

# Yiguandao in Korea: International Growth of a Chinese New Religion

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## Original Articles

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## Abstract

Yiguandao missions arrived in Korea no later than 1947. Despite many obstacles, including war and internal dissension, the movement has flourished in South Korea. Today there are three active major lineages and another seven smaller networks. This article relates the movement's overall development in Korea. We begin by discussing key missions dispatched to Korea by Yiguandao's founder Zhang Tianran. The northern port city of Tianjin was key to this effort, in particular a single temple, the Hall of Morality. In Korea the leaders found an unfamiliar cultural landscape that was soon engulfed in war. The Yiguandao missions tended to develop independently, without coordination. In an effort to unify the movement, the Morality Foundation was established in Busan in 1952. The article shows how Yiguandao's subsequent success in Korea is connected to the development of indigenous leadership. Local Korean leadership ousted Chinese members from the Morality Foundation in 1954, and this branch has continued under Korean leadership to this day. The ousted Chinese leaders continued to develop their own lineages. Two major leaders, Zhang Ruiquan and Kim Bokdang, were able to establish enduring legacies. A final section looks at organizational traits that will determine the movement's future prospects in modern Korean society.

**Keywords:** : Yiguandao, leadership, lineage, indigenous leadership, Kim Bokdang, Zhang Ruiquan, schism

## Introduction

Yiguandao's founder Zhang Tianran (張天然, 1889-1947) began discussing Korea as early as 1945. At that time, the movement was barely fifteen years old in its homeland of China. Its growth had been nothing less than breathtaking. Following the rail networks connecting a rapidly urbanizing China, the movement established Yiguandao temples in all the major urban centers, from Guangzhou in the south to Mukden in the northeast (瀋陽, today's Shenyang). Each temple was led by a dedicated individual charged with a simple mission: salvation through growth. For Yiguandao at its core is a religion of salvation. Each member is charged with spreading this message, and every second counts (分秒逼真, *fennmiao bizhen*).

The northern port city of Tianjin occupied a special place in the Yiguandao network. In 1930 Yiguandao began when co-leaders Zhang Tianran and Sun Suzhen (孫素貞, 1895-1975) united their followers and formally took leadership of a small religious network in Jinan (濟南), a city to the south of Tianjin. Zhang and Sun were jointly recognized as the 18<sup>th</sup> generation holders of the Dao mandate, the *tianming* (天命). Holding the *tianming* allowed them to speak on behalf of the supreme Yiguandao deity, the Unborn Mother (無生老母, *wusheng laomu*). They and their followers could claim unimpeachable authority to speak truth and save humanity. Salvation was possible for the downtrodden and pitiful human race, they taught, but only through Yiguandao.

Zhang and Sun immediately embarked on a strategy of rapid growth. And one of the first places visited with his message of salvation was Tianjin. Like Shanghai, Tianjin was a concession city, a quasi-colony outside the reach of Chinese civil authorities. These jurisdictions could be used as havens for illegal activities and political activists. By the same token the foreign authorities, generally committees of influential business people, gave free range to publishers, educators and business in general. The treaty ports became generators of wealth and magnets for in-migration. The new migrants generally found a free-wheeling atmosphere where new ideas could be encountered and discussed without fear. It was an ideal environment for religious ferment.

Zhang Tianran made a fateful visit to Tianjin in 1934 (Irons 2017). While there he succeeded in converting the two founders, Sun Xikun (孫錫昆) and Yang Guanchu (楊灌楚), of a martial arts academy, Daode Wuxueshe (道德武學社). The academy was renamed the Temple of Morals (道德佛堂, *daode fotang*). The Daode lineage and other Tianjin halls would become a primary vector for the overseas transmission of the Dao. All three of the first missionary groups sent to Korea were sent from Daode lineage halls (Lin Rongze 2018).

This article describes Yiguandao's development in Korea. We rely primarily on what is available in Korean and Chinese sources, supplemented by visits and on-line searches. We will explain the historical events and those individuals who played a large part in

them. Throughout we will need to distinguish between several organizational levels within Yiguandao groups. In Yiguandao settings the Chinese language terms *tan* (壇, altar), *fotang* (佛堂, Buddha hall), and *daochang* (道場, “Dao field”) are often used interchangeably in names and everyday discussions, and will be rendered here using the generic English term “temple.” The category of temple also includes home temples (家庭佛堂, *jiating fotang*), private altars used for community ritual and gathering. The larger category of public temples (公共佛堂, *gonggong fotang*) are staffed by full-time personnel and are open to anyone. Network is a term introduced here to mean groupings of temples, numbering from two to twenty or more, which share some affiliation, for instance, having been founded by the same person or overseas lineage. Lineages (支線, *zhixian*) are larger, more complex groupings centered around a head temple. The major lineages in Korea are registered as societies or associations, while networks are not.

### The Three Missions

Three Yiguandao groups departed Tianjin for Korea in 1947. All three group leaders had been recruited by Zhang Tianran personally. Each group was led by a senior (前人, *qianren*), a title usually indicating the venerated head of a lineage or sub-lineage. The first group, led by Zhang Ruiquan (張瑞荃), departed in July.<sup>1</sup> A second, led by Li Defu (李德福), left in October. And the third group, headed by Jin Enshan (金恩善), left in September. (Lin 2018, 2) All three would provide a powerful stimulus for Yiguandao’s initial development in Korea.

1947 was a momentous year for Yiguandao. Zhang Tianran had only recently been released from prison, where he was held due to charges of collaboration with the Japanese-backed Wang Jingwei (汪精衛) regime during World War II. Yiguandao had in fact grown dramatically during the war, both behind and within lines of occupation. While nominally residing in Chongqing (重慶) during this period, Zhang apparently moved freely throughout different parts of China. With the end of the war, Yiguandao continued its rapid growth. Zhang presided over dharma assemblies (法會, *fabui*) attended by thousands. A major focus of such meetings was the recruitment and training of new transmission masters (點傳師, *dianchuanshi*). New personnel in turn propelled for the movement into its next phase. Zhang’s decision to send three separate groups to Korea can be seen in this light as part of his incessant urge to propagate the Dao. Expansion was part of the movement’s organizational DNA.

