

# **Nationalities and the World, the Three Teachings (三教), and the Way of Change (易道) – Religious Connotations of Taiwan’s Weixinshengjiao (唯心聖教) and South Korea’s Daesoonjinrihoe (大巡真理會)**

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## **I. Introduction: Double Jeopardy of Nationalities and the World**

East Asian countries encountered a sovereignty crisis in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century under the impact of Western powers. Likewise, traditional culture of the Three Teachings was unable to resist the invasion of Western culture. After the arrival of Western religions, such as Catholicism and Christianity, many new religions with national consciousness were motivated to revitalize the Three Teachings, emphasizing the subjectivity of Eastern nationalities on this basis. Besides passing down and applying traditional cultures, the new religions accepted the ideology of the Three Teachings with critical judgment, and further gave it new interpretations, making reforms through practice.

The value and meaning of the Three Teachings, namely Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, in East Asian countries is that they provide cultural heritage for identification, and is generally acknowledged in countries such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam. When facing the impact of foreign cultures, learning how to strengthen oneself from advanced civilizations and absorbing nutrients from one’s own traditions is a way of self-affirmation. This study examines Taiwan’s Weixinshengjiao (唯心聖教) and South Korea’s Daesoonjinrihoe (大巡真理會), which are based on national culture and have become a way for establishing the subjectivity of ethnic group and State.

Taiwan and South Korea not only face the impact of foreign cultures, but also conflict and contradiction between nationals. This double jeopardy is apparent when Taiwan faces the giant in East Asia – China, with contradictions between the influence of Chinese culture and threat of China from a political view. Korea is divided into north and south due to different political positions of the same ethnic group. When a new religion aims to grow and spread in the modern, globalized environment, its pursuit of world peace shows its present day world view and indirectly shows how it thinks of ethnic groups and the world.

From a geographic perspective, Taiwan and South Korea are both located in East Asia on the circum-Pacific belt and in the Chinese-character cultural circle. Taiwan and South Korea have several similarities in terms of history: both were colonized by Japan, the traditional culture of both countries were impacted by Western culture, both uphold liberalism and are friendly to the U.S. in geopolitics, and both are influenced by the Three Teachings of China. From the perspective of religious content, Taiwan's Weixinshengjiao and South Korea's Daesoonjinrihoe are similar in that classics and religious practices are not only deeply influenced by the Three Teachings, but also apply "the Way of Change (易道)", "eight trigrams(八卦)", and five phases (五行)." Both are new religions formed from the revitalization of national traditions.

National identity is relatively complex in Taiwan due to the diversity of ethnic groups. From a historical perspective, Taiwan was ruled by many countries and has always been a part of struggles between international forces: Cheng Cheng-Kung(鄭成功) ruled Taiwan in 1662, Shih Lang(施琅) of the Qing Dynasty led forces to Taiwan in 1683 and made Taiwan a part of the Qing Dynasty, Western imperialists cast their covetous eyes on Taiwan in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and Taiwan was ceded to Japan in 1895; after Japanese rule for 50 years, the nationalist government retreated from China to Taiwan in 1949 and began the rule of the Republic of China. Taiwan and China are inextricably linked culturally, but great contradiction exists politically. Identification with cultural China does not equal identification with political China, and is manifest in new religions, which inherit, combine, transform, and innovate Chinese culture while isolating itself from political China. In an environment with diverse ethnic groups and cultures, Taiwan's Weixinshengjiao proposed "the Chinese culture orthodoxy (中華文化道統) – the studies of *I-Ching* and Feng-Shui (易經風水學)." However, the Chinese culture orthodoxy does not simply advocate the return to traditional culture. Facing the modern world, the religion developed a set of adjustment principles, and its "integration" strategy not only integrates the Three Teachings, but also applies "the Way of Change" in *I-Ching (Classic of Changes)* to the Three Teachings, and expands the definition of ethnic group to view the entire East Asia as one "religious community," so that members put themselves into the world and lead the world towards peace of "the Eternal Bright Heaven (光明天)."

This study examines how Weixinshengjiao reflects on features of modern Taiwan society based on interpretations and applications of the Three Teachings the Way of Change, and also discusses new interpretations and applications of the Three Teachings and the Way of Change by South Korea's Daesoonjinrihoe, using this as a basis for understanding how new religions with the spirit of revitalizing national identity in East Asia pass down traditional Chinese culture. This study also examines how they innovate traditions in response to Chinese consciousness, show national qualities in modern situations, and search for their positioning; how the religions show concern for the common future of the nation when facing the world, which also

shows introspection of traditional religion and strategies in response to present day issues.

## **II. Contemporary East Asia, the End of Martial Law (解嚴) and Weixinshengjiao in Taiwan**

Modern history of East Asia was unraveled by the immense pressure of European and American countries seeking to develop capitalism. After signing an unequal treaty to cede land and compensate damages after the Opium War, the “May Fourth Movement” occurred in China under the impact of Western culture, modern science, and going through a series of failures. The movement sought to adopt a Westernization policy to strengthen the nation and comprehensively review traditional culture. Science and reason brought by the Enlightenment challenged the way of thinking in traditional Chinese culture, and scholars began to oppose traditions under strong feelings of grief and indignation, also leading to the development of patriotism and nationalism.

Saving the nation with science became the flag that rallied people to strengthen the nation, and pursuits of religion and aesthetics lost justifiability. Religion specifically went through a process of “disenchantment,” traditional techniques such as the five arts (五術) and divination were gradually viewed as superstitions and were oppressed and opposed. The nationalist government lost the Chinese Civil War and retreated to Taiwan in 1949. Even though the government promoted Confucianism, it merely used Confucian teachings as a means to control people’s thoughts, and free and diverse religions were not allowed during the period of martial law; the government oppressed folk religions, such as divination and Geomancy (堪輿), at the time.

