



Sincronía

E-ISSN: 1562-384X

revista.sincronia@academicos.udg.mx

Universidad de Guadalajara

México

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Sincronía, núm. 39, junio-septiembre, 2006, pp. 1-21

Universidad de Guadalajara

Guadalajara, México

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Shendao, Shindo and Shinto (神道 / 신도). Comparative linguistic and cultural studies of the Korean and Japanese tradition for the terminology of spiritual beliefs and its Chinese cultural background

*Shendao, Shindo y Shinto (神道 / 신도). Estudios lingüísticos y culturales comparativos de la tradición coreana y japonesa
Para la terminología de las creencias espirituales y su fondo cultural chino*

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This article focuses on a comparative study of Shendao, Shindo and Shinto movements in China, Japan and Korea. Linguistically in terms of etymology, the three terms are similar, but in practice the three countries developed slightly different cultural forms. While there is obviously an etymological relation between Shendao, Shinto and Shinto in the belief system we find divergences in common basic beliefs and practices. We will look at the use of the term 'shin' and alternative concepts to decide about the terminology and translation options.

Shamanism in which shin belief finds its ground is still alive in South Korea, Japan, and the Chinese communities in Southeast Asia, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Descriptions of shamanic spirit journeys (*shen you*) are found in a number of texts of Daoism. The term is related with Shamanism. The word 'shaman' comes from the Manchu-Tungus language (*saman*) and means 'one who knows'. Shamans typically are chosen by the spirits. *Wu* is usually translated as 'shaman' in modern books on ancient Chinese religion. *Wu* are to perform exorcisms, serve as mediums to the spirits of the dead, interpret omens, pray and dance to bring rain, organized numerous sacrifices and other procedures. The Daoist philosopher Zhuang Zi valued the shamanic techniques for individual growth, liberation, well-being, and certainly for enjoyment. Some shamans stress the 'supernatural' aspect and specialized in sacrifice and dealings with the various ghosts and spirits. Zi wrote that the *shen ren* is an independent and evolved holy person or shaman, with great power to

affect the world, but with little inclination to be tied down with the affairs of government.¹ The early Daoists elaborated on the ritual fasting and preparations done by these early mediums, including quieting the heartmind of its distractions and sitting still. Confucius' *Doctrine of the Mean* in the translation of Charles Muller contains a commentary of Confucius on spiritual beings:

16. Confucius said: "The overabundance of the power of spiritual beings is truly amazing! Looking for them, they cannot be seen. Listening for them, they cannot be heard. There is nothing that they do not embody. They cause the people of the world to fast for purification, and wear beautiful clothes in order to participate at the sacrifices. They are overflowing, seeming to be above, seeming to be on the left and on the right. The Book of Odes says: 'Trying to investigate the spirits, we cannot reach them. How could we possibly grasp them with our thoughts?' The manifestation of the subtle and the inconcealability of sincerity is like this."²

Key practices related with *shin beliefs* are ancestral rites and divination, Daoism, the teachings of the philosophers Confucius and Laozi, and Buddhism. In understanding the various Chinese *shin* belief objects, it is important to see the variations of shins. A shaman is a priest or priestess who uses magic for the purpose of curing the sick, predicting the future, and controlling events. There is a correlation between Asian medical culture and *shin*-belief. In acupuncture the 'spirit path pattern' consists of six acupuncture points and has a twofold function that is formulated and designed to install the correct frequencies for strengthening the Heart Chakra, and to unite the higher physical body chakras in the proper frequency to form a 'pathway to spirits.' The fourth point needed in the spirit path pattern is called *shen dao* in Chinese. *Shen* (身) means in its simplest meaning body. The *shen* that most acupuncturists are familiar with is related to the activities of the mind, memory, mental alertness, and the emotions that are associated with the heart, such as joy and happiness. The 'higher level *shen*' or 'higher spirit', is sometimes also called 'original spirit.' There is also a human *shen* in the heart. The 'original *shen*' is limitless and has a

1 Yutang, Lin: Translation of the Chuang-tzu. Online edition. Dec. 12. 2005. <[Http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/gthursby/taoism/cz-text2.htm](http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/gthursby/taoism/cz-text2.htm)>

2 2] Confucius. The Doctrine of the Mean. Translated by Charles Muller. Dec. 12. 2005. <[Http://www.hm.tyg.jp/~acmuller/contao/docofmean.htm](http://www.hm.tyg.jp/~acmuller/contao/docofmean.htm)>

direct connection back to what is called *wu chi* in Chinese. *Shen dao* is often translated as 'spirit path' and the name of this pattern is taken from the name of this point. *Shen ming* ('folk deities' or 'spirits') usually refers to the various household and nature gods or spirits, such as the deities of thunder, winds, mountains, etc. *Shen men* and *yang gu* control laughter. *Shen zhu* heals anger with the desire to kill someone. *Xin shu* and *shen men* heal sorrow and crying of children. *Shen yi* is the Chinese sun god. When the heat of ten suns scorched the earth, he shot nine with his arrows and became the ruler of the remaining one. He also got the title of 'Heavenly Archer'. The goddess Xi Wang-mu granted him the drought of immortality, and he went to the abode of the immortals. His wife Heng O tried to drink the draught too, but he caught her before she could drink all of it. As a result, she did not reach Heaven and had to settle on the moon. The wind god Fei Lian is his eternal enemy. *Sheng yi* is portrayed with a sun in his hand.³

Next to the *shin* concept there are other expressions for spiritual entities. *Ci* is the classical Chinese word for ghosts in general. *Ci* is the classical word for a dragon without horns. The word *mei* by itself means a beautiful and terrible spirit that cannot exist without stripping mortals of their soul or life-force (*jing qi*) through sexual intercourse or by blood-taking. The words *wang liang* mean a demon or spirit in mountains or rivers. *Gui* is the general term for 'ghost,' whether it's human or animal or material. *Gui hun* is the ghost of a human soul. *Gui shen* is literally 'ghost god' used traditionally for gods who have let their powers corrupt them. The majority of these types of spirits have bad intentions. 'God' can be translated in Chinese as *shen*. Alternative terms are 'spirit', 'holiness', 'numina'. Chinese culture believes each person has two spirits, a good spirit known as *shin*, and a bad known as *gui*. If the body of the dead does not get a proper burial the *gui* is left to wander. Like in India and Egypt, the Chinese would offer cakes to the ghosts in the hope that they would not bother the family.