At the same time, Zhang Tianrans’ health was ailing—he died later in 1947—and he may have wanted to start as many projects as possible. Possibly too, he may have had an inkling that the Chinese civil war would not end well, and that the communist regime would not be partial to Yiguandao. So it was with some urgency that he directed

Zhang, Li and Jin to go to Korea. As early as 1945 Zhang Tianran had already told Zhang Ruiquan to convert (濟度, *jidu*) the “three thousand bodhisattvas and five hundred lohans” (三千菩薩和五百羅漢, *sanqian pusa he wubai luohan*) [waiting] in Korea (Lin 2018, 3). In an urgent 1947 meeting held at what was then the Tianjin head temple, Tianzhen Temple (天真壇, *tianzhen tan*), Zhang Tianran bluntly told all three of the missionaries that his time was running out, and that he would in the future incarnate as a youth in Korea (Lin 2018, 3). This exhortation was evidently enough to spur all three to action, for as we have seen all three left later that year.

The discourse of three missions to Korea reflects the findings of Lin Rongze (林榮澤), who has done original research on Yiguandao missionary efforts. These three parties were certainly the primary vector for Yiguandao’s growth in Korea. However, it is probable that other transmission masters also arrived throughout the late 1940s. For example, Gao Yuncheng (高雲程, later using the name Gao Jincheng 高錦程 1914-1999), originally a transmission master working with Zhang Ruiquan, later became a senior in his own right. (Lin 2018, 3).

### The Unification of the Three Altars (三壇合一)<sup>2</sup>

The early Yiguandao pioneers from China operated independently. The very external environment made cooperation and communication difficult. In China, the victory of the communist forces in the civil war in 1949 ushered in a radically different social environment. It was not long before the new state actively repressed Yiguandao. Leaders were either arrested or forced to go underground. Any central leadership that may have existed during Zhang Tianran’s tenure was probably non-existent after 1949. As a result, missions to other countries were on their own. On top of that, war broke out in Korea in 1950. Fighting raged up and down the entire Korean peninsula. It was a time of turmoil and suffering for the Korean people. The Allied counter-offensive at the Battle for Busan, a desperate, last-ditch effort to turn the tide, lasted between June and September of 1950.

It was at Busan where a major effort was made to unify all Yiguandao groups under one banner. This event is generally referred to in Yiguandao literature as the “Unification of the Three Altars” (三壇合一, *santan beyi*). The three temples involved were the Society of Morality (道德社, *daodeshe*), established by the transmission master Kim Bokdang (金福堂), the Jili Temple (濟黎壇, *jilitan*), and the Guangji Temple (廣濟壇, *guangjitan*) (International Moral Association 2011,6).<sup>3</sup> A revealed text received in the Guangji Temple in September of 1951, from no less than Zhang Tianran, was interpreted as directing the active temples to merge into one organization. This resulted in the formal establishment of a new organization, the Morality Foundation (道德礎基會, K. *dodeok chogibhoe*), in Busan on January 5, 1952. (Lin 2018, 3; Lin Muyu 2014,

249) While we can surmise that all three of the component temples are descended from the three seniors originally dispatched from Tianjin in 1947, we cannot be absolutely sure. The sources describing the events are unclear. We know almost nothing about the leadership of the Jili and Guangji temples, for instance. What is clear is that a Korean member, Son Wooheon (孫佑憲, b. 1920), was appointed as president (會長, *buijzhang*) of the new organization. We also know the new organization was riven with tension. (Lin 2018, 3; Lin Muyu 2014, 249) There were serious disagreements between the Korean and Chinese leadership. These eventually led to the expulsion of Chinese members in 1954.

The Unification of the Three Altars is one of the most formative early events in Yiguandao history in Korea. The incident can be seen as an attempt by some parties (we do not know whom) to exert control over competing temples. In addition, it clearly reflects the assertion of power by indigenous Korean members. Organizationally this jostling for control resulted in the creation of the Society of Ethics (K., *dodeokhoe*; hereafter, SOE), a major contemporary lineage. At the same time the exclusion of ethnic Chinese leaders forced them to embark on separate paths of development. Like the Korean nation itself, disunity has characterized Korean Yiguandao ever since.

## Yiguandao Religious Bodies in the Contemporary Korea

Today there are still three major Yiguandao lineages in Korea. These are the Society of Ethics (道德會), the Greater Korea Ethics Society (大韓道德會), and the International Moral Association (國際道德協會). As noted, the first group derived from the Morality Foundation in 1952. The second two were founded by the important seniors Zhang Ruiquan and Kim Bokdang. Each group is currently registered as a religious organization with the Bureau of Culture, Sports and Tourism of the South Korean central government. And each one can be accurately studied as a new religious organization within the Yiguandao tradition—using the terminology introduced above, they are lineages. The following section will introduce these lineages as well as smaller temple networks currently active in South Korea.

### A) Society of Ethics (道德會)

After the expulsion of Chinese members in 1954 the Morality Foundation changed its name to the Society of Ethics. The SOE functioned as a purely Korean religious organization. In 1964 its legal structure was changed to that of a foundation, the Jaedan Beopin Dodeokhoe (財團法人道德會). The head office moved to the Gayang-dong district of Daejeon City (大田市佳陽洞) in 1990 (Lin 2018, 6). Today the Society has some 17 branches in addition to the headquarters. There are around 80 transmission master serving around 2000 active members (Lin 2018, 6).

The group's primary scripture, *The Book of Heaven* (天書, *tianshu*) is a massive compilation of multiple texts and historical records, including *fuji* (扶乩) revelation sessions, in three volumes.<sup>4</sup> This work contains transcriptions of revelations received between 1948 and 1953—many predating the formation of the Morality Foundation in 1952. *The Book of Heaven* is thus an important document in the early development of Yiguandao in Korea overall. The original texts were first published Chinese in three volumes in 1980, 1983, 1993, respectively. A single-volume Korean version was not published until much later, in 2012. While the SOE's foundational textual material was all in Chinese, all of the organization's activities and texts are currently published in Korea.

The SOE has a complex organizational structure. In addition to transmission masters and office staff, the Society has developed two unique organizational positions, the promoter (宣傳師, *xuanchuanshi*) and the specialist (專員, *zhuanyuan*). These positions perform functions similar to those of a (中勸士, *zhongqinshi*) in many Chinese Christian churches. In addition, there are representatives (道宗師, C. *daozongsbi*) and directors (理事長, C. *lishizhang*) involved in governance issues.



Figure 1. Altar in Society of Ethics headquarters, Daejeon City. Note image of Dan Gun, legendary founder of Korea, to the right side of the altar I.