Folk beliefs could not be developed during the period of martial law, so numerous new religions appeared after the end of Martial Law (解嚴) in 1987, and the religious groups were formally registered with the Ministry of the Interior to become legal organizations. Quite a few of the religions were developed based on the Three Teachings, such as Sanyijiao (三一教), Lijiao (理教), Ikuantao (一貫道), Xiantianjiao (先天救教, The World Red Swastika Society), Tiandeshengjiao (天德聖教), Xuanyuanjiao (軒轅教), Tiandijiao (天帝教), and Miledadao (彌勒大道, Maitreya Great Tao). All of these religions believe they are the heir to Chinese culture, and each religion developed new interpretations. Furthermore, combinations of divination, Feng Shui, and folk beliefs with the Three Teachings became very popular, and the religious activities have even become the basis for national identification.

The five arts, *I-Ching*, divination, and Feng Shui have always been popular in Chinese societies, where there are numerous Feng Shui and numerology halls, the foundation of folk beliefs and practices. *I-Ching (Classic of Changes)* is the most

important of China's five classics, and in addition to its perspective of the universe and values of moral obligation, it also contains predictions of the future, divination, and art of the numbers. However, modern scholars only praise *I-Ching (Classic of Changes)* for philosophy and moral obligation, but do not mention its contents on divination and geomancy. Even so, divination and geomancy remain popular folk beliefs and have never disappeared. Taiwan successfully became a modernized society in merely 50 years of rapid economic development, but folk beliefs and traditional crafts have continued to hold an important position in the nation.

According to the "Taiwan Social Change Survey" investigated by the Institute of Sociology, Academia Sinica in 1985, 1990 and 1995, a growing number of Taiwanese people had used the art of the numbers (術數), especially in 1990. The education system based on science and reason did not entirely stop the use of the art of the numbers, and increased fortune-telling and Feng Shui instead. The actors involved in such behavior were from folk beliefs or diffused Buddhism, in which folk beliefs accounted for the majority of religions in Taiwan. In contrast to the hostility of the nationalist government towards the art of the numbers and folk beliefs during the period of martial law, flourishing religions showed the release of the public's life force after the end of martial law.

Taiwan was given the responsibility of a spiritual fortress for "revitalizing Chinese culture" under the rule of the KMT, especially after the Cultural Revolution in China (1966-1976), Taiwan became the heir of Chinese culture and the concept of orthodoxy was deeply embedded in the hearts of Taiwanese people under the education of the party-state system. The concept of orthodoxy was also manifest in the teachings and practices of new religions. Even though new religions were given more freedom to grow after the end of martial law, they had no choice but to heed to the orthodoxy of "revitalizing Chinese culture" in the political atmosphere. On one hand it gave them political legitimacy by complying with the spirit of the party-state system, on the other hand it was an adaptation strategy that allowed marginal religions to be given the spiritual value of "the Chinese culture orthodoxy," and the religions seized the opportunity to become part of the mainstream culture. Furthermore, it also allowed the new religions to find their identity through cultural value amongst the contradictions between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait.

The rise of Taiwan's Weixinshengjiao can be described as the "institutionalization" of these diffused folk beliefs, turning them into a systematic, organized religion. Weixinshengjiao is a new religion that integrates the Three Teachings founded by Grand Master Hun Yuan (混元禪師) in the 1980s, and is the 28<sup>th</sup> religious group registered with the Ministry of the Interior in Taiwan. The religion's headquarters "Hsien Fo Temple on Chan Chi Mountain (禪機山仙佛寺)" is located in Fuguei Township, Nantou County in central Taiwan. Grand Master Hun Yuan(1933-) or Chang Yi-Jui was born in a poor village in Zhongliao Township, Nantou County, and graduated from the Land Survey Department of Kuang-Hwa

Senior Industrial Vocational High School. He stayed to teach at his original school and later founded the first land survey company in Taiwan, specializing in urban planning, road development, and land survey work for the government. He was greatly interested in divination, *I-Ching (Classic of Changes)*, Feng Shui, and Geomancy, and continued to learn about the arts. He became severely ill in 1983 and began his path of religious practice. At first, he opened a family hall for worshipping Buddha and used divination to resolve the questions of others. He built the religion's headquarters "Hsien Fo Temple on Chan Chi Mountain" in Nantou County in 1989, where he offered courses on the studies of *I-Ching* and Feng-Shui and used Buddhist rituals to remove ill fortunes and pray for blessings.

According to internal data of the religion in 2016, the religion had 41 preaching halls and temples and 27 classrooms to propagate Buddhist teachings around Taiwan, as well as 8 overseas preaching halls. The religion built the "Eight Trigrams Town (八卦城) in Yunmeng Mountain" in China covering 720 thousand square meters, as well as three ancestral halls worship the Yellow Emperor (黃帝), Yan Emperor (炎帝), and Chiyoudi (蚩尤帝), having over 300 hundred thousand believers around the world. Weixinshengjiao operates in the form of a "foundation," and the "Weixinshengjiao College (唯心聖教學院)" that is currently under preparation has been approved by the Ministry of Education. The college's goal is to become the first college in the world to teach the studies of *I-Ching* and Feng-Shui. Weixinshengjiao established "Weixin TV (唯心電視台)" in 2003 and broadcasts Feng Shui programs 24 hours a day. It also established a new channel to broadcast news of the religions group, and there is an online platform for users to learn about *I-Ching (Classic of Changes)* and Feng Shui free of charge, fully utilizing modern technology to propagate the religion. Clergy positions in the religion include master (法師), lecturer (講師), chanter (誦經師), and preacher (弘化師), organizing an originally diffused belief in the art of the numbers into an institutionalized religious group.

