

IV · Daesoon: Indigenous Modernity and the Revitalization of Order — 3. Indigenous Modernity of the View of the Human Realm (人界觀) as Seongsa-jaein (成事在人)

Indigenous Modernity of the View of the Human Realm as Seongsa-jaein

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Introduction: What Is the View of the Human Realm (人界觀)?

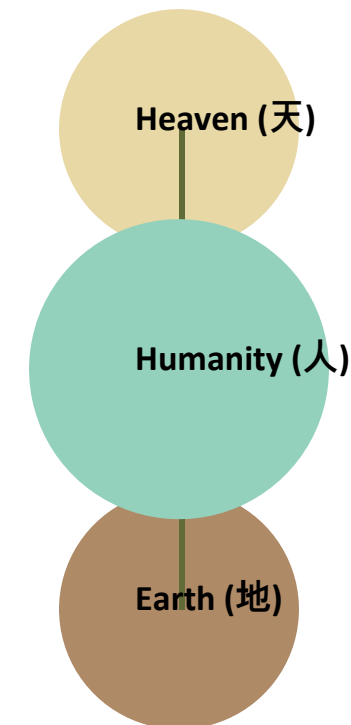
The Definition and Meaning of the View of the Human Realm

- The View of the Human Realm is Daesoon Thought's perspective on the human world, in which humanity takes on a mediating role between Heaven and Earth and the divine beings
- Seongsa-jaein (成事在人): the core idea that the success of all affairs rests with humans
- Through the Advent in Human Form of Gucheon Sangje, the cosmic order is reorganized and the status of humanity is elevated
- A paradigm shift from the traditional order of honoring Heaven and debasing Earth and belittling humanity (天尊地卑人輕) to the era of Human Dignity (人尊)

Problem Awareness

- A new cosmological order brought about by the shift in the relationships among humanity, the divine beings, and Heaven and Earth
- How is a human-centered worldview differentiated from Eastern tradition and Western modernity?

The Three-Dimensional Structure of the View of the Human Realm



Excerpt from the Daesoon Jinrihoe Yoram:

"By the three great essentials of Sinin-johwa (神人調化), Haewon-sangsaeng (解冤相生), and Dotong-jingyeong (道通真境), [He] governs all under Heaven (治天下)."

The Advent in Human Form of Gucheon (九天) and the Shift in Relationships

What Is the Advent in Human Form of Gucheon?

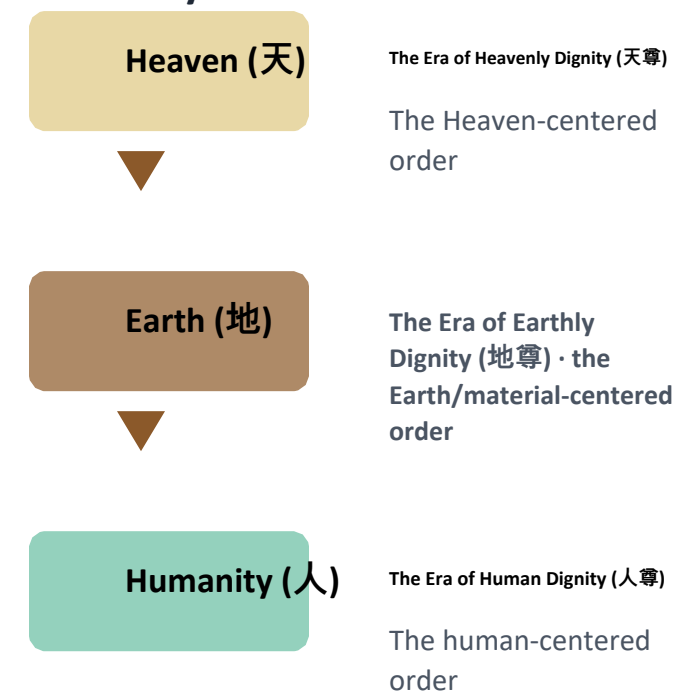
- The Sangje of Gucheon (九天) descends (Advent) in a human body (in human form) and carries out Cheonji-gongsa
- "The great work of Gucheon Sangje, in which Gucheon Daewon Johwa Jushin descends into the human world and saves the Samgye (Heaven·Earth·Humanity)"

