

A COLLECTION OF  
MODERN KOREAN BUDDHIST  
DISCOURSES

## A Collection of Modern Korean Buddhist Discourses

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The Samboryun (Three-Jewel-Wheeled) symbolizes the ideas of Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism: this symbol involves the faith in Three Jewels of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Saṃgha and Two Traditions of Seon (Meditation) and Gyo (Doctrine); and means harmonizing all the clergy and laypeople and realizing the Pure Land of Buddha by way of religious propagation.

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Korean Buddhism Library  
Collected Works of Modern Korean Buddhism



A COLLECTION OF  
MODERN KOREAN BUDDHIST  
DISCOURSES



by Choe Namseon and others  
Translation by Kim Seong-Uk  
Introduction by Kim Yongtae and Kim Seong-Uk

Series Editor  
Kim JongWook, *Dongguk University*



Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism

## Foreword

Culture communicates. Culture flows smoothly just like the wind blows, clouds drift, and the birds fly in the air. So it did, even in the old times when lofty mountains and deep valleys interrupted the course of people's mutual exchanges. Culture flows in like a stranger, but as people share it, their individual gazes, touches, and breaths embody it with different appearances. Furthermore, it brings their gazes, touches, and breaths to their neighbors in a way that is meaningful to them. The culture exchanged is one and yet two; two and yet one.

Such is the case with Korean Buddhism. Buddhism, having originated in India, came to be one of the East Asian religions as Buddhist literature was translated into literary Chinese in China. Korea, a land neighboring China, acquired literary Chinese from the third to fifth centuries of the Common Era, which enriched its cultural vitality. Importing the translated Buddhist scriptures, Koreans established a Buddhist tradition themselves and expressed the essence of Mahāyāna Buddhism in their own way. Korea also played a dynamic role as a cultural messenger in transmitting Buddhism to Japan.

In this manner, Korean Buddhism was formed and continually evolved through lively exchange with Chinese Buddhism, and in the process developed the characteristic form of Korean Buddhism.

Buddhist culture flourished in the Unified Silla period (668–935) and this early Korean state established itself as a center of contemporary East Asian Buddhism. The Goryeo dynasty (918–1392) adopted Buddhism as the state religion and employed it as the state ideology. As a result, Korea currently has various forms of Buddhist cultural treasures, such as Bulguksa 佛國寺 Temple, the Dabotap

多寶塔 and Seokgatap 釋迦塔 Pogoadas, Seokguram 石窟庵 Grotto, and exquisite statues of Buddhist figures seated in the pensive pose (半跏思惟像), as well as *Essentials of the Buddhas and Patriarchs Pointing Directly to the Essence of Mind* (*Buljo jikji simche yojeol* 佛祖直指心體要節) which is the earliest extant text printed by metal type, the *Goryeo Buddhist Canon in Eighty Thousand Woodblocks* (*Palman daejanggyeong* 八萬大藏經), and paintings of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara which are the acme of religious aesthetics.

In the Joseon dynasty, in which the Korean alphabet (Han'geul) was invented, a foremost state project was to translate the whole corpus of Buddhist scriptures into Han'geul. In the second half of the fifteenth century the Office for Sūtra Publication (Gan'gyeong dogam 刊經都監) was eventually established and published Buddhist canonical texts in the Korean language.

In 2010, the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism published the *Collected Works of Korean Buddhism* in thirteen volumes, English translations of *Han'guk jeontong sasang chongseo*, for the purpose of introducing the excellence of Korean Buddhism to the world. This collection was compiled by carefully selecting representative works from the *Complete Works of Korean Buddhism* (*Han'guk Bulgyo jeonseo* 韓國佛教全書) from the Unified Silla through Joseon periods. These include *Wonhyo*, *Chinul*, *Hyujeong*, *Hwaŏm* (I, II), *Doctrinal Treatises*, *Gongan Collections* (I, II), *Seon Dialogues*, *Seon Poems*, *Korean Buddhist Culture*, *Exposition of the Sutra of Brahma's Net*, *Anthology of Stele Inscriptions of Eminent Korean Buddhist Monks*. Although the works in the collection are not enough to reveal the whole picture of Korean Buddhism, I hope that the collection helps people understand main features of premodern Korean Buddhism.

Now we have selected ten works of modern Korean Buddhism and translated them into English to introduce them to an international audience. During the early twentieth century, a turbulent era in East Asia, such Korean Buddhist monks and laymen as Gyeongheo 鏡虛 (1849–1912), Yongseong 龍城 (1864–1940), Seokjeon 石顛 (1870–1948), Manhae 衞海 (Han Yongun, 1879–1944),

Choe Namseon 崔南善 (1890–1957), Yi Neunghwa 李能和 (1869–1943), Go Yuseop 高裕燮 (1905–1944), published many works in various fields. This period in East Asia witnessed the influx of Western civilization and the imperial expansion of Japan, which was then ahead in the modernization process, resulting in some countries becoming colonized by Japan. As Korean Buddhism endured along with Korean people and shined its capability at every crisis in history, it developed its own identity accepting the current of the modern times on the one hand and confronting external challenges on the other. The efforts made in the darkest times in Korean history to maintain the Korean tradition will be not only a precious asset of Korean Buddhism but also a significant record of East Asian Buddhist history.

