reordering Works* 1: 2).”³ Kang emphasized the *Cheonji-gongsa* in the processes of *Haewon* (解冤, Resolution of Grievances), *Sangsaeng* (相生, Mutual Beneficence), and *Johwa* (造化, harmony), in order to establish the earthly paradise (Yang MM 2009, 230-236). The details of *Cheonji-gongsa* are seen in the claim that he re-organized the principle of the universe which was previously chaotic. Their God revenged deeds for positive coexistence and established a harmonious government to peacefully rule the reformed universe (Ko NS 1998, 645-647).⁴

The Daesoon philosophy was developed as *Segye-Gaebyeok* (世界開闢, Re-creation of the World), a transformational period. The creation of the earthly paradise brings a division between honest and dishonest people (Kim BR 2009, 286-288; Lee GW 2010; Jang JJ 2011). It is a moment where one understands justice and injustice. Like the time of harvest, honest people receive happiness and prosperity with a long life,

while dishonest people collapse without a future (DIRC 1994; Kim HG 2004; Baker 2008).⁵ Lee GW (1998, 2012a) interprets the condition of the Former World (先天, *Seoncheon*) and the Later World (後天, *Hucheon*) in the perspective that the scope of the Former World is small and simple, but the formation of the Later World is big and complicated, and as such, they have to use various Daos (principles of the universe) to prevent conflicts and disorder.⁶ According to Daesoon, the Later World Gaebyeok (後天開闢) was presumed to begin in 1901 when their God launched the work of *Cheonji-gongsu* (天地公事). It was then completed in 1909 (before his mystical death), but not everyone was able to live there yet, for human beings were also required to transform themselves first (Jeong DJ 1998, 14-19; Ro KM 2009, 92-93).

To do this, Daesoon Jinrihoe mentions the condition of *Ingangaejo* (人間改造, Renovation of human beings) where people cultivate themselves through the training process of *Sudo* (修道, Cultivation) (Sin CK 2009, 305). The training of the heart is a significant part of *Ingangaejo* (Ryoo JK 2009, 114-156).⁷ The *Progress of the Order* (1:34) supports the view of internal training: “I (Sangje) will enlighten anyone’s mind, in accordance with his or her own cultivation.” The *Gaebyeok* of mind, like the single-mindedness of Won Buddhism, is seen as a necessary effort people should enact for self-cultivation, as they believe that when the mind and thought of humans are joined together, there is much energy raised. They indicate that the transformation of human beings is possible through the personal achievement of the *Dotong* stage (道通, the unity with Dao).

Method of ‘Dotong’

The method of *Dotong* (道通, the unity with Dao) is introduced in the context of reading the *Sutra of the Seven Stars* (七星經) and *Great Learning* (大學) as well as memorising spells (呪文讀誦) and the preface to *The Commentaries on the Book of Documents* (書傳序文, Sin CK 2009, 167-169): “Go back home and use the fan as you recite the *Sutra of the Seven Stars* up to the part where the stars *Mugok* and *Pagun* are written and then recite *The Great Learning* as well. Then you will be well-versed in Dao” (*Authority and Foreknowledge* 1). In this regard, the single-mindedness of ‘*Dotong* (道通, the unity with Dao)’ is understood as the condition of harmony between heaven, humans, and earth. The human who reaches this stage can realize the principles of the universe with their highest personality (Yang MM 2009, 27-28).⁸

Furthermore, Nam-Sik Ko refers to *Dotong* in that human beings train their mind in relationship with Sangje, *Daedumok* (great head of each religious God), and deities. The various kinds of deities appear to them as the result of the effort they put into *Dotong* (Ko NS 1998, 640-648).⁹ He also describes that *Dotong* has different grades, as not everybody is at the same level. Each person who reaches the stage of unity with Dao

can gain distinctive abilities through their achievement (Kim D 2014, 277-278).¹⁰ The *Dotong* man (道通人, 도통인, the human united with Dao), reflected in the teaching of *Sinin-jobwa* (神人調化), can communicate with the will of the deities, and achieve their personal desire, or wish (Park SS 2009, 550-554). The *Dotong* man understands the primary principle of the change in the universe. He/she can also live the perfect life of morality as a sage. The practical process of *Sudo* (修道, spiritual cultivation) transforms human beings into the condition of *Dotong* (道通, the unity with Dao) (Park SS 2009, 555-557). The key point of *Sudo*, as mentioned, is control of the mind:

心也者鬼神之樞機也門戶也道路也 開閉樞機出入門戶往來道路神
或有善或有惡 善者師之惡者改之 吾心之樞機門戶道路大於天地

The mind is a pivot, gate, and gateway for gods; They, who turn the pivot, open, and close the gate, and go back and forth through the gateway, can be either good or evil. Instruct that which is good and rectify that which is evil. The pivot, gate, and gateway of my mind is more enormous than Heaven and Earth (Acts 3: 44).

Daesoon's mind is described as 'one mind,' 'divine mind,' and 'undoubtful faith' (Jo TR 2009, 269-278). The methods devotees adopt to become the *Dotong* man are the individual and group activities of *Suryeon* (修鍊, spiritual training), *Gido* (祈禱, prayer), and *Gongbu* (工夫, holy works). While the Daejonggyo's of *Sambeop-subaeng* and *Doksong-subaeng* are more individual, Daesoon contains a communal concept of individuality in relation to 'the unity of minds.' This means that followers regularly practice together, but the result is based on personal achievement. Among them, *Suryeon* is the internal action of cleaning one's heart and character. The ritual takes place anywhere that is clean and quiet. In particular, the training rooms of the Yeosu Headquarters, *Hoegwans* (會館, fellowship buildings), and *Podeoksos* (布德所, propagation centres), as well as follower's home, are recommended (DIRC 2010). When a person begins *Suryeon*, s/he memorises a *jumun* (呪文, spell) at a certain time and then repeats the *Kidoju* (祈禱呪, Gido incantation) or the *Taeulju* (太乙呪, Tae-eul mantra) (Kim BR 2009, 88-90). They should repeat the spells with hypogastric breathing. During this time, their mind needs to be focused on worshipping their god, Kang Jeungsan (Jang JJ 2011; Daesoon Jinrihoe 2006, 251-261). The steady position of the wave of the mind without a high and low pitch is called *Beopjwa* (法坐). The followers accept that *Beopjwa* is the condition where soul and spirit are united (Cha SK 2011a, 156-67).¹¹