- Communication between the human realm and the heavenly realm: divine authority intervenes directly in the human world

The shift in the relationships among the divine beings, humanity, and Heaven and Earth

- The shift of power from the traditional structure of honoring Heaven and debasing Earth and belittling humanity (天尊地卑人輕) toward the human-centered
- "Heaven and Earth are the sun and moon, and the sun and moon are the one Yin and one Yang. When Yin and Yang unite in virtue, the Way of the transformation and birth of all things comes to be."
- Samgye-gaebyeok: the formation of a new order through the structural transformation of the heavenly, earthly, and human realms
- The change in the status of the divine beings (神明) — the Sangje bestows power upon humanity

The Schematic of the Shift of Authority



Excerpt from the Jeon-gyeong (典經):

"Human Dignity (人尊) is greater than Heavenly Dignity and Earthly Dignity; now is the era of Human Dignity. Diligently exert your mind."

The Seongsa-jaein (成事在人) Thought: The Shift of Authority · The Era of Human Dignity

The Emergence of a Human-Centered Worldview

- ◆ Seongsa-jaein: "Now even the divine can scarcely participate in the creative transformation of the management of Heaven and Earth except through humans"
- ◆ The decisive transition from the traditional structure of honoring Heaven and debasing Earth and belittling humanity (天尊地卑人輕) to the era of Human Dignity
- ◆ "It is humans who employ the principle-law of Heaven and Earth, and it is also humans who bring about the creative transformation of Heaven and Earth"

The Process of Transferring Authority

- ◆ The establishment of human subjectivity: the management of Heaven and Earth and the Way of the Divine (神道) come to accord with the intent of human affairs (人事)
- ◆ **Humanity's status changes from a passive being to the steward and manager of the universe**

"The one who presides over all under Heaven is not Heavenly Dignity or Earthly Dignity but Human Dignity... From now on, the era of Human Dignity has come"

-
Jeon-gyeong
(典經)

The Flow of the Shift of Authority

The Past Era · A world presided over by Heaven · Heavenly Dignity (天尊)

The Middle Era · A world presided over by Earth · Earthly Dignity (地尊)

The Present Era · A world presided over by humans · Human Dignity (人尊)

The Meaning of the Era of Human Dignity · an era in which humanity, as the presiding one over all things of Heaven and Earth, fulfills its responsibilities and duties

The Philosophical Meaning of the Mind (心) and the Spiritual Terrace

Daesoon Thought's Understanding of the Mind · A Comparison of the Eastern and Western Views of Humanity

- "The mind is the mode of the divine's existence, the substance of the human being, and the center of Heaven and Earth"
- The Spiritual Terrace (靈臺): the passage through which the divine beings come and go, and the space of exchange between humans and the divine beings
- Jeon-gyeong (典經): "The center of Heaven and Earth is the mind (心), and the mind is the master (主宰) of the whole body (一身)."

The possibility of humanity's self-transformation

- **The possibility of self-cultivation and self-completion through the mind**
- Jeon-gyeong (典經): "If you do not deceive your mind and cultivate with a single mind (一心), the divine beings of Heaven and Earth will all be moved."
- **Through cultivating the mind, humanity can reach the state where the divine and the human become one (神人一體)**



Eastern Philosophy · Western Modern Philosophy

Mind (心)-centered · Reason (理性)-centered

The integration of spirit and body · The dualism of soul and flesh

The unity of Heaven and humanity (天人合一) · The separation of humanity and nature

Transformation through inner cultivation · Conquest of the external world through reason

The harmony of feeling and reason · The supremacy of reason

Sinin-johwa (神人調化) · Anthropocentrism (人間中心主義)

The Distinctiveness of Daesoon Thought

A balance of humanity's inner cultivation and outer practice, and self-completion through harmony with nature and the divine beings

The Integration and Reinterpretation of Confucian, Buddhist, and Daoist (儒佛仙) Thought