The main deity of Weixinshengjiao is "Guiguzi (鬼谷子)," the originator of Political Strategists during the Warring States Period, who is also known as "Wang Chan Lao Chu mantra (王禪老祖)" in folk beliefs. He is believed to be accomplished in astronomy, the art of the numbers, Pre-Qin Dynasty scholars' thought, and possesses psychic power. Weixinshengjiao combines the art of the numbers led by Guiguzi, *I-Ching (Classic of Changes)*, divination, and the Three Teachings, namely Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, and also integrates elements of folk beliefs to create the contemporary Chinese culture orthodoxy. "*I-Ching (Classic of Changes)* is the lineage of Dao, while Feng Shui is culture." Therefore, the Chinese culture orthodoxy proposed by Weixinshengjiao is the studies of *I-Ching* and Feng-Shui.

### **III. The Three Teachings and the Way of Change**

Weixinshengjiao has numerous classics as it vastly included classics of the Three

Teachings into its ideological system. There are also sutra instructed by the main deity “Wang Chan Lao Chu mantra,” the religion’s own Apocalypse Sutra (天啟經典). These classics of the Three Teachings and Apocalypse Sutra were included in the ideological system “the 30 Weixin scriptures (唯心三十經),” in which the examples used are the same as Buddhism and Taoism and the verse for opening sutra are mostly Buddhist teachings or Taoist incantations. A new Apocalypse Sutra is revealed (出世) every one or two years. New sutras constantly being revealed shows that the religious doctrine is still being developed and subject to change.

In the 30 Weixin scriptures of Weixinshengjiao, there are six Buddhist classics, two Confucian classics, and seven classics from folk beliefs; there are also 16 Apocalypse Sutra created by the religion. Of the classics from the Three Teachings, Buddhist classics are the more frequently recited and applied. During early periods before it became an independent religion, Weixinshengjiao was registered as “Buddhist” in the religion category of the Ministry of the Interior, showing that it is more inclined towards Buddhism among the Three Teachings.

Buddhist concepts are common in Weixinshengjiao and are even the basis of its philosophy and teachings; concepts of “cause and effect,” “incarnation,” and “merit” are common in the 30 Weixin scriptures. Grand Master Hun Yuan mainly taught the “Four Noble Truths,” “Eight Noble Paths,” “Twelve Nidānas,” and the *Heart Sutra* when propagating the religion at first, and it was an opportunity to form his religious thoughts. Buddhist sutra recited by Weixinshengjiao, e.g. *Amitabha Sutra*, *Medicine Buddha Sutra*, *Sutra of the Fundamental Vows of the Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha*, *Lotus Sutra*, and *Diamond Sutra*, are all commonly recited sutra in Chinese societies. These sutras being adopted by Weixinshengjiao show how the religion included Buddhist teachings from folk beliefs. Reciting Buddhist sutra is the daily homework of believers and a part of religious assemblies. Those who recite sutra can gain merit, change their fate, and return merit to their ancestors and all living things, benefiting both the departed and the living.

Even though Weixinshengjiao advocates that it has integrated classics of the Three Teachings, but classics recorded in “Daozang” are nowhere to be found, and there seven classics from folk beliefs, e.g. *Wang Chan Lao Chu Mantra Sutra* (王禪老祖玄妙真經), *Perfected Scripture of the Jade Thearch* (玉皇真經), *Primordial Heavenly Worthy on Shennong and Wugu Sutra* (元始天尊說神農五穀真經), etc. All of these are popular sutra among the common folk in Taiwan, and even though their contents integrate the Three Teachings, their fundamental religious framework are all Taoist. Yet, aside from *Wang Chan Lao Chu Mantra Sutra* these folk sutra are rarely recited and applied in Weixinshengjiao, and are used for religious missions for certain stages, not constantly recited as Buddhist sutras. In certain aspects the Taoist teachings of Weixinshengjiao are inherited from folk beliefs. Folk beliefs are different from Taoism but have always been closely related. One can say that Taoism has always been the religious system of Chinese people; Taoist thought is the “cultural

gene pool” of China, spread in the public’s daily life, so the sutras of folk beliefs naturally reflect on Taoist thought. Based on the above, Weixinshengjiao absorbed the cultural spirit of Taoism from folk beliefs.

In addition to the classics system of the 30 Weixin scriptures, Weixinshengjiao compiled its teachings into a set of 15,615 books in 2014 – the “Weixin’s Dao Zang (唯心道藏).” There is no specific style of writing for these books, which document verbatim the lectures and teachings of Grand Master Hun Yuan on TV, at various occasions, and in classrooms. After the Weixin’s Dao Zang was completed with 15,615 books, “petitions will be presented to Heaven (稟天)” in ten “open-book rituals” over a period of six months. In other words, these books are presented to Heaven and become sacred through the ceremonies. The ritual of transmitting Weixin’s Dao Zang (傳藏大典) is then held for members to personally participate in the preservation process, using their own hands to place the 15,615 books into the sacred spaces of 10 preaching halls around Taiwan, making the Weixin’s Dao Zang a sacred object both spiritually and materially. Revealing the Weixin’s Dao Zang consolidated the authority of Grand Master Hun Yuan’s interpretation of the Three Teachings, and the ritual of transmitting Weixin’s Dao Zang establishes its sacredness. The position of Weixin’s Dao Zang, which is a compilation of exhortations of Grand Master Hun Yuan, in Weixinshengjiao gradually overtook the 30 Weixin scriptures, which contain the Three Teachings. This shows that exhortations with new interpretations of Grand Master Hun Yuan are the true spirit of the religion’s teachings that are propagated.