Gido (祈禱, prayer) is not related to *Suryeon*, but also part of *Sudo* (Sin 2009, 305). As the Daesoon religion considers the action of *Gido* to be the method by which gods

and human beings can communicate, they focus on listening to the voice of their God Sangje (DIRC 1994). The short-term *Gido* is calling the names of their gods. As they call the divine names, the practitioners pursue the ultimate wisdom and achieve the completion of the self (*Daesoon Bulletin* 4 1986, 2, 14). *Gido* is divided into daily prayer (平日祈禱) and weekly prayer (主日祈禱), which is done every five days (Cha SK 2011a; Kang DK 2013; Kim DK 2020).¹² *Gongbu* (工夫, holy works) is a special ritual activity that takes place every day at the Yeosu Headquarters Temple Complex. During the *Gongbu* time, a team of thirty-six participants take turns in chanting their incantations (*jumun* 呪文) in specially designed rooms. As the spiritual cultivation is performed to open up the coming 'Earthly Paradise (後天世界),' the *Gongbu* team recite certain incantations in a specified way for twenty-four hours without a break (Jang JJ 2011; Yoon JK 1996, 107-125).¹³ The public *Gongbu* is divided into the *Sibak Gongbu* (侍學工夫) and the *Sibeop Gongbu* (侍法工夫), which are different ways to chant incantations (*Daesoon Bulletin* 4 1986). As a result of achieving such processes of Sudo (修道, spiritual cultivation), they sustain transformation into the ultimate stage of *Sin-ingan* (新人間, literally means 'new humans' but symbolizing 'being a human-god'), like Daejonggyo's condition of *Seongtong-gongwan* (Jeong 1998, 14-19).¹⁴ They get this supernatural ability according to their canon in that they not only master astrology and geomancy, but also are highly proficient in human affairs (Lee GW 2012a, 138-143): "Since old times, there have been those who have mastered astrology and those who have mastered geomancy. However, no one who has mastered human affairs, but one shall appear" (*Dharma* 3: 31).

Process of Sin-ingan (Human-God)

Kang Jeungsan taught that the status of 'Dotong (道通, the unity with Dao)' equalises with the presence of 'Jin-gyeong (真境).' The stage of *Sin-ingan* (新人間, human-god) is seen as a unity period with Dao in the earthly paradise, *Jin-gyeong* (Lee GW 1998). Here, Daejonggyo teaches that humans previously had the figure of 'God-Human Beings (檀君天祖神),' but the Daesoon human never had such a divine character. The process of becoming *Sin-ingan* is well depicted in the illustration of Simudo (尋牛圖, Ox-seeking Pictures) (Kim D 2020). The painting series symbolizes one's journey towards spiritual enlightenment using the metaphor of a boy finding a white ox, but the number of pictures, in a notion of receptive syncretism, has been reduced to six, instead of the ten pictures of Buddhism or the eight pictures of Daoism (Kang DK 2013, 145-175). The boy is seen as the disciple and the ox is the animal associated with December (the twelfth month of the lunar calendar) in the Chinese zodiac (Baker 2008). The number twelve is suggestive of Dao itself as it includes a full cycle of creation and transformation in nature (Mun 1997). In other words, the white ox connotes the Daesoon Truth (Dao) which their God unfolded into this world (Hwang JY 2009, 88-90).¹⁵

The first painting (called, *Simsim-youo*, 深深有悟, deep contemplation leading to awakening) shows a boy (= a disciple) who is in a deep state of contemplation under a pine tree where he asks philosophical questions such as 'What is life?', 'Where did I come from?', and 'After death, where do I go?' (Kim NW et al 2007; AADJ 2016). The boy, who grew weary of the ways of secular life, has come to the point of seeking the reason for human existence (DIRC, 1994; Kim YJ and Yun JK 2015, 53-82).¹⁶ The second painting (*Bongdeuk-singyo*, 奉得神教, finding and following heavenly teachings) reflects the stage where, in accordance with his destiny (or karmic affinity), the boy is introduced to the Daesoon Truth of Kang Jeungsan. As the boy points his finger in a direction, the path he shall undergo has been determined. The boy of *Bongdeuk-singyo* discovers footprints left behind by the white ox (Kim Tack 2006). These prints imply the guidance of divine beings who lead devotees to Dao (Daesoon Jinrihoe 2006, 251-261). The stepping-stones in the creek represent the support of ancestors who have accumulated virtuous deeds in heaven for ages as well as the care given by spiritual mentors who lead devotees along the right path in their cultivation process (Baker 2008). Even though the boy has not fully acknowledged these benefits received from others and has not yet grasped the truth, he feels inspired to progress in his search (Cha SK 2011a, 156-67).¹⁷

