

■ (b) Buryeon-giyeon (不然其然) and Seongsa-jaein (成事在人)

Buryeon-giyeon and Seongsa-jaein

Research Overview and Purpose

- Research Background

Donghak Thought and Daesoon Thought are major axes in the development of modern Korean religious thought, and comparative study of the two thoughts' views of humanity is essential to understanding Korean intellectual history.

- Research Purpose

The purpose of this study is to re-illuminate the contemporary meaning of each thought by comparing and analyzing the view of humanity that lies at the core of Donghak and Daesoon Jinrihoe thought.

- Research Method

Centered on the concepts of Buryeon-giyeon (不然其然) and Seongsa-jaein (成事在人), it examines the characteristics and differences of the two thoughts' views of humanity through literature research and comparative analysis.

Key Question

How are human agency and autonomy expressed differently in Donghak Thought and Daesoon Thought, and what implications does this hold for modern society?

Introduction to Key Concepts: Buryeon-giyeon and Seongsajaein

○ Buryeon-giyeon (不然其然)

Means that the not-so (不然), not currently understood, is transformed into the so (其然) through spiritual cultivation or experience

- In Donghak Thought, the concept that even what is hard for a human to understand can someday be understood through cultivation - A way of expressing God-human harmony in Donghak Thought, which did not introduce the realm of divine beings

☞ Seongsajaein (成事在人)

A central concept of Daesoon Thought, in which the authority to decide the success or failure of an affair is transferred from Heaven (天) to humans (人)

- Former Heaven: "Planning (謀事) rests with humans (在人), accomplishment (成事) rests with Heaven (在天)" - Later Heaven: "Planning rests with Heaven, accomplishment rests with humans" - A shift in the locus of decision-making after Gucheon's Advent in Human Form

🔑 **Key difference: the decisive difference between the views of humanity in Donghak and Daesoon Thought lies in Seongsajaein, which signifies the establishment of a human-centered worldview.**

Donghak Thought's View of Humanity

▲ The Concept of the Heaven-beyond-Heaven (天外天)

Views the human as the center of the universe and a being directly connected to Heaven (天)

- With the meaning that there is another Heaven beyond Heaven, it emphasizes human change and possibility - Emphasizes that, since a heavenly nature (天性) lies within the human, the human is itself Heaven

⇒ A Gi (氣)-Centered System of Thought

Develops a view of humanity centered on gi (氣) and vital energy rather than on the concept of divine beings

- Donghak Thought emphasizes that "what decides a fight is vital energy" - Forms a distinctive human-centered worldview in which the concept of divine beings does not appear

● Buryeon-giyeon (不然其然): "Even the not-so (不然), the part that is hard for a human to understand, someday becomes the so (其然) that can be understood through cultivation"

- A way of expressing God-human harmony in Donghak Thought, which did not introduce the realm of divine beings

Daesoon Thought's View of Humanity

A Human-Centered Worldview

After Gucheon's Advent in Human Form, the role of the divine beings of Heaven and Earth weakens and human autonomy and agency are strengthened

- Positioning the human as Earth (土), the center of Yin-Yang and the Five Phases, it plays the key role in the system of God-human harmony - Being a god confined within the body, one can awaken the inner god and communicate with the outer god

Gucheon's Advent in Human Form (九天人神降世)

The descent of the Supreme God into a human body reverses the positions of humans and divine beings

- Because "the divine beings fell into the blocked calamity (否劫) and humankind fell into the disaster calamity (災劫)," a human-centered worldview is established
- Humans are imperfect in possessing the substance of a body rather than being divine beings, yet they have the advantage of adapting flexibly to change

Seongsa-jaein (成事在人)

The decision of an affair's success or failure is now made by humans

- "Planning rests with Heaven, and accomplishment rests with humans" — the Jeon-gyeong, Gyobeop 3-35 - Establishes God-human harmony as the principle of Gaebyeok by which Heaven and Earth accomplish through humans

“ A paradigm shift from "After the battle in Heaven ends, the battle among humans is decided" (the Jeon-gyeong, Gyobeop 1-54) to "Now, planning rests with Heaven and accomplishment rests with humans"

Comparative Analysis of Donghak Thought and Daesoon Thought

Donghak Thought

Concept of divine beings

The concept of divine beings is weak; a system of thought centered on gi (氣) and vital energy

Operation of Yin-Yang and the Five Phases

In the operation of Yin-Yang and the Five Phases, Earth (土) plays the role of divine beings