## B) Greater Korea Ethics Society (大韓道德會, K. *daehan doduckhoe*, hereafter, GKES)

Soon after his arrival in 1947, the senior Zhang Ruiquan moved quickly to set up temples, including a number in Busan(釜山), Daejeon(大田), and Daegu(大邱). Of particular importance is the Yukhwadan (育化壇) temple established in Pohng (浦項) of North Gyeongsang Province (慶尚北道) in 1949. This temple is significant because it marks the point at which Yiguandao began to attract significant numbers of Korean converts. (Lin 2018, 6) Zhang not only converted new members, he also trained new transmission masters and sancai (三才), including the sancai Su Ilyang (守一樣) in the southern City of Sacheon (泗川). In 1948, Zhang established the Bohwadan (普化壇) temple in Daegu City, together with the recently arrived senior Pu Huacheng (普化程, later known as Gao Jincheng (高錦程, 1914 - 1999) (Lin 2018, 7).

As we have mentioned, Zhang and other ethnic Chinese leaders were expelled from the Morality Foundation 1954. To make a living Zhang established the Heavenly Virtue Chinese Medicine Hospital (天德漢醫院 K. *cheondeokhanuiwon*) in Seoul's Myeongryun-dong (明倫洞) district. It was only after another ten years that Zhang was able to establish another public temple, in the Hongseun-dong (弘恩洞) district. Zhang established and registered the GKES in 1961. In that same year the Korean government decided to group foreign religious groups under one umbrella, to be called Dongdogyo (東道教), "Teachings of the Eastern Way." The GKES operated under that label for several years, until it withdrew from the umbrella organization in 1963.



Figure 2. Alter at Greater Korea Ethics Society head temple in Daejeon City.

The first GKES leader (全國代表會長, *quanguo daibiao buizhang*, "national representative") was O Seonggeun (吳聖根) (Lin 2018, 8). Zhang Ruiquan subsequently assumed formal leadership in 1963 and dedicated the rest of his life to the GKES. He moved the GKES headquarters to Daejeon in 1986. At that point, Zhang held the movement's first repentance class (懺悔班程, *chanbui bancbeng*). And in 1988, shortly before his death, Zhang applied to the government for a new registration.

After Zhang's death in 1988, the society split into two factions. One was led by his son, the other by his widow. The son inexplicably promulgated an announcement of cessation (正道令, *zhidaoling*) ordering that all propagation activities would cease effectively, freezing the membership in its state at the time.

The GKES lists 38 separate branches, established between 1947 and 2011, in all major cities of Korea (Song Byeongcho 2011; Ethics Association Foundation 1980;1983). The current GKES headquarters are in the Dodeokdan Temple (道德壇) in Daegu. There are over one thousand active members (Lin 2018, 8).

A youth branch of the GKES, named the Association for Study and Cultivation of Dao Learning (道學研修會, *dobak yeonsubhoe*), was established inside Seoul Engineering University (首爾工大) in 1974 (Lee, Irons, and Lee 2019, 10). This development reflected the large number of students who were GKEA members (GKES 1974, 2). In 1973 this student group was renamed the Greater Korea Youth Ethics Association (大韓道德會青年會, *daeban dodeokcheongnyeonhoe*).



GKES purchased expanded premises at Hongoon-dong in Seoul in 1975, while Zhang was still alive. Due to financial constraints, construction dragged on for six years. The new headquarters was finally opened in 1980 (GKES 1980, 1). With the opening of the Daegu assembly hall in September of that same year, the assembly decided that the GKEA's primary mission and activities would henceforth be decided by the heads of relevant departments. These new regulations (新道規, *xindaogui*) were intended to guide all branches and missionary work from that point on (GKES 1980, 1). This resulted in a trend toward devolution of power from the central organization to local units. One presumably unintended result was the application of a number of transmission masters from Daegu who announced to Zhang Ruiquan their intention to separate from the movement (發表離異宣言, *fabiao liyi xuanyan*).

Zhang was succeeded by the second generation leader, Jang Yonghun (張永勳, 1960-2003), who officially assumed the title of senior in 1995. Jang worked to strengthen ties with Taiwan Yiguandao. He had welcomed a significant visit by senior leaders from Taiwan in 1989.<sup>5</sup> A third confession class, overseen by the Taiwan visitors, was held at Myeongdeokdan (明德壇) temple in Seoul. While GKES can clearly be categorized as an independent Yiguandao lineage in its own right, it has maintained close ties with several of the Taiwan lineages. Jang Yonghun also led a delegation of 130 people to Taiwan to participate in the Taiwan Yiguandao General Association's Celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of Zhang Tianran and Sun Suzhen's mission in 1990.

In April of 2001 the leadership passed to the third generation leader, Kim Changin (金昌仁). He was followed in 2005 by Lee Hanseung (李漢昇). In 2009 the government issued a registration certificate, naming Lee as the legal representative. A fifth generation leader, Choi Dongseong (崔東晟, 1950~), was elected to head the GKES in 2015.

By the late 1990s it had become clear that the GKES was in a period of declining membership. In 2001 the senior Gwak Hyojin (郭孝振) rather inexplicably issued a cessation order prohibiting Dao transmission. (Lee 2019, 481) This meant that transmission masters were no longer authorized to transmit the Dao—in other words, they could no longer admit new members, a policy which was sure to exacerbate membership decline. Perhaps the most significant sign of GKES decline in the period after Jang Yonghun was the departure of the Cheondeokdan (天德壇) temple in 2014 (Lee, Irons, and Lee 2019, 12). Cheondeok's leader Kim Gigon (金淇坤) proceeded to register his group as the Korean Maitreya Buddha Hall of Heavenly Grace (韓國天恩彌勒佛院, *banguk cheoneun mireukbul-won*). This was a major event in several ways. First, it was a further splintering of the GKES. Second, it marked the formal entry of a competing Yiguandao-inspired religion, Maitreya Great Tao (彌勒大道). This group had originally been a splinter group of Yiguandao called the Heavenly Grace Hall of Maitreya (天恩彌勒佛院, *tianen mile foyuan*). Maitreya Great Tao did not formally register as a separate religion in Taiwan until 2000. Clearly, the Korean temple's departure was the result of early lobbying and a strategic shift on Kim's part.