The boy catches a glimpse of the white ox, but only its hindquarters. This means that in the stage of *Myeoni-suji* (勉而修之, practising Dao diligently and overcoming hardships), he carries out what he has learned as theory and puts personal knowledge into practice (Mun 1997). However, he has yet to awaken to Dao. Furthermore, he faces lightning, rainstorms, and a steep cliff. This, according to Daesoon, is when devotees encounter environmental problems and difficulties and try to overcome them (Kim T 2011, 251-283; Hwang JY 2009, 88-90). Although the boy knows well that there will be many obstacles ahead of him, such as bumpy roads, steep cliffs, and bad weather, he still refuses to be deterred (DIRC 1994). This stage is where *Dotong* devotees push themselves forward diligently towards spiritual enlightenment and overcome hardships inevitably encountered during their cultivation (Kang DK, 145-175).¹⁸ The boy finally encounters the white ox and pats it affectionately. The boy has safely crossed the steep valley and the sky has cleared up (Cha SK 2013, 99-156). This *Seongji-useong* condition (誠之又誠, keep devoting oneself incessantly to Dao) is the time to build a friendship with the white ox, an act which signifies the stage where devotees discard the thoughts and behaviors acquired from the former world (Baker 2008). At this stage, the boy exerts himself in inspired efforts to fully internalize Daesoon teachings in order to advance to the stage of complete unification and identification with Dao (Hwang JY 2009, 88-90; Daesoon Jinrihoe 2006, 251-261).¹⁹



Figure 1: The Picture for Dotong-jingyeong

The boy then rides the white ox and quietly plays his flute in the scene of Dotong-jingyeong (道通眞境, perfected unification with Dao). Riding on the back of the white ox reflects that he has become one with the ox (Kim SN 2013, 28-40). In the Korean religion, he (as a devotee) has reached the state of the 'self as Dao and Dao as self.' The boy has finally unified himself with the Dao of the Daesoon God (AADDJ 2016). He has achieved the perfect condition of a quiet mind (安心) and a quiet body (安身). The *Dotong-jingyeong* season in this painting reminds viewers that his cultivation has come to full fruition as a reward for his dedicated efforts (DIRC, 1994). As the final stage of Doji-tongmyeong (道之通明, the later world of earthly paradise), the boy who is united with the white ox has turned into an Earthly-Immortal. The world has changed into a place where heavenly female fairies are playing music, the herbs of eternal youth are blooming, and cranes are flying around the meadow (Kim YG and Yun JK 2015, 53-82). This part of the Simudo series implies the stage where Dotong men are transformed into earthly immortals while the world has become an earthly paradise (Ro KM 2009; Kang DK 2013).²⁰

Morphology of Jin-gyeong

Daesoon *Jin-gyeong* (大巡眞境, Daesoon earthly paradise) denotes a world where human beings and all creatures can enjoy the condition of permanent happiness, while the narrative of heavenly life is dull in the teachings of Donghak, Daejonggyo, and Won Buddhism. Conflicts, irregular environments, and illegal actions are all recovered to the stage of an ideal formation (Park SS 1998). The worlds of heaven, humans, and earth function well according to the foundation of Dao, depicted in the teaching of *Eumyang-bapdeok* (陰陽合德) (Choi DH 1998, 45-57). The term Jin-gyeong (眞境) is thought to be uniquely created by Jo Jeongsan (趙鼎山, 1895~1958), the second leader of Daesoon Jinrihoe among sects of the Jeungsan movements (Kim BR 2009). However, there are hypotheses of the actual identity. Sin, Chul Kyun (2009) attempts to view the

process of *Jin-gyeong* as the age of respecting human beings firstly comes. The speedy age of the universe is the second stage in the peaceful formation of the Western world. The scholar (Sin) then sees human beings live a long life without diseases by medical success. The age of paradise will come with a high level of technology in civilized life as well as in the natural environment. The condition of paradise will be developed by means of LLET (Life-Longing Engineering Technology).²¹ The ultimate *Jin-gyeong* will be completed by the reconciliation of religions and the unification of ideologies. Kwang Soo Park (2009) also approaches the concept of *Jin-gyeong* from the perspective of time and space, in that the world of *Jin-gyeong* can be brought in accordance with the universal time frame of the righteous Yin and the righteous Yang. The space of *Jin-gyeong* (眞境) is divided into nine heavens but they will be located in the human world (Kim JT 1998, 680-695). The harmony between material civilization and mental civilisation is also mentioned by Park. Further, he points out the significant relationship between Kang Jeungsan and human beings in the notion that Sangje ('Supreme God of the Ninth Heaven') is the master planner of human salvation (Park KS 2009 205-220).

If then, how does *The canonical scripture* of *Jin-gyeong* draw the picture of *Jin-gyeong* (眞境)? The image overall depicts as the pattern of a natural universe, a high and opulent lifestyle of the material world, the residence of *Sin-ingan* (新人間, human-god), the unity of all ideologies, moral society, and divine civilization (Lee GW 2013, 173-176). The general meaning of '*Jin-gyeong*' is a clean and beautiful land where deities dwell, and the ideological world represents the perfect place where there is no necessity for correcting or fixing the environment. Further, the 'Gyeong 境' of *Jin-gyeong* demonstrates a world where *Sin-ingan* and deities co-exist (Lee GW 1998, 62-68). In the Daesoon Jinrihoe context, Sangje often has a negative view of traditional Eastern things, while the Western civilization of technology is positively considered (Choi DH 1998, 79). His saying that Western civilization resembled the Later World also support this depiction of perfect heaven: "Sangje said he was right, adding that 'Their machines have been modeled after those in Heaven.'"²² In terms of weather, *Jin-gyeong* is neither hot nor cold but always has the mild temperature of a warm climate. The soil of the land is fertile, not barren. The land keeps green regardless of the season of the year. The easy daily life is narrated in the following metaphorical statement (Yang MM 2009, 32-34):

In the upcoming good world, it shall be possible to cook rice without making a fire and to farm without touching the soil. And a light tower shall be set up at every Dao empoweree's house, brightening the whole village like sunlight. Today's electric lamps are just prototypes. Doorknobs and clothes racks shall be made of gold and golden shoes shall be worn (*Reordering Works* 1: 31).