For the current project of English translation focusing on modern Korean Buddhist works, we have selected ten documents that have significance in terms of the modernization process of Korean Buddhism as well as being representative works in their own right. These works include the writings of Buddhist lay thinkers as well as the discourse records or treatises of Buddhist monks, cover various subjects such as comparative religion, editorial writing, criticism on current affairs, literature, history, art, and so forth. A Korean proverb says that “even the easy pace of a cow finally makes a thousand miles” (*ubo cheolli* 牛步千里) or that “a journey of a thousand miles must begin with the first step.” Although it is impossible to express the rich and complicated features of Korean Buddhism through only these ten volumes, I hope that readers will regard the project as a second step taken by the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism toward the globalization of Korean Buddhism.

Most of the writings from the period covered by this series are written in literary Chinese, but some employ Korean vernacular endings along with literary Chinese, and some are written all in the Korean vernacular script. The importance of modern Korean Buddhism lies in the fact that Korean Buddhism was conducted through the Korean language. The full-fledged usage of Korean

language in Buddhist activities was the achievement of modern Korean Buddhism, and Korean culture was thereby enriched. However, it is not easy for non-Koreans to understand such works in their original form. Therefore, the translation of the works into English—the international language—is an unavoidable task in our cultural communications, just as medieval East Asians shared literary Chinese—the common literary language of the time—to communicate and understand each other.

I really appreciate the translators who have sympathized with the aspiration of the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism and have completed their translations despite various difficulties. I also would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of the other contributors to each volume for their valuable comments, reviews, and corrections. Lastly, I would like to thank the members of the Editorial Board for spending time and effort at the initial stage of planning the project and selecting the works and to Dongguk University Press for their constant support in the publication of the series. My special thanks go to the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of the Republic of Korea for providing strong support to the Publication Committee of Modern Korean Buddhism.

With the Palms of My Hands Joined in Reverence

Haebong Jaseung 海峰 慈乘

The 34th President of the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism  
President, Publication Committee of Modern Korean Buddhism

## Editor's Preface

One thousand seven hundred years have passed since Buddhism, which originated in India, arrived on Korean Peninsula via China. The goal of Buddhism in ancient India was the attainment of enlightenment with respect to the dharma and the realization of Buddhahood, which was based on consistent religious practice in the repetitive cycle of birth and death. When Buddhism was transmitted to China, the goal of Indian Buddhism was accepted in a transformed form. For Chinese people, who also aspired to attain Buddhahood but, unlike Indians, were both temporarily and geographically separated from the Buddha, the Buddhist doctrine that all living beings have innate Buddha-nature emerged as one of the most efficient ideas. It is in this context that in Chinese Buddhism “enlightenment” (覺) is mostly interpreted as “original enlightenment” (本覺); “Buddha” is often regarded as “Buddha-nature” (佛性); and the fundamental doctrine of dependent origination (緣起) is sometimes replaced by the “the (unconditioned) arising of the (original) nature” (性起). The unique transformation of Buddhism in China, which is oriented to the idea of original Buddha-nature, led to the emergence of distinctive Chinese Buddhist schools, such as the Tiantai and Huayan schools that focus on doctrines and the Chan and Pure Land schools that emphasize practices.

These Chinese schools, along with the foundational doctrine of original Buddha-nature, were accepted in Korea and Japan, neighboring countries that also used classical Chinese as their literary language. In the case of Korea, the way in which Buddhism was adopted has a distinctive feature, which is an ecumenical tendency to synthesize various teachings or harmonize contrasting doctrines of the schools as much as possible. We see this ecumenical

tendency of Korean Buddhism in several cases. For example, Wonhyo 元曉 (617–686), the pioneer of Buddhist scholasticism in Korean Buddhism, sought to harmonize various schools. Jinul 知訥 (1158–1210), the founder of Korean Seon school, also advocated the unity of Buddhist practice and doctrine (禪教一致). The attempt to unite Hwaeom and Seon teachings in Buddhist educational system during the Joseon period (1392–1910) is another example. If Chinese Buddhism is marked by its establishment of individual schools on the basis of the idea of original nature, Korean Buddhism may be characterized by its consistent attempts to synthesize the schools by embracing their doctrinal distinctions.

The decline of the Joseon dynasty and subsequent colonization by Japan, however, brought contemporary Buddhists a double task: they had to preserve the identity of Korean Buddhism on the one hand and accommodate traditional Buddhism to Western modernity on the other. Until the liberation day arrived, Korean Buddhists endured nationwide hardships together with all Korean people and also steadily carried out the challenging task by inheriting traditional Buddhist culture as well as transforming it into a modern form. In spite of such problems as incessant foreign incursions and disruptions at the end of Joseon period and an identity crisis in Korean Buddhism derived from the forced importation of Japanese Buddhism, prominent Buddhists of those days left remarkable writings. In this way, they contributed to the process of developing the received Korean Buddhist tradition and shaping the ground for modern Korean Buddhism after liberation.