The Japanese language knows also the terms '*shin*' and '*kokoro*'. The *I-Ching* the *Book of Changes*, uses the phrase *shen dao* (神道). The *I-Ching* states " what cannot be put in terms of yin and yang is called spirit (*shen*)". It is also said that "when *qi* is extended, it forms spirits (*shen*); when furled up, it forms ghosts (*gui*)." In Japanese culture only a physical entity can be referred to

3 Cf.: Foy, Geoff E.: Chinese Belief Systems: From Past to Present and Present to Past. Dec. 12. 2005.<http://www.askasia.org/teachers/Instructional_Resources/Materials/Readings/China/R_china_16.htm>

as a *kami* (spirit, deity). Japanese Shinto of the State is called *kokka shinto* (家 神道). Alternative translations for *shen dao* (神道) are 'soul path' or 'sacred way'.⁴ *Shen* are the good ghosts or gods of China. Most ghosts or gods in Chinese mythology have their origins as mortals, whether they were at one time human or animal. By learning magical practice it was believed that mortals could ascend to god-hood and thus immortality. Most of these so-called 'gods' retained many of their mortal flaws even after ascension. In the China of Darkness the *shen* are any spirits or beings that are not dedicated to evil. The transcendents (*xian ren*, 'immortals') began life as humans and returned to the ideal embryonic condition through a variety of means. The 'City god' is *cheng huang shen*'. The first meaning of *shen* is confined to the domain of the individual human being; it can be translated as 'spirit' in the sense of 'human spirit' or 'psyche'. It is the basic power or agency within humans that accounts for life. To extend life to full potential the spirit must be cultivated, resulting in ever clearer, more luminous states of being. In physiological terms 'spirit' is a general term for the 'heavenly souls', in contrast to the *yin* elements of the person. The more supernatural meaning of *shen* may be rendered in English as 'spirits' or 'gods' for all-mighty, transcendent, or creators of the world.

The Chinese character *shen* in Japanese is pronounced as *shin* or *kami*. In this sense 'spirits' (*shen*) are *yang* and opposed to the *yin* class of things known in Chinese as *gui*, 'ghosts' or 'demons' with a negative connotation. The two words put together in the combined form *gui shen* ('ghosts and spirits') cover all manner of spiritual beings, benevolent and malevolent, lucky and unlucky. In this perspective of Daoism spirits are manifestations of the *yang* material force, and ghosts are manifestations of the *yin* material force. The proverb *Shen gon gui fu* ('Shen's work, Gui's axe') describes master pieces crafted so exquisitely that they seem to be created not by humans, but by super natural beings and put together the supernatural entities of *yin* and *yang*.

Shinto (Japanese: 神道) is the native religion of Japan. It involves the worship of *kami*, which could be translated as 'gods', 'ghosts', 'nature spirits', or just 'spiritual presences'. Some *kami* are very local and can be regarded as the spirit or genius of a particular place, but others represent major natural objects and processes. The word *shinto* was created by combining two

4 See also: Wang Xiaolin: Cultural Differentiation: On Shen and Xin in Chinese and Japanese.<[Http://www.cityu.edu.hk/ccs/Newsletter/newsletter3/HomePage/CulturalDiff/CulturalDiff.html](http://www.cityu.edu.hk/ccs/Newsletter/newsletter3/HomePage/CulturalDiff/CulturalDiff.html)>

Chinese characters (神道, *shen dao*). The first character means 'divine' or 'god', and can also be read as '*kami*' in Japanese. The second character means 'way' or 'path,' and is the character used for the word 'Taoism.' Shinto literally means 'the way of the kami.' The Japanese religious tradition is rich and complex encompassing within it both complementary and contradictory trends in religious thought and practice with an ease that may occasionally puzzle the Western observer. Shinto about 500 B.C. was originally an amorphous mix of nature worship, fertility cults, divination techniques, hero worship, and shamanism. Its name was derived from the Chinese words *shen dao* (*The way of the gods*) in the 6th century C.E. At that time the Yamato dynasty consolidated its rule over Japan. Divine origins were ascribed to the imperial family. Shinto established itself as an official religion of Japan, along with Buddhism the two words in Japanese and Korean, the cults based upon Shinto / Shindo beliefs are quite different.

At the beginning of the Japanese culture tradition stand Shinto, the indigenous religion of Japan, and Buddhism, the Indian religion that reached Japan in the sixth through eighth centuries A.D. from Korea and China. About 84% of the population of Japan follows Shinto or Buddhism. It has been these two religions that have contributed most to the Japanese understanding of themselves and their world. Shinto was the earliest Japanese religion. The word Shinto, '*the way of the kami* (gods or spirits)', came into use only after the 6th century, when the Japanese sought to distinguish their own tradition from the foreign religions of Buddhism and Confucianism that they were then encountering. In its origins, Shinto was the religion of people who were sensitive to the spiritual forces that pervaded the world of nature in which they lived.⁵

The Shinto worldview is fundamentally bright and optimistic, as befits a religion in which the main deity is a sun goddess. While it is not unaware of the darker aspects of human existence, Shinto's main thinking is the celebration and enrichment of life. Two 8th-century works, the *Kojiki* (*Record of Ancient Matters*) and the *Nihon shoki* (*Chronicles of Japan*) include the story of the

5 Watt, Paul: Shinto and Buddhism: Wellsprings of Japanese Spirituality. Article for the Asia Society's Focus on Asian Studies, Vol. II, No. 1, Asian Religions, pp. 21-23, Fall 1982.