Traditional Thought and Daesoon Thought's View of Humanity · Comparison and Integration of Key Concepts

- **Confucianism (儒教):** the completion of character through the Five Constants (五常) and righteousness (義理) → reinterpreted in Daesoon Thought as 'the delegation of the authority to manage humanity'
- **Buddhism (佛教):** the pursuit of the state of extinction (寂滅) and emptiness (虛無) → expanded in Daesoon Thought into 'the strengthening of human subjectivity'
- **Daoism (道教):** the orientation toward detachment (離調) and union with nature → reconstituted in Daesoon Thought as 'the harmony of humanity and the divine beings'

Daesoon Thought's Integrative Approach

- Jeon-gyeong (典經), "Gyobeop" 3-29: "Inheriting the Dao-attaining divine [powers] (道通神) of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism, [He] set the degree-numbers in order and rectified the divine government (神政)."
- **The internalization of the cultivation methods of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism: expanding the structure of the mind-state (心境) from individual cultivation to the 'public good (公共善)'**
- **Overcoming the limitations of traditional thought (transcendence, regressiveness) through an active 'Indigenous Modernity'**

Concept	Confucianism	Buddhism	Daoism	Daesoon Thought
The Essence of the Human	The theory of innate goodness (性善說)	Non-self (無我)	The natural person (自然人)	Sinin-johwa (神人調化)
Method of Cultivation	Preserving and examining the mind (存養省察)	Meditative concentration (禪定)	Nurturing life (養生)	Sudo, cultivation of the Dao (修道)
Ultimate Goal	The sage (聖人)	Liberation (解脫)	The immortal (神仙)	Dotong-jingyeong (道通真境)
The Human–Divine Relationship	Reverent awe (敬畏)	Transcendence (超越)	Communion (疏通)	Interaction (相互作用)
The View of Saving the Human World	Cultivating oneself and governing others (修己治人)	The Bodhisattva practice (菩薩行)	Saving the world (濟世)	Haewon-sangsaeng (解冤相生)

Daesoon Thought synthesizes the core values of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism, building an integrated worldview centered on 'Human Dignity (人尊)'

constructing it

A Critique of Western Modernity and the Daesoon View of the Human Realm

The Limitations of the Western Modern Perspective

- The human–divine separation of the Western Enlightenment: the position of the divine is reduced and human reason is placed at the center
- The limitation of Western constructivism: a dichotomous thinking that thoroughly separates the human subject from the object
- The pursuit of reason-centered rationality brings about the split between spirit and matter, subject and object

The Original Perspective of the Daesoon View of the Human Realm

- Jori (條理): reason and logic operate not as mere products of human thought but as a cosmic principle
- Gihwa (氣化): the principle of change and communication through qi (氣), without distinction between matter and spirit
- The interrelation of the Samgye: unlike Western anthropocentrism, the status of humanity is established within the organic relationship of Heaven, Earth, and Humanity

A Comparison of Western Modernity and Daesoon Thought

Category	Western Modernity · Daesoon View of the Human Realm
The divine and the human	The divine: diminished status, dichotomous separation · Sinin-johwa (神人調化) integration
Human role	Human role: conquest and objectification of nature · participation in Cheonji-gongsa, coordinator
The source of value	The source of value: human reason and rationality · the Sangsaeng principle of Heaven, Earth, and Humanity
Epistemological feature	subject/object separation · the unity of subject and object, body–mind integration
The nature of change	The nature of change: linear progress and development · cyclical, Sangsaeng-based change

"Daesoon Thought, fundamentally different from the anthropocentrism of Western modernity, presents a new View of the Human Realm—one grounded in the human–nature organic relationality and the harmony between humanity and the divine beings—and this it demonstrates."