In 2012, the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism published the English Edition of the *Collected Works of Korean Buddhism* as a project promoting the globalization of Korean Buddhism with the support of Korean government. This is a collection of representative Buddhist works selected from the *Han'guk Bulgyo jeonso* 韓國佛教全書, a compilation of three hundred and twenty three Korean Buddhist writings from the Silla to Joseon periods. To succeed and further develop upon this project, we are translating and publishing

representative Buddhist writings by modern Korean intellectuals in English and introducing them abroad. The fruit of this initiative is the Translation-Publication Project with Representative Works of Modern Korean Buddhism, which the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism has been administering since 2013 with the support of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. The collection contains selected works of modern Buddhist literature written by eminent Buddhist monks and scholars, such as Gyeongheo 鏡虛 (1849–1912), Yongseong 龍城 (1864–1940), Seokjeon 石顛 (1870–1948), Manhae 卍海 (1879–1944).

The Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism established several organizations to facilitate the project: a publication committee chaired by Ven. Jaseung, a management group chaired by Ven. Jin-Gak, and an editorial board chaired by me, Prof. Kim JongWook. In particular, the editorial board, which was entrusted with the work of translation and publication, surveyed more than three hundred and twenty Korean Buddhist writings written between 1900 and 1945 and carefully selected significant works in several genres, compiling them in ten volumes. For instance, *The Gyeongheo Collection*, *Sun Over the Sea of Enlightenment*, and *An Anthology of East Asian Commentaries on the Nyāyapraveśa* belong to the genre of philosophy or intellectual thought; *Sheaves of Korean Buddhist History* to history; *A Study of Korean Pagoda* to art; *Harmonizing the Hundred Teachings* to comparative; *The Temple of Words: An Anthology of Modern Korean Buddhist Poetry* to literature; *Essential Compendium for Buddhists: A Modern Buddhist Liturgy* to rituals; *Tracts on the Modern Reformation of Korean Buddhism* and *A Collection of Modern Korean Buddhist Discourses* to social criticism. The broad range of materials selected from various genres is intended to exhibit a dynamic picture of modern Korean Buddhism in multiple aspects.

*The Gyeongheo Collection*, the collected dharma-talks and Seon poetry by Gyeongheo, the figure responsible for reviving modern Korean Seon Buddhism, is a significant text in that it shows us the mode of the transformation of Korean Buddhist thought during the interim period until modern times. Yongseong's *Sun Over the*

*Sea of Enlightenment*, one of the most representative works of this time, represents the author's earnest intent to reform and modernize Korean Buddhism. This work also elucidates essential points of Seon practice and Buddhist doctrine. Seokjeon's *An Anthology of East Asian Commentaries on the Nyāyapraveśa*, a variorum text on Buddhist logic, is an important Buddhist philosophical text that shows the research level of modern Korean Buddhism in Buddhist logic. Gim Yeongsu's *Sheaves of Korean Buddhist History*, a Buddhist historiography, provides chronological accounts of Buddhist history since the first transmission of Buddhism during the Three Kingdoms period. The text also provides a systematic description of the history of Korean Buddhist orders and schools, including the "Five Doctrinal [schools] and Nine Mountains [traditions of Seon]" (Ogyo Gusan 五教九山) and the "Five Doctrinal [schools] and Two [Meditative] Traditions" (Ogyo Yangjong 五教兩宗). Go Yuseop's *A Study of Korean Pagoda*, which contains explanations of Korean stone pagodas from the perspective of their architectural style, is a monumental work in the field of Korean Buddhist art history because it not only established in scholarship the standard style of Korean Buddhist pagodas but also created the basic framework in the periodization and appreciation of Korean pagodas.

Yi Neunghwa's *Harmonizing the Hundred Teachings*, a work that compares Buddhism to other eleven religions, such as Confucianism, Taoism, Christianity, Islamism, Brahmanism, and so on, reveals the level of religious studies during the modern period in Korea. Choe Chwiheo and An Jinho's *Essential Compendium for Buddhists: A Modern Buddhist Liturgy*, the earliest modern text on Buddhist rituals, shows not only how Buddhist rituals changed during the modern times but also how Buddhism was popularized and modernized. *The Temple of Words: An Anthology of Modern Korean Buddhist Poetry*, a compilation of Buddhist verse written by modern Buddhist poets such as Han Yongun, Seo Jeongju, and Jo Jihun, demonstrates that the Buddhist spiritual world served as the foundation of poetic lyricism for the modern intellectuals. *Tracts*

*on the Modern Reformation of Korean Buddhism* is a collection of essays written by modern Buddhist reformers, such as Gwon Sangro, Han Yongun, Yi Yeongjae. These writings reflect these Buddhists' awareness of the contemporary need to respond to the changing times with the appropriate transformation of Buddhism. These texts show us the social and historical situation that Korean Buddhism had to confront in modern times. *A Collection of Modern Korean Buddhist Discourses*, written by such modern Korean thinkers as Choe Namseon, Kang Yumun, Gwon Sangro, Gim Beomnin, Gim Yeongsu, Gim Taeheup, and so forth, is a collection of editorials that discuss issues related to the Korean Buddhist tradition and its modernization. These writings may be said one of the most representative Buddhist works of the time because they contain discourses on immediate social and ideological problems of the day.