Other works on Shintoism:

Basic literature is:

Picken, Stuart D. B.: Essentials of Shinto. An analytical guide to principal teachings. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994. Pp. 20ff

Picken, Stuart D. B.: Historical dictionary of Shinto. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2002. Bibliography Pp. 253 - 283

creation of the Japanese islands by the divine couple Izanagi and Izanami. A subsequent birth of numerous gods and goddesses exists. The Sun Goddess Amaterasu was chief among them and the descent of representatives of the Sun Goddess' line to rule the islands.

Japanese Shinto exists in four main forms or traditions: *Koshitsu Shinto* (Shinto of the Imperial House) involves rituals performed by the emperor, who the Japanese Constitution defines to be the symbol of the state and of the unity of the people. *Jinja Shinto* (Shrine Shinto) is the largest Shinto group. It was the original form of the religion. Its roots date back into pre-history. *Kyoha Shinto* (Sectarian Shinto) (*aka Shuha Shinto*) consists of 13 sects, which were founded by individuals since the start of the 19th century. *Minzoku* (Folk Shinto) is not a separate Shinto group with no formal central organization or creed.⁶ Shinto deities are referred to as *kami*. The term is frequently translated 'god' or 'gods', but it expresses a concept of divinity significantly different from that found in Western religion. Shinto deities do not share the characteristics of utter transcendence and omnipotence often associated with the concept of god in the West. A *kami* may be anything that is extraordinary and that inspires awe or reverence. A wide variety of *kami* exist in Shinto. There are *kami* related to natural objects and creatures like the spirits of mountains, seas, rivers, rocks, trees or animals. There are guardian *kami* of particular locales and clans. Other *kami* are exceptional human beings, including all but the last in Japan's long line of emperors. Japanese Shinto religious texts discuss the 'High plain of heaven' and the 'Dark Land', which is an unclean land of the dead, but give few details of the afterlife. Ancestors are deeply revered and worshipped. Shinto recognizes many sacred places like mountains and springs. Each shrine is dedicated to a specific *kami* who has a divine personality and responds to sincere prayers of the faithful. *Origami* ('Paper of the spirits') is a Japanese folk art in which paper is folded into beautiful shapes. They are often seen around Shinto shrines. Out of respect for the tree spirit that gave its life to make the paper, origami paper is never cut.

6 Nelson, John K.: Enduring identities. The guise of Shinto in contemporary Japan. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000. Pp. 32ff.

The living way: Kyososama no goitsuwa. Stories of Kurozumi Munetada, a Shinto founder narrated by Tadaaki Kurozumi and Isshi Kohmoto. Translated by Sumio Kamiya. Edited by Willis Stoesz. Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 1999.

Lokowandt, Ernst: Shinto. Eine Einführung. Eine Publikation der OAG Deutsche Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens, Tokyo. München: Iudicium, 2001

Shinto creation stories tell of the history and lives of the *kami* (deities).⁷ Humans become *kami* after they die and are revered by their families as ancestral *kami*. The *kami* of extraordinary people are even enshrined at some shrines. Some prominent rocks are worshipped as *kami*. Among them was a divine couple Izanagi-no-mikoto and Izanami-no-mikoto, who gave birth to the Japanese islands. Their children became the deities of the various Japanese clans. Amaterasu Omikami, the sun goddess, was one of their daughters and is the ancestress of the Imperial Family and is regarded as the chief deity. Her shrine is at Ise. Her descendants unified the country. Her brother Susano came down from heaven and roamed throughout the earth. The *kami* are the original Shinto deities. The word *kami* is generally translated 'god' or 'gods'. The *kami* –just like the shin- have little similarity with the gods of monotheistic religions. There are no concepts, which compare to the monotheistic beliefs in the wrath of God, his omnipotence and omni-presence, or the separation of God from humanity due to sin. There are numerous other deities who are conceptualized in many forms: Those related to natural objects and creatures. A Shinto-festival continues for several days, shifting at times in mood from the solemn to the lighthearted or even raucous, individual worship may require only a few moments to complete. In spite of such contrasts all types of Shinto worship have three essential elements in common. All types begin with the all-important act of purification, which ordinarily involves the use of water; in both an offering is presented to the *kami*, today usually money but often food; and in both a prayer or petition is made. In general Shinto worship is performed at a shrine. Since Shinto is without scriptures, dogmas, and creeds, worship has always had a central place in the religion. Shinto was less transmitted through sermons or study. It became popular through its festivals and rituals. Shinto has transmitted its characteristic attitudes and values in practicing it. Most prominent among these are a sense of gratitude and respect for life, a deep appreciation of the beauty and power of nature, a love of purity and cleanliness, and preference for the simple and unadorned in

7 Cf.: Handbuch der Orientalistik. Ed. by H. Hammitzsch. Part 8: Antoni, Klaus: Shinto und die Konzeption des japanischen Nationalwesens (Kokutai). Der religiöse Traditionalismus in Neuzeit und Moderne Japans. Leiden: Brill, 1998. Bibliography Pp. 387 – 414

Shinto in history: Ways of the Kami. Ed. by John Breen and Mark Teeuwen. Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press, 2000. Pp. 56ff

the area of aesthetics. After World War II the Emperor was forced by the American army to renounce his divinity at that time.