In terms of religious practice, Zhang Ruiquan placed special emphasis on inner cultivation (內功修煉, *neigong xiulian*) (Lin 2018, 8). Upon his death he left several foundational texts, in Chinese, including *Ten Essentials for Cultivating the Way* (修道十要, *xiudao shiyao*, 1977) and *Ten Prohibitions for Dao Cultivation* (修道十不可, *xiudao ren shibuke*, 1978).<sup>6</sup> The Ten Prohibitions are of particular interest because they focus on issues relevant to women.<sup>7</sup>

Overall the GKES has been able to survive for sixty years, no mean feat. At the same time, it appears that neither Zhang Ruiquan nor his successors were able to avoid schisms and dissension. Some degree of dissension is not unusual Yiguandao groups. However, inter-lineage cooperation is also possible. While the GKES was not able to avoid factions, its major competitors, the SOE and the International Morals Association, have proven able to maintain better institutional cohesion over the same time period.

### C) International Moral Association (國際道德協會, K. *gukje dodeokhyoephoe*)

The International Morals Association (hereafter, IMA) was established by Kim Bokdang (金福堂) in 1953, before his exclusion from the Morality Foundation. Although the IMA formally submitted an application for registration to the government in 1953, the application was not approved until December 5, 1961. Kim Bokdong was not formally elected president until 1965.

The early IMA temples were generally home temples. The first IMA head temple, Indeok Beopdan (仁德法壇), was opened on Chungmu Street in Seoul's Jongro district in 1948 (Lin 2018, 23). It was moved south of the Han River to Heukseok-dong, in today's Dongjak-gu district, in 1965 (IMA 2009, 37). The largest IMA public temple, Seungmuk Beopdan(繩墨法壇) Institute (教育院), was inaugurated in Buyeo County in the same district in 1988 (Lin 2014, 442).



Figure 3. Altar at International Morals Association headquarters in Seoul City.

The IMA claims to have spread the Dao to one million seekers; some sources say 1.3 million (IMA 2009, 37). While not all of those who receive the Dao continue to practice, the figure of one million converts is suspiciously large and would make IMA one of the largest if not the largest Yiguandao branch in the world. What is irrefutable is that by Kim's death in 1991 the IMA had spread widely throughout South Korea, with some 165 temples organized into 16 districts.

Like many of the Yiguandao organizations in Taiwan, the IMA during the 1980s and 1990s was concerned with the need to train members. Such training took the form of talent trainings (人才培訓, *rencai peixun*) in two forms: national dharma assemblies (全國大法會, *quanguo dafahui*) and repentance classes (懺悔班, *chanbuiban*). These trainings probably reflect the influence of Taiwan lineages, where such trainings had become popular. In all training sessions, Kim Bokdang mandated the use of the principle of humanistic learning (人間學會, *renjian xuehui*). Application of this principle gave the organization's six functional departments latitude to plan and develop according to their own needs.<sup>8</sup> The Taiwanese scholar Lin Rongze considers this administrative innovation the key to the IMA's ability to survive after the departure of Kim Bokdang (Lin 2014, 442).

Organizationally, the IMA currently maintains several social service units, including one scholarship foundation (獎學法人, *jiangxue faren*), four charity funds (福祉法人, *fuzhi faren*), and one rural foundation (營農法人, *nongye faren*).

The IMA's publications run to over 100 titles, including *The Edited Talks of Kim Bokdang* (昆水谷人法語輯, *kunshui guren fayuji*), *Lectures on the Furnace Times* (爐期講義錄, *luqi jiangyilu*), *Recorded Lectures on Ethics* (道德講義錄, *daode jiangyilu*), *Essentials of the Way of Heaven* (天道簡說, *tiandao jianshuo*), *Instructions in the Three Treasures* (三寶說教, *sanbao shuojiao*), *The Precious Transmission of Bodhidharma* (達摩寶傳, *damo baozhuan*), *New Understanding of the Study of the Way* (道學新論, *daoxue xinlun*), and *Acknowledge Principle and Return to Truth* (認理歸真, *renliguizhen*) (Lee 2014, 217-269). Most significant of all the IMA publications are Kim Bokdang's collected writings, which have recently been published in Taiwan (IMA 2016). In addition the IMA began to publish a magazine, *Ethics* (道德, *daode*), targeted at members, from 1965.

One important development was Kim's announcement of the cessation of *fuji* (扶乩) revelations in 1955 (Lin 2018, 10). Up until that point all important decision and developments had been guided and validated by *fuji* revelations. While widespread in popular Chinese religion, the practice of consulting *fuji* had begun to fade in Taiwan Yiguandao groups as well.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, spirit writing continued to carry much weight among Yiguandao members, and *fuji* is still practiced today in some temples. There is no doubt that the divine revelations received through *fuji* have been treated as being to some degree the actual pronouncements of the deities contacted. The instruction to

stop using *fujī* revelations in the IMA was therefore a major development. Ironically, it came in the form of a revealed directive from a deity, the Master of Examinations (院長大人, *yuanzhang daren*), concerning the will of the Heavenly Ancient Mother (上天老母, *shangtian laomu*):

Do not carry out any further revelations. From today if there are any revelations carried out it goes against the celestial rules. From now on the Dao affairs in Korea will be carried out according to the instructions of Master Kim Bokdang. *His instructions are identical to the will of the Unborn Mother.* [Italics added.]

今後不要進行任何降筆, 從今天起如果再進行降筆就是違法佛規的行動。今後韓國得道務就跟隨金福堂前任的指示來進行, 金福堂的指示和上天老母的天命毫無差別。(IMA 2011, 15)

This revelation indicated that all of Kim's actions would carry the divine imprimatur. There would therefore be no need to practice *fujī* revelation in the future. Assuming that this announcement was orchestrated, we can only speculate as to the reasons Kim stopped using the *fujī*. At the very least it indicates that his influence was paramount within the IMA.

Another significant aspect of Kim Bokdang's tenure was his effort to position the IMA as a patriotic organization. In keeping with many other religious leaders in Korea, Kim held dharma assemblies to pray for unification between north and south (巡迴大法會, *xunhui dafahui*). The first of these symposia was held in 1981 and the second in 1982. Jichu(基礎) Lineage seniors Su Shouxin (蘇守信) and Zhang Peicheng (張培成) were invited to attend from Hong Kong and Taiwan, respectively.

By all indications Kim managed the organization tightly. He is today widely revered by IMA practitioners. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that Kim Bokdang's Korean branch of Yiguandao took root in Korea in the first place. One possible explanation is that Kim was adept at integrating Yiguandao's eschatological message, a key component of doctrine, into an environment of Korean millenarianism. When Kim Bokdang met with the Patriarch Sun Suzhen in 1971, he was given specific authority to develop an additional 500 transmission masters. These 500 leaders must have been recruited and trained in an environment of strong belief in the Yiguandao millenarian message, one which found strong echoes in Korea.