For each of the ten volumes, the Editorial Committee invited a specialist in each subject and entrusted them with the responsibility of the translation. Both domestic and foreign scholars participated in proofreading and reviewing the translation, by comparing the draft to the original and checking the appropriateness of English expressions. In this way, the Editorial Committee has done its best so that both accuracy in translation and the translators' intention are preserved. The translators of the volumes include David McCann, John Jorgensen, Tonino Puggioni, Seonjoon Young, Pori Park, Suh Junghyung, Kim Sung-uk, Lee Seunghye, Ham Hyoung Seok, and Dan B. Jung. Those who worked as the proofreaders and reviewers are Richard D. McBride II, Mark Nathan, Cho Eun-su, Yun Woncheol, Kim Yongtae, Kang Hosun, Lee Sumi, Koh Seung-hak, Kim Jongjin, Park Inn-Suk, Kim Sooyoun, Hyeonseo Seunim. Kim Junghee, the coordinator of the current project, has been devoted to her role throughout the process of translation and reviewing. Yi Deokyeol carried out the editing work during the final process of publication. Shim Jongsub worked for binding and printing the volumes. Yoo Hanrim, head of the publication department, supervised the whole process of publication. The project was only

possible with the enthusiastic effort and selfless dedication of all of these people.

I cannot let this opportunity pass without saying about the consistent interest and support from Ven. Jaseung, president of the Jogye Order, and Ven. Hyeoneung, president of Education Bureau of the Jogye Order. Ven. Jaseung, as president of Publication Committee, superintended the entire project in a responsible way. Ven. Hyeoneung particularly spared no pains to offer his helpful advice from the beginning stages of planning through the final publication. I would like to express my gratitude for his insightful assistance and encouragement whenever we were in need. Ven. Jin-Gak, chair of Executive Committee, and Ven. Su-Kyoung, director of Research Institute of Buddhist Studies, served as consultants to facilitate the process of planning, editing, and publication. Lee Seog-sim of Department of General Affairs contributed to maintaining a cooperative relationship with the government during the planning and implementation phases of the project. Park Yong Gyu and Ko Sang-hyun, and Choi Ae-Ri as well, resolved administrative issues and problems in a timely manner.

Without the dedicated participation and concerted effort of all these people, this project would not have been completed successfully. At this moment, we cannot but contemplate the Buddhist truth of dependent origination that everything comes to arise through mutual relationships based on numerous conditions. Lastly, as chair of the Editorial Board, I sincerely hope that the publication of the *Collected Works of Modern Korean Buddhism* contributes to the rediscovery of the value of Korean Buddhist culture by informing the whole world of the fact that Korean Buddhism absorbed the impact of modernity in its own way and thereby preserved its traditional identity throughout one thousand and seven hundred years of history.

Kim JongWook

Professor, Department of Buddhist Studies, Dongguk University  
Series Editor & Chair of the Editorial Board,  
*Collected Works of Modern Korean Buddhism*

## Contents

Foreword	_iv
Editor's Preface	_viii
Acknowledgments	_xxii
Conventions	_xxiii

Introduction	_3
--------------	----

### Overview of Korean Buddhism: A Diachronic Approach to Korean Buddhism \_31

Choe Namseon

Chapter 1	Buddhist Influence on Korean Culture	_33
Chapter 2	The Relationship between Korean Buddhism and the History of Interaction between the East and the West	_37
Chapter 3	The Position of Korea in the History of the Transmission of Buddhism	_41
Chapter 4	Korean Contribution to the Understanding of Buddhism	_45
Chapter 5	Korean Contribution to Scholastic Schools of East Asia	_49

- Chapter 6 The Three Influences of Buddhism on the Korean  
Temperament \_ 53
- Chapter 7 Fellow Buddhists! Have a Historical Consciousness  
First! \_ 56
- Chapter 8 Foreigners' Ignorance of Korean Buddhism \_ 59
- Chapter 9 Japanese History and Korean History in Relation to  
Buddhism \_ 64

## Buddhism and Korean Literature \_ 79

Yi Gwangsu

## To Establish a Modern Buddhism\_ 91

Baek Seonguk

- Chapter 1 Ordination Certificate \_ 96
- Chapter 2 Education \_ 98
- Chapter 3 Mission \_ 101
- Chapter 4 Bhikṣuṇī \_ 102
- Chapter 5 Institution \_ 103
- Chapter 6 The Expulsion of a Buddhist Monk \_ 104
- Chapter 7 Monk Examination \_ 105
1. Bhikṣu Exam \_ 105
  2. Master Exam \_ 107
- Chapter 8 Economic Life \_ 108

