

A Comparison Between Daesoon Jinrihoe's "Resolution of Grievances for Mutual Beneficence" and Weixin Shengjiao's "Resolving Grievances to Make Life Harmonious"

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ABSTRACT: The article compares two parallel concepts, "resolution of grievances for mutual beneficence" in Daesoon Jinrihoe, one of Korea's largest new religions, and "resolving grievances to make life harmonious" in the Taiwanese new religion Weixin Shengjiao. Exploring the two concepts show their similarities, as both are grounded in a sacred history and emphasize ancient grievances of ancestral times. Differences, however, also emerge. Daesoon Jinrihoe's resolution of grievances is based on the idea of the "Reordering of the Universe (Heaven and Earth)," performed by the Supreme God, Sangje, incarnated on Earth as Kang Jeungsan (1871–1909). Weixin Shengjiao places more emphasis on the individual solutions of grievances based on the practical aspects of *I Ching*, i.e. divination and Feng Shui. Both religions see themselves as including the Three Teachings of Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism, but Weixin Shengjiao seems to rely more on Buddhist sources, while Daesoon Jinrihoe, which also has some Buddhist features, seems to share more elements with Daoism and Confucianism.

KEYWORDS: Daesoon Jinrihoe, Kang Jeungsan, Reordering of the Universe, Resolution of Grievances for Mutual Beneficence, Weixin Shengjiao, Resolving Grievances to Make Life Harmonious, Hun Yuan, I Ching, Chinese Folk Religion, Weixinism.

Introduction

On January 1, 2017, I went to Taipei's Linkou Stadium to participate in the 12th United Chinese Nationality Ancestors Worship Ceremony, organized by the Taiwanese new religion Weixin Shengjiao. It was a very impressive event, held to worship the three Chinese ancestors: Chiyou (蚩尤), the Yellow Emperor (黃帝), and the Yan Emperor (炎帝 神農氏, Shennong Shi), as the origin and the founders of the Chinese nation.

In several places of China, including in the Henan province, I had visited monuments or museums commemorating the Yellow Emperor, the Yan Emperor, and Fuxi Shi (伏羲氏), the Emperor of Heaven, Earth and Humans, or the three sovereigns and the five emperors Diku (帝嚳高辛氏), Zhuan Xu (顓頊高陽氏), Tang Yao (帝堯陶唐氏), Yu Shun (帝舜有虞氏), and Shao Hao (少昊金天氏), either together or separately. What was distinctive in the January 1, 2017 ceremony, however, was that Grand Master Hun Yuan, the founder of Weixin Shengjiao, proposed to remedy an ancestral injustice by rehabilitating Chiyou, once regarded as a villain in traditional mythology, and venerating him as one of the three ancestors of the Chinese people. As a Korean, I remembered how Chiyou was adopted as one of the most famous symbols of the 2002 Korean-Japanese World Cup of Soccer. Koreans think that Chiyou is one of their ancestors, who led the Jiuyi (九夷) or Jiuli (九黎) tribes with the help of the deities of wind and rain (Yuan 1979, 441–475; Yilyeon 1993, 38–54).

One of my major areas of interest at that time revolved around the *Jeongyeong*, the cardinal scripture of Daesoon Jinrihoe (大巡眞理會), a new religious movement that began at the end of 19th century in Korea. In this sacred scripture, Jo Jeongsan (1895–1958), regarded by Daesoon Jinrihoe as its founder, depicts the Yellow Emperor as one of the official initiators of all civilizations recorded in history, and describes how he was followed by the five emperors (*Kyowun* 1:26). This is also related to the veneration and worship of ancestors. I also noticed how the idea of “resolving grievances to make life harmonious” (*jieyuan hesheng*, 解冤和生), advocated by Grand Master Hun Yuan, had many aspects in common with the notion of “resolution of grievances for mutual beneficence” (*haewon sangsaeng*, 解冤相生) in Daesoon Jinrihoe.

Because the idea of “resolving grievances” plays an important role in the doctrines of both religious movements, this article will focus on this concept, by comparing their respective interpretations by Weixin Shengjiao and Daesoon Jinrihoe. Weixin Shengjiao would probably recognize itself in the central moral principles of what the Korean new religion calls the “Daesoon Thought,” and in turn Daesoon Jinrihoe would agree with Grand Master Hun Yuan’s idea of “resolving grievances to make life harmonious.” However, the context of Daesoon Jinrihoe is based on its notion of the “Reordering Works of the Universe” (天地公事), a series of “Works” performed by the Supreme God, Sangje

Kang, to rectify the previous order of Heaven and Earth into a new state characterized by universal reconciliation among human beings and the world.

I would suggest that the two religions share significant similarities in their traditions, while also revealing differences in their way of approaching the concept of “resolving grievances.” Weixin Shengjiao approaches this concept from the perspective of resolving individual grievances through persuading evil spirits to leave this world or driving them away. Daesoon Jinrihoe regards the resolution of grievances, in its practical aspect, as the ethical attitude and duty of each individual human being. In addition, the resolution of grievances is understood as a natural principle of the universe, based on the Reordering Works of the Universe performed by the Supreme God, Sangje (上帝). Although “Sangje” is an ancient name for the Supreme Being in East Asian religious traditions, Daesoon Jinrihoe believes that he incarnated in a Korean spiritual master called Kang Jeungsan (1871–1909).

I will first introduce the Daesoon concept of the “resolution of grievances for mutual beneficence.” Second, I will describe the general characteristics of Weixin Shengjiao’s idea of “resolving grievances to make life harmonious.” Finally, I will propose a comparison between these two systems of thoughts.

The Idea of the “Resolution of Grievances for Mutual Beneficence” in Daesoon Thought

According to an inscription explaining the name “Daesoon Jinrihoe” in the Yeosu Headquarters Temple Complex of the religion, “Daesoon Truth” is the universal principle, which has been handed down throughout the centuries up to the present time:

All things pertain to the mysterious function of Tai Ji (太極), and many saints came down to the Earth to convey the universal truth to save all humankind. For instance, those who came down as kings were Fuxi (伏羲), Dangun (檀君), and Wenwang (文王), and those who came down as teachers were Confucius, Buddha, Lao-tze, and our Holy Teacher Kang Jeungsan in the modern period.

In the scripture of Daesoon Jinrihoe (*Jeongyeong*), there is also a passage that explains the historical role of Huangdi (the Yellow Emperor) and Chiyou in the early stage of East Asian history:

When there is a person who wages war, there is a person to calm it down. Since Chiyou waged a war while creating a fog, Huangdi suppressed it with a south-pointing chariot [i.e. a chariot equipped with a magnetic needle]. All those who wage wars, and suppress them, do so in accordance with the mysterious works of heaven. Accordingly, Choe Jewu was one who motivated war, and I [Kang Jeungsan] am the one who will suppress it. Jeon Myeongsuk has waged war in the world. (*Kyobeop* 3:30)

Choe Jewu (1824–1864) was the founder of the early Korean new religion Donghak. After his execution in 1864, a protest movement escalated to the bloody Donghak Revolution of 1894, led by Jeon Myeongsuk (Jeong Bong-jun, 1855–1895), who in turn was executed in 1895. Kang Jeungsan, regarded by Daesoon Jinrihoe as both the incarnation of the Supreme God, Sangje, and the origin of Daesoon Thought, counseled his followers not to participate in the Donghak Revolution, predicting its failure. In the above passage, Kang explains the historical clash between the Yellow Emperor and Chiyou from a viewpoint wherein they play different roles within the broader context of the grand design by Sangje, the Supreme God (i.e. Kang himself), to resolve century-old grievances and convert the world into an earthly paradise free of war and conflict. Following his work through the religious ritual called the Reordering of the Universe, the principle of mutual beneficence was introduced by Kang as the remedy for curing the diseases caused by grievances.