The environment of *Jin-gyeong* is described as a world free from fire, floods, or destructive winds. In scripture this appears as "... The three disasters which resulted from water, fire, and wind shall disappear from the world" (Prophetic Elucidations 81). Social policy is controlled by *Sin-ingan* (新人間, human-god) rather than by divine sages (Jeong DJ 1998, 16-17; Lee GW 2012b, 177-203).²³ This term is also interpreted as the *Hucheon-Seongyeong* (後天仙境, the Later World's paradisiacal land of immortals) which has all the necessary components of the utopian world in the present era with the harmony of God, humans, and earth. Further, world religions will be cooperative (Jo TR 1998, 290-291). The current languages of all human beings (of which there are 2,796) will be unified to bring peace among diverse ethnic groups. There is no certain information about what it is exactly, but this Korean new religion mentions a new unified language that one does not need to study in order to speak (Jo TR 1998, 288-289).²⁴ There will be political stability as global politicians develop noble personalities. They will keep moral principles, catholicity, and integrity. Even the economic balance is also included in the concept of the Daesoon scripture (Jo TR 1998, 295-296). The Korean peninsula is presumed to be the center of this new universe (Sin CK 2009, 188-190). For this reason, the Daesoon God has departed to the West to bring subordinated gods to make Korea the most superior nation in the world (Kim JT 1998, 683-686).²⁵ The Geumgang Mountain in Korea (currently located in North Korea) is pointed to as the center of the Later World (*Prophetic Elucidations* 45).²⁶ Another story of 3000 nations around Korea is also applied in the canon: "The solutions of saving three-thousand nations belong to South Joseon (Korea)..."²⁷

How long will the *Jin-gyeong* world last? Daesoon indicates a time of 50,000 years.²⁸ They also teach that the *Jin-gyeong* world offers the best condition for all animals and plants.²⁹ However, there will be no creatures that are harmful for human beings (tigers, leopards, coyotes, wolves, mosquitoes, lice, fleas, and bedbugs).³⁰ The condition of *Sin-ingan* (新人間, human-god) will be like a young statue and live forever without worry about food and dress (Lee GW 1998, 714-720).³¹ As *Sin-ingans* are treated equally regardless of social level, education, authority, and wealth (Yang 1998, 240-242), they will not only be respected with honor and glory³² but also gain more energy.³³ Women, who personally cultivate themselves to be *Sin-ingan*, recover the same rights as males. The *Dharma* of *The Canonical Scripture* predicts that the *Jin-gyeong* era will be the time Yin is revealed, for women is the symbol of Yin (Park KS 2009, 216-217): "a woman's accomplishments shall also be acknowledged depending on her cultivation. Because of this, the custom of the predominance of men over women ... shall be abolished" (*Dharma* 1: 68).

Remarriage is continuously permitted if young widow remarries a young widower and if an old widow meets to an old widower.³⁴ The population of *Sin-ingan* (新人間) (or of the Later World) is said to be 12,000 which is the metaphorical expression

of a small number of people. Daesoon promotes the abstract view that the earthly paradise will be achieved by 12,000 Dotonggunja (道通君子, sages empowered by the Dao) who completed the sacred meditation of Dotong. Among them, this new religion argues that there will be more women than men (Park KS 2009, 213-214).³⁵ The issue of minority rights is solved in the era in that the weak, sick, humble, and foolish people of society will gain their rights with fair treatment in terms of human value and dignity.³⁶ *Jin-gyeong* is presented as having two social classes, even though the identity and character of them (possibly Dotonggunja and commoners) are still controversial.³⁷ The multi-ethnic formation of the Former World is transformed into a one-family society, reducing great conflicts from different thoughts and backgrounds.³⁸ For example, there is no legal force or punishment, and physical freedom is granted from disease, aching, death, and burial (Yang MM 2009, 27-28). The Later World is also seen to be a space where people still farm for a living, but they do not need to sow seeds annually. The land works automatically, including harvesting itself: "once seeds are sown, every year new buds will come out from the same roots and be harvested. The land shall be fertile even without being nourished."³⁹ The ability to travel in space is also given to the Daesoon *Sin-ingan* (新人間, human-god), even though the condition is limited by each individual.⁴⁰

The thought of *Hucheon* (後天, the Later World) contains the concept of universal circulation in which the entry of the era is explained in the term '*Wonsi-banbon*' (原始返本, everything will seek the beginning and return to the original root) (Lee GW 2010). In this regard, Daejin Jeong argues that there was no division between the material world and the mental world in the era of pre-depravity (Ryoo JK 2009, 140-142). The teaching of *Dotong-jingyeong* is not dependent on circulation theories in India and China but interrelated with the denominational teaching of *Wonsi-banbon*, which encourages one to seek the return of the genesis of oneness without the divisions of ideology and philosophy (Park MS 1985; Chung KH 2001).⁴¹ For this, the three characteristics of *Jisang-sinseon* (地上神仙, earthly immortality) are maintained in the meaning of *Muwihwa* (無爲而化, the way of changing without need for action) in which one can achieve his/her goals without the normally necessary strengths (Ro KM 2009, 107-109). The first characteristic is that *Sin-ingan* (新人間, human-god), as described, is able to live an eternal life without any sickness and diseases. Life in the Later World is unlimited as it is given a physical and medical blessing. The second characteristic is that they have complete wisdom in life. The wisdom allows them to master change and the principles of the universe for the past, present, and future.⁴² The third characteristic is to have supernatural abilities by which *Sin-ingan* can use infinite power or authority for the harmonious work of the universe (Lee JW 2011; Cha SK 2011).⁴³ Thus, the teaching of *Jisang-sinseon* connotes the concept that human beings become god-like, not in heaven but on earth.