# Research on Religion and the Development of Social Work \_ 113

GimTaeheup

Introduction \_ 115

Chapter 1 Religion and Social Work \_ 119

1. The Arising of Religion and Social Work \_ 119
2. The Essence of Religion and Social Work \_ 126
3. Buddhism and Social Work \_ 137
4. Christianity and Social Work \_ 141
5. From the Idea of Repaying Kindness to the Joint Responsibility \_ 143

Chapter 2 The Concept of Social Work \_ 149

1. The Meaning of Social Work \_ 149
2. The Purpose of Social Work \_ 151
3. The Categorization of Social Work \_ 151
4. The Illnesses of the Society \_ 154
5. The Diagnosis of the Society \_ 155
6. The Causes of Poverty \_ 157
7. The Arising of the Social Work \_ 163

Chapter 3 Historical Overview of Social Work \_ 167

1. History of Social Work in the West \_ 167
2. History of Social Work in the East \_ 173

## A Concern for Korean Buddhism: The Words Addressed to All Korean Buddhist Clerics \_191

Gim Byeokong

- Chapter 1 Introduction \_193
- Chapter 2 Past \_194
- Chapter 3 Present \_196
- Chapter 4 Institution \_198
- Chapter 5 Work \_200
- Chapter 6 Incorporated Foundation \_202
- Chapter 7 Temples \_204
- Chapter 8 Education \_206
- Chapter 9 Propagation \_208
- Chapter 10 Conclusion \_210

## Korean Buddhism: Its Position in the Cultural History of the East \_215

Choe Namseon

- Chapter 1 Korea and Its Position in Cultural History \_217
- Chapter 2 General Trend in the Transmission of Buddhism toward  
the East and Korea \_220
- Chapter 3 The Development of the Buddhist Doctrines and  
Korea \_225
- Chapter 4 Wonhyo: The Founder of Unified Buddhism \_232
- Chapter 5 Korea in the History of Buddhist Art \_240
- Chapter 6 Buddhist Canon and Korea \_245

- Chapter 7 Korea in the Spread of Buddhism \_260
- Chapter 8 Japanese Buddhism and Korea \_268
- Chapter 9 Eastern Culture and Korean Buddhism \_274

## Buddhism and the Trend of Social Thought \_305

Yu Yeop

- Chapter 1 Foreword \_307
- Chapter 2 Introduction \_309
- Chapter 3 Religious Status of Buddhism \_311
  - 1. Comparison between Buddhism and Christianity \_312
  - 2. Features of Buddhism \_325
- Chapter 4 Buddhism and General Social Thought \_328
  - 1. Buddhism and Modern Thought \_330
  - 2. The Responsibility of Buddhism in Modern Times \_331
- Chapter 5 Conclusion \_333

## Overview of Korean Buddhism for the Last Hundred Years \_341

Kang Yumun

- Chapter 1 Introduction \_343
- Chapter 2 The Six Periods of Modern Korean Buddhism \_344
  - 1. The Period of Passivity and Suffering \_344
  - 2. The Period of Management Office \_346
  - 3. The Period of Board of Administrative Affairs of Won jong \_348

- 4. The Period of Joint Office \_351
- 5. The Period of the Administration Bureau \_354
- 6. The Period of Saṃgha Assembly \_355

Chapter 3 Conclusion \_358

## On the Separation of Religion and Politics \_365

Gim Beoprin

Chapter 1 Introduction \_367

Chapter 2 Overview of the Relationship between Religion and  
Politics \_369

- 1. Religion-State \_369
- 2. State-Religion \_370
- 3. Officially-Recognized Religion \_372
- 4. Separation of Religion and Politics \_373

Chapter 3 Temple Ordinance and Korean Buddhism \_375

- 1. Harmful Effects Regarding the Appointment and Dismissal of  
the Abbots \_376
- 2. Harmful Effects on the Temple System \_377
- 3. Harmful Effects Regarding the Disposal of Temple  
Properties \_378

Chapter 4 Conclusion \_380

## Foundations and Errors of Anti-Religion Movement \_383

Heo Yeongho

Chapter 1 Introduction \_385

Chapter 2 Origination of Primitive People's Religion \_387

Chapter 3 Meaning of Religion \_389

## Examining the Causes of Korean Buddhism Facing a Crisis \_395

Mong Jeongsaeng

Chapter 1 Introduction \_397

Chapter 2 The Causes of a Crisis \_400

Chapter 3 The Outer Disruptions \_402

Chapter 4 The Inner Poisons \_407

Chapter 5 The Poison of Abbot \_410

Chapter 6 The Poison of Taking Wife \_413

Chapter 7 Conclusion \_417

## On the Principal Teachings of Korean Buddhism \_423

Gim Yeongsu

Chapter 1 The Transmission of the Lamp in  
Korean Buddhism \_427

Chapter 2 The Recovery of the Order-Name \_431

- Chapter 3 The Principal Teachings of Jogye Seon jong \_435
- Chapter 4 The True Meaning of “Not Establishing Words and Letters” \_438
- Chapter 5 The Correction of the Denominational Constitution \_441
- 
- Bibliography \_449
- Index \_454
- Contributors \_460
- The Committee Organization of the Publication Project of the *Collected Works of Modern Korean Buddhism* \_462
- Korean Buddhism Library’s *Collected Works of Modern Korean Buddhism* \_466