In the list of deities of Weixinshengjiao, Guiguzi is the main deity with a lineage tracing back to Fuxi (伏羲), Goddess of Nine Heavens (九天玄女), Three Chinese Ancestors (Yellow Emperor 黃帝, Yan Emperor 炎帝, and Chiyoudi 蚩尤帝). Guiguzi Wang Chan Lao Chu is the one unifying the method of Dao (道法), taking his place at the center, surrounded by 33 celestial kings and 72 celestial masters as his guardians; the image of the deities expands three dimensionally. The originator Grand Master Hun Yuan is the spokesperson and preacher for Wang Chan Lao Chu in the world of man, and exists in unity with Wang Chan Lao Chu .



Even though teachings are integrated from the Three Teachings, the list of deities is mainly based on Chinese myths and historical figures: Fuxi and the Goddess of Nine Heavens are both from Chinese mythology, in which Fuxi drew the eight trigrams of the Pre-World (先天), and the Goddess of Nine Heavens was regarded as a goddess of the Pre-World by Taoists; Weixinshengjiao regarded the goddess as the ancestor of the nine stars (九星) and eight trigrams in the Later World (後天). The 33 celestial kings and 72 celestial masters (天師) in the surrounding space are unique to Weixinshengjiao and based on trigrams of *I-Ching (Classic of Changes)*, possessing the divinity of the trigram according to *I-Ching (Classic of Changes)*. It is noteworthy that Chinese ancestors – Yellow Emperor, Yan Emperor and Chiyoudi are also listed, in which worshiping Yellow Emperor and Yan Emperor is symbolic of being “descendants of Yan and Huang (炎黃子孫)” and inheriting Chinese culture, but why is the infamous Chiyoudi among their ranks? Weixinshengjiao believes that Chiyoudi is the ancestor of ethnic minorities in China, and other ethnic groups can only be truly integrated into one community by recognizing Chiyoudi as a Chinese ancestor.

Weixinshengjiao holds large ancestor worship ceremonies to recognize the historical status of Chiyou as the national ancestor, and began holding the “21<sup>st</sup> Century Chinese Joint Ancestor Worship Ceremony (中華民族聯合祭祖大典)” in Linkou Stadium since 2004. This is a major event for ancestral worship and is also a carnival that mobilizes over 30 thousand members of the religious group, inviting politicians and businessmen from around the world, as well as representatives of Chinese religious groups. Grand Master Hun Yuan proposed the concept of “three Chinese ancestors” in this event, listing Chiyoudi as equal to Yandi and Huangdi, also

giving him the title of “Man and Civilizations’ First Ancestor.” This type of large assembly has the influence of agenda-setting, i.e. making declarations through regular assemblies and verifying the core thoughts of the religious group, and thereby allowing the status of Chiyoudi to be recognized within the religious group. The “three Chinese ancestors” have thus become a key lineage in Weixinshengjiao.

During ancient times in China, after Chiyoudi was defeated and killed in the Battle of Zhuolu, and his people scattered throughout the land, south to Yunnan and Gueizhou to become the ancestors of the Miao people, passing through Shandong north to Korea to become the ancestors of the Korean people, and west to Mongolia. Weixinshengjiao used this history to determine the Korean civilization originated from the people of Chiyou. Furthermore, according to the *Basic Annals of Qin* (秦始皇本記) and *Biographies of the Kings of Huainan and Hengshan* (淮南衡山列傳) in *the Records of the Grand Historian* (史記), Weixinshengjiao recognizes a blood relation and cultural connection between the first emperor of Japan, Emperor Jimmu, and Qin Dynasty’s Xufu (徐福), who crossed the ocean to Japan. Xufu is believed to be the reincarnation of Guiguzi. The lineage revealed by the list of deities covers East Asian nationalities, including them into the system of the three Chinese ancestors.

During the era of imperial China, Pre-Qin classics wrote “the great affairs of a State are sacrifice and war (國之大事,唯祀與戎),” indicating that the grievance of spirits of the deceased from inevitable war between States could only be resolved through sacrifice. East Asian countries in the Chinese cultural circle have engaged in exchange, cooperation, competition, tribute, and war throughout history, and grudges between nations have accumulated in the process. From the perspective of Divine Dao (神道), these grievances in the history of East Asia originate from Chinese ancestors, and is why Weixinshengjiao must trace back to the three Chinese ancestors to resolve the grievances through Divine Dao.

Even though there are many new religions in Taiwan that combine beliefs in Maitreya and the Eternal Venerable Mother (無生老母), Weixinshengjiao did not take on this religious content and uses the belief of Guiguzi as the basis of its religion, which is actually related to “the Way of Change.” Guiguzi was originally a “trade deity” in the beliefs of Han people, and was responsible for the art of the numbers, e.g. fortune telling, divination, and Feng Shui. According to the “Taiwan Social Change Survey” investigated by Chu Hai-Yuen (瞿海源) of Academia Sinica, the art of the numbers is becoming growingly popular; scholars believe that uncertainties in the social structure have resulted in people feeling a sense of uncertainty and thus look to the art of the numbers for a solution. However, this sense of uncertainty does not suffice as a reason for why Weixinshengjiao bases its belief on Guiguzi, and why the art of the numbers combined with folk beliefs should be viewed as the cultural gene of people. Guiguzi in Weixinshengjiao far exceeds the confines of a trade deity, and descends into the world as an enlightened cultivator, integrating Chinese culture. This

is apparent from the list of deities including the three Chinese ancestors, which is equivalent to combining the lineage of *I-Ching (Classic of Changes)*, Fengshui, and national ancestors in the method of Dao, and then using “the Way of Change” to expand to sacred spaces and heavenly deities.