Important features of Shinto art are shrine architecture and the cultivation and preservation of ancient art forms such as *No* theater, calligraphy and court music (*gagaku*), an ancient dance music that originated at the courts of Tang China (618 - 907). *Shin ran* teachings developed within the Shin sect. It is pointed out that *Shin ran* left the monastery to marry and to preach Buddhism according to his understanding. Shin clergy today marry and eat meat and do many of the things, which Buddha forbade, to his monks. *Shin ran* insisted that the Japanese monks of his day had lost their valid orders. The Shin attitude can be seen in *Shin ran's Compendium on Teaching, Practice, Faith and Attainment*. This is the basic presentation of the fundamental doctrines of the Shin sect. At the beginning of this 'Compendium', *Shin ran* says that the 'Great Sutra of Eternal Life' is the only important scripture for his teaching. *Shin ran* then goes on to quote fifty-three other books to illustrate his teachings, virtually ignoring his main scripture. When he does quote this *Great Sutra*, he accepts five different versions of it as equally authoritative; yet some of these do not even contain *Shin ran's* most basic theme, the *Eighteenth Vow of Amida*.

Shin is never concerned with letters or scripture. It considers the scriptures as a guide to the way to explain what has already been experienced. Non-theistic Shin Buddhism is not concerned with prayers. Shinto documents and Shinto scriptures are *The Kojiki* and *The Nihongi*. The *Yengishiki* or Shinto Rituals are also written down.⁸ In the *Koj-iki* (part I. *The birth of the deities*) the beginning of heaven and earth is described:

The names of the deities that were born in the Plain of High Heaven when the Heaven and Earth began were the deity Master-of-the-August-Center-of-Heaven; next, the High-

⁸ Cf: Elvy, Dale: *Dark Shinto*. Auckland: Harper Collins Publishers (New Zealand) 2003.

Nobutaka, Inoue (ed.): *Shinto, a short history*. London; New York: Routledge Curzon 2003

Littleton, C. Scott: *Shinto: Origins, rituals, festivals, spirits, sacred places*. Oxford [a.o.]: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002.

Satow, Ernest Mason, Florenz, Karl: *Ancient Japanese rituals and the revival of pure Shinto*. London: Kegan Paul, 2002:

Shinto: The sacred art of ancient Japan. Edited by Victor Harris. London: British Museum, 2001

Kato, Genichi: *A historical study of the religious development of Shinto*. Reprint. New York [a.o.]: Greenwood Press, 1988

August-Producing-Wondrous deity; next, the Divine-Producing-Wondrous deity. These three deities were all deities born alone, and hid their persons.⁹

Set in writing in 712 AD, the *Kojiki* is the Japanese for a group of ancient stories that would be otherwise translated as *Records of Ancient Matters*. They represent the culmination of the Yamato dominance over the islands of Japan towards the end of the 7th century. The *Kojiki* essentially begins with the beginning of the world, the birth of Gods and Goddesses, the creation of the islands of Japan, and the descent of the Gods and Goddesses to Japan itself. The line of the tale concludes logically that the rulers of the period, overseeing the compilation of the texts, will be linked directly with the gods. The *Kojiki* is a rich lore of folk tale that has ultimately helped shape how the Japanese people view themselves. The *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi* have defined Japanese image, by the communication through literature of the most ancient of Japan's mythology.

In the *Yengishiki* the Harvest Ritual is described:

I declare in the presence of the sovereign gods of the Harvest, If the sovereign gods will bestow, in many-bundled spikes and in luxuriant spikes, the late-ripening harvest which they will bestow, the late-ripening harvest which will be produced by the dripping of foam from the arms, and by drawing the mud together between the opposing thighs, then I will fulfil their praises by presenting the first-fruits in a thousand ears, and in many hundred ears; raising high the beer-jars, filling and ranging in rows the bellies of the beer-jars, I will present them in juice and in grain.¹⁰

The *Nihongi* (*The laws of Rotoku Tenno*), Book XXV, tells how the Emperor Ame-yorodzu toyo-hi honored the religion of Buddha and despised the *Way of the Gods*. On the 19th day the Emperor, the Empress Dowager, and the Prince Imperial summoned together the Ministers under the great tsuki tree, and made an oath appealing to the gods of Heaven and Earth, and saving:

Heaven covers us: Earth upbears us: the Imperial way is but one. But in this last degenerate age, the order of Lord and Vassal was destroyed, until Supreme Heaven by

9 The *Koj-iki*. Translated by B.H. Chamberlain. Dec. 12. 2005. <<http://www.sacred-texts.com/shi/kojiki.htm>>

10 The *Yengishiki*. Dec. 12. 2005. <<http://www.comparative-religion.com/shinto/yengishiki/>>

Our hands put to death the traitors. Now, from this time forward, both parties shedding their hearts' blood, the Lord will eschew double methods of government, and the Vassal will avoid duplicity in his service of the sovereign! On him who breaks this oath, Heaven will send a curse and earth a plague, demons will slay them, and men will smite them. This is as manifest as the sun and moon.¹¹

Korea participates in the world religions such as Buddhism, Confucianism, Protestantism and Catholicism and Taoism. Next to this it has developed its own spiritual belief system. While exclusiveness of one religion/ thinking never was cultivated in Korea, we find here a syncretistic pool of religions and thinking. While the main world religions are represented, spiritual movements, sects and native animistic believes in Korea are widely used as a traditional element. The problem of a definite presentation of percentages for each religion depends on the fact that Koreans participate in more than one religion. Traditionally they use the combination of Buddhism, Confucianism and Shamanism. Since the 19th century the Christian religion found a large group of participating members. Korea has many religions and syncretistic movements. Korea has crags and gorges and an ancient tradition of respectfully, ritually acknowledging the spirits they embody. For the past 400 years the *San-shin* has been depicted in human form, intimately interacted with and worshipped as a Shamanic god. *San-shin* became a central figure of all Korean religious culture. *San-shin* is the most common deity, nearly universally revered. Due to its association with all of the major religions that Koreans subscribe to, mountain-worship with *San-shin* is flourishing in 21st-century industrialized Korea, a unique and valuable phenomena in our world.