Conclusion

The people of the Late Joseon dynasty were socio-politically interested in personal and community fate and sought visual and tangible hope for their future. The weak influence of traditional religions offered an opportunity for the leaders of native and foreign new religions, including Christianity, to succeed in Korea. The common theological foundation was found in the metaphysical theory of a new era from the moment of a turning point, called ‘*Gaebyeok*’ (開闢, Great Opening). The prophetic term, derived from ancient Chinese literature, was variously interpreted among new religions. In particular, Daesoon Jinrihoe of Jeungsanism applied it to the reordering works of their God Sangje. Kang Jeungsan was depicted as establishing the *Jin-gyeong* world (後天, the Later World). Unlike other ones, Daesoon Jinrihoe creatively carries on the philosophical thought that the earthly paradise is free, but limited people can experience the Hucheon world. Devotees are encouraged to possess the condition of *Sin-ingan* (新人間, human-god) through the practice of *Sudo* (修道, spiritual cultivation).

The training courses of *Suryeon* (修鍊, spiritual training), *Gido* (祈禱, prayer), and *Gongbu* (工夫, holy works) are useful methods through which genuine practitioners are said to ideally reach the stage of *Dotong* (道通, the unity with Dao). The prophecy of the Later World in *The canonical scripture* of Jin-gyeong draws a perfect picture that divinized people who overcame the fears of death, disease, poverty, calamity, and dispute, keep an unlimited relationship with their God of the ninth heaven (Sangje) (Smart 1987, 418-420). The so-called *Injon* era (人尊時代, the era in which human-gods are respected by deities) is elaborated on the perspective that other deities cooperate with the new role of *Sin-ingans* (human-gods): “Greater than the nobility of heaven and earth is that of human beings. Now is the era of human nobility” (*Dharma* 2: 56). The *Jin-gyeong* (眞境), reflected in terms of *Wonsi* (原始, the era of pre-depravity), has been defined as a space with western style high-tech and civilization where all ethnic groups, as well as animals, are harmonious and live in a warm-weather environment. Further, social policy and political issues maintain a peaceful condition lasting 50,000 years. Such a sanguine interpretation of *Jin-gyeong* that offers the most imaginative confidence among the Korean new religious movements of the ‘present heaven theology,’ was a key strategy of success and prosperity for the movement in contemporary society, even though the *Koreanised* standpoint could be a challenging obstacle for globalization unless reworded.

Conflict of Interest

David Kim has been on the Editorial Board of *JDTR* since July 2021 but had no role in the decision to publish this article. No potential conflict of interest relevant to this article was reported.

Notes

- ¹ Here, the meaning of 'Dan' in old Korean implies bright land. 'Gun' means god and king, and 'Hanbaegeom' (God-Human-king) has a number of meanings such as king of heaven, the first king, the highest king, and the greatest king.
- ² The condition of *Sinin-babil* (神人合一, the unity with God) allows them to enter the heavenly palace (天宮) for eternity.
- ³ Daesoon applies the term 'Reordering Works' in two different cases. The first one is as the name of a book (Gonsa, 公事, *Reordering Works*) in *The canonical scripture* of Jin-gyeong. The second case is in the works of their God Kang Jeungsan (天地公事, *Cheonji-gongsa*, , the Reordering Works of Heaven and Earth).
- ⁴ "To save all the people in the world, I will resolve the grievances and grudges accumulated from time immemorial by recalibrating the Degree Number of Heaven and Earth, harmonizing divine beings, and establishing the paradise of the Later World which will be based on the principle of mutual beneficence (*sangsaeng*, 相生)" (*Reordering Works* 1: 3).
- ⁵ Such an ideological doctrine was established by the personal religious experience and efforts of the second leader, Jo Jeongsan in the 1920s-1940s.
- ⁶ Jin-gyeong reflects such a view of difference between them: "In the Former World, the frame was narrower and matters were easier. ... In the Later World, the frame is broader and matters are more complicated. If all methods of Dao are not united and utilized, then efforts will be insufficient for bringing chaos back into balance" (*Prophetic Elucidations* 13).
- ⁷ Ryoo mentions that mind is the centre of human beings and the universe.
- ⁸ He/she is depicted as the one who completed the process of Ingangaejo (人間改造, Renovation of human beings).
- ⁹ "I will send the line of Dao-unification (*Dotong*, 道通, the unity with Dao) to the great head. He will instruct people in the ways of Dao-unification. When it is the right time, all the gods of Dao-unification from Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism shall gather, enabling people to achieve unification with Dao, according to their degree of individual cultivation" (*Progress of the Order* 1: 41).
- ¹⁰ The method of *Dotong* is open to everybody who is willing to pursue it. "Gong-Wu... asked Him (Sangje) to bring him into unity with Dao. Sangje chided him, One shall only achieve unity according to one's own degree of cultivation." (*Progress of the Order* 1: 33).
- ¹¹ It is the condition when one can concentrate without secular worries.
- ¹² The daily prayer is performed four times for 20 minutes at AM, 1 PM, and 7 PM every day.
- ¹³ The Sihakwon building (侍學院) and the Sibeobwon building (侍法院), located near the Bonjeon building (本殿, the Yeongdae building), are where the *Sihak Gongbu* and the *Sibeop Gongbu* are conducted respectively.
- ¹⁴ "According to the extent of cultivation, capability, and magnanimity, everyone is escorted by a divine being assigned to aid them in their duties" (*Dharma* 2: 17).
- ¹⁵ The six paintings reflect a metaphoric representation of the whole process of spiritual cultivation to realize their Dao.
- ¹⁶ The background setting in the painting of Simsim-yuo is the season of spring.
- ¹⁷ This painting is set in spring time.
- ¹⁸ The setting is in the season of summer.