To realize mutual beneficence, Kang Jeungsan gave primacy to the resolution of grievances (冤), accompanied by a principle of reciprocity in his Reordering of the Universe. Likewise, with reference to social ethics in the sphere of everyday life, he affirmed the principles of not provoking *cheok* (i.e. emotional grudges by others) and making fellow human beings prosperous, while harmonizing disputes by following the Divine Dao (神道).

In the *Jeongyeong*, the expression “the Age of the Resolution of Grievances” is frequently used in the context of Kang Jeungsan’s Reordering Works of the Universe. We read, for example:

I will conduct the Reordering Works of the Universe to resolve the piled-up grievances from older times, while eliminating unfortunate events, to achieve eternal peace. Like the whole body moves when one scratches one’s head, if we resolve the grievances of Danzhu, who is the starting point of the record of humankind as well as the first chapter in the history of grievances, then the knots and pains of grievances, piled up for thousand years, will be resolved. When Yao, considering Danzhu an unworthy son, gave his two daughters to Xun and passed the world to him, Danzhu caused Xun to die in the river of Cangwu (蒼梧), and

his two queens to die in the river of Xiaoxiang (瀟湘). From this time on, the roots of grievances were embedded in the world, and the seeds of grievances were spread to each generation, until grievances filled Heaven and Earth and humanity was left on the brink of ruin. (*Gongsa* 3:4)

The different ancestral deities make their descendants dedicated in their spiritual cultivation, by extricating them from their *cheok* spirits, facing the current time of the Resolution of Grievances. (*Gyobeop* 2:14)

As this is the Age of the Resolution of Grievances, practice virtue and treat others properly. (*Gyobeop* 2:20)

In these words, we can see that the “Age of the Resolution of Grievances” contrasts with “the Age of the Former World” (先天), where all the grievances had formed and piled up, and human beings and the universe in general were governed by mutual conflict. While the Age of the Former World was the period of creating and bearing grievances, the Age of the Resolution of Grievances, achieved through Sangje’s Reordering Works of the Universe, can be defined as a transitional age leading into the Later World (後天) of mutual beneficence, which is an earthly paradise.

According to Sangje’s teaching, the social classes such as shaman, female, and the lowly, who were afflicted with alienation, discrimination, and exclusion in the Former World under the principle of mutual conflict, gain release from these fetters, acquire power, and enter into the Age of the Resolution of Grievances.

As this is the Age of the Resolution of Grievances, at first, I will deliver the teaching to the lowly. (*Gyowun* 1:32)

Faced with the Age of the Resolution of Grievances, those who do not have prestige will earn vigor, and energy will be returned to the deserted Earth. (*Gyobeop* 1:67)

I (Sangje) let all be free to do as they wish, by eliminating the discrimination between men and women, but from now on, I reestablish the principle of propriety by rectifying the moral disorder of Yin and Yang. (*Gongsa* 1:32)

Kang (Sangje) always used honorific language, even when addressing himself to individuals of low birth. One of his first disciples, Kim Hyeong-ryeol (1862–1932), felt embarrassed when he heard Kang using honorific language when addressing Kim’s servant. Yet, Kang advised Kim as follows:

That man is your servant, but wherein should that fact alter my interactions with him? You should respect all people, whoever they may be. Hereafter, there will be no discrimination between the noble and the low, or legitimate and illegitimate children. (*Gyobeop* 1:10)

With reference to this, Kang (Sangje) also offered the following explanation:

This is the Age of the Resolution of Grievances, and good times will come through resolving *cheok*, when people will discard the conventions of noblemen while giving preferential treatment to the lowly. (*Gyobeop* 1:9)

It should be noted that “resolution of grievances” does not mean that those oppressed in the past would now wield the power at their will, nor would they dominate others as a retaliation for past discrimination or injustice. Kang taught that one should always repay evil with good and treat others properly.

Facing the times of the Resolution of Grievances, you should repay evil with good. (*Gyobeop* 3:15)

Resolve the grudges your enemy holds against you and love him as your savior, then he will turn into a virtuous human being and become your fortune. (*Gyobeop* 1:56)

Our work is a *gongbu* (practice, 工夫) not to incur *cheok* and promote the betterment of others. Taking the remaining good fortune would be sufficient, after you have made all the others prosperous. (*Gyobeop* 1:2)

It is believed that, through his Reordering Works of the Universe, Kang, as the incarnated Supreme God Sangje, resolved grievances of all sorts, ranging from the grudges of kings and revolutionaries to those of several deities. For instance, Sangje resolved the grievances of Jeong Bong-jun (*Gongsa* 3:2), Choe Jewu (*Gongsa* 3:2), Jinmuk (1562–1633, *Gwonji* 2:37), Danzhu (*Gongsa* 3:6, *Haengrok* 3:4), Qin Shi-Huangdi (the first emperor of the Qin dynasty, 259–210 BCE), and those of a number of deities (*Gyowun* 1:17). He also remedied the grievances of the spirits of rebels, who were previously marked with eternally indelible dishonor, while dispatching them to a celestial star (*Gyobeop* 3:6).

Daesoon Jinrihoe teaches that Sangje conducted a coordination and reorganization of the deities according to their deeds and achievements in contributing to the supreme good of humankind. He also conducted the resolution of personal grudges caused by failed ambition, jealousy, or obsession. Even those general resolutions of personal grievances were included in his great plan to open the Earthly Paradise of the Later World of mutual beneficence. Likewise, regardless of the aims or intentions the actions that led to grudges originally contained, Kang resolved all grievances, while allowing all those involved to participate in the Reordering Works. This, Daesoon Jinrihoe believes, was Kang’s way to fulfill the idea of mutual beneficence, in order to promote the betterment of people and spirits. In turn, the result of the resolution

of grievances for those involved in the process was that Sangje allowed them to take part in his Reordering Works of the Universe and creation of the Earthly Paradise. He also resolved the grievances of specific historical characters:

Jeon Myeongsook [Jeong Bong-jun] initiated the Donghak peasant movement in the spirit of making peasants noblemen and making men of low birth noble. (*Gyobeop* 1:2)

By proclaiming the Eastern Dao, Choi Suwun [Choe Jewu] endeavored to propagate the Great Way (Dao) while receiving the heavenly mandate and the teachings of the deities. (*Gongsa* 3:2)

Jinmuk went up to Heaven, so that he could learn all the ingenious teachings of Heaven and pass them onto human beings, but he was killed by the jealous Confucian scholar, Kim Bongok [1575–1661]. (*Gwonji* 2:37)

Kang, as the incarnated Sangje, went on to conduct the Reordering Work to resolve the collective grievances of several nations, and this included the “Resolution of the Grievances of China” (*Gongsa* 3:18). He proclaimed that “since China had been invaded by other ethnic groups and tribes repeatedly, the time has come for China to recover its national sovereignty.” It is worth noting here that Weixin Shengjiao also proposes the resolution of the grievances of Chinese ancestors, including those belonging to ethnic minorities, something that is presented as crucial for the resolution of cross-Strait problems between Taiwan and China. This resolution is believed to eventually contribute to peace and harmony in the whole world. In relation to this issue, the main ideas of Weixin Shengjiao will be treated in more detail in the next chapter.

Weixin Shengjiao’s Notion of “Resolving Grievances to Make Life Harmonious”

We have seen how “the Divine Way for the Resolution of Grievances,” is an essential part of Sangje’s (i.e. Kang Jeungsan’s) Reordering of the Universe in Daesoon Jinrihoe. Weixin Shengjiao also expresses a view of the Divine Way in relation to the “redressing of wrongs” or the “resolution of grievances,” not only at the individual level, but also at the collective level of resolving the grievances of national ancestral origins (Lee 2013, 38).