Requital of Heaven and Earth (天地報恩) and the Ethics of Haewon-sangsaeng

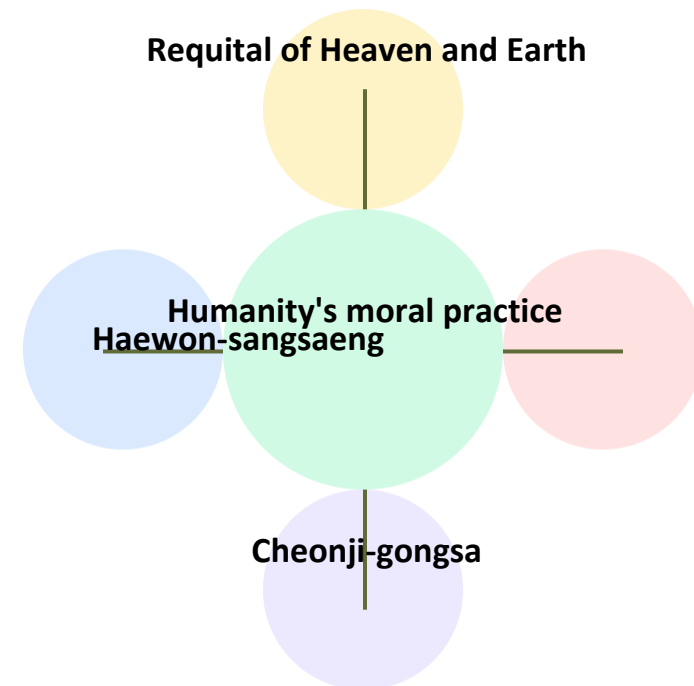
Requital of Heaven and Earth and Humanity's Ethical Responsibility

- **Requital of Heaven and Earth (天地報恩):** repaying the grace of Heaven and Earth—humanity's sense of responsibility to revere and steward Heaven and Earth
- Jeon-gyeong (典經), "Gyobeop" 2-55: "Heaven and Earth are the parents of all things; therefore human affairs must model themselves on the virtue of Heaven and Earth."
- **Haewon-sangsaeng (解冤相生):** a Sangsaeng ethical system that resolves grievance and lets one another live

The View of the Human Realm and Ethical Practice

- **The practical ethic by which humanity, as a participant in Cheonji-gongsa, takes part in the Gaebyeok of the world**
- **The ethical responsibility of the era of Human Dignity, in which human morality brings about the transformation of Heaven, Earth, and nature**
- **The moral practice of Sangsaeng: the principle whereby making others prosper is what makes oneself prosper**

The Ethical System of Haewon-sangsaeng



"Haewon-sangsaeng and Boeun-sangsaeng are the principle of Sangsaeng. That is, the work of making others prosper

is also what makes me prosper."

- Daesoon Jinrihoe Yoram -

The Mutability, Elevation of Status, and Interchangeability of the Samgye (Heaven·Earth·Humanity)

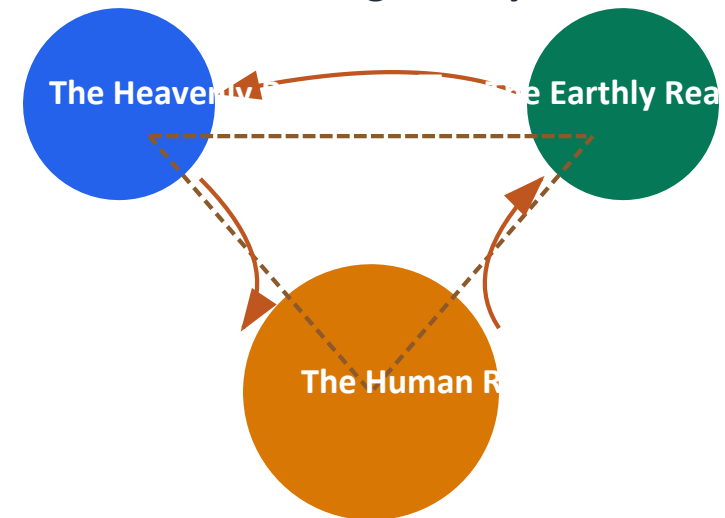
The Characteristics of the Samgye Structure

- **Mutability:** breaking away from the existing fixed hierarchy and forming a fluid relationship among the heavenly, earthly, and human realms
- **Elevation of status:** humanity's status is raised to a position where, together with the divine beings, it participates subjectively in the transformation of Heaven and Earth
- **Interchangeability:** through human cultivation, the status of a divine being can be attained, and the Samgye changes into an interacting relationship