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## Conventions

- HBJ: *Han'guk Bulgyo jeonseo* 韓國佛教全書 (Complete Works of Korean Buddhism). 14 vols. Seoul: Dongguk Daehakgyo Chulpanbu, 1979 (–2004).
- T: *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經 (Taishō Edition of the Buddhist Canon). Edited by Takakasu Junjirō et al. 100 vols. Tokyo: Taiahō Isssikyō Kankōkai, 1924–1935.
- X: *Xuzang jing* 續藏經 (Hong Kong reprint of the *Dai Nihon zokuzōkyō* 大日本續藏經 [Kyoto Supplement to the Canon. Kyoto, 1905–1912]). 150 vols. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Buddhist Association, 1967. (Sequential numbers of texts established according to listing in *Shōwa hōbō sōmokuroku* 昭和法寶總目錄, vol. 2.)
- Ch.: Chinese, Ger.: Germany, Jp.: Japanese, Kor.: Korean, Skt.: Sanskrit

*Collected Works of Modern Korean Buddhism* series uses the standard Romanization systems for East Asian Languages for the transcription of them: Pinyin for Chinese, Revised Hepburn for Japanese, and Revised Romanization for Korean, with slight elaboration in some cases.

Proper names of persons, sites, and other cultural practices or institutions are transcribed according to their nationality and the provenance of the text, but translators transcribe and translate them considering specific contexts they are dealt with. (Translators may have their own transcribing conventions specific to their translations in each volume.)

Citations from the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* are listed as follows: title (with Sanskrit title, if relevant, in parentheses) and fascicle number, T[aishō] and Taishō serial number, Taishō volume number, page number, register (a, b, or c), and, if applicable, line number(s)—e.g., *Shoulengyan jing* (*Sūramgama-sūtra*) 2, T 945.19.110a1. In citations from the *Han'guk Bulgyo jeonseo*, the Romanized Korean title will be mentioned first and then volume number, page number, register (a, b, c, d), and if applicable, line number(s) such as the *Seon'ga gwigam*, HBJ 7.637a21–22.

As of the Romanization of Korean terms and names, this series has some exceptions for its application as far as the Revised Romanization system allows. Firstly, in case that persons' names mentioned in any parts of the book have their own English spellings, they are spelled as they are regardless of transcribing them under Revised Romanization System. Secondly, to avoid the phonetic confusions, hyphens and apostrophes are used in some cases: an apostrophe usually lies in between letters not to join and make a phoneme, but a hyphen does specifically in a person's name. Lastly, the given names of Kang, Noh, Shin and Yi are alternatively transcribed as such to avoid supposedly uncomfortable implications or phonetic confusions of their Romanized names.

The original texts used to get translated for this *Collected Works of Modern Korean Buddhism* series have minor misprints and typos in their early twentieth century printed copies. Most of the translators did researches and studies to correct and revise them in the course of translation, with the Editorial Board's support and consultation. Translators usually never missed noting significant changes in translation from the original texts, but might have left minor revisions and corrections without footnoting them. For example, translators sometimes add section headings which are not in the original texts for readers to better understand the texts.

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## Introduction

Kim Yongtae, Kim Seong-Uk

Korea faced the great socio-political crisis in the nineteenth century. A series of peasant uprisings rose due to the misrules of local and central governments in addition to grave natural disasters. Western imperial countries as well as Japan threatened the Korean sovereignty with their overwhelming military powers. Buddhism, which had permeated the Korean society since its introduction, was also challenged by such “new” religions as Eastern Learning (Donghak 東學) and Christianity. Even though Buddhism tried to embrace diverse social classes, providing a vast array of spiritual practices, it simply did not have the capability of actively resolving the socio-political issues of the time. Buddhism was rather gulped down by angry waves of modernization, having little time to revive its traditional value for the new era.

After the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Japan took the path toward imperialism, following Western imperial powers. Japan promoted Shintō as its state religion to strengthen the imperial authority and ideology, while launching the anti-Buddhist campaign of the so-called “abolishing Buddhism and destroying Śākyamuni” (*haibutsu kishaku* 廢佛毀釋). For its survival, Japanese Buddhism supported imperial Japan, revealing the strong color of the state-Buddhism. As Japan advanced to Korea, Japanese Buddhism also landed on the Korean soil to facilitate the process of the imperial expansion. The foundation of a branch temple of the Ōtaniha 大谷派 Honganji 本願寺 Temple of Jōdo shinshū 淨土真宗 in the open port Busan in 1877 signaled the beginning of the Japanese Buddhist invasion to the Korean Peninsula. Afterwards, many Japanese schools

such as Nichiren shū 日蓮宗, Jōdo shū 淨土宗, and Sōtō shū 曹洞宗 competitively dispatched missionaries and established branch temples or mission stations in Korea.