Yet, whereas Daesoon Thought traces the starting point of all human grievances back to the grievance of Danzhu, who was the son of the Yao Emperor (*Haengrok* 3:4), Weixin Shengjiao locates it in the Battle of Zhuolu. The Yan Emperor, leading his tribe, battled the Nine Li tribes, led by Chiyou. The Yan

Emperor stood no chance, and he lost the battle. He escaped, and later ended up in Zhuolu, begging for help from the Yellow Emperor (Dai and Gong 2003, 32). Then, the epic battle between Chiyou and the Yellow Emperor's forces began. The battle lasted for ten years, with Chiyou having the upper hand. During the Battle of Zhuolu, Chiyou breathed out a thick fog and obscured the sunlight (Woolf 2007, 213; Wang 2006, 11–12). The battle dragged on, for four days, and the Yellow Emperor's side was in danger of losing. Then, the Yellow Emperor invented the south-pointing chariot, and found his way out of the dangerous battlefield. Chiyou conjured up a heavy storm. The Yellow Emperor called upon the drought demon, Nüba (女魃), who blew away the storm clouds and cleared the battlefield. Chiyou and his army could not hold up, and all were later killed by the Yellow Emperor (Wang 2006, 11–13).

Weixin Shengjiao assumes as its mission to rectify the injustice of the historians in their treatment of Chiyou. In the *Classic of Mountains and Seas* (Shanhai Jing, 山海經), there are several stories delineating the war between Chiyou and the Yellow Emperor, Huangdi:

When Chiyou invaded Huangdi with his troops, Huangdi ordered the Ying Dragon (應龍) to attack Chiyou in the field of Jizhou (冀州). The Ying Dragon attempted to stop Chiyou by preventing his access to water, yet Chiyou asked the deities of wind and rain to rage a great rainstorm. By dispatching the heavenly lady Ba to stop rain, Huangdi was able to kill Chiyou at last. Then, from the blood being stained in the shackles and handcuffs used for tying up Chiyou, a red maple tree was born. (Yuan 1979, 441–475; Sima 2004, 1–48)

Another version reads like this:

Chiyou, with the giants, the Jiuli tribes, and evil spirits, rebelled against the Yellow Emperor at Zhuolu plains. Both sides used magical powers, but Chiyou had the advantage of forged swords and halberds. Using his powers, Chiyou covered the battlefield with thick fog. Only with the help of a south-pointing chariot using a magnetic compass, could Huangdi's [i.e. the Yellow Emperor's] troops find their way through the mist. He also used his daughter, Nüba, the Drought Demon, to harm Chiyou's troops. Later on, Chiyou suffered more defeats and was captured. Only the Ying Dragon, the winged dragon, being a brave servant of the Yellow Emperor, dared to slay him. Chiyou's chains were transformed into oaks, while the Ying Dragon was cursed to remain on Earth forever. And later, Chiyou was worshipped as a war god and an inventor of metal weapons as a nemesis of Huangdi. (Yuan 1979, 441–475)

Yet, in the *Biographic Sketches of Five Emperors*, a part of the *Shiji* (Chronicles), the record is as follows:

When the world became agitated by Shennong's declining influence, Huangdi went on to conquer the feudal lords all across the country. Yet, since Chiyou was strong and powerful, Huangdi could not conquer him. Having re-organized his coalition, Huangdi subjugated the Yan Emperor in the battle of Banquan. Yet, when Chiyou promoted a rebellion without submitting to this threat, Huangdi assembled the military and feudal lords, and killed Chiyou in the battle of Zhuolu, and then acceded to the imperial throne replacing Shennong. (Lin 2009, 39–67)

In Chinese mythology, Chiyou is a villain and a tyrant who defeated the Yan Emperor, but was in turn defeated by the Yellow Emperor in the epic battle of Zhuolu, traditionally thought to have occurred around the 26th century BCE. Chiyou, however, is worshipped by Weixin Shengjiao together with the other two great ancestors (Introvigne 2016). This seeming anomaly has been explained by Taiwanese scholar, Fiona Chang, who suggests that Chiyou is believed to be the ancestor of Chinese ethnic minorities (Chang 2016, 8). Through his worship, these minorities are also incorporated into the movement's grand project of reconciliation.

Tracing the origin of grievances back to the tragic affair of Chiyou, Weixin Shengjiao's Grand Master Hun Yuan proposes to rehabilitate this ancestor, while redressing the historical injustices and wrongs done to him. According to Lee Fong-Mao, in October 2015, Grand Master Hun Yuan carried out his plan to rehabilitate Ancestor Chiyou in line with the other two ancestors, and completed Zhuolu's Three Ancestors Culture Park in Hebei, China. He also built there a Three Ancestors Culture Museum, as well as the Altar of Joining the Talismans and the Three Ancestors Culture Museum. The Three Ancestor's Halls, including the Yellow Emperor Palace, the Yan Emperor Temple, and the Chiyou Shrine, were constructed thanks to Grand Master Hun Yuan's mobilization of Weixin Shengjiao's resources (Lee 2013, 22).

In 2006, Grand Master Hun Yuan founded the Wei Xin College of Buddhist Chants to train ritual specialists capable of leading dharma services. He stated that one of his main motivations for establishing this institution was "looking after the realms of both life and death." Weixin Shengjiao's rituals honor the ancestors, starting with the Three Great Ancestors and Guiguzi, who are also enshrined in temples in Taiwan and China (Introvigne 2016). According to Hsieh, ancestor worship can be taken as evidence of the group's "authentic participation in time-honored traditions" (Hsieh 2015, 33).

Through the rehabilitation of Chiyou, Grand Master Hun Yuan advocates the concept of “resolving grievances,” while attempting to appease the collective grievances of national ancestors. In fact, the principle of “resolving grievances and making life harmonious” is one of the major religious tenets of his religious movement. Grand Master Hun Yuan received several messages about rectifying injustices in the Chinese ancestral heritage from Guiguzi. According to Hsieh, Guiguzi was recorded in the *Records of the Grand Historian* as the teacher of the late Warring States political lobbyists Su Qin (蘇奏) and Zhang Yi (張儀), both famous strategists active around 400 BCE (Hsieh 2015, 28). Guiguzi was deified in China well before Weixin Shengjiao, and is regarded in the movement as an incarnation of the Immortal Master Wang Chan Lao Zu. Speaking through Grand Master Hun Yuan, Guiguzi advised:

The maleficent deeds of the past bears [sic] bad fruits of today, reincarnations not swayed in its path. The ancestors of the dead are deceased, now on monuments we worship. (Hun Yuan 2016, 168)

And he went on to instruct:

To solve conflicts, one should search its [sic] roots, and find a point of balance of the spiritual life from the Three Ancestors of Chinese. Look for the past, the present and the future. This is the Bai He Principle. (Hun Yuan 2016, 168)

On November 15, 2016, Grand Master Hun Yuan reaffirmed Guiguzi’s teaching as follows:

The Three Ancestors of Chinese were of one root, worship ceremonies are the start of the melting pot of Chinese cultures. If we look objectively at history, there are many tests in history, but if we let go of the stubbornness in history and the bipolar criticisms and set poles again, then society will be more harmonious. (Hun Yuan 2016, 168)

In 2004, to practice the idea of “resolving grievances and making life harmonious,” Grand Master Hun Yuan started to hold the 21st Century Chinese Joint Ancestor Worship Ceremonies, by gathering 36,000 “representatives of the three Chinese ancestors” every year. Weixin Shengjiao claims that the ceremony resolves the grievances between Chiyou and the other ancestors. It also commemorates the ancestors of 15,615 Chinese families (via their family names), those who died in 3,762 wars, 917 emperors, Xu Fu and his descendant, the 124th emperor of Japan, the 195 members of the imperial family in Korea, and the innocent dead in 816 wars and battles (Hun Yuan 2016, 169).