Kim Bokdang is no longer present. In contrast to practice in most Chinese Yiguandao groups, the IMA has not appointed a new senior to replace him. At this time there are several seniors heading sub-lineages, but no single leader has risen to prominence. This means that the IMA headquarters functions without a senior leader. The lack of strong leadership is in stark contrast to the situation during Kim Bokdang's tenure. Perhaps

as a result of the organizational stasis, there is some concern within the IMA that Yiguandao will gradually decline in Korea.

Besides these three major lineage organizations, beginning in the 1990s several other Yiguandao groups established temples in Korea. Some of these have developed into major temple networks with potential for further growth.<sup>10</sup>

#### D) Korean Maitreya Buddha Hall of Heavenly Grace (韓國天恩彌勒佛院, *K. banguk cheoneun mireukbul-won*)

As mentioned briefly above, the Korean Maitreya Buddha Hall of Heavenly Grace strictly speaking belongs to a separate religious tradition, Maitreya Great Tao. This new religion was formally registered in Taiwan in 2000. At that time, it became organizationally distinct from Yiguandao groups. Today there is little interaction between Maitreya Great Tao and traditional Yiguandao lineages. However, prior to its registration the same network claimed to be a part of Yiguandao. Indeed the group's original founder, Wang Haode (王好德, 1921-1999), claimed to have received the *tianming* directly from the joint 18<sup>th</sup> patriarch Sun Suzhen on her deathbed. In addition, all ritual and terminology used by Maitreya Great Tao remains recognizably within the Yiguandao fold. Maitreya Great Tao clearly shares a history and soteriology with Yiguandao groups. For this reason, we treat Maitreya Great Tao and its Korean branch as a member of the family of Yiguandao-derived religious groups.<sup>11</sup>

The transmission master Kim Gigon (金淇坤) had established the predecessor temple, Cheondeokdan, in 1996.<sup>12</sup> Up until the point where he disassociated his group from the Greater Korea Ethics Society, Kim had been a transmission master in the Puhua Temple established by Zhang Ruiquan and Gao Yuncheng in 1948. Kim's organization is now an official branch of Maitreya Great Tao. According to the *Dictionary of Korean New Religions*, the Korean Maitreya Buddha Hall of Heavenly Grace network had 16 temples in 2014 (Kim 2016, 1172).



Figure 4. Altar at Maitreya Great Tao (Korean Branch) head temple in Daegu City.

### E) Anyang (安養) Temple Network

We noted that Li Defu (李德福) led the second group which departed Tianjin in 1947. He arrived in Korea in 1948, and began working in the city of Anyang (安養), to the south of Seoul. We know that he established the Munhwadan (文化壇) in 1948. Li's successor was Wang Uishin (王義臣, Wang Yichen), who was in turn succeeded by Lee Jinbang (李振芳, Li Zhenfang), both originally from China.<sup>13</sup> There are currently between 10 and 20 temples in this network.

### F) Daren (大仁壇) Temple Network

Gao Yuncheng (高雲城), a native of Baozhi City (寶坻) in Hebei (河北), arrived in Korea in 1949, ostensibly with the goal of assisting Zhang Ruiquan. Gao worked in Daegu City, where he established the Cheonheungdan (天興壇) temple. Following the expulsion of Chinese members from the Morality Foundation in 1954 he worked independently. The major temple of this group is the Daegu Daeindan (大邱大仁壇) temple.

### G) Nanxing (南興) Temple Network

Nanxing was established in 1985 by 李翼淳, a Korean scholar who had received the Dao at the Xingyi Lineage (興毅組, *xingyizū*) Nanxing Temple (南興道場) in Taiwan (chinareviewnews 2010). As of 2000, this group's network had four temples. In addition to Nanxing Temple, Li also established the Goyngindang (宏仁堂) temple in Seoul in 1990, the Sun Family Temple (孫氏堂, *sonssidang*) in Daejeon in 1999, and Daejeon City Public Temple (大田市公共佛堂, K. *daejeon-si gonggongbuldang*) in 1990. This network can be considered a branch of Taiwan's Xingyi Lineage.

### H) Fayi Chongde Temple (發一崇德道場) Network

A major sub-lineage from Taiwan, Fayi Chongde (發一崇德), established several temples in Korea, beginning with the Bupyeong Kimssidang (富萍金氏堂) temple in 1998. This was followed by the Indeok Gongdang (仁德公堂) temple in Suwon (水源) and the Douideok Gongdang (道義德公堂) temple in Gangwon (江源). In 2000 the Yedeok Gongdang (禮德公堂) temple was established in Incheon (仁川). Two of the public temples in the network, Uideok (義德) and Jideok (智德), were opened by Korean followers, the rest by ethnic Chinese.

## I) Deokhwadang (德和堂) Temple Network

The Dukhwadang Temple Network is a second temple network under Taiwan's Fayi Lineage (發一組, *fayizu*), specifically under the Tianyuan Changsheng Temple (天元長聖道場, *tianyuan changsheng daochang*) sub-lineage. Dukhwadang was established in Seoul in 1987. It was followed by the Dukguangdan (德光堂) temple. The network has over 10 affiliated temples, including some in Busan and Jinju (晉州).

## J) Tianxiang Temple (天祥道場) Network

This temple was established in Seoul in 1991. There are two temples in the network. Overall the many smaller networks in Korean Yiguandao are affiliated with various Taiwanese lineages. They reflect the growing influence of Taiwanese Yiguandao groups, as well as the effort to spread Yiguandao internationally.

## Major Leaders in Focus—Zhang Ruiquan and Kim Bokdang

Little information exists on the major Yiguandao leaders, with two exceptions, Zhang Ruiquan and Kim Bokdang.<sup>14</sup> The lineages they founded, the Greater Korea Ethics Society and the International Morals Association, have collected large amounts of relevant material on their lives. In this section we will fill in some of the personal details for both men's lives. Both were born in northern China and received the Dao in Tianjin. Both were asked to go to Korea by the 18<sup>th</sup> patriarch, Zhang Tianran. Once in Korea their paths diverged, and the organizational networks they founded remain separate to this day.