In response, Korean Buddhists pushed forward the reformation for Buddhism to survive as a modern religion. They aimed for rejuvenating Korean Buddhism and transforming it for the new era through the removal of obsolete conventions and westernization. Since Christianity was introduced to Korea with some symbols of the modern civilization such as new education and medication, Korean Buddhists naturally recognized Christianity as the model of modern religions that possessed the key elements of the western civilization. Hence, they were eager to imitate Christianity and thereby followed the path of Japanese Buddhism that had modeled after Christianity in its modernization decades earlier.

In March 1895, at the request of the Japanese Buddhist priest Sano Zenrei 佐野前勵 (1859–1912), the Joseon government lifted the ban against Buddhist clerics entering the capital, a symbol of its anti-Buddhist policy. Although the abolition of the ban was already discussed in the Joseon court years ago, it was not implemented until Sano's petition. As Japan's political position in the peninsula was ever strengthened with the triumph in the Sino-Japanese War in 1895, Sano's request was rather easily granted. This lifting of the ban helped Japanese Buddhist priests win the hearts of many Korean Buddhist followers and thus propagate Japanese Buddhism more easily in the peninsula. Many Korean Buddhists expressed their gratitude toward Japanese Buddhism, saying that their long-cherished desire was finally attained and the foundation for the revival of Korean Buddhism was established thanks to their Japanese friends. Japanese Buddhists' active missionary and charitable acts also created a great sensation in the Korean Buddhist community. Most of all, Japanese Buddhist clerics gained sympathy from Korean counterparts in that both faced similar issues such as protecting their religion from the Christian challenge. As Christianity expanded its influence in the peninsula, many Korean Buddhists simply believed that imitating Japanese Buddhism would

be a shortcut to survive in the religious competition of the new era.

From the early twentieth century, the efforts of the Korean Buddhist community and the government toward modernization began to be materialized. The government changed its Buddhist policy in April, 1902, to directly control the Buddhist community. It established the system of Temple Management Office (Sachal gwalliseo 寺刹管理署) with Wonheungsa 元興寺 Temple, located right outside of the Eastern Gate of Seoul, as great dharma mountain (*dae beopsan* 大法山), the head temple of the Korean Buddhist community. Under the control of Wonheungsa, there were sixteen middle dharma mountain (*jung beopsan* 中法山) temples selected throughout the peninsula as head temples of provinces. Management officers (*doseomni* 都攝理) were dispatched to middle dharma mountain temples. The temple decree (*sachallyeong* 寺刹令) with thirty six articles was issued as management regulations for all the temples in Korea. One of the main goals of the decree was the enforcement of the ordination-license system by which the government could control temple property and grant clerical certificates. The temple decree also stipulated on the observance of Confucian ethics such as loyalty and filial piety. It is not so surprising that it included an article that Buddhist clerics were not allowed for political activities, considering the marginalized status of Buddhism during the Joseon dynasty. This reflected some features of state Buddhism in Japan. However, this could be also interpreted in a way that the temple decree attempted to enforce modern religious policies which embraced the principle of separation between religion and politics.

As Imperial Japan more blatantly interfered with the Korean politics, the system of Temple Management Office with the temple decree was abolished in 1904. As Korea became a protectorate of Japan in 1905, the Residence-General's Office was established. It enforced the temple management regulations in 1906 to allow Japanese Buddhist priests to supervise Korean temples. Some Korean temples attempted to heighten their socio-political status through the support and supervision of Japanese Buddhism. With the sponsorship from the Japanese Jōdo shū, Society for Buddhist

Research (Bulgyo yeon'guhoe 佛教研究會) was organized and Myeongjin Academy (Myeongjin hakgyo 明進學校, present Dongguk University), the first modern institute for Buddhist education in Korea, was founded in 1906. In particular, the latter taught Buddhism and New Learning (Sin hangmun 新學問) to monk-students who were selected from temples throughout the peninsula.

In 1908, the fifty-two representatives of the Korean temples established the unified order Won jong 圓宗 (Consummate School) to represent the Korean Buddhist community. Gakhwangsa 覺皇寺 Temple was founded in the urban Seoul as the head temple of the Won jong. Yi Hoegwang 李晦光 (1862–1933), a renowned monk from Haeinsa 海印寺 Temple, was elected as the first president of the Won jong. The Japanese Sōtō shū missionary Takeda Hanshi 武田範之 (1863–1911) served as advisor to this newly-founded school especially for such issues as the reformation of Korean Buddhism and the direction of its development. Takeda was, in fact, an extreme imperialist who was involved in the murder of the Korean Empress Myeongseong 明成 (1851–1895) in 1895. Being an advisor for the pro-Japanese political association Iljinhoe 一進會 (Advancement Society), he was one of the leading figures who paved the way for the Japanese colonization of Korea. Japanese Buddhists' protection and support awakened the Korean Buddhist community as a whole and helped its modernization. However, it is undeniable that such intervention also served as a vanguard of the Japanese imperial invasion by spreading the friendly sentiment toward Japanese Buddhism among Korean Buddhist followers.