- 19 The season has changed into autumn, which means that his diligence has started ripening into fruition.
- 20 In particular, the fictional teaching of Simudo (尋牛圖, Ox-seeking Pictures) applied at the Pocheon temple complex is unique. For the process of Bongdeuk-singyo (奉得神教, finding and following Heavenly Teachings), they have another picture where a boy found the footsteps of the ox. There are two pictures for the meaning of Myeoni-suji (勉而修之, practising Dao diligently and overcoming hardships).
- 21 Sin proposes an innovative picture of future where the advanced development of medical science would take an important role for the paradise life of human.
- 22 *Reordering Works* 1: 35.
- 23 “In ancient times divine sages ... could control and administer both government and matters of edification. However, ... Now everything will seek the beginning and return to the original root. Master and king shall unite as one” (*Dharma* 3: 26). “In the Later World, through the art of creation, they shall be governed without force or punishment and according to laws and reason. People shall not be agonised by worldly desires or resentment” (*Prophetic Elucidations* 81).
- 24 “Sangje answered, ‘Since the East and the West will be unified, ... ‘Languages shall likewise be unified in the future’” (*Dharma* 3: 40).
- 25 “He (Sangje) answered, ‘For enabling this country (Korea) to gain superiority in the world, the divine beings in the West must be called in.’” (*Prophetic Elucidations* 45). “Master Jin-Muk ... led the gods who preside over the enlightenment of Dao ... to the West. ... Now I will bring him back home (to Korea) so that he shall take part in establishing an earthly paradise” (*Authority and Foreknowledge* 2: 37).
- 26 “Sangje, referring to a well at ... the (Taein) county, said ‘This is a spring of milk. And as Dao shall dwell in the twelve thousand peaks of Geumgang Mountain (Korea), ...’”
- 27 *Prophetic Elucidations* 14.
- 28 “‘Thus, I assigned it to you, and you settled it well,’ adding, ‘The decision of this Reordering Work shall last for Fifty Thousand Years’” (*Reordering Works* 2: 17).
- 29 “When He (Sangje) stepped back outdoors, many varieties of birds and species of animals gathered together quite suddenly at the valley around the temple. ... Sangje ... said to them: ‘Do you also wish for the resolution of grievances for the Later World?’ In reply, the animals bowed to Him as if they understood” (*Acts* 2: 15).
- 30 “Sangje said, ‘List all things (tigers, leopards, coyotes, wolves, mosquitoes, lice, fleas, and bedbugs) that harm human beings.’ ... ‘I will get rid of all harmful things to human beings in the Later World.’” *Reordering Works* 3: 8.
- 31 “Sangje said, ‘In the Later World, all people shall acquire eternal youth and immortality. When they open a chest, clothing, and food shall be available’” (*Prophetic Elucidations* 80).
- 32 “Therefore, even though you are suffering now, try to endure all the hardships. When you teach all the people of the (Later) world, your wealth and prosperity shall grow to be incomparable” (*Prophetic Elucidations* 82).
- 33 “They asked Him (Sangje) in return, ‘Can old men not regain new vigor in the Later World?’ ‘What you are saying sounds plausible,’ Sangje responded” (*Reordering Works* 2: 16).
- 34 “Therefore, in the upcoming Later World, ... it is right to have a young widow remarried to a young widower and an old widow to an old widower by inviting the relatives and friends and holding a courteous public ceremony” (*Reordering Works* 2: 17).
- 35 “And as Dao shall dwell in the twelve thousand peaks of Geumgang Mountain, the same number of sages who were enlightened to Dao will be born into the world. Yet, in the Later world, women shall outnumber men among the sages” (*Prophetic Elucidations* 45).

- ³⁶ “Sangje said to disciples, ‘In the Later World, the weak shall be given favor; the sick shall be given good health; the humble shall be given high status; the foolish shall be given wisdom. However, the strong, the rich, the noble, and the wise shall fall on their own’” (*Dharma* 2: 11).
- ³⁷ “In the Later World, there shall be not many social classes but only two. Yet, dietary life shall be fair to everyone” (*Dharma* 2: 58).
- ³⁸ “All ethnic groups in the world have established their indigenous cultures . . . , but when these cultures spread beyond internal usage, great conflicts occurred. Therefore, Sangje has now made the foundation of a civilization which will be achieved in the Later World by absorbing the essence of each culture” (*Dharma* 3: 23).
- ³⁹ *Dharma* (3: 41).
- ⁴⁰ “And Sangje said, ‘In the Later World, all people shall become one family. Through the art of creation, they shall be governed without force or punishment and according to laws and reason. . . . Also, free from disease, aching, death, and burial, . . . In addition, distinctions shall no longer exist between rich and poor. And people shall be able to travel anywhere freely and, moreover, ascend to and descend from Heaven due to its lowering’” (*Prophetic Elucidations* 81).
- ⁴¹ “(Sangje said), this era is the period of Wonsi-banbon. Because it is the time where the origin (of corruptions) is rightly fixed, . . .” The teaching is connected to the theory that the circulation of the universe is repeated.
- ⁴² “Their wisdom will be so thoroughly illuminated that they can completely know the past, present, and future and the worlds throughout the ten directions. . . . The Later World shall become an earthly paradise filled with auspiciousness” (*Prophetic Elucidations* 81).
- ⁴³ “Now, as I (Sangje) thoroughly arranged the heaven-ordered predeterminations by revising the existing orders of heaven and earth, everything will be opened in a new way in their own times. Also, I (Sangje) will have divine beings come in and out of human apparatuses in order to change human beings of their physical constitution and personality, so that they can be used for their purpose. It is because even a frivolous stake can be useful when it is endowed with energy (*Dharma* 3: 4). The Academic Affair Department of Daesoon Jinrihoe, “Hwang Geuk Shin,” In *Daesoon Jinrihoe Dictionary*, accessed August 15, 2021, <http://daesoon.org/about/dictionary.php?idx=397>

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B O O K R E V I E W

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The Scriptures of Daesoon Jinrihoe: *The Canonical Scripture, The Guiding Compass of Daesoon, and Essentials of Daesoon Jinrihoe*. Translated and published by Daesoon Institute of Religion and Culture. Yeosu City: Gyeonggi-do, Republic of Korea. 2020.