In the 9th to 11th century the recent form of *Zen* Buddhism (*Seon* Buddhism) was introduced from China. Beside the temples of the old style new temples in the *Zen* style developed. The *Zen* Buddhists attached only little new features to the arrangement of the temple. The Koryeo dynasty (918-1392) was in Korea the golden age of Buddhist culture. In this time developed eleven Buddhist temple centers, which had all their own architectural style. The temples of the Hwaeomjong were characterised for example by a temple center with a pagode, around which the

11 The Nihongi (excerpts). Translated by W.G. Ashton. Dec. 12. 2005.
<<http://www.comparative-religion.com/shinto/nihongi/nihongi2.php>>

temple buildings were grouped. Since the majority of the Korean population consisted of illiterates, for the people not the Buddhist writings, but Pagodas, statues and painting were a direct source for religious knowledge.¹² The *shin*-worshipping was –like the *kami* cult- related to non-literary-activity.

In the 7th and 8th century the Korean peninsula was divided into the two kingdoms Silla in the South and Barhae in the North. After Silla made Buddhism to its state religion, the Buddhist culture experienced a bloom. Silla monks, which traveled to China, central Asia and India for their study brought new Buddhist architecture to Korea. By the ancestors of the primeval times in the establishment myths of the clans is said that the sky on the mountains climbed down. Every clan had its own 'holy wood' (*sodo*), in which the shaman lived. In the State of Silla since the 5th century up to 927 the rule changed originally made under the heads of the clans. Chinese terms such as *choun gun* ('sky prince') refers to divine origin. This system lost its meaning with the wide-spread acceptance of Chinese civilization and Buddhist religion. A multiplicity of spirit is admired. So the ruler of the sky (*hanuullim* / raised sky), the rulers of the five-directions of the universe and the central mountain god *San shin*, the kite king, the ruler of the sea (*yong wang*), the spirit of nature and the agriculture, household spirit with the spirit of the kitchen and the toilet. Although there is male (*paksu*) and-female schamans (*mudang*), the majority of the schamans are female carrying during *kut* the clothes of the other sex and being possessed of the spirit, which speaks in her.

There are different kinds of ancestor rites, under it native, not shame anise table rites, shamane rites and Confucian ancestor rites. In nearly each temple in Korea one finds one *Sansin gak*, a shrine for the mountain God, which is not a local God, but the ruler of all mountains. It is also a shape of the *Tangun*, the divine founder of Chosun, the first Korean kingdom. These shrines are dedicated to the polar star spirit (*chilsoung* or *samsoung*). There always has been a kind reverse of syncretism, with which the native traditions took up the outside forms of a world religion such as Buddhism.

12 Suk-Jay, Yim; Janelli, Roger L.; Janelli, Dawnhee Yim: Korean religion. In: The religious traditions of Asia (2002), Pp. 333-346

Religion and society in contemporary Korea. Ed. by Lewis R. Lancaster and Richard K. Payne, with the assistance of Karen M. Andrews. Berkeley, CA: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1997.

신 (*shin*) is faithfulness, ghosts or gods. 신선 *shinson* are the immortals. For the ghost eye ('inner eye') the term *shin ap* 신안 is used. Related to the *shin*-ghosts are demon spirits *ma-shin* (마신). 신교 (*shin kyo*) is the teaching of the spirits. *Shindo* (신도) is the *spiritual world* or *spiritual way*. Tales (*seol hwa*) consists of myth (*shin hwa*), legend (*cheon seol*), and folktale (*min dam*). *Shin* refers to spirits, ghosts, monsters, and semi-gods as well as the gods that reside in heaven. Thus the term *shin hwa* would seem to refer to all supernatural tales or the mythology. The Korean *shin hwa* focuses almost exclusively on national-foundation myths (*keon guk shin hwa*). The *shin hwa* served to legitimize the existence of a government or nation, and they were vigorously handed down to succeeding generations. *Shin hwa* and *cheon seo* both served the interests of the ruling aristocracy, one serving political interests and the other serving social interests. In the *Korean Buddhist Canon Catalogue* we find the following entries:

신세경 in the translation by Tan-wu-lan of the Eastern Chin dynasty (東晉) (A.D. 381-395) in *Pravaraasutra* and *Hsin sui ching*:

新歲經

신세경¹³

신역대방광불화엄경음의 was written by Hui-yüan, disciple of the Hua-yen master, Fa-tsang (A.D. 643-712) of the Tang dynasty (唐), in Ching-fa Monastery (淨法寺).¹⁴ The text and transcription is as follows:

Hsin i ta fang kuang fo hua yen ching yin i. (2 chüan)

新譯大方廣佛華嚴經音義

13 *Korean Buddhist Canon Catalogue*. Edited by Lewis R. Lancaster in Collaboration with Sung-bae Park. Volume 653. K 872 (XX:1242) (T. 62) (H. 63). Dec. 12. 2005.

<http://www.hm.tyg.jp/~acmuller/descriptive_catalogue/files/k0872.html>

14 *Korean Buddhist Canon Catalogue*. Edited by Lewis R. Lancaster in Collaboration with Sung-bae Park. Volume 990 K 1064 (XXXII:340). Dec. 12. 2005.