Further, by tracing the origin of the dharma to the Three Emperors, Grand Master Hun Yuan insists that the practice of resolving grievances through ancestor worship is a starting point for world peace and harmony, the beginning of Chinese consolidation and respect.

It is the time for Chinese people to establish a Pure Land together. (...) Chinese have the same root, so worshiping ancestors is the beginning of Chinese culture. Chinese people have to observe history and put aside polemic criticism. Then society will be more peaceful. (Hun Yuan 2016, 68)

Likewise, Grand Master Hun Yuan regards the ancestor worship ceremony as the starting point of world peace and harmony. He claims that the ceremony contributes to harmonizing disputes, and would eventually lead to the establishment of the Pure Land.

Why, however, is ancestor worship so important for Weixin Shengjiao, and how can this practice lead people to the Pure Land? On what grounds or principles can ancestor worship contribute to world peace? Grand Master Hun Yuan's first answer to this difficult question seems to be that his movement is not merely a creation of humans. It was established by Heaven and Earth, and its tenets were revealed by divine sages, particularly Wang Chan Lao Zu (Guiguzi).

Second, Grand Master Hun Yuan offers a genealogical tree of his doctrine, from the mythical Chinese ancestor Fuxi Shi, who reputedly taught the natural principles both of the Eight Trigrams (Bagua, 八卦) of the Earlier Heaven and of *Wuji* (無極), which is identified with emptiness. *Wuji* is a Daoist notion, and the word can be roughly translated as “nothingness.” When Buddhism was initially introduced to China, many Chinese confused the meaning of emptiness in Buddhism with the Daoist concept of nothingness or *Wuji*, although the two notions are not the same. Weixin Shengjiao appears to be aware of this criticism by scholars of Buddhism, yet it still equates (Buddhist) emptiness and *Wuji*, as it aspires to offer a synthesis of Buddhism, Daoism, and Chinese folk religion.

In Weixin Shengjiao's genealogy, the teachings of the Eight Trigrams passed from Fuxi Shi to the incarnated goddess Jiutian Xuannu (九天玄女), within the framework of the second Daoist state of manifestation, or *Taiji* (太極). Subsequently, the teachings about the Trigrams were passed to the three Chinese ancestors. Grand Master Hun Yuan teaches that “Inheriting from Fuxi civilization, Huangdi and Yandi developed Lian Shan Gui Zang, and Chiyou created the Nine Squares and Eight Trigrams of Later Heaven” (Hun Yuan 2016, 36).

Fuxi Shi, the mythical first emperor of China, is also considered the father of the Hsien Tien (Former World) arrangement of trigrams. After that, three editions of the *I Ching* (易經; Book of Changes), known respectively as *Lian Shan Yi*, *Gui Cang Yi*, and *Zhou Yi* were established. Some scholars believe that the *Lian Shan Yi* (連山易, The Changing Principle of Continuous Mountains) was written to record the 64 hexagrams (六十四卦), according to traditional chronology at the time of Emperor Yu (禹, 2194–2149 BCE). It starts with the hexagram Gen (艮), which means “mountain.” Supposedly, the *Gui Cang Yi* (歸藏易, The Changing Principle of Return and Storage), as a new version of the *I Ching*, was written at the time of the Shang dynasty (1600–1046 BCE), with the hexagram Kun (坤), which symbolizes Earth, as its starting point. Archeology has proved that, before the formation of the third version, the *Zhou Yi* (周易), which was written at the time of the Zhou dynasty (1046–256 BCE), several hexagrams made of series of numbers were already widely used, and dated back to the period of the Shang dynasty. In Weixin Shengjiao, Guiguzi is said to be the sage who uphold these teachings, and finally passed his knowledge to Master Hun Yuan through revelation.

In this regard, Weixin Shengjiao claims that the transmission process of the heavenly teachings offers the holy ground for establishing the correct ancestral heritage, resolving the grievances of ancestors, and as a consequence, making the world harmonious.

A Comparison between Daesoon Jinrihoe's "Resolution of Grievances for Mutual Beneficence" and Weixin Shengjiao's "Resolving Grievances to Make Life Harmonious"

A. Similarities in the Religious Ideas of Daesoon Jinrihoe and Weixin Shengjiao

We have examined so far, the main contents and connotations of “resolving grievances” in the two religious doctrines. As we have seen, Daesoon Jinrihoe and Weixin Shengjiao have several points in common. Both cherish the spiritual heritage of the great sages and ancestors, while emphasizing the resolution of grievances for mutual beneficence or harmonious life. Grand Master Hun Yuan’s concept of *Weixin* (唯心, mind) also presents similarities with Daesoon Thought.

Kang Jeung-san stated: “I only see the mind (of people)” (*Kyobeop* 2,10). In many occasions, he emphasized the importance of “mind itself” (心), “one-mind” (一心), or the “soul in the mind” (心靈). Jo Jeong-san, regarded by Daesoon Jinrihoe as Kang’s successor in the religious orthodoxy, issued a “Declaration of Propagation of the Dao” (布諭文), proposing a way to seek the “soul in the mind,” while maintaining a strict union with the Supreme God (Sangje) incarnated in Kang Jeung-san.

In Daesoon Thought, the sacred religious realm is accessed by restoring and preserving the “soul (spirit) in the mind” as the heavenly endowed nature of humans. It is also called “the innate pure mind as the sacred place of spirits” (心靈神臺). The quest is reflected in the architectures and structure of the Yeongdae, sacred spaces within temple complexes built under the instructions of Park Wudang (1917–1995 according to the lunar calendar normally used in the movement, or 1918–1996 according to the solar calendar), regarded by Daesoon Jinrihoe as Jo Jeong-san’s successor. The hierophany making the “innate pure mind as the sacred place of spirits” shares several affinities with the concept of Weixin (唯心), which gives its name to Weixin Shengjiao, “the Sacred Teachings of Mind Only” (唯心聖教會).

It should perhaps be added that the English translation of 唯心聖教會 is not without problems. Weixin Shengjiao teaches that “the mind is the Buddha,” “the mind is the only method,” or “the mind, the origin of *I Ching*, is the only way to achieve Nirvana” (Hun Yuan 2016, 42). Thereby, “Weixin’s method is that mind is everything” (Hun Yuan 2016, 24). However, “the notion of ‘mind,’ on the other hand, is not constructed according to Western or rationalist models, and includes what is commonly called the heart” (Introvigne 2016).

We find other similarities between the two movements in the idea of Buddha-nature, *Tathāgata-garbha*, *Tathatā*, or the true self, as described in various sections of medieval Chinese Mahayana Buddhism, which emphasized scriptures like the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, the *Awakening of Faith*, the *Nirvāna sūtra*, and “On the Attainment of Buddhahood” (*Shenming-chengfoyi*, 神明成佛義) by Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty (Liangwudi, 梁武帝: see Ito 1986, 217–249), as well as the Linji school (臨濟宗) of the Zen (Chan) tradition.