### A) Zhang Ruiquan

Zhang Ruiquan's party of three was the first known group of Yiguandao masters to depart for Korea. A native of Ningjin (寧津) County near Tianjin, Zhang received the Dao in 1941, when he was 27. He was mentored by his direct transmission master, the senior Yang Guanchu (楊灌楚直屬前人). After receiving the Dao, Zhang established a clinic near the Chonghua Temple (崇華堂, *chonghuatang*) in Tianjin. He worked there for five years, under the supervision of the Dao Master (道長) Zhang Wenyun (張文運) (Song 2011, 5). Zhang Ruiquan met Zhang Tianran and Sun Suzhen several times during this period, at one point serving them a meal. It was at one of these moments that Zhang Tianran requested Zhang Ruiquan help spread the Dao in Korea (Song 2011, 5).

Yiguandao's founder Zhang Tianran issued an order to cease propagation of the Dao (止渡令, *zhidaoling*) in 1945 (Lee S. 2011, 106). He said that it was time for the Dao to spread internationally, and he specifically noted that Korea would be the first choice

for propagating the Dao outside China: “Our Dao of Prior Heaven must spread outside,” he said.<sup>15</sup> With such a portentous instruction, it is not surprising that Zhang Ruiquan responded quickly.

Zhang Ruiquan’s first step was to move to Andong (安東), in China’s far northeast. There he enlisted financial help from a local senior, Chen Huiquan (陳惠泉) (Song 2011, 22). This stopover turned into an extended stay of three years, during which Zhang worked on spreading the Dao and saving up funds for the mission to Korea.

Zhang finally made arrangements to depart on a small sailing vessel on July 7 of 1947. He was accompanied by Zhou Shenxiu (周慎修), the transmission master Wang Shaowen (王紹文), the young *tiancai* (天才) Li Zhaoxu (李兆煦), and the temple master (壇主 *tanzhu*) Zhang Nianxue (張年學). They brought some building materials and enough food for 20 days, which reportedly took all their cash. (Song 2011, 26)

The trip did not go smoothly. The boat was forced by bad weather to take cover near an island in China. Arriving eventually in Korea, the party was interrogated at Jinnampo (鎮南浦), in what is now North Korea. They next reached Dukjeok Island (德積島). From there they moved to Wolmi Island (月尾島). The entire trip took 49 days (Song 2011, 30). Not only was this the first Yiguandao mission in Korea, it was one of the earliest Yiguandao missions overseas.<sup>16</sup>

The period between 1952 and 1961 was one of hardship. Zhang’s greatest challenge came after the Three Altars Incident, when he was shunned by all temples and existing Yiguandao organizations. To survive he opened up a Chinese medicine shop in Daegu (大邱). He eventually moved to Seoul, where he lived simply in the Mungryundong (明倫洞) district in a one-room residence. He later started yet another Chinese medicine shop. He eventually received a license to practice Chinese medicine, and established the Cheondeok Hanui-won Hospital (天德漢醫院) (Song 2011, 38-40). All of this activity kept him occupied throughout the 1950s. The GKES did not begin until 1961.

Clearly, Zhang’s career in Korea was filled with challenges. He did not achieve the major breakthrough for Yiguandao that he probably wanted. But his followers admire his perseverance to this day (Song 2011, 31).

## B) Kim Bokdang

Kim was born into an ethnic Korean family in Wuyi County (武邑縣), Hebei province. He moved to Tianjin when he was 16 and later graduated from Nankai University, where he majored in philosophy. After graduation he established a small factory and retail store selling belts.

Not only was Kim of Korean ancestry, his ancestors had in fact been from the aristocracy. The IMA exhibition hall in Seoul displays a genealogy chart (家譜, *jiapu*) tracing his family back to a branch of the Kim (金) family of Gyeongju (慶州). His ancestor thirteen generations prior had been sent to the Qing court as an emissary from



the Chosun dynasty, and the family continued to live in China thereafter.

Kim's wife Zhang Fenglan (張鳳蘭) was the first to convert to Yiguandao. Moved by her example, Kim Bokdang received the Dao in 1936 at the Gangyi Temple (剛毅佛堂) in Tianjin. Gangyi was a sub-temple in the Daode Lineage, which was introduced above as the first major altar in Tianjin (International Moral Association 2011,4). At that point Kim was 22, probably just out of university.

In 1945, after having practiced for ten years, he became a transmission master. Soon after this Zhang Tianran asked him to go to Korea to spread the Dao, to serve, in other words, as a missionary. Zhang urged Kim on, saying, "When you return to Korea, all the saints and ancestors will help you achieve your mission."<sup>17</sup> Kim left for Korea by steamer via Shanghai; the specific year is not known, but we assume it was 1947 or 1948. In the process Kim left behind his wife and six children. He evidently did not expect to be gone long. Yet he may have had an inkling of the possibility of a separation, as he told his children, "when you are grown up, you will understand me." Kim never saw his parents, his wife, or his eldest son Jin Shuxin (金樹新), again. Both his wife and eldest son were arrested and died in captivity after the communist conquest of China in 1949.

Kim traveled to Korea with two others, Dao master (道長, *daozhang*) Kim Eunchung (金恩忠) and transmission master Cho Uimin (曹義敏). Together they founded the Society of Morality (道德社).<sup>18</sup> The trio at first focused on converting Chinese residents. Ethnic Korean membership began to grow after they converted the Korean wife of one member, Lee Soon Ae (李順愛). The date of the Society of Morality's establishment is not known, but we can assume it came prior to the establishment of the IMA in 1953, since as discussed above the Society of Morality was one of the three major branches folded into the Foundation of Morality in 1952.

Internal sources on the history of the IMA are not always clear. Kim eventually became the pre-eminent power within the organization. But his authority did not go unchallenged. He was, most notably, arrested on several occasions. In 1968 he was accused by a follower, Pan Nam Hong, of being a spy sent by Mao Zedong (IMA 2011, 17). He was reportedly called in to the National Security Planning and tortured before being released at night into a public cemetery in Seoul. His life had in fact been spared through the intervention of a colonel in the military police, Yang Yeongtae (梁英泰), whose wife was in turn the niece of a Yiguandao Great Master (IMA 2011,24).

According to the Association's material, competing parties continually conspired to spread rumors and falsehoods about Kim throughout his life. In 1976 another serious accusation by seven followers led to Kim's imprisonment. After this he remained under constant police surveillance. His legal trials continued well into the 1990s, when he was finally acquitted in court.