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Currently one of the largest indigenous new religions of Korea, Daesoon Jinrihoe is based on the teachings and practices of Kang Il-Sun (1871-1909), later known by the honorific title of Jeungsan, or as Sangje, the Supreme God of the Ninth Heaven. Records of Kang Jeungsan's life have given rise to a proliferation of new religions within Korea, but only a small handful of these have been translated into English. Unlike some other new religions, Daesoon Jinrihoe has sent few missionaries overseas and has produced relatively few translations and English-language literature. These books open up the possibility for a whole new audience to have access to the teachings and practices of the movement.

Following Sangje's death, several of His disciples founded their own distinct groups, each emphasising different aspects of the teaching, with well over 100 sects appearing (and, in many cases, disappearing) throughout the twentieth century. One branch developed under the leadership of Jo Jeongsan (1895-1958), who, although not a direct disciple of Sangje Kang Jeungsan, had received a revelation in 1917 announcing his succession into the lineage of Sangje's religious orthodoxy. Jo Jeongsan, known in Daesoon Jinrihoe as the Holy Founder, Doju, "the Lord of the Dao", returned to Korea from Manchuria (where he had been involved in a campaign to rescue Korea from the Japanese occupation) to continue Sangje's work. In 1925, he founded a religious order known as Mugeuk-do. During World War II, the Japanese outlawed any religion deemed incompatible with State Shinto, but Doju managed to continue his activities and in 1950 he renamed the order Taegeukdo.

By his death, Doju had established and actualised principles of cultivation, elaborated rituals, clarified codes of behaviour and reorganised the order's executive system. He had also conferred responsibility for the management of the order's affairs to Park Wudang (1917-1995), referred to as Dojeon (Leader of Principle). In 1969, in the face of internal dissension and schisms, Dojeon made further organisational changes, thereby

founding the religious order known as Daesoon Jinrihoe (the Fellowship of the Great Itineration). Since Dojeon's death, the Order has been run by a Central Council.

The Canonical Scripture, a weighty volume of 654 pages, is divided into several sections. Five *Acts* describe, in roughly chronological order, the day-to-day life of Sangje, starting with His auspicious birth and prodigious childhood, and ending with His conducting some elaborate rituals in anticipation of His imminent ascension into the Ninth (and highest) Heaven. (Unlike Doju or any other personage, a capital letter is used in the Scripture when reference is made to Sangje.)

The *Acts* paint a vivid picture of Sangje's day-to-day life. In nearly all cases we are informed precisely when and where the event took place and who was present to witness it. In many respects these accounts are similar to the Four Gospels that relate the life of Jesus, His parabolic teachings, healings and miracles, such as turning water into wine.

We learn how, on the day Sangje was born, the delivery room was filled with light; "two celestial maidens descended to Earth from Heaven ... and ... attended to the newborn Sangje. An effervescent, mysterious fragrance filled the entire delivery room. An auspicious vapor enveloped the entire house in which Sangje was born, and its light, extending up into the sky". We also learn that from his youth Sangje "exhibited a good-natured and generous personality and a remarkably brilliant mind." He taught at a neighbourhood school and spent hours reading books on Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism and learning about East Asian philosophies, rituals and prophecies. Then, "to observe public sentiments and circumstances", He undertook a three-year journey (1897-1900), staying for varying periods of time at the homes of different disciples. During His travels, Sangje met Kim Il-Bu, whose *Corrected Book of Changes* was to have a significant influence on the Korean new religions. And who was, at that time, teaching and spreading the practice of Yeonggamudo – simultaneous chanting and gentle movement, based on the thought of Yin-Yang and the Five Movements (a system of East Asian thought which includes all phenomena, including human affairs).

On His return, Sangje spent some time practising Holy Works on a mountain top. By now stories of His teachings, healings and miracles were spreading. Particularly impressive was Sangje's ability to produce dramatic changes in the weather, be it to herald some auspicious happening, to save a neighbour from being executed or the crops from drought, to present a couple with a fine day as their wedding gift, or merely to prevent Himself from getting wet – or too hot. Sometimes scolding, occasionally praising, invariably teaching, life for Sangje was not always easy; there were those who subjected Him, His family and His disciples to both verbal and physical abuse, including imprisonment and torture. Such tribulations were, however, used to demonstrate key issues related to His teachings.

Throughout *The Canonical Scripture*, we are frequently told that Sangje (or someone at His instigation) wrote something on a piece of paper and then burnt it. Only occasionally do we know what was written on the paper. Other objects were also burned, such as promissory notes, a whole book and, on one occasion, a new blue outfit He had told a wealthy follower to make for Him.

Three sections labelled *Reordering Works* describe in some detail the rituals and practices Sangje performed to overcome the ills of the past (the Former World), open the Three Realms of the World of traditional East Asian cosmology: those of Heaven (including all divine beings and spirits); of the Earth (all natural living beings); and of Humanity (human civilisation) and establish an earthly paradise in the Later (future) World. Of primary importance is the principle of mutual beneficence (*sangsaeng*), where everyone benefits from any situation or action. To achieve the necessary harmony, all grievances of both divine and humans must first be resolved. Respect, particularly for one's parents, but also for the poor and for women, is required; and various cultural and legal reforms need to be implemented – for example, young widows should not be forced to grow old in isolation but allowed to remarry, there would be no distinction between legitimate and illegitimate children and no discrimination between the gentry and the low-born.