The culture of venerating scriptures in Weixin Shengjiao reminds us of the tradition of cherishing the scriptures and stupas enshrining sacred relics in the

Mahāsāṃghika school of Buddhism, or Emperor Wu’s high respect for holy texts. According to Fiona Chang (2016):

After the Weixin’s Dao Zang [the collection of Grand Master Hun Yuan’s teachings] 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 established its sacredness. (Chang 2016, 7)

In Grand Master Hun Yuan’s teaching on “resolving grievances,” there is also a strong emphasis on the heritage of ancestors, which is quite similar to that of Daesoon Jinrihoe, although how this is presented is also somewhat different:

If the spirits of the ancestors are not at peace, then the minds of men will not be at peace and all under heaven will inevitably be in great disorder. Grievance after grievance, when will they cease? One generation takes vengeance on another generation, and one age takes vengeance on another age. It is in this way that the Chinese nationality has had 3,762 wars, big and small. (Lee 2013, 27)

This can be compared with the following passages from the *Jeongyeong* of Daesoon Jinrihoe:

Fighting among people triggers a feud among ancestors, and after the fight is over in heaven, the corresponding fight in the human world is decided. (*Kyobeop* 1:54)

The reason why the Three Realms have not been newly created is due to the fact that, in the Former World, the principle of mutual conflict dominated human affairs, making the three Realms of Heaven, Earth, and Humanity unable to interact with one another, while producing miserable disasters. (*Yesi* 8)

Hence, descending to the human world, Sangje reordered [everything] in accordance with his cosmic plan for Heaven and Earth. After setting them in an unshakable way, by resolving the grudges that had piled up over the ages through his harmonious reordering and the opening of the Later World, with the establishment of the Dao of mutual beneficence, he harmoniously reorganized human affairs, so that all people revered him as God. (*Yesi* 9)

According to Daesoon Jinrihoe, the main principle of Sangje’s Reordering of the Universe lied in reshaping the cosmic plan for Heaven and Earth in its public and collective sphere, while resolving the grievances of deities through the Heavenly Way of Mutual Beneficence (解冤相生), so that the resolution of each

individual grievance could naturally be achieved. And through his promulgation of the advent of the new world, which included the essentials of the Three Teachings, Kang prepared a way where everyone could participate in the Earthly Paradise.

Weixin Shengjiao presents a similar view of creating universal harmony through resolving the grievances (解冤和生) of ancestors at the collective level, as well as untying knots of enmity (解冤釋結) and the quarrels within aggrieved households at the individual level. The movement uses the categories of the Visible and Hidden, drawn from the Buddhist and Daoist scriptures, in its interpretation of the sacred texts (Lee 2013, 29–36).

In addition, as Fiona Chang (2016, 16–17) has persuasively argued, both systems of thoughts are based on the tradition of the Three Teachings (Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism) and the philosophical thought of the “Way of Change” as taught in the book *I Ching*. The central principle of Weixin Shengjiao is to practice the Eight Saints’ Paths (八聖道) and reach a state of unity between humanity and nature, by studying natural phenomena as interpreted through the *I Ching* and its trigrams. The central tenets of Daesoon Truth include “the Virtuous Concordance of Yin and Yang” and “the Harmonious Union between Divine Beings and Human beings,” while heading towards “Perfected Unification with Dao” (道通真境), in connection with the principle of *Zheng Yi* (“The Way of Ultimate Change,” 正易), which is a transformed version of the “Way of Change.”

In Daesoon Jinrihoe’s sacred book, the *Jeongyeong*, Sangje gives a speech regarding world affairs to his core disciples, using concepts that appear in the tradition of the “Way of Change”:

Lyu Chanmyeong [1866–1931] has received Sangje’s instruction that ‘the Perfect Enlightenment with Dao’ shall hinge on Geon (乾, Qian), Gam (坎, Kan), Gan (艮, Gen), Jin (震, Zhen), Sōn (巽, Xun), Yi (離, Li), Gon (坤, Kun), Tae (兌, Dui). Receiving Sangje’s instruction, he read Geon (乾, Qian), Gam (坎, Kan), Gan (艮, Gen), Jin (震, Zhen), Sōn (巽, Xun), Yi (離, Li), Gon (坤, Kun), Tae (兌, Dui) aloud, then left Sangje’s presence. (*Kyowun* 1:47)

When disciples such as Choi Dukgyeom [?–1951], and Cha Gyungsuk [1880–1936] were with Sangje, Choi Dukgyeom asked the following question to Sangje: “How could world affairs be developed?” To this, Sangje answered: “It will be done like this,” and wrote the characters Ja (子, Zi), Chuk (丑, Chou), Yin (寅, Yin), Myo (卯, Mao), Jin (辰, Chen), Sa (巳, Si), Ō (午, Wu), Mi (未, Wei), Xin (申, Shen), Yu (酉, You), Xul (戌, Xu), Hae (亥, Hai).

Kim Jahyun (1874-1927) jibed at interpreting it. Thereupon, after writing the characters Gap (甲, Jia), Eul (乙, Yi), Byung (丙, Bing), Jung (丁, Ding), Mu (戊, Wu), Gi (己, Ji), Gyung (庚, Geng), Xin (辛, Xin), Yim (壬, Ren), Gye (癸, Gui) while pointing toward Cha Gyungsuk, Sangje explained to the disciples that “these two lines are like a loom for weaving hemp cloth and a comb used for brushing one’s hair.” (*Kyowun* 1:48)

Admittedly, not many would understand the hidden meaning behind such a multifaceted outline of the divine cosmic plan for Heaven and Earth (度數), possibly symbolizing their reordering by Sangje. What is clear, however, is that Kang was using here several principles from the *I Ching* and *Zheng Yi*, which became crucial tools in his Reordering of the Universe under the name of “Divine Dao.” In fact, the Divine Dao constituted the cornerstone of his Reordering Works.

In general, this notion is similar to the central concept of Weixin Shengjiao, which attempts to take a middle or neutral way between Yin and Yang in order to practice humanitarianism by means of the Divine Way (Hun Yuan 2016, 26). In Daesoon theology, however, the expression “Divine Dao,” or “Way of Great Deities” (神道), indicates the Heavenly Dao as run by the Great Deities of Heaven and Earth. In Weixin teachings, it mainly denotes the spiritual way revealed by Wang Chan Lao Zu (Guiguzi) to Grand Master Hun Yuan, and sometimes incorporates the way of the great ancestors and spirits in the spiritual world. This confirms that, together with similarities, there are also quite a few differences worth examining between the two systems.

B. Some Differences in Social Ethics

The religious ideals of both religions are also translated into social activities, but in a different way. Daesoon Jinrihoe promotes several major endeavors in the fields of charity and aid, social welfare, and education. Weixin Shengjiao focuses more on social activities that promote public welfare by providing useful information on *I Ching* and Feng Shui. Indeed, research has demonstrated a positive correlation between education in *I Ching* and Feng Shui and tangible benefits, such as increases in happiness and quality of life (Chen, Li and Lin 2015a; Chen, Li and Lin 2015b; Chen, Li, Lin and Lin 2015). Weixin Shengjiao also promotes the public chanting of mantras, to avert public calamities or alleviate their effects. For instance, during the 921 earthquake in Taiwan (1999),

the movement established the *I Ching* and Feng Shui Interest Circle and mobilized its general service group, both of which helped in the recovery (Introvigne 2016; Huang 2016, 40).

Daesoon Jinrihoe places an emphasis on “cultivation” and on a spiritual program called *Gongbu*, a specifically timed devotional incantation ritual held at the Yeosu Headquarters Temple Complex every day, believed to be a form of participation in the reformulation of time and space for the Later World. During the ritual, thirty-six devotees take turns chanting their mantras in special *Gongbu* rooms. Weixin Shengjiao promotes various activities and the chanting of mantras to prevent earthquakes and diseases, while praying for a spiritual renewal that would protect the whole of humanity.