On yet another occasion Kim was deceived by a transmission master named Lee Man Shik (李萬植) who oversaw the Jesebuldang (濟世佛堂) temple in Busan. It was Lunar New Year's Eve. Li warned Kim that he was about to be arrested, and that he should go

into hiding. Kim and another member, Shin Bok Gyun (申福均), then went into hiding for several days. At the same time Lee reportedly tricked Kim into passing him a large sum of money.

Following his death in 1991 Kim was given the posthumous title of Ancient One of the Turbulent Waters (昆水谷人, *kunshui guren*). He is widely believed to have been an incarnation of Maitreya Buddha.<sup>19</sup>

## Discussion and Conclusion

This survey focuses on institutional development of a major world religion, Yiguandao, in a specific national context, South Korea. While we mention historical events and the major individuals behind Yiguandao's push into Korea, our main focus is to understand how Yiguandao institutions have developed in Korea. Several elements of institutional identity are clear. Firstly, Yiguandao's move to Korea, from both the adjacent bases in Tianjin and Andong and, later, from Taiwan, was a natural evolution. Korea lies next to China's northeast and has always enjoyed close cultural and trade interaction with a number of Chinese cultures. Korea has a shared background in Buddhism and Confucianism, as well as some Daoism, all of which are components of Yiguandao ideology and practice. And in the post-WWII period of economic prosperity South Korea became a wealthy and open society, posing relatively few barriers to propagation. Taiwan, Japan, and Korea have developed deep ties throughout the post-war period. It should not be surprising that a Chinese religious tradition focused on growth and ritual practice should take root in Korea.

A second salient feature of Yiguandao in Korea is indigenization. A significant percent of the active lineages is fully Korean, especially the Society of Ethics. This situation with Yiguandao is not unique—it mirrors the indigenization of other forms of Korean religiosity, in particular Buddhism and Christianity. Nevertheless, not all Yiguandao satellite temples manage to take root in other parts of the world. Based on the current authors' observations, in many cases they remain ethnic temples run by Taiwanese, Chinese, or Vietnamese immigrants, with at best a small number of token local members. Yiguandao has had great success in such countries as Korea and Thailand, where the initial Taiwanese leadership has been replaced by locally trained transmission masters. For this reason, the degree of indigenization in Korea is worthy of note, and a sign that Yiguandao still has potential to be a major religion on the world stage.

A third finding is in the area of doctrine. The sacred texts found in the active lineages in Korea often consist of standard Yiguandao ritual and divination texts. The Society of Ethics has a major collection of writings, in both Korean and Chinese, but these were collected early on, in the 1950s, and consist largely of the revealed texts obtained through *fuji* divination. The International Morals Association holds many of the writings of Kim

Bokdang, in Chinese, which have yet to be fully studied. Kim had a background in academic philosophy, as well as a thorough knowledge of Yiguandao, so there may very well be unique theological innovations in his writings. However, from the point of view of practice the lineages surveyed here have kept to standard Yiguandao teachings and ritual practice. There are as yet few signs of innovation in theology. The relative resistance to doctrinal change is not confined to Korea, of course. Many of the Taiwanese lineages are similarly ambivalent about doctrinal innovation.

A fourth topic is relations between the Korean units and the Taiwan lineages. Throughout this period of turmoil and development in Korea, Yiguandao was undergoing its own course of development in Taiwan. The numerous *qianren* and transmission masters who had moved there from China included many senior Dao masters from major lineages and temples in China. In addition the wife of the founder, Sun Suzhen (孫素貞), had herself located to Taiwan in 1953. From no later than the 1970s at least eighteen active lineages and more sub-lineages have been active in Taiwan. Many of these had large membership bases and stable funding resources, allowing them to spread overseas. Based on our description above, in the Korean context Fayi and Xingyi were the most active Taiwan lineages.

Relations between Korean Yiguandao and the Yiguandao lineages in Taiwan appear to have been limited until the 1970s. Sun Suzhen finally dispatched a delegation to visit Korea, and specifically Kim Bokdang, in 1971. The delegation was led by Yiguandao leaders Dong Yiming (董義冥) as well as Su Shouxin (蘇受信) (IMA 2011). From the importance attached to this visit in the IMA's account we can confidently assume that Kim still paid allegiance to Sun. And he personally visited her in Taiwan in 1973. While there he received confidential instructions from Sun. First was a teaching on the saving of sinners through repentance (懺悔渡罪經, *chanbui duzuijing*). He was also given the authority to develop 500 transmission masters. The GKES also appears to have enjoyed close relations with Taiwan lineages, in particularly Fayi.

A final finding seen clearly in this article is that the various lineages and networks in Korea are not united. From a civil society standpoint, the lineages and networks share a common background but have failed to join together into a single organization to represent their shared interests. Such pan-lineage and pan-network cooperation has been difficult in Yiguandao in general. In fact, it has only happened in Taiwan. Yiguandao organizations in other locations, including mainland China before 1949, maintained sole loyalty to the respective lineage and founder. Even in Taiwan only about 60% of temples belong to the umbrella organization, the Yiguandao Association.

From one angle this lack of unity is not surprising. The temple's mission is to propagate the Dao, and the organizing mechanism to accomplish this is through motivated transmission masters going out into the field, supported by temples. In theory there is no remit to cooperate beyond the lineage. In practice, lineage rivalries block potentially

beneficial inter-lineage cooperation. This competition can be seen as an organizational trait of Yiguandao lineages in general, dating back to the very founding of the movement in 1930, when Zhang Tianran and Sun Suzhen joined forces and received the *tianming*. At the time the *tianming* had been “temporarily held” by the daughter of the 17<sup>th</sup> patriarch. Following Zhang Tianran’s death in 1947 there were new splits between followers of his first wife and Sun Suzhen. And once in Taiwan the various lineages, all deriving from different mother temples in China, generally focused on their own internal development. So inter-group rivalry is nothing new.

Yet there is also a strong argument for some level of cooperation. A single organization can speak with a powerful voice in civil society settings. It can promote certain values and present an accurate image of the religion. It can control messaging. And it can effectively lobby the government. Taiwan’s Yiguandao Association, while sometimes struggling, has proven its value in these regards.

The Korean example of Yiguandao is at once a great success and, paradoxically, a possible failure. The largest branch, IMA, claims to have registered over a million adherents. In the Yiguandao context this means that a large number of people have sought the Dao (求道, *qiudao*) at lineage altars. This is an extraordinary success, by most measures.