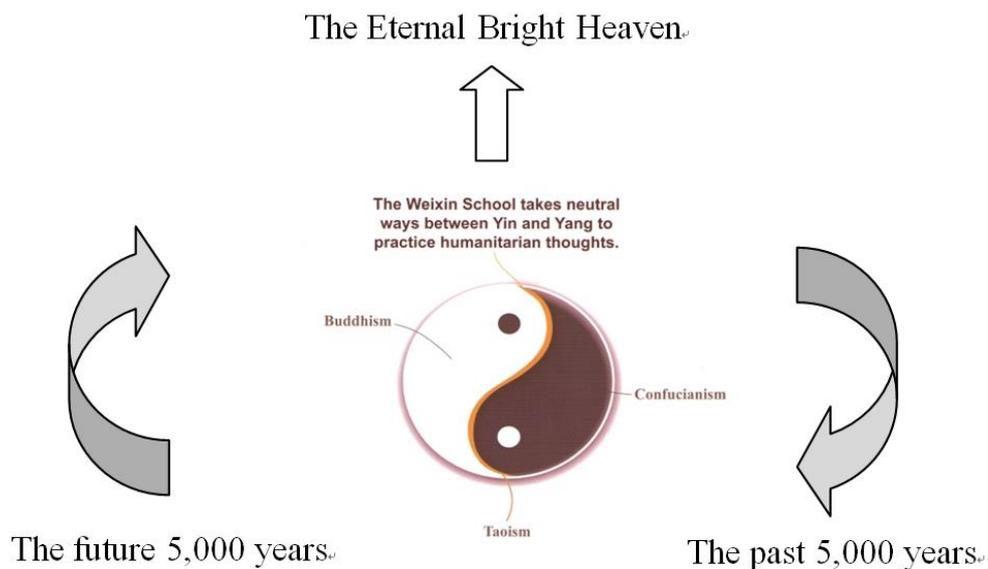
*I-Ching* has always had two dimensions as a Confucian classic, righteousness in terms of reason and divination. Weixinshengjiao emphasizes “the usage of I-Ching (用易)” with respect to divination and not only “the theory of I-Ching (易學),” and believes that it expands the application of *I-Ching (Classic of Changes)* compared with Confucianism: “Confucius learned and taught I-Ching, while Guiguzi Wang Chan Lao Chu studied and used I-Ching... creating culture and civilization of the present to future.” Weixinshengjiao does not recite *Chou-I (周易)* but rather uses I-Ching, i.e. using divination and geomancy to “study the relationship between Heaven and man.” Furthermore, Grand Master Hun Yuan also advocated traditional human’s order and universal commonwealth in “The Chapter of Great Harmony,” and used the subordinate relationships between the six relations and the reinforcing and neutralizing relationships between trigrams to explain principles such as Confucian ethics and the four anchors and eight virtues.

The *Feng Shui Sutra (風水真經)* points out that “Feng Shui is the only way to understand emptiness and form in Buddhism. Feng is emptiness and Shui is form,” “faith in the profound Feng Shui of the universe will build a pure land of Buddhism in the world of man,” “if humans understand that Feng Shui is the Dharma realm, it will not be hard to transcend the three realms and realize enlightenment.” Since *I-Ching (Classic of Changes)* and Feng Shui are two sides of the same coin, Feng Shui is a manifestation of the Way of Change, and Weixinshengjiao thus claims that following the principles of Feng Shui will allow this world to be built in a pure land for Buddha. There are so called “dragon node (龍穴)” in Feng Shui, where the essence of the mountain – “Qi (氣)” lies. Weixinshengjiao believes that Kunlun Mountain Range in China extends its veins to Taiwan and forms a “dragon node,” over which is the realm of the sacred “South Heaven,” allowing the Chinese culture orthodoxy to strike root and grow in Taiwan.

The *Sutra of the Weixin Heart Calmness (安心真經)* clearly states that “the Way of Change” is the being of the universe and is the first and utmost principle, while Weixinshengjiao is the heir to “the Way of Change,” claiming that mastering “the Way of Change” is the key to becoming a Buddha. Weixinshengjiao integrates the Three Teachings into “the Way of Change,” i.e. it is integrated into the heir of “the Way of Change” Weixinshengjiao. In other words, Weixinshengjiao has taken over the five thousand year Chinese culture orthodoxy to establish the legitimacy and sacredness of the religion.

“Any ‘school,’ whether it may belong to Buddhism, Taoism or Confucianism cannot be separated from *I-Ching*” and “*I-Ching* contains all Dharma.”

Weixinshengjiao integrates the Three Teachings into the Way of Change and further gives new interpretations. Weixinshengjiao uses the Grand Ultimate symbol (Tai Chi 太極) to interpret the development process of the Three Teachings, in which Buddhism represents world-transcending dharma and is on the Yang side of Tai Chi, also representing “emptiness”; Confucianism represents worldly dharma and is on the Yin side of Tai Chi, also representing “form”; Taoism is the origin of “Dao.” The Three Teachings jointly develop upwards and finally enter the last and highest stage – “Weixin School (唯心家),” carrying out humanitarian practices through the Middle Path of Yin and Yang in the sensible world, in which the Middle Path is “the Way of Change.” Telling from the circular lines, the past 5,000 years are the dark world of “Yin,” Weixinshengjiao is currently propagating Feng Shui of *I-Ching (Classic of Changes)* and using “the Way of Change” to change the world, so has to reach the Eternal Bright Heaven or “Yang,” continuously ascending to transcend the cycle of Yin and Yang and never returning to the world of Yin. This course of development is the return of Numbers of Pneuma (氣、數、象), where Xiang (象) returns to Shu (數) and Shu returns to Chi (氣), and then returns to perfect pneuma (真炁); perfect pneuma is the light. Hence, the final stage of developments of the Three Teachings is “the Eternal Bright Heaven (光明天),” where there is eternal light and peace.