What sets Weixin Shengjiao apart most from the majority of East Asian new religions is that it does not propose the concept of an ultimate deity, such as God, Maitreya or Sangje, as the ground for “resolving grievances.” Instead, it venerates the Bodhisattva Wang Chan Lao Zu as the deified equivalent of the ancient saint Guiguzi, who, as revealed by Grand Master Hun Yuan, endeavored to resolve the grievances of Chiyou and initiate his rehabilitation.

The Korean *Hongik Yingan* (弘益人間) is a doctrine of God descending from Heaven, and of the construction of the City of God or the Later World on Earth in accordance with ultimate criteria. Weixin Shengjiao’s approach is more “down-to-earth” in its character. Grand Master Hun Yuan is the patriarchal head of the religion and reveals the teachings of Bodhisattva Wang Chan Lao Zu. This may indeed be one of the points of attraction for the lay followers, who are able to communicate with the patriarchal head in an easier way than in other new religions.

Practical and utilitarian features can also be detected in Weixin Shengjiao’s emphasis on the divination side of *I Ching* and not only on its philosophical content. According to Hsieh, Weixin Shengjiao and folk religion share a similar cosmology. The movement is able to attract followers of folk religion and grow rapidly, thanks to the fact that it is much more organized and systematic than “diffuse” popular religion (Hsieh 2015, 28).

As for the respective theories of “resolving grievances,” the main difference between Daesoon Jinrihoe and Weixin Shengjiao concerns the basis of the respective concepts: reciprocal, as opposed to unidirectional logic. In Daesoon

Thought, the relationship between “resolution of grievances” and “mutual beneficence” is reciprocal and complementary, although the former functions as the presupposition for achieving the latter. Yet, in Weixin Shengjiao, it is more certain that the concept of “resolving grievances is the cause, and making life harmonious is the result” (Lee 2013, 24) operates within a scheme of unidirectional logic.

The “resolution of grievances,” strictly speaking, can be a one-directional or uni-directional concept, presupposing sacrifice either of others or oneself, through benevolence, love, or mercy. However, the resolution of grievances turns into a reciprocal concept when it is connected to mutual beneficence. In this case, it works as a buffer zone, not flowing towards a selfish, self-satisfying, or negative direction. The ethical features of mutual giving (“one has to perform certain speech and action when it is beneficial both to oneself and others”: Daesoon Institute of Religion and Culture 2014, 19–21) suggest a form of teleological-consequentialist ethics.

C. Differences in the Approach to the Three Teachings

The most important differences between the two movements concern their respective approach to the Three Teachings, and the role of Buddhism and Daoism. The Divine Way of Weixin Shengjiao incorporates the Three Teachings and the thoughts of the Hundred Schools, proposing their creative *ronghe* (fusion, 熔合). In Daesoon Jinrihoe, the essentials of the Three Teachings are also said to be integrated into the Dao. There is, however, a different nuance in the contents of Daesoon scripture, taught by Kang Jeungsan within the context of his Reordering Works of the Universe:

The essence of Buddhism is form, the essence of Daoism is creation, and the essence of Confucianism is propriety (佛之形體, 仙之造化, 儒之凡節). (*Gongsa* 3:39)

Being in command of the ‘Deities who are perfectly enlightened with Dao’ (道通), and the ‘Deities of Civilization’ (文明神), Sangje unified the essence of the manifold cultures and rigorously arranged the cosmic plan for Heaven and Earth (度數). (*Yesi* 12)

Several new religions of Korea synthesize and harmonize the three religious traditions following the ancient ideas of *Hongik-yingan* (弘益人間), or the presentation by Confucian intellectual Choi Chiwon (857–?) of “the mysterious

Dao (玄妙之道) incorporating the three teachings” (Yilyeon 1993, 34–37; Kim 1988, 77–82; Jo 1984, 65–82).

Weixin Shengjiao seems to show more inclination toward the Zen (Chan) or the Pure Land traditions of Buddhism, centered around prayers to Amitabha Buddha rather than around belief in a Supreme Entity or God. The mantras in both Weixin Shengjiao and Daesoon Jinrihoe incorporate the common elements of Daoism, Buddhism, and folk religion. The incantations in Daesoon Jinrihoe, however, include more elements derived from the Korean version of Daoism, while Weixin Shengjiao’s mantras are rooted in Buddhism. According to Fiona Chang:

Buddhist sutras 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. (Chang 2016, 6)

Weixin Shengjiao also uses Daoist sutras, but “aside from *Wang Chan Lao Chu Mantra Sutra*, these folk sutras are rarely recited and applied in Weixin Shengjiao, and are used for religious missions for certain stages, not constantly recited as Buddhist sutras” (Chang 2016, 6).

Different features can also be found in how mantras are chanted in the two religions. Weixin Shengjiao maintains its Buddhist features through performing repetitive recitation of the Buddha’s name, especially of the Amitabha Buddha in the Pure Land sects:

The merit of praising the Buddha’s name is viewed in the same way as making prostrations in veneration of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas, both of which are regarded as the only proper courses to ‘resolve grievances and transform the *kalpas* of accumulated karma’ (解冤化劫). (Lee 2013, 32)

In general, Daesoon Jinrihoe seems to show more Daoist tendencies, as we can see from the names of deities used in their incantations, including the main one called the *Taeul Mantra* (太乙呪). The principles of causes and effects, or karma, also constitute one of the bases of Daesoon Jinrihoe’s discourse, and the Buddha is enshrined alongside Gucheon Sangje (the God of the Ninth Heaven, 九天上帝,

identified with Kang Jeungsan) and the Jade Emperor (玉皇上帝, identified with Jo Jeongsan) in the major shrine of the movement called Yeongdae (靈臺). However, there are comparatively more Confucian and Daoist elements in Daesoon Jinrihoe's creeds, teachings, and ritual practices.

In Weixin Shengjiao, there is a multitude of Daoist elements both in its references to various deities and in the content of its incantations and scriptures. However, Buddhist inclinations seem to be more conspicuous. A case in point is Grand Master Hun Yuan's explanation of the doctrine of "creditor of enemies and intimates" (*yuanjia zhaizhu*, 冤家債主). According to Lee Fong-Mao, during the Three Kingdoms period, when the Buddhist monk Zhi Qian (支謙, 2nd–3rd century) translated the *Weisheng Yuan Jing* (未生怨經, Ajatasatru Sutra), he had already used the term "past evils" (*suyuan*, 宿殃), or "grievances of the unborn" (*weisheng yuan*, 未生怨). However, to express enmity and grievances, the expression *yuanjia zhaizhu* came to be used, as it was most adapted to the Chinese mentality.

From the Eastern Han to the Cao Wei periods, this term was largely used and appeared in several translations of holy scriptures. It was generally referred to the misfortunes of human life. In the Tang dynasty, and in later Buddhist scriptures and apocrypha, *yuanjia zhaizhu* was used to designate one of ten kinds of orphaned souls, in works that prescribed rites for chanting sutras and feeding hungry ghosts, such as in the translation by Amoghavajra (705–774) of the *Yujia Jiyao Yankou Shishi Yi* (瑜伽輯要焰口施食儀) and the apocryphal text *Fo Dingxin Tuoluoni Jing* (佛頂心陀羅尼經). Both were widely circulated. Esoteric Buddhism used the expression *jeshi yuanqin zhaizhu* (解釋冤親債主), with a reference to the "creditor of enemies and intimates" in Daoist scriptures. In the Daoist texts of the Wei and Jin dynasties, known as *Upper Clarity* (Shangqing, 上清), and of the Tang and Song dynasties, *yuanjia zhaizhu* was often used to designate wronged souls, within the larger context of the Daoist theology of spirits and souls (Lee 2013, 31). Grand Master Hun Yuan's explanation of *yuanjia zhaizhu*, however, seems more rooted in the Buddhist tradition of using the term.