<http://www.hm.tyg.jp/~acmuller/descriptive_catalogue/files/k0872.html>

신역대방광불화엄경음의¹⁵

신편보권문 was edited compiled with a preface by Yugi (有璣) in the Yi dynasty (李朝)

(A.D. 1707-?). There we find the terms:

Sin-p'yŏn po-gwŏn mun.

新編普勸文

신편보권문¹⁶

The *shin* in *shin hwa* are the gods who live in the heavens and more or less rule over the earth. The other *shin* also called *chap shin*. *Chap* has the meaning 'various' or 'miscellaneous' live on the earth and interact quite regularly with humans. These *chap shin* are a product of Korean folk religions. Ghosts, faeries, guardian spirits, and even what would be considered monsters in the West are all described by the term *chap shin*. Throughout 2000 years of Korean history, the *san shin* (mountain spirit) has been the main tutelary spirit of each village and town. The *San-shin* is the guardian of the nation as a whole. Since ancient times, kings have funded great ceremonies at grand *Sanshin dan* altars as symbols of their legitimacy, while common folk prayed for good weather, bountiful crops, healthy children and protection from ill-fortune at their small village 'San-shin *gak*' or 'Seonang dang' shrines. *San shin* is first among all Korean deities. Korea's mythical founder is thought to have become a *San shin* upon retirement, and all of the country's imported religious traditions acknowledge the importance of *San shin*, and its people have always worshipped the *San shin*. *San shin* icons are not only historical treasures. Visitors to temples see newly created and enshrined paintings and statues of the mountain spirit. *Sanshin* shrines were once typically a small building behind temple compounds on a mountain slope surrounded by forest, and in a traditionally designed temple they can sometimes be a little difficult to find.

¹⁵ *Korean Buddhist Canon Catalogue*. Edited by Lewis R. Lancaster in Collaboration with Sung-bae Park. Volume 990 K 1064(XXXII:340). Dec. 12. 2005.

<http://www.hm.tyg.jp/~acmuller/descriptive_catalogue/files/k1064.html>

¹⁶ *Korean Buddhist Canon Catalogue*. Edited by Lewis R. Lancaster in Collaboration with Sung-bae Park. Volume 990 K 0059(XXXII:340). Dec. 12. 2005.

<http://www.hm.tyg.jp/~acmuller/descriptive_catalogue/files/ks0059.html>

Temples are reconstructing or newly constructing 'Sam shin gak' ('Three Spirits Shrine') or 'Sam seong gak' ('Three Sages Shrine') buildings within the main Buddhist worship area. Believe in spirits still affect the lives of ordinary Koreans. The rituals that most foreigners view are public and have few children in attendance. These *kuts* held within private homes, or simple divinations, include the future generation as active participants. Buddhists, including followers of Shin, do not believe man has an eternal soul; nor do they believe in eternal hell. Shin finds man's nature depraved by wrong actions and passions. This depravity shall force man to undergo an eternal round of rebirths unless he attains salvation. These wrong actions and passions are not based upon any disobedience to any god or Buddha. They have their source in desire, which is rooted in absolute ignorance of the nature of reality. In the *Hyeonjeong non* (顯正論) *Exposition of the Correct* by Gihwa 己和 (*Hamheo Deuktong* 涵虛得通) and translated from the *Hanmun Text* by Charles Muller is written on the defense of Buddhism as a foreign religion written in Chinese:

[HBJ 7.223b3]

曰、天下之可遵者、五帝三王之道而已。故孔聖祖述 而羣賢相傳
載諸方策而列國皆遵。此道可求之於中國、不可求之於夷狄也。佛西夷之人也。豈
以其道流行於中國也。漢明帝、求其法於西域昧也非明也。

[The Confucians complain, saying:] The only Dao in the world which deserves our veneration is that of the five emperors and three kings, and nothing more.

Therefore that which was explained by Confucius, the sages, and the patriarchs, and has been successively transmitted by the worthies serves as the support for all methods [of governing] and is a standard for statehood that all respect.

This Dao is to be sought in the Middle Kingdom, and is not to be sought among the barbarian tribes. The Buddha was a Western barbarian. How is it that his Way came to permeate the Middle Kingdom? The story about Mingdi of the Han seeking the dharma in the Western regions is vague and unclear.

[HBJ 7.223b9]

曰、道之所存、是人之所歸也。五帝三王既道之所存故、

爲人之所歸、而王於華夏也。佛之興天竺而爲法輪王、亦復如是。華夏之指天竺爲西、猶天竺之指華夏爲東也。若取天下之大中、則當午無影爲中、天竺乃爾。佛之所以示生於彼者、豈非以其天下之大中也。

[In response to this, I] say: He who embodies the Way is the one who the people will rely upon. Since the Way was embodied by the five emperors and three kings, the people relied upon them, and thus they were the rulers of China. The Buddha's flourishing in India as a king who turned the wheel of the dharma, is the same sort of thing. The Chinese referring to India as the West, is just the same as the Indian's referring to China as the East. If we want to find the great center of the world, then it would be the place where no shadow can be seen at twelve noon, and this also happens in India. Since the Buddha appeared to the world in India, why not regard India as the "great center" of the world?

[HBJ 7.223b15]

所謂東西者、蓋彼此時俗之相稱爾。非占其中而定其東西也。苟以佛爲夷、而不遵其道、則舜生於東夷、文王生於西夷。可夷其人而不遵其道乎。所出迹也、所行道也。但觀其道之可遵不可遵也、不可拘其所出之迹也

So-called "east" and "west" are nothing more than names which applied to this or that place according to the situation. There is no such thing as occupying the center and determining East and West. If we do not respect the Way of the Buddha because he is a barbarian, then shall we also not respect the Ways of Shun, who was born among the Eastern tribes, and King Wen, who was born among the Western tribes? Can we disparage a person's Way just on the basis of their being foreign? It should rather be based on the results of their works and the Way which governed their behavior. However, in observing as to whether one's Way is to be respected or not, it is better not to be too much attached to their works.