“The Way of Change” is not only manifest in the list of deities including the three Chinese ancestors and the Chinese culture orthodoxy, but also applied to rituals. Weixinshengjiao commonly adopts Buddhist rituals for religious assemblies, using them to rescue and relieve ghosts from suffering (超渡), transfer merit to the living, and pray for blessing and protection. However, when facing natural and artificial disasters of our time, Weixinshengjiao created a ritual for “ridding calamities and

eliminating disasters (消災化劫)” based on “the Way of Change,” using the eight trigrams to arrange a worship space and extensively reciting sutra. The religion is concerned about global disasters that human beings jointly face, e.g. SARS epidemic, ozone hole, risk of volcanic eruption at Fuji Mountain, risk of volcanic eruption at Yellowstone National Park, and “sinkholes” that frequently occurred in China, the U.S., and Russia in 2010. Weixinshengjiao refers to these disasters as “the war between human beings and nature” and they must be resolved through “morality.” *I-Ching (Classic of Changes)* and Feng Shui attach great importance to mountains, landforms, and origins, and the concern for the natural environment causes Weixinshengjiao to view the world as a whole, ridding calamities and eliminating disasters under “the Way of Change” must be carried out from a global perspective. Thus, concern for cross-Strait disputes to the global situation is the pristine concern of “the Way of Change.”

#### **IV. A comparative view: The Three Teachings and the Way of Change of South Korea’s Daesoonjinrihoe**

Daesoonjinrihoe is a branch of the famous national religion in South Korea “Jeungsangyo,” and is the most successful of all branches. Its headquarters is located in Yeojusi, Gyeonggido. According to data from 2010, the religion has 3,000 assembly halls around the country with 50,000 members of the clergy and 800,000 believers, making it the sixth largest religion in South Korea.

The founder of Jeungsangyo is Kang Jeungsan (姜甌山) (1871-1909), born during the turmoil of late Joseon Dynasty. Korea went through the Japanese invasions in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the invasion of Western forces, development of industry and commerce, and rapid social changes threatened its national security. Confucianism deviated and oppressed the thought of Korean people, making life impossible. In the social unrest, new religions appeared one after another due to the unease of the people and their imagination of the future, such as the belief of Maitreya and Chung-kam-rok during the late Joseon Dynasty. In which the “Donghak Peasant Revolution” in the 1860s was the largest movement with the greatest influence, using “Eastern Learning” to oppose “Western Learning,” becoming one of the first new religions with profound influence on opening up (開闢) new thought. Kang Jeungsan also followed Donghak (Eastern learning) for a while, but after the Donghak Revolution failed, he learned that human beings alone were not enough to change the world, and used “deities” and “magic arts (法術)” for the power to open up a new world. After Kang Jeungsan, Doju (道主) Cho Jeongsan (趙鼎山) (1895-1958) gained a revelation from Kang Jeungsan and established Mugeukdo (無極道), later passing his lineage to Dojeon (都典) Park Han-Gyeong (朴漢慶). Dojeon Park Han-Gyeong (1917-1995) founded Daesoonjinrihoe in 1969, and actively engaged in charity, social welfare, and education.

The sutra of Daesoonjinrihoe is *Jeonkyeong*, which is a record of the deeds of the Ninth Heaven Emperor (九天上帝) Kang Jeung-san, and contains teachings of the religion compiled by Dojeon Park Han-Gyeong. The earliest record of Kang Jeung-san was in the *Record of Kang Jeung-san* by Lee Sangho in 1926. The *Daesoon Jeonkyeong* was first published in 1929, and the sixth edition of *Daesoon Jeonkyeong* was published in 1965. Even though Kang Jeung-san and Park Han-Gyeong were familiar with Confucian classics, the classics were not included in the sutra system of Daesoonjinrihoe. The only sutra of Daesoonjinrihoe is *Daesoon Jeonkyeong* (典經). It is noteworthy that *Daesoon Jeonkyeong* has a similar writing style to the Bible of Christianity.

Kang Jeung-san was deified into the Ninth Heaven Emperor (Kangseong Sangje, 姜聖上帝), Dojeon Cho Jeung-san was deified into the Jade Emperor (玉皇上帝), and Dojeon Park Han-Gyeong was deified into Mireuk Sejon (朴聖上帝). The founders of Daesoonjinrihoe were deified and “unified” with preexisting heavenly deities, evenly clearly stated as the deities “descended into the mundane world (倒裝下凡)” or return, giving them the qualities of the Messiah.

The Three Teachings of Daesoonjinrihoe first appears in the Buddhist religion of Korea. After the Great Itineration throughout the Three Realms (環視三界、大巡天下), the Ninth Heaven Emperor descended to the Buddhist Geumsan Temple, a metaphor that traditional Buddhism is no longer capable of shouldering the great responsibility of the new world, and the “religion” and “fate” were given to Choe Suwoon (崔水雲). After Choe Suwoon failed, the deity took back the religion and fate and personally descended into the world, becoming Kang Jeung-san (Kangseong Sangje, 姜聖上帝).

Korea ruled the nation with Confucianism and upheld the political principles of Zhu Xi, using it as the norm for all society. Even though political Confucianism was corrupted, Kangseong Sangje succeeded orthodox Confucianism. He was familiar with the works of Zhu Xi (朱熹), Dojeon Park also instructed disciples to collect Chinese classics, and Confucian classics, e.g. *Chou-I* and the *Great Learning* (大學), are often quoted in *Daesoon Jeonkyeong*. Taichi and Taichitu (太極圖) are mentioned in several parts of *Jeonkyeong*, showing that “the Way of Change” is the origin of the religion’s view of the universe and religious beliefs. The creeds in the teaching of Daesoonjinrihoe – sincerity (誠), reverence (敬), and faithfulness(信) are also according to the spirit of Confucianism.