A second example is Grand Master Hun Yuan's emphasis on chanting mantras. According to Hsieh, Weixin Shengjiao appropriates, and critically uses, pan-Indian concepts such as karma and reincarnation (Hsieh 2016, 28). Fiona Chang emphasizes that there are also sutras (*Sūtras*) that were revealed by Weixin

Shengjiao's man deity, Wang Chan Lao Zu (i.e. the divinized Guiguzi), collected in the religion's own *Apocalypse Sutra* (天啟經典):

In the 30 Weixin scriptures of Weixin Shengjiao, there are six Buddhist classics, two Confucian classics, and seven classics from folk beliefs; there are also 16 Apocalypse Sutras 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, Weixin Shengjiao 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 Weixin Shengjiao 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. (Chang 2016, 6)

The respect for *Heart Sutra* reminds us of the strong tradition of revering "The Heart of the Perfection of Wisdom sutra" (*Prajñāpāramita-hṛdayam Sūtra*) in Chinese as well as in Tibetan Buddhism, although the contents differ. The same appellation of Hun Yuan as Grand Master (Chanshi, 禪師) is reminiscent of Buddhist schools as well.

About the merit of chanting mantras, Grand Master Hun Yuan offers the following explanation:

The merits of our chanting the Buddha's name can also be given to the many fields of principle. Over the past 5,000 years, our Chinese people have experienced 3,762 wars and battles, all the innocent lives killed and our 15,615 families' name and the 816 world battles and the innocent lives killed will depend on the Buddha's powers to head towards heaven, or the pure land of Western Paradise. This is a common wish and also heaven's will. (Hun Yuan 2016, 169)

The emphasis on the "pure land of Western Paradise" comes from Pure Land Buddhism. Also an important usage of Tibetan Buddhist terminology can be found in connection with esoteric Buddhism, which inspires the movement's insistence on the incessant rolling of the Dharma Wheel (*dharmachakra*, 法輪) while contributing to world peace. Grand Master Hun Yuan's instructions clearly include these references:

In the thirtieth-year of the Dharma Wheel of Peace under Heaven, the Venerable Celestial Dharma Ancestor, for the sake of the state cultivates the Way, for the sake of the people prays for blessing, and holds the third Nine-nine Religious Assembly [i.e. an assembly for a great exposition of the Scriptures, organized every ten years.] (Lee 2013, 25; see Hun Yuan 2013, 3)

This is our Nine-nine Religious Assembly, given to all of us by Venerable Patriarch Wang Chan. Together we can ensure now to resolve grievances and untie knots. But, if we want to resolve grievances and untie knots, we must chant scripture ourselves, in accordance with what was taught by Venerable Patriarch Wang Chan: ‘Read eight sections of scripture ten times each’ (誦八部經, 各十遍). (Lee 2013, 26; see Hun Yuan 2013, 54)

Grand Master Hun Yuan’s usage of the *dharmachakra* is connected to his idea of world peace and resolving grievances. According to his teachings, “the dharma ship loads doctrine. The dharmachakra is incessantly rolling. Weixin’s 48 great wishes have benefited the country and people” (Hun Yuan 2016, 7). Likewise, here we can find some affinities with the Tibetan Buddhist’s use of the notion of *dharmachakra*. Both demarcate different stages or periods, based on their interpretations of scriptures and on their respective theories of emptiness and mercy. Grand Master Hun Yuan’s ideas also share some affinity with the classic *dharmachakra* (法輪) theories of Zhu Daosheng (竺道生: ?–434), Jizang (吉藏: 549–623), Paramārtha (真諦: 499–569), and others. The original meaning of *dharmachakra* is “to cleanse the anguish of the sentient beings through Buddha’s teaching.”

Yet, here Grand Master Hun Yuan’s use of the expression “resolving grievances and loosening knots,” as Lee Fong-Mao states, “emphasizes the merit and virtue of the veneration and recitation of the True Scriptures, while placing the retribution for people’s grievances in the category of karma, the cause and effect of the accumulation of kalpas from the antiquity to the future” (Lee 2013, 26).

According to Lee Fong-Mao:

When Weixin Shengjiao uses the Buddhist method of providing deliverance for the souls, the names of the providers of aid appear on the Pure Land Altar, set side by side on spirit tablets of different colors. In the ceremony for the placing of food in the mouths of hungry ghosts, they call out all their names and places of residence one by one, so that each lonely soul can be helped. And this generally corresponds to the salvation ritual for private individuals and households. (Lee 2013, 39)

By contrast, in the Devotional Offerings (*Chiseong*) of Daesoon Jinrihoe, which are mostly held in Yeosu Headquarters temple complex every month, the object of worship is not an individual spirit who has a grudge or grievance, nor are the names of the ghosts or the spirits called out. Rather, the *Chiseong* is a ritual ceremony showing sincere gratitude for the grace of Sangje and other Great Deities, including the main ancestors. However, in the Devotional Offering for an

initiation, the name of the new initiate is called out. *Nok-myeong Ji* (a paper which symbolizes the improvement of initiate's lifespan and blessing in this life) is then burned by the initiate as a representative of his or her household.

According to the doctrine of Daesoon Jinrihoe, the "Reordering Works of the Resolution of Grievances," for both ancestors and living individual human beings, has already been performed as a result of Sangje's Reordering of the Universe, along with other forms of Reordering of the "Resolution of Grievances" at the collective level. Daesoon Thought indicates that, when a new devotee joins Daesoon Jinrohe to follow the law of Dao, his or her grievances can naturally be resolved through personal cultivation. Thus, a separate special ritual for resolving the grievances of each individual is not necessary. The characteristics of Devotional Offerings in Daesoon Jinrihoe are more akin to Confucian ritual in appearance, while the content of the incantations is more Daoist than Buddhist.

In Weixin Shengjiao, Grand Master Hun Yuan involves various subjects in the process of resolving grievances through salvation rituals (超度法儀). They include spirits in the three realms, family and ancestral spirits, national grievances, orphaned souls, and even the "aggrieved spirits of insects killed by pesticides" (Lee 2013, 29). By incorporating in its teachings doctrines about "resolving grievances to release the knots," which are frequently used in Buddhism, Grand Master Hun Yuan uses the Buddhist text called *Cibei Xiu-Chanfa* (慈悲修懺法, original name 慈悲三昧修懺), in which the fifth of seven kinds of repentance corresponds to a "heart of equanimity extended to both friends and foes (冤親平等心)" (Lee 2013, 32).

The *Cibei-Xiu Chanfa* is similar to the *Cibei Daochang Chanfa* (慈悲道場懺法: "The Repentance Rite for the Altar of Compassion") and the *Liang Huang Bao Chan* (梁皇寶懺: "The Repentance of the Liang Emperor") attributed to Emperor Liang Wudi (梁武帝, 502–549). It can also be connected to the *Cibei Sanmei Shui Chanfa* (慈悲水懺法: "The Repentance of the Waters of Samadhi of Compassion"), which was propagated by the late Tang monk, Zhixuan (知玄, 811–833) (Bai 2009, 69–129; Lagerwey and Marsone 2015, 409–410). In fact, when Grand Master Hun Yuan uses the concept of "creditor of enemies and intimates," he also mentions that "reciting the water repentance" (*shui chan*: 水懺) would liberate all sentient beings.

By contrast, in Daesoon Jinrihoe, the only way of resolving grievances is through Sangje in the Ninth Heaven. Yet, the resolution of grievances can only be fully completed by reaching the stage of Perfected Unification with Dao, through self-cultivation based on the principle of “guarding against self-deception” (無自欺).

