

COVID-19: Scapegoating Shincheonji in South Korea: White Paper II

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Full Report:
<https://www.cesnur.org/2020/shincheonji-second-white-paper.htm>

1. 1. It Is About COVID-19... or Is It?

Why This Report

The name of Shincheonji (a name meaning “New Heaven and New Earth”), Church of Jesus, the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony (in short, Shincheonji) was known in the West only to a few scholars of new religious movements before February 2020, when the church was accused of being largely responsible for the spread of COVID-19 in South Korea.

In March 2020, the authors published a first White Paper (Introvigne, Fautré, Šorytė, Amicarelli and Respinti 2020) distinguishing facts from fiction in the accusations against Shincheonji. The repression of Shincheonji in South Korea has now escalated to what can be described, without exaggeration, as an attempt to suppress a religion, close its places of worship, arrest its leaders, and scare members so that they

will leave the movement out of fear of losing their jobs. A second White Paper, dealing with the persecution, is thus necessary. We will, however, summarize in this introduction some essential points about Shincheonji discussed in the first White Paper, and add some further general comments.

What Is Shincheonji?

Why is Shincheonji Persecuted?

Is It Really About Covid-19?

2. Is Shincheonji “Responsible” for the Virus Outbreak in Daegu?

Patient 31

The Alleged Wuhan Connection

The Case of the Cheongdo Daenam Hospital

Did Shincheonji Create the Outbreak in Daegu?

3. Did Shincheonji Refuse to Cooperate with the Authorities?

Shincheonji Stopped Services Immediately

Why Are Leaders Prosecuted?

Legal Background

Which Lists?

4. A Disproportionate Reaction

Mistakes Punished As Crimes

Disproportionate Measures

Private Vigilantism

Conclusions

References

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PAPER: <https://www.cesnur.org/2020/shincheonji-second-white-paper.htm>