Key expression

Buryeon-giyeon (不然其然) — even what is hard to understand can be understood through cultivation

View of humanity

Emphasizes human change and possibility through the concept of the Heaven-beyond-Heaven (天外天)

Daesoon Thought

Concept of divine beings

Clearly presents the change in the status of divine beings and humans

Operational structure

Establishes a human-centered structure of resources/operation and strengthens the system of God-human harmony

Key expression

Seongsa-jaein (成事在人) — the authority to decide an affair's success or failure rests with humans

View of humanity

Emphasizes human agency and autonomy after Gucheon's Advent in Human Form

Key Difference

The decisive difference between the views of humanity in Donghak and Daesoon Thought lies in Seongsa-jaein, which signifies that after the Advent in Human Form, humans—not the divine beings of Heaven and Earth—became the agents of the affairs of the world.

God-Human Harmony and the Principle of Yin-Yang and the Five Phases



The Principle of God-Human Harmony

In Daesoon Thought, humans (yang) and divine beings (yin) are harmonized by the principle of the Yin-Yang union of virtue

- As an embodied substance, the human can adapt flexibly to change - Divine beings are utmost in truth yet possess only a single direction



The Working of Yin-Yang and the Five Phases

Geumhwa-gyoyeok (金火交易): harmony through the exchange of opposing energies (metal and fire)

- Togeuksu (土克水): the principle by which the human (Earth) controls the realm of divine beings (Water) - As Earth (土), the center of Yin-Yang and the Five Phases, the human orders (調理) the gihwa (氣化) of divine beings



The relation between God-human harmony and Seongsajaein: in Daesoon Thought, Gaebyeok is the accomplishment of Heaven and Earth—a world of Dotong-jingyeong under the primacy of the human (人尊), possible only after the emergence of noble ones who have attained the Dao (道通君子). God-human harmony becomes the principle of the Gaebyeok by which Heaven and Earth accomplish through humans.

The interaction between the human's (Earth's) ordering (調理) and the divine beings' gihwa (氣化)

Human (土) ↔ Divine beings

Conclusion and Significance

Summary of Findings

- The view of humanity in Donghak and Daesoon Thought develops from Buryeon-giyeon to Seongsajaein
- Compared to Donghak Thought, Daesoon Thought expands correlative thinking and strengthens fractal thinking
- The change in the positions of humans and divine beings is effected through Gucheon's Advent in Human Form

Academic Significance

- Illuminates the process of change in the view of humanity in Korean religious thought
- Expands the philosophical meaning of Sinin-johwa (神人調化)
- Discovers the indigenous character of modern Korean religious thought

Contemporary Implications

- Contributes to strengthening human agency and a sense of responsibility
- A means of restoring Liminality in modern society
- The possibility of reinterpreting Eastern traditional thought in the modern age

Suggestions for Future Research

More in-depth research is needed on the modern application of Seongsajaein (成事在人) and the practical meaning of God-human harmony (神人調和). In particular, attention should be paid to the possibility, inherent in Korean religious thought, of integrating Eastern and Western cultures.

V-4. Comparison of the Indigenous Modernity of the Heaven-Earth Relationship in Donghak and Daesoon Thought

The Spirits of Heaven and Earth (天地鬼神) and the Sincerity-Reverence-Faith toward Heaven and Earth (天地誠敬信)
Dogijangjon (道氣長存) and Sangsaeng (相生)

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Research Overview and Contents

This study compares and analyzes the characteristics of Indigenous Modernity in Korean intellectual history, centered on the Heaven-Earth relationship in Donghak and Daesoon Thought. In particular, through the comparison of the core concepts of the spirits of Heaven and Earth and the sincerity-reverence-faith toward Heaven and Earth, and of Dogijangjon and Sangsaeng, it examines the characteristics and significance of the Indigenous Modernity of the two thoughts.

Main Contents

1. Comparison of the concepts of the spirits of Heaven and Earth and the sincerity-reverence-faith toward Heaven and Earth
2. Donghak Thought's theory of the spirits of Heaven and Earth
3. Daesoon Thought's theory of the sincerity-reverence-faith toward Heaven and Earth
4. Analysis of the concepts of Dogijangjon and Sangsaeng
5. Differences in the perception of the West
6. Comparison of perspectives on Japan
7. Conclusion and the significance of Indigenous Modernity