

(c) “Hak (學)” as the Formal System of Indigenous Modernity

Hak as the Formal System of Indigenous Modernity

Research Background and Problem Statement

- ◆ The crisis of Western scholarship and reflection in the philosophy of science
- ◆ **The need to examine the distinctive status of “Hak (學)” as an Eastern religion**
- ◆ **The traditional relationship between religion and Hak (學) in Eastern religions**
- ◆ **The change in the meaning of “Hak” within modernity emerges as a research problem**

“The most striking way that Donghak, as a religious thought, differs from other religions is that it expresses religion through the academic term ‘Hak (學).’”

Research Aim and Methodology

- ◆ Research aim: to elucidate the East's “Hak (學)” through the phenomenology of religion
- ◆ Methodology: a multidimensional use of three approaches—the philosophy of science, the phenomenology of religion, and the anthropology of religion
- ◆ Object of analysis: the continuity and change of the key terms and concepts of Donghak and Daesoon Thought

Applying the phenomenology-of-religion methodology

Structural approach	Principial approach	Processual approach
Paradigm theory Correlative thought and analytic thought	Rite-of-passage theory Liminality (the liminal state)	Revitalization theory Acculturation and the reinterpretation of tradition

“This paper attends to the key terms of the two thoughts and seeks to grasp, in a multidimensional way, the continuity and change in their meanings by using all three perspectives: structure, principle, and process.”

The Phenomenological Meaning of the Eastern “Hak”

- ◆ The East Asian tradition of expressing religion through the academic term “Hak (學)”
- ◆ The holistic quality in which religion is not separated from its natural-scientific background, such as astronomy and geography
- ◆ The phenomenological meaning in which “Hak” functions as a worldview
- ◆ The feature of the Eastern “Hak”: a philosophical system of thought whose intrinsic norm is “correlative thought”

“One reason religion has traditionally been expressed as ‘Hak’ in the East is that Eastern religion has a natural-scientific background in astronomy and geography... and possesses a holistic quality indistinguishable from natural science.”

Ninian Smart's Phenomenology of Religion

- ◆ **Worldview = Welterklärungssystem (system for explaining the world) + Lebensbewältigungssystem (system for coping with life's problems)**
- ◆ The seven dimensions of religion and cross-cultural phenomenology — a perspective that views religion
- ◆ systemically and phenomenologically

Ninian Smart's seven dimensions of religion

- | | |
|---|---|
| ● Ritual dimension (Ritual) Experiential dimension (Experience) | ● |
| ● Mythic dimension (Myth) Doctrinal dimension (Doctrine) | ● |
| ● Ethical dimension (Ethics) Social dimension (Social) | ● |
| ● Material dimension (Material) | |

“Cross-cultural phenomenology broadly divides the worldview, as an object of religious-studies research, into two.”

The Anthropology-of-Religion Approach

- ◆ Religion as problem-solving: the three perspectives of principle, structure, and process

Principle

Van Gennep's rite of passage and Turner's theory of Liminality

Structure

Religion as paradigm; the East's correlative thought and generative method

Process

Wallace's revitalization model; acculturation and adaptation

- ◆ The liminality (the liminal state) and ritual changes appearing from Donghak to Daesoon Thought
- ◆ Correlative thought: a mode of thinking distinctive to the East, grounded in the interconnectedness of all things
- ◆ A comparison of the generative method and the ontological method

“Correlative thought corresponds to the East's generative method of thinking, whose deductive principle generates from the top downward.”

A Comparative Analysis of Donghak and Daesoon Thought

- ◆ The continuity and change appearing in the terms and concepts of Donghak and Daesoon Thought
- ◆ Cases of applying the concept of Hak (學) in the two thoughts within the context of modernity
- ◆ Analysis: the simultaneous use of the perspectives of structure, principle, and process

Category Donghak Daesoon Thought
Meaning of Hak (學) Religion as an Eastern scholarly system Indigenous modernity grounded in correlative thought
Worldview traits An opposing structure of Eastern and Western methodology An integrated liminality stage
Core mode of thought The generative method The systematization of correlative thought

“The continuity and change of tradition appearing in Donghak and Daesoon Thought appear chiefly in shifts in the meaning of terms and concepts.”

Conclusion and Significance

- ◆ Elucidating the phenomenological value of the Eastern concept of Hak (學)
- ◆ The meaning of tradition and change running from Donghak to Daesoon Thought; the
- ◆ possibility of expanding indigenous-modernity research and suggestions for follow-up study; of East–West
- ◆ scholarship, a basic study seeking complementary methodologies

Overall conclusion

The “Hak” of Donghak Thought was not a mere knowledge system but a worldview system operating through correlative thought, functioning as the formal system of indigenous modernity; through contemporary phenomenology-of-religion research, it makes possible an integrated understanding of Eastern and Western thought.

Significance of the study

By integrating the methodologies of the phenomenology and anthropology of religion and systematically examining the Eastern concept of “Hak” of “Hak” as the possibility of a new understanding of indigenous modernity.

Suggestions for follow-up research

Interdisciplinary research to examine the Eastern concept of “Hak” of “Hak” as it appears in various East Asian religious thoughts and to explore its possibilities for contemporary application.