There is a considerable amount of Taoist elements in the *Jeonkyeong*, e.g. deity names, Taoist concepts, and method of Dao. The “Incantation for Lord Tai Yi (太乙咒),” an extremely important Taoist incantation, is believed by Wang Tsung-Yi (王宗昱) to be within the scope of immortals according to the *History of Taoism in Korea* by Yi Nūnghwa (李能和). The Way of Immortality originated in Ku County, the

hometown of Laozi. Hence, Laozi is the ancestor of the Way of Immortality/Taoism. Also, the “Hyun-Mu Sutra (玄武經)” in *Jeonkyeong* is believed to be closely connected to the Hyun-Mu belief. Huo Ke-Gong (霍克功) believes that the purpose of Daesoonjinrihoe is: “Creative conjunction of the virtues of Yin and Yang, harmonious union of divine beings and human beings, resolution of grievances for the mutual beneficence of all life, and realization and completion of the Dao in the world (陰陽合德、神人調化、解冤相生、道通真境),” in which “Yin and Yang” contains the concept of Taoism. Even though Huo Ke-Gong believes that Daesoonjinrihoe “originated from Taoism,” Daesoonjinrihoe scholar Park Maria (朴瑪利阿) listed difference in the thoughts and teachings of Daesoonjinrihoe and Taoism from the perspective of religious practice, belief, etiquette, and aesthetics. This shows that even though new religions are adept at absorbing the essence of traditional religions, transformation and innovation are the emphasis and the self-expectations of new religions in order to take on a different path.

Daesoonjinrihoe carried on the Three Teachings, but the Three Teachings is not its ultimate path, and it seeks to find its own way to maturity. “Ru (儒), Fo (佛) and Xian (仙)” are viewed as the “prototype” of the Three Teachings, and are even closer to the essence of culture than the Three Teachings, earning them the title “the Three Ways.” These three ways do not have the same function and do not have equal status. Instead, they each have a mission for different stages. *Jeonkyeong* (3:39) states: “Buddha is the truth of forms, immortality is the truth of nature, and Confucianism is the truth of etiquette,” describing the function of each way. The order of the Three Ways is indicated in the “12 Growth Phases (十二長生).”

受天地之虛無仙之胞胎，受天地之寂滅佛之養生，受天地之以詔儒之浴帶，冠旺，兜率虛無寂滅以詔。

The “12 Growth Phases (十二長生)” symbolizes the course of life in Chinese numerology, e.g. the symbolic system of birth, aging and death, and is also an analogy of all things from creation, development, decline, to death. The 12 Growth Phases (十二長生) are “Tai (胎), Yang (養), Changsheng (長生), Muyu (沐浴), Guandai (冠帶), Linguan (臨官), Diwang (帝旺), Cui (衰), Bing (病), Si (死), Mu (墓), and Jue (絕).” The Way of Immortality is in the “Tai (胎)” phase, i.e. the merging of Yin and Yang into the initial phase of an “embryo,” when everything is new, there is new hope, unlimited vitality, and infinite possibilities for development, but it is also an unstable and uncertain phase. Buddhism is in the “Yang (養)” and “Changsheng (長生)” phases, in which “Yang (養)” is the process from embryo to infant, it is the phase that all things begin to grow; “Changsheng (長生)” is when human beings are first born, full of life, and have unlimited vitality. Confucianism is in the “Muyu (沐浴)” and “Guandai (冠帶)” phases, which is the phase of growth from infants to juveniles. Daesoonjinrihoe is in the mature phases of “Linguan (臨官)” and “Diwang (帝旺).”

Lee Kyung Won (李京源) believes that this is consistent with the time sequence that the Three Ways appeared in history: “*the Way of Immortality appeared first, then Buddhism, and then Confucianism with the fate of humanity developing as well. Next was the era of human beings opening a path to the everlasting Later World (後天開闢), the essence of traditional religious culture emerging, reaching harmony, and being unified... into a state of maturity.*” Once can say that after opening a path to the everlasting Later World, Daesoonjinhoe is a mature religion that has carried on history and fully developed the Three Ways.

In *Jeonkyeong*, “the Way of Change” is applied in “the reordering of the universe (天地公事),” which starts from “Divine Dao” to fundamentally resolve grievances between deities and human beings, and therefore carries out the reordering of the universe (天地公事) by “correcting the numbers of cosmos cycles (整理天地度數), adjusting the deities (調化神明), and resolving grievances.” The reordering of the universe can be roughly divided into three categories, the first is “reordering of theocracy,” i.e. resolving grudges between deities to unify deities and finally collecting and unifying the earth’s energy for the world of deities to gain harmony and stability; the second is “reordering social changes,” i.e. mediating injustice in the world of men, especially the encounter of the Korean people, bringing Korea from the dark Former World (先天) or the world of “Yin” into the bright Later World or the world of “Yang,” opening up the heavenly Later World; the third is the “reordering of teachings,” i.e. disciples divided into many religious groups after Kang Jeungsan, but one true heir will appear to realize the thought of Kang Jeungsan and make Daesoonjinhoe one of the largest religions in the world.