17 contains the 'Unity of the Three Teachings':

[HBJ 7.225a14]

所言之理既同、而所教之迹、何以異乎。專己略人是此非彼、人之常情也。通人達士唯義是從。豈以人我彼此而是非者乎。使人不待爵賞之勸而靡然從化者、三教之中、佛教能然也。蓋以吾佛大聖大慈之所感也。舜好問而好察邇言、隱惡而揚善。

禹拜昌言。若使舜禹遇佛之化、則豈不歸美乎。而以爲不可爲修己治人之方者、亦未之思也。

If the underlying principle of the words is the same, then why should the effects of the teachings differ? Holding stubbornly to one's own opinion while ignoring the positions of others, arbitrarily affirming this and rejecting that—this is the attitude of common people. The man of penetration and the accomplished scholar only follows what is right. How could they make determinations of right and wrong based the positions of self and other or this and that? When it comes to the task of motivating people to rapidly transform themselves without reliance on reward and praise, then among the three teachings, it is Buddhism that fills the bill. It does so because people are affected by the great sageliness and great compassion of our teacher, the Buddha. "[The Emperor] Shun liked to question people and delighted in listening to everyday speech. He would cover people's bad points and disclose their goodness." 62 "Yu paid homage to the excellent words." 63 If we could have Shun and Yu encounter the Buddha's transformative teaching, would they not be attracted by its beauty? To say that the Buddhist teaching does not work for the cultivation of oneself and the transformation of others is truly ridiculous!¹⁷

In the *Bulssi japbyeon* 佛氏雜辨 (*An Array of Critiques Against Buddhism*) written by Jeong Dojeon and translated from the Hanmun text by Charles Muller is the concept of Buddhism confronted with Daoism. In the *Critique of the Buddhist Doctrine of Transmigration* 佛氏輪迴之辨 is written:

[SBJ1.75c]

人物之生生而無窮乃天地之化、運行而不已者也。原夫太極有動靜而陰陽生。陰陽有變合而五行具於是。無極太極之真、陰陽五行之精、妙合而凝、人物生生焉。其已生者、往而過。未生者來而續、其間不容一息之停也。佛之言曰人死、精神不滅、隨復受形。於是輪迴之說興焉。

17 Hyeonjeong non 顯正論 (Exposition of the Correct). By Gihwa 己和 (Hamheo Deuktong 涵虛得通). Translated from the Hanmun Text by Charles Muller
Source: Hyeonjeong non. Hanguk bulgyo jeonseu, [HBJ] Vol. 7. Pg. 217-225. Dongguk taehakkyo chulpansa. Seoul 1985. Dec. 12. 2005.
<<http://www.acmuller.net/jeong-gihwa/hyeonjeongnon.html>>

The unending production and reproduction of human beings, along with the transformations of heaven and earth, operate continually without break. Originally the great polarity has motion and stillness, which generates yin and yang. Yin and yang undergo changes and recombination, and within this, the five phases are contained. The reality of the non-polarity and great polarity, and the germinative essence of yin/yang and the five phases mysteriously combine and congeal, and human beings are produced and reproduced. That which has once been born, goes away. That which is not yet born comes forth and continues, without a moment's interruption. The Buddha says that when people die their spirit is not annihilated, and they subsequently take on [new] form. The theory of transmigration starts with this.

Now, prior to the existence of heaven and earth and the myriad things, there is at the extreme beginning the principle of the great polarity, heaven and earth and the myriad things, already fully integrated in their midst. Therefore it is said: "The great polarity gives birth to the two primary forces, the two primary forces give rise to the four forms."

41 A thousand transformations and a myriad changes all manifest following this. It is like when a river has a source, and ten thousand branch streams pour water everywhere. It is like a tree that has roots, whose branches and leaves grow thickly.

此非人智力之所得而爲也。亦非人智力之所得而遏也。然此固有難與初學言者。以其衆人所易見者而言之。自佛氏歿至今數千餘年、天之昆侖於上者。

若是其確然也、地之磅礴於下者。若是其隕然也、人物之生於其間者。若是其燦然也、

日月寒暑之往來。若是其秩然也、是以天體至大、而其周圍運轉之度、日月星辰逆順疾

徐之行。雖當風雨晦明之夕、而不能外於八尺之璣、數寸之衡。18

18 *Bulssi japbyeon* 佛氏雜辨 (*An Array of Critiques Against Buddhism*).

Pulssi Japbyeon 佛氏雜辨. By Jeong Dojeon. Translated from the Hanmun text by Charles Muller. Source: *Sambong jip*. vol. 1, pages 75-85. Minjok munhwa chujin hoe, Seoul: 1977. Dec. 12. 2005. <<http://www.acmuller.net/jeong-gihwa/bulssijapbyeon.html>>