At the same time there is a time bomb ticking under the surface. Kim Bokdang, the Patriarch of the major lineage, the IMA, died in 1991. At the time there were five subsidiary *qianren* under Kim; three have since died, and the last two are elderly. The movement’s current leader is not a *qianren*, but the Head Transmission Master (領導點傳師, *lingdao dianchuanushi*).

The organization continues to function, but without its charismatic leader. In some ways the IMA appears to be frozen in its tracks, unable to change course. This may also be the case with all the other lineages and networks discussed above, with the exception of the Maitreya Great Tao branch. Several of the Taiwan-affiliated networks may also show institutional vitality.

Yiguandao successfully spread into a Korea that was reeling from war and beginning to develop. Today’s South Korea is a very different setting. Institutional flexibility and accommodation will still be needed to adjust to modern society. South Korea’s current condition as a developed nation will continue to test Yiguandao’s resilience.

## Conflict of Interest

Edward Irons has been on the Editorial Board of *JDTREA* and Lee Gyungwon has been the Associate Editor of *JDTREA* since July 2021 but neither had any no role in the decision to publish this article. No potential conflict of interest relevant to this article was reported.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> In this text Chinese romanization will be used to refer to these three original leaders. Korean romanization will be used for other Chinese leaders who stayed in Korea, as well as for all Korean individuals. Chinese characters are given for reference, for all names.
- <sup>2</sup> Lin Rongze has used two terms to refer to the Unification of the Three Altars in Chinese: 三團合一 (*santuanbeyi*) and 三壇合一 (*santanbeyi*). This paper will follow the later term. See Lin (2018, 3).
- <sup>3</sup> This source, provided from the IMA temple, states that Kim Bokdang was named the first president of the Foundation of Morals Association. This claim is not matched in other sources, however.
- <sup>4</sup> The three sections of the Tian Shu are the Scripture of the Heavenly Lord Heavenly Harvest (神主收天經, *shenzhu sboutian jing*), the Scripture of the Imperial Spirit (皇靈經, *huanglingjing*), and the Scripture of the Three Sacred Miracles (三聖妙經, *sansheng miaojing*). Fuji revelatory texts contained in the Tian Shu date from the SOE's early period, and were all originally written in Chinese. *Fuji* revelation is no longer practiced in SOE.
- <sup>5</sup> The visitors were Zhang Wenyun (張文運), a Dao leader (道長, *daozhang*) from Taiwan's Tianzhen Zongtan lineage (天真總壇, *tianzhen zongtan*), and the senior Gao Banqi (高斌凱, 1924-2008) of Taiwan's Andong Lineage(安東組). See Lin 2018, 8.
- <sup>6</sup> The ten essentials discussed by Zhang are: 1.認道要真要知道道是真的；2.目標要准要看準目標；3.修道要誠 要至誠修道；4.心身要正心靈和身體都要正直；5.行道要篤行道要篤實；6.考魔要識要了解考與魔的意思；7.意志要堅要帶有堅定的意志；8.責任要負要負起責任；9.誓愿要了了的愿要了；10.天恩要報要報答上天的恩德。(GKES 1977, 1-2)
- <sup>7</sup> The ten prohibitions are: 1.不可自己尋死若自己結束生命,會變成魔鬼,遇到再怎麼困難的事,也不可自；2.不可口說是非不可將他人的過失當成與別人談論的話題；3.不可嫌夫貧醜不可厭惡家道貧困或丈夫外表不揚；4.不可搽胭脂粉不可化妝花俏,或過多裝飾,這樣會導致誘惑他人的結果；5.不可殺生命不區分生命,不隨意危害生命；6.不可獨自觀劇不可獨自去劇場或獨自觀賞；7.不可獨自登山遊寺不可獨自登山或去寺廟遊玩；8.不可串鄰賭博吃嘴不可聚集富有鄰居們賭博,以及好吃；9.不可好認乾兒不可收養兒女；10.不可溺女害命不可虐待,傷害前妻小孩。(GKES 1978, 2)
- <sup>8</sup> The six functional departments are general affairs (總務, *zongwu*), international affairs (國際, *guoji*), editorial (編輯, *bianji*), external affairs (涉外, *shewai*), education (教育, *jiaoyu*), and research (學術研究, *xueshu yanjiu*).
- <sup>9</sup> Many Yiguandao members at the time felt it to be superstitious and non-scientific to hold *fuji* sessions. In addition, a series of sensationalist revelations in Taiwan newspapers exposed instances whereby temple seniors had planted the contents of the revelations in advance.
- <sup>10</sup> Much of the following material on the Yiguandao networks in Korea is summarized in Lin Muyu (2002, 134-6).
- <sup>11</sup> The category of groups with resemblances to Yiguandao was first described by Wang Cishan (2009).
- <sup>12</sup> Lin Rongze notes that Kim started the Korean Maitreya Buddha Hall of Heavenly Grace in 1966, which does not make sense, since at that point Sun Suzhen was still alive and Wang Haode had not yet broken with the established Yiguandao lineages. See Lin (2018, 8).
- <sup>13</sup> Li Zhenfang had been in the second mission which departed from Tianjin in 1947, led by Li Defu (Lin Muyu 2014, 193).
- <sup>14</sup> Zhang Ruiquan's background is contained in the GKES publications Song Byeongcho(2011) and Lee Soonhyu(2011), as well as in particular entries in the monthly publication *Ethics Monthly* (道德月報) between 1972 and 1982. Kim Bokdang's life story is found in numerous IMA publications, such as the aforementioned "A brief biography."
- <sup>15</sup> "Our Great Way of Former Heaven must develop overseas" (我們先夫大道要傳到外, *women xiantian dadao yao chuandaowai*). Song (2011, 23).

- <sup>16</sup> The first Yiguandao mission to Taiwan was in 1945. See Lin (2015).
- <sup>17</sup> “Go to Korea, ten million ancestors will assist you to complete your great mission” (你回韓國, 千佛萬祖會幫助你大功告成的, *ni buibanguo, qianwanzu bui bangzhu ni dagong gaobengde*) (IMA 2011,4).
- <sup>18</sup> Kim Eun Chong and Cho Eui Min are mentioned in the IMA source “A brief biography.” Neither of them appears in other records. The authors assume they were ethnic Korean heritage and so use the Korean romanization for their name.
- <sup>19</sup> Maitreya fulfills the role of savior in Korean Buddhism. Maitreya belief was a Korean millenarian faith long before the arrival of Yiguandao in 1947(IMA 2010).

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