The reordering of the universe in *Jeonkyeong* applies principles of China’s ancient “the Way of Change,” e.g. the eight trigrams of the Pre-World of Fuxi and eight trigrams of the Later World of King Wen of Zhou (周文王), which are used to correct the numbers of cosmos cycles, adjust Yin and Yang, and resolve grievances tracing back to the son of China’s ancient emperor Yao – the grievance of Danzhu. This concept of resolving grievances from the origin is the same as Taiwan’s Weixinshengjiao, and also reflects on the intertwining histories of East Asian countries. Most importantly, Kangseong Sangje used Divine Dao to change the world from a public domain and the overall environment, first directing his attention to the relationship between Korea, Japan and China, using Divine Dao to help Japan defeat Russia, viewing East Asia as a whole to resist Western forces; he then slowly diverted the energy from Japan to Korea and helped Korea become prosperous. This reordering of the universe by applying “the Way of Change” aims to create a new world – an “earthly paradise (地上天國),” and Korea’s national religion created an entirely new concept – “Opening a path to the everlasting Later World,” which is opening up a new world without oppression, that upholds ethics and morality, and does not have self-deception.

The concept of “opening a path to the everlasting Later World” that was given new meaning is a very important concept of Korea’s national religion, and is based on the historical view and religious experience of the founder of the religion, differentiating between Pre-World and Later World based on a specific point in time. The mutual restriction that occurs in the Pre-World will cause opposition and grudges between humans and all beings in the world, derailing the realms of Heaven, Earth and Humanity and causing all sorts of calamities. The reordering of the universe carried out by Kangseong Sangje by correcting the numbers of cosmos cycles, resolving grievances, and opening up the three realms will transform the world into the Later World of mutual generation. The Pre-World and Later World referred to here is not the same as the positions of the eight trigrams for Pre-World and Later World in *Chou-I*, and is a historical concept instead. Kangseong Sangje believes that the old era was dominated by the energy of mutual restriction and people thus held grudges against each other with constant calamities. There were even grudges in the realm of deities. These contradictions could only be resolved through the reordering of the universe by “opening up the three realms” and thus enter the Later World with mutual generation.

In a sense, “the Way of Change” has two dimensions in “the reordering of the universe” in Daesoonjinrihoe, one is the application of the eight trigrams of I-Ching (Classic of Changes) for correcting the numbers of cosmos cycles and supporting Divine Dao; the other is the Pre-World and Later World, and the logic of generation and elimination among five phases (五行生剋), transforming the meaning to interpret the fate of Korean people. This provides an explanation for the survival of the nation and rationalizes its encounters to provide nationals with a vision of a beautiful future. After application and reinterpretation of *I-Ching (Classic of Changes)* in Korea, “the Way of Change” represents its innovative national spirit.

## **V. Conclusion**

New religions are able to become independent of the many great traditions because the issues they seek to resolve are unprecedented, e.g. resolving grievances of Chiyou, Danzhu (丹朱), and Eastern and Western cultures. The Three Teachings are applied to integrate religious practices that are more in-line with the spirit of the current era. Weixinshengjiao claims that it “integrates the thought of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism,” and *Jeonkyeong* of the Daesoonjinrihoe writes: “Sangje led all deities with the power of the way and deities of civilization, and unified the essence of all national cultures.” Even though the two religions both have views of integration, they place emphasis on different aspects and have their own preferences, and do not comprehensively accept the Three Teachings. The religions absorb, critically judge, adapt, and transform, both claiming to extract the essence of the Three Teachings and integrate the essence into an optimal state of harmony, using it to rediscover the national spirit and the double jeopardy of nations and ethnic groups.

National religions do not necessarily negate “world religions.” In an era of globalization, it is hard for religious groups to stay within their own closed world, and must constantly respond to new situations in the world. Therefore, these national religions have self-expectations to become a world religion that faces the entire universe. Religions face the world by first showing transcendence of Divine Dao, especially the thought of “the Way of Change” in Weixinshengjiao and Daesoonjinrihoe. Their “Dao” is not traditional Taoism, but new “Dao” after transformation. It is this new “Dao,” whether it may be “the Eternal Bright Heaven” or “opening a path to the everlasting Later World,” that allows them to open up a new religious path and create new circumstances.

Jin Xun (金勳) advocates that new religions in Korea use the concept of “integration” for innovating the Three Teachings, and seeks to further “unify” the teachings, which is a unity from the standpoint of “self.” Placing “self” at the center of the religion is a common approach. Weixinshengjiao found the way of the “Weixin School” from the Three Teachings, while Daesoonjinrihoe entered the phase of “Guanwang (冠旺)” after the Three Teachings to become the most mature new religion. Both can be understood as the Chinese culture orthodoxy shifting to the new religion, and shows that the new religions will have to directly face the double jeopardy of nationality and the world in modern times.

The end of Martial Law (解嚴) in Taiwan was not the end of Taiwan’s dire circumstances in the international society. On one hand, Taiwan faced Western forces of globalization. On the other hand, Taiwan faced contradictions with the Chinese Communist Party. Moreover, the diverse ethnic groups on the island each took different stands, and conflict between unification and independence escalated. Weixinshengjiao uses the perspective of Divine Dao in “the Way of Change” to transcend political positions, viewing cross-Strait relations from the origin – grievances of Chinese ancestors. It first expands the definition of nationality and advocates “the Chinese culture orthodoxy,” expanding concern of “the Way of Change” to East Asian countries, and viewing the entire East Asia as a “religious community.” It puts itself into the world and then uses “the Way of Change” to transcend humanity, showing concern for the common fate of the nation through enlightenment and revelation, and leading the world into “the Eternal Bright Heaven.”

From this perspective, Daesoonjinrihoe hopes to “open a path to the everlasting Later World” via the reordering of the universe, which is for “resolving grievances.” In the era of Kangseong Sangje, “the Way of Change” was used to integrated Korea, Japan and China into an East Asian community for resisting Western forces. In modern times, resolving grievances in the history of confrontation between North and South Korea, as well as the complex situation in the world is an inevitable issue that must be faced. The new religions face this double jeopardy and show the new manner of tolerance, benevolence and integration in present day world, is people’s expectations for the new religion.

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