It is said that Sakya taught 84000 different doctrinal systems so that there might be one suited to each possible kind of human personality. *Shin*, as one of these many doctrines, will find kindred spirits in every country of the world. Koreans created to believe in the animistic concept of the order of *San shin* (or *San shin ryong*). Most prominent landforms were considered spiritually alive, being the earthly manifestation of spiritual beings or infused with a unique *ki* (material energy). They have sensed that each has its own individual character. Mountain-worship is as ancient as anything else that we know about early Korean civilization. The oldest *bi sok* that has been found in Korea is dedicated to a *San-shin*. Chinese documents from two millennia ago describe the Koreans as having the custom of paying respect to mountains and streams, and performing rites in honor of the tiger. Many of the old legends that have long informed the Korean sense of national identity feature personified Mountain-spirits in essential roles. Geomancy (*pung su*) is based on the belief that one's luck or misfortune has much to do with the shape of mountains and the topographical features of the concerned locality. *Pung su* was initially devised as a means to select a site for establishing a new nation's capital or building a house, in which local terrains were taken into account. Selecting an auspicious site was believed to ensure the prosperity of a nation or household. Shamans belief in a world inhabited by spirits is probably the oldest form of Korean religious life, dating back to prehistoric times. There is a rather unorganized pantheon of literally millions of gods, spirits, and ghosts, ranging from the god generals who rule the different quarters of heaven to mountain spirits (*sansin*). This pantheon also includes gods who inhabit trees, sacred caves, and piles of stones, as well as earth spirits, the tutelary gods of households and villages, mischievous goblins, and the ghosts of persons who in many cases met violent or tragic ends. These spirits are said to have the power to influence or to change the fortunes of living men and women. Korean shamans are similar in many ways to those found in Siberia, Mongolia, and Manchuria. In the Lesson 94 *Ways of Contemplation East and West - Xuan Zang, Fa Zang, Jing Jing* written by the Jesuit Yves Raguin in the 20th century the term of spiritual penetration *shentong* (神通):

复次，岑稳僧伽！我在诸天，我在诸地；或于神道，或于人间；同类异类，有识无识。诸善缘者，我皆护持。诸恶报者。我皆救拔。然于救护，实无闻，同于虚空，离功德相。

*The doctrine is very clear and radical : no good deeds on which you could rely, no merit, no fame which would come from your actions, no desire which would limit your aspirations. By teaching people the doctrine of "non-virtue" and "non-reputation" wuwen 无闻 , we will help others to attain the state of spiritual penetration" shentong 神通 。 This will lead them to understand the correct truth."*¹⁹

Mushin (mu: nothing; shin: spirit) in meditation is the state of no thought stived for in martial arts. *Zanshin* (zan: to remain; shin: spirit) is the term used for a mental connection between two persons. The word *shin* in Japanese is sometimes translated as a synonym for ‘soul’ or ‘spirit’ in English. Buddhism does not speak in terms of soul (*tamashii*), gods (*shin, kami*), spirit (*sei*) or spirits (*rei, ryo*), and prefers instead to couch its arguments in terms of heart/mind (*shin, i*) or consciousness (*shiki*). The Seal of Solomon is said to have given Sulayman power over the jinn. ‘Genie’ is the English term for the Arabic ‘jinn’ (جن). In pre-Islamic Arabian mythology and in Islam, a jinn is a member of the jinn (or ‘djinn’), a race of spirits. ‘Genie’ is the English term for the Arabic ‘jinn’ (جن). Genie is an Anglicization of the original Arabic term *jinn* through sources in Latin or French or even Spanish. The Latin word *genius* stands for a spirit. For the ancient Semites جن (*jinn*, fem.: *jinniyah*) were spirits of vanished ancient peoples who acted during the night and disappeared with the first light of dawn; they could make themselves invisible or change shape into animals at will. These spirits were commonly believed to be responsible for diseases and for the manias of some lunatics. Types of *jinn* (جن) include the *ghul* (night shade, which can change shape), the *sila* (which cannot change shape) and the *ifrit*. In sorcery books Jinn are classified into four races

¹⁹ Raguin, Yves: *Lessons*. Edited by Taipei Ricci Institute. Lesson 94. *Ways of Contemplation East and West*. Xuan Zang, Fa Zang, Jing Jing.

[Http://210.208.162.224:1980/gb/www.riccibase.com/docfile/rel-cw94.htm](http://210.208.162.224:1980/gb/www.riccibase.com/docfile/rel-cw94.htm).

after the classical elements, Earth, Air, Fire; (Ifrit) and Water; (Marid) and presumed to live in them. They are collected in tribes, usually seven, each with a king.

Muslims believe that djinn (جن) are real beings. The *jinn* are said to be creatures with free will, made of smokeless fire by God. In the *Quran*, the *jinn* are frequently mentioned (e.g. Surat 72 mentions *al-jinn*). Jinn are beings much like humans, possessing the ability to be good and bad. According to the majority of Islamic scholars, clear evidence exists in the *Quran* that the devil was never actually an angel, but a *jinn*. In the Aladdin tale in the Western version of *The Book of One Thousand and One Nights*, genies live in small oil lamps. Moslems made the jinn supernatural anthropoid beings, created of subtle fire (Quran, sura, xv. 27; lv. 14), not of earth like man, propagating his kind, ruled by mighty kings, the last being Jan bin Jan, missionarised by Prophets and subject to death and Judgement. From the same root as *jinn*, *junun*, (madness) and '*majnun*' (madman) derive. Both Shindo and Shinto have no developed a theology or written documents. They do not have its own moral code. Shintoists generally follow the code of Confucianism. Both Sindo and Shinto are deriverates from the Chinese words '*shin tao*' ('The way of the god'). Both Shindo and Shinto have no real founder. They were lately preserved orally transmitted written scriptures. No body of religious law, and only a very loosely-organized priesthood or single shamans exists. Common elements are:

- Oral tradition or late written documents
- Cult of animistic believes
- No founding
- A loose connection to other spiritual thoughts
- Adoration of nature

Both *Shinto* and *Shindo* movements are original ethnic movements based on national and ethic origin coming from ethnic folk beliefs. In Korea they are performed in a syncretistic sourrounding and performed together with other religious movements and Confucianism. In Japan *Shinto* is stricted bound to the traditional system of the emperor. In Korea it is joined with Confucianism for social ruling. The concept of *Shinto*, *Shendao* and *Shinto* is a belief system of animistic supernatural

powers in humans, animals and material. It is in that concern universal that it covers areas, which are in Western cultural concepts separated in different fields.