Two sections, entitled *Progress of the Order*, start with Sangje's recounting how all the divine sages, buddhas, and bodhisattvas, who had existed since the dawn of time, petitioned Him to reorder the disorder that had been created throughout the Three Realms. The disorder, Sangje recounted, was due partly to the Jesuit priest, Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), who had travelled from Italy to the East to build an earthly paradise but had failed due to “the deplorable practices that Confucianism had amassed over a long time”. However, Ricci opened the borders between Heaven and Earth, enabling the divine beings to come and go freely. This, largely because Western civilization was undermining the authority of the gods, resulted in the Dao of Heaven and Dao of human affairs becoming violated and the Three Realms being thrown into disorder.

Reluctantly, Sangje had agreed to descend from the Ninth Heaven to undertake His Great Itineration (Daesoon) “to save the realm of humans and the realm of gods from the catastrophes that they were facing” – a journey which is likened to that of a king making a circuit about his kingdom as part of his governing or administering of justice. Having travelled throughout the world, Sangje finally reached Korea and spiritually entered the golden icon of Maitreya Buddha in the Golden Mountain Temple, roughly 200 km south of Seoul, for 30 years before incarnating as a man in 1871. Further revelations of a prophetic nature follow, as do Five Incantations and the somewhat enigmatic 25-page “Scripture of the Black Tortoise” which Sangje wrote shortly before His death and which contains one oft-repeated prayer: “to never forget and to know everything”. His disciples were instructed to pass on what He taught them “to 10,000

people”.

The second part of *Progress of the Order* introduces Doju, whose voice, we are told, “was resonant, his eyes were as glittering as those of a tiger, his neck was like that of a crane, his back was like that of a turtle, and his forehead shone like the sun and the moon.” One day, whilst Doju was practising Holy Works, “a man of divine power appeared” and told him, “If you recite this incantation, you shall save the world from chaos and relieve people of their despair.” The man then disappeared. Every day and night Doju respectfully recited the incantation: “*Lord of Heaven and being unified with the divine order, I wish to never forget and to know everything. May the ultimate energy descend abundantly now!*” He then received a revelation from Sangje, suggesting that he should return to Korea and look for Him there. There follows a description of how Doju devoted his life to following in Sangje’s footsteps and how he introduced “the Charter for Realizing the Dao”. Numerous incantations, together with a complex system of rituals that the disciples were expected to follow, are then spelled out in some detail.

Sections entitled *Dharma* return to Sangje’s teachings concerning both individual morality and more social matters – stressing the need for improving the lot of, amongst others, the poor, the sick and the foolish. The following sections, *Authority and Foreknowledge*, include further teachings concerning cause and effect, and more prophecies and warnings about the consequences of not understanding or following His instructions sufficiently clearly.

Saving Lives is devoted to healings performed by Sangje. Some were brought about through the administration of Traditional Korean Medicine, providing herbal medicines and/or balancing the person’s energies; sometimes He employed Shamanistic practices; some of His results were seemingly miraculous – but others demonstrated an astute awareness of the nature of both the elements and the human mind.

Prophetic Elucidations repeat and elaborate much of what had been written earlier, but from a more systematically theological perspective. This is followed by a six-page commentary by Professor Don Baker on *Reading The Canonical Scripture*. I would strongly advise readers unfamiliar with Daesoon Jinrihoe and/or East Asian philosophy to read this before embarking on *The Scripture* itself. It is not that *The Scripture* is difficult to read. It is not. The English translation is delightfully clear. However, as Baker points out, some basic assumptions of East Asian tradition are very different from those that have shaped Western thought, and in his short commentary Baker provides an excellent framework within which to locate not only *The Scripture*, but also the other two volumes.

Finally, we are presented with *The Literary Companion Dictionary for The Canonical Scripture* which takes up almost half the volume. This is a truly fascinating addition, more like an Encyclopedia than a mere appendix or glossary. It is not to be read from

A to Z, but referred to whenever the reader would like further background to the main text. It is, however, something which can absorb readers, taking them far beyond the confines of the formal Canon to discover new worlds of history, politics, culture, agriculture, sacred mountains and rivers, ritual attire, musical instruments, herbal medicines, ancient war lords, and Confucian, Buddhist, and Daoist and shamanistic beliefs; one can, moreover, train oneself to practise the Steps of Yu the Great – and so much more.

In the box set accompanying *The Canonical Scripture*, there is a 152-page volume entitled *The Guiding Compass of Daesoon*. This contains the basic knowledge required by members of Daesoon Jinrihoe as spelt out in detail by Dojeon (Park Wudang) and now carefully organised into five main parts (*The Right Comprehension of Daesoon Truth; Cultivation and Holy Works; Organisational System; Examples of Proper Conduct; and Works of the Order*), each of which is subdivided into up to four sections, which are themselves further subdivided into numerous headings covering short paragraphs, often no more than one sentence long. This is essentially an internal Guide, full of encouragement for the devotee to follow his or her path correctly and with due diligence.

A shorter, 58-page book, *Essentials of Daesoon Jinrihoe*, provides a useful overview for those who are less familiar with the Order, informing the reader about its organizational structure and numerous charitable, educational and welfare foundations as well as its history, theology and ethical beliefs. There are also a number of illustrations with 22 colour photographs of Daesoon Jinrihoe's five temple complexes and its many projects. Which include the Welfare Foundation; a vast hospital that offers both Western and Traditional Korean Medicine; Daejin High Schools in both Seoul and Bundang; and Daejin University campuses in both Korea and China.

Taken together, these three books offer a comprehensive introduction in the English language to what is arguably the most successful indigenous new religious movement in Korea. They provide essential reading for any religious scholar interested not only in discovering the foundation and contemporary practices of Daesoon Jinrihoe, but also for comparing the many ways in which human beings perceive and act in an increasingly globalising world. There should be a place for it in any library of note.

It is, furthermore, an absorbing read.

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