# EDITOR'S PREFACE

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JDTREA

This issue completes the fifth volume of *Journal of Daesoon Thought and the Religions of East Asia*, which is a great achievement in the East Asian religions and Korean new religions academic space. As Editor in Chief, I am really excited by the growing level of interest in *JDTREA* and the academic events hosted by Daejin University, Pocheon City, South Korea, and diversity of academic content that is showcased in this current issue.

The opening article is by Shen Yeh-Ying (Singapore University of Social Sciences), and is titled "The Transformation Development of Chinese-Attributed Religions in Indonesia: A Case Study of Yiguandao, MATAKIN, and Mile Dadao." This is the first study of religion in Indonesia that *JDTREA* has published, and it connects well with previous research on Yiguandao that has been featured in the journal. Shen establishes the political and religious context established in Indonesia after the nation emerged from Dutch colonial dominance, with a focus on Chinese Indonesian new religions. Yiguandao and Mile Dadao were introduced from Taiwan, but MATAKIN developed in the local context, focusing on Heaven, *Thian*, as sole god and Confucius as prophet. There are three levels of clergy, and the hymns and sermons were delivered in Bahasa Indonesia. The model of Islam and Christianity is seen to have profoundly influenced MATAKIN's institutional form.

The second contribution is by Li Xiaolong (Henan Normal University, China) and Su Qianwen (Henan Normal University, China), "Beyond Utilitarian Compassion: The Daoist Practice of Animal Release." This practice – the release of animals that were to be slaughtered for food, so that divine protection and blessings might be received – unites Daoist, Confucian and Buddhist ideas. Daoist love of and respect for nature includes animals, while Confucian valuing of all life includes the animal and plant categories. Buddhism has strong prohibitions against killing, and the three traditions combined form a basis for animal rights and ecological values in the contemporary world.

The third article is by Dinh Hong Hai (Vietnam National University, Hanoi City) and concerns "The Fusion of Maitreya and Messiah Symbols in East Asian New Religions: An Examination of Daesoon Jinrihoe in Korea and Caodaism in Vietnam." The interactions of Jesuit missionaries and East Asian cultures from the sixteenth century onwards created a receptivity to saviour symbols that involved the rethinking of existing anticipated supernatural figures like Maitreya in Buddhism. Dinh's article shows how links between Maitreya and the Christian Messiah influenced new religions like Daesoon Jinrihoe and Caodaism, which both emerged in the twentieth century.

The next article is by Dominik Rutana (SWPS University, Poland) and addresses "The Rationality of Myth: An Analysis of the Mythology in The Canonical Scripture through the

Lens of Bronisław Malinowski's Functional Theory of Myth." Rutana begins by considering *mythos* and *logos* as different modes of thinking, and the importance of culture as an integrated whole. Daesoon Jinrihoe is examined in terms of drawing inspiration from the past, with Sangje's personal practice offered as a model for religious excellence. The enduring value of the religious revolutions often referred to as the "Axial Age" in the present day is affirmed.

The next research included is by Ibukunolu Isaac Olodude (Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria), "Language and Identity Construction in Nigerian Pentecostal Christianity and the Korean Daesoon Jinrihoe Religious Movement." This study brings together two radically different religious traditions and demonstrates that using broad, general methodological frames like language and identity – which can be nuanced and tailored to specific situations or applied to specific themes – and results in insightful perspectives that increase new knowledge. It is argued that such linguistically mediated identities are emergent, interactional, and intersubjective, and depend upon the theological and social structures of the religions.

The final article is Trinh Ngoc Linh's (Vietnam National University at Ho Chi Minh) "Invented Traditions and the Construction of New Religious Collective Memory in Southern Vietnam: An Overview Study from a Cultural Perspective." Trinh discusses the methodological frameworks of invented traditions, proposed by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, and the construction of collective memory, referring especially to Maurice Halbwachs. These ideas are applied to the new religions which developed in Vietnam in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Trinh connects the landscape of the Mekong Delta and the ethnic diversity of the people to the diverse and flourishing religious and spiritual culture of South Vietnam, which exhibits syncretic and mixed qualities as a result.

The journal issue is completed by reviews supplied by the Review Editor, Professor Holly Folk (Western Washington University). As always, gratitude is due to Chairman Bae Kyuhan, Lee Gyungwon, Jason Greenberger, and Choi Wonhyuk from Daejin University, and to the authors and referees who wrote the articles and reviewed them for publication. It is a delight to continue my involvement with *Journal of Daesoon Thought and the Religions of East Asia*. Five volumes is a great achievement, and the future is looking bright.

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