These differences in the use of the Three Teachings, and interpretation of the concept of “resolving grievances,” should of course be assessed against the similarities between Daesoon Jinrihoe and Weixin Shengjiao, both in their use of religious traditions and grand designs for the future.

Conclusion: Resolution of Grievances and Cultivation of Mind

The previous sections have catalogued the major similarities and differences between Daesoon Jinrihoe and Weixin Shengjiao’s doctrines or systems of thought, centering on the concept of “resolving grievances.” It has been noted that both movements share the tradition of Three Teachings. However, in Weixin Shengjiao, Buddhism and Daoism are amalgamated in a manner wherein Buddhism becomes the more dominant component, both for the resolution of grievances and for the removal and settling of misgivings or worries. In comparison, Daesoon thought seems to share more features with Daoism and Confucianism. Further, we have seen that there are differences in the object, subject, and method of resolving grievances, as well as similarities in the respective ideas of self-cultivation.

With regards to these similarities, just as Daesoon Jinrihoe places a high value on “guarding against self-deception,” Weixin Shengjiao emphasizes the state of mind of “not being ashamed” or “achieving resolution,” and stresses the importance of repentance for achieving salvation. Other key similarities can be found in the two movements’ views of mind in relation to self-cultivation. Here are some examples of Daesoon ideas, from Park Wudang’s instructions and from the *Jeongyeong*:

Since it is said that ‘Every great and small affair is examined by the deities of Heaven and Earth,’ those engaged in cultivation should bear this in mind, in order not to deceive one’s mind even in a dark room. (Daesoon Jinrihoe Religious Research and Edification Department 2016, 28)

To guard against a mistake, it has been said as follows: ‘Deceiving oneself is to desert oneself, and deceiving one’s mind is to deceive deities, and deceiving deities is to deceive

Heaven.’ Thus, we ought to think deeply about what is permissible. (Daesoon Jinrihoe Religious Research and Edification Department 2016, 42)

Mind is the center of the universe. Therefore, the body of north, south, east and west relies on mind. (*Kyowun* 1:66)

In turn, concerning the importance of mind, Grand Master Hun Yuan offers the following instructions:

Everyone’s mind is a universe. The mind is the truth. The authentic self stores great wisdom. By means of disclosing this treasure, we can have a peaceful mind and live a happy life. Only Zen Enlightenment can bring peaceful mind and happiness. (Hun Yuan 2016, 69)

Weixin Shengjiao is a religion of peaceful mind. To be a saint, sage and Buddha, you have to do those [sic] you won’t feel ashamed and have to prove the truth. (Hun Yuan 2016, 70)

This is also the main doctrine of Daesoon Truth. It is the way of attaining the “Perfected Unification with Dao” (道通真境) through self-cultivation based on “guarding against self-deception,” as well as the propagation of Sangje’s truth and his Great Itineration (*Daesoon*).

According to Daesoon Thought, “the human mind is an organ, in which divine beings reside, and which divine beings use to make things happen” (*Haengrok* 3:44). Hence, human beings come to Earth to achieve harmony with divine beings through their minds. Further, when human beings keep their mind clean and selfless, while guarding against self-deception and living in union with divine beings for the betterment of others, they can reach the stage where they understand and fulfill every secret and rule of the universe:

When we practice the principle of not deceiving ourselves as the ground of cultivation, and revere ethics and morals, we can naturally understand and unravel the whole movement of nature. (Park 1993, 316–317)

We should bear in mind the fact that, through reconciling and uniting with each other, and becoming one in mind and body, we can achieve the Perfected Enlightenment with Dao and gain the blessings of great fortune. (Daesoon Jinrihoe Religious Research and Edification Department 1989, 2)

This approach of collaborative effort between human beings, as well as between humans and deities, is also expressed by Grand Master Hun Yuan:

Self-cultivation indicates that one can examine one’s behavior and thinking in order to check if there is any deviation. It is necessary to reflect, repent, and make efforts to understand the truth and practice it in one’s daily life. To make the mind peaceful is to obtain happiness. (Hun Yuan 2016, 69)

When Buddhas and gods are helping people, they don't tie up their hearts, instead make life full of vitality. They lead us overriding our troubles and cross the 'river of life and death' (river of troubles of life and death). Therefore says: 'to pass.' True passing is passing freely another [sic], '*pass oneself and pass another*' as the principle, and principle is living. (Hun Yuan 2016, 167)

Similarly, in Daesoon Thought, with the same joint effort, human beings can share the eternal blessings of life with deities as they face the period of *Injon* (Venerable Humanity, 人尊), which is characterized by the two principles of the "resolution of grievances for the mutual beneficence of all life" and the "repaying of favors for the mutual beneficence of all life":

'The resolution of grievances for mutual beneficence means to make others prosperous and free from grudges.' This leads to the true stage of 'the Perfected Unification with Dao,' based on 'guarding against self-deception,' a practice which 'focuses on cultivating mind to be pure like a mirror.' (Park 1985, 114)

The religious order should aim at building an image of a true devotee that can be respected as a spiritual model, by practicing the basic works for achieving faithfully the salvation of the world and the redemption of humanity, and for devoting oneself to the reformation of the human spirit and the renewal of human beings, based on guarding against self-deception (...), while raising the will to resolve grievances for mutual beneficence and repay favors for mutual beneficence. (Daesoon Jinrihoe Religious Research and Edification Department 1984, 2)

Daesoon ethics tries to build a complete image of a caring human being, embodied with heavenly virtue, who has harmonized the pursuit of the ideal objectives and their tangible realization through practice. The aim for the individual lies in the unification of soul and body, and of divinity and humanity. This harmonization between humans and deities is well expressed in the four tenets of Daesoon Jinrihoe and the idea of *Injon*. Similar aspirations have been expressed since the 19th century in the West by philosophies focusing on the subjectivity of human being, including existentialism, phenomenology, critical theory, and post-structuralism.

Based on a comparable idea of self-perfection, Weixin Shengjiao also advocates the practice of religion for the salvation of the nations, in particular by praying for the country and for world peace:

Our method proposes a practice under the 'I' [i.e. *I Ching*] as the correct principle, for the nation and for all mankind. There are two aspects, the tangible and the intangible, in practicing for the nation. The intangible goes together with the tangible, and then the

tangible is rendered intangible. With a singularly focused mind, we pray for world peace. (Hun Yuan 2016, 65)

In Weixin Shengjiao, the act of resolving grievances is grounded in repentance, and as such contributes to the creation of a harmonious life. In Daesoon Jinrihoe, the “Reordering Work of the Resolution of Grievances” leads to mutual beneficence for all living beings, while promoting the harmonious union between divine beings and human beings. Moreover, true to the name it has chosen for itself, Weixin Shengjiao (唯心聖教), shows that the “mind-only,” “soul in the mind,” or the “authentic self,” is the ground for creating harmonious lives and peace through resolving grievances.

In Daesoon Jinrihoe, devoting oneself to serving Sangje through the moral principle of mutual beneficence guides people to respect others as well as themselves as high and noble. Every human being has received an “innate human nature” as an endowment from Heaven as son or daughter of Sangje. This principle creates a spirit of coexistence and mutual prosperity in human relations, in the form of serving others with respect by practicing the three cardinal virtues of sincerity, reverence, and faithfulness (Daesoon Institute of Religion and Culture 2014, 9 and 16–17; Daesoon Jinrihoe Religious Research and Edification Department 2003, 6).

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Note: Quotes from the *Jeongyeong*, Daesoon Jinrihoe’s sacred scripture, are given in the text by book, chapter, and verse (e.g. “*Gongsa* 3:39.”) I have used the 2004 Korean edition, Yeosu: Daesoonjinrihoe Publishing Department.

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