Modern Meaning and Implications

- **Establishing a new, human-centered Indigenous Modernity** that transcends the hierarchical order of Eastern tradition
- **The realization of the integrated harmony and Sangsaeng of the Samgye through Sinin-johwa (神人調化)**
- **The strengthening of human subjectivity together with an emphasis on coexistence with Heaven and Earth—an ecological significance**

The Schematic of Samgye Interchangeability



Excerpt from the Jeon-gyeong (典經)

"Human Dignity (人尊) is greater than Heavenly Dignity and Earthly Dignity; now is the era of Human Dignity. Henceforth everyone

must come to resemble the Maitreya (彌勒)."

- Daesoon Jeon-gyeong, Part 3, Chapter 41 -

Conclusion and the Significance of Indigenous Modernity

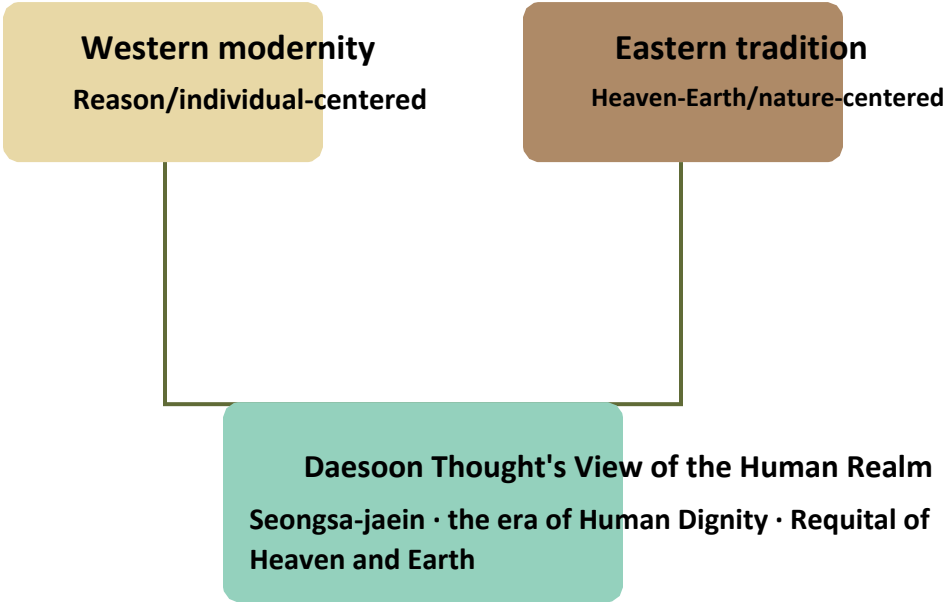
The Significance of Daesoon Thought's View of the Human Realm in the History of Thought

- A new paradigm of human-centeredness (人中心性): establishing humanity's status as the mediating subject of the divine beings of Heaven and Earth
- The reversal and reconstitution of the traditional Eastern View of Humanity (honoring Heaven and debasing Earth and belittling humanity, 天尊地卑人輕): providing the philosophical basis for the era of Human Dignity
- Unlike the fragmented human–nature dichotomy of Western modernity, securing an integrated, harmonious relationality

The Possibility and Prospect of Indigenous Modernity

- The modern meaning of a human-centered worldview that arose in the Korean context rather than in the Western model of modernity
- The future-oriented model of human–divine–nature coexistence suggested by the Samgye interchangeability of the View of the Human Realm
- **The practical value of Sangsaeng, harmony, and Boeun (報恩) for overcoming modern environmental and social crises**

The Position of Indigenous Modernity



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Daesoon Jinrihoe Yoram, Daesoon Jinrihoe Religious Affairs Department, 1969.
Jeon-gyeong (典經), Daesoon Jinrihoe Religious Affairs Department, 1974. Cha Seon-geun, "Daesoon Jinrihoe's Gaebyeok and the Earthly Paradise," Studies in New Religions 29, 2013.