As Korea was colonized by Imperial Japan in 1910, the Government-General's Office issued the Temple Ordinance (Sachallyeong 寺刹令) and the regulations for its enforcement in June, 1911. The Korean Buddhist community officially designated itself as “Two Traditions of Seon and Gyo of Korean Buddhism” (Joseon Bulgyo Seon-Gyo yangjong 朝鮮佛教 禪教 兩宗) and launched the system of the thirty head temples in 1912, adopting the head-branch system of Japanese Buddhism. Under this Temple Ordinance system, the colonial government directly

controlled the Korean Buddhist temples. The Governor-General held the right not only to appoint or dismiss the abbots of all thirty head temples, but also to manage or dispose temple property. As the Temple Ordinance system was enforced as part of Japan's colonial policies of Korean religions, it naturally brought the subordination of Korean Buddhism to the Japanese political authorities. Nonetheless, the majority of the Korean Buddhist community, including head temple abbots who came to enjoy great power under this system, welcomed this Temple Ordinance as the legalization of Buddhism, the grace and support from the government, and the momentum for a new development of Korean Buddhism. In the early twentieth century, many Buddhists dreamed a rosy future of the modernization of Korean Buddhism through this political support.

As the Korean Buddhist community compromised with the colonial system in the 1910s, it focused on reforming and modernizing Korean Buddhism. Its efforts were well-reflected in the publication of Buddhist journals, the translation and publication of Buddhist texts, and the suggestion of various proposals for the reformation of Korean Buddhism. Korean Buddhists also established mission stations throughout the peninsula for the popularization of Buddhism and set up the modern Buddhist educational system which consisted of the three levels of common school, local seminaries, and the central seminary. The Buddhist community pushed forward the systematic improvement and reformation in order for Buddhism to successfully adjust to a new era and survive as a modern religion.

There were active discussions on the reformation of Korean Buddhism in the 1910s. For example, in the *Treatise on the Restoration of Korean Buddhism* (*Joseon Bulgyo jusinnon* 朝鮮佛教維新論) of 1913, Han Yongun 韓龍雲 (1879–1944) argued that since Buddhism was a high level of thought system that embraced both religion and philosophy, it could not only survive in the modern religious competition but also become a source of a moral civilization. In particular, Han emphasized the equalitarianism and universalism of Buddhism as a basis of his argument. He also argued that thorough self-

awareness and radical reformation should be carried out to remove old evil conventions of Korean Buddhism. Most famously, Han also advocated the clerical marriage for the revival, popularization, and modernization of Korean Buddhism.

Gwon Sangro 權相老 (1879–1965) also composed a number of writings covering various fields such as Buddhism, history, and literature. In particular, in the “Treatise on the Reformation of Korean Buddhism” (Joseon Bulgyo gaehyeongnon 朝鮮佛教改革論) of 1912, he argued that the reformation was inevitable in order to overcome the obsolescence and exclusiveness of Korean Buddhism in the era of religious competition which was based on the theory of evolution. He went forward to describe traditional Buddhism as dependent and subordinate and dismissed it as an old convention and even an object of removal. Baek Yongseong 白龍城 (1864–1940), one of the renowned Seon masters of the time, deplored the backwardness and underdevelopment of Korean Buddhism in the *Returning to the Source of the Right Tenet* (*Gwiwon jeongjong* 歸源正宗) of 1910, witnessing the popularity of Christianity in the peninsula. Contrary to the negative perception of the Korean Buddhist tradition of his time, Baek argued that the true reformation should be able to reveal the Seon identity of Korean Buddhism and present its original face.

Discourses on the reformation of Buddhism in the 1910s mainly aimed for the survival of Buddhism in the new era, adopting an apologetic stance rather than a nationalist one. This attitude was related to the Buddhist awareness of the socio-political situation of the peninsula shortly after Japan’s colonization of Korea. Under the colonial rule, the Korean Buddhist community found it difficult to directly reveal its political discontent and opposition to the religious policy of the Japanese government which was represented by the Temple Ordinance. Most of Korean Buddhists instead turned their attention to the modernization of the Korean Buddhist tradition, complying and compromising with the political power.

After the March First Movement in 1919, some Buddhists were awakened to the spirit of national and ecclesiastic independence.

Politically aware of the necessity to overcome the harmful effects of the Temple Ordinance system and its consequent subordination of Buddhism to the government, they came up with more practical reformation plans. For example, reformative young clerics organized Association of Young Korean Buddhists (Joseon Bulgyo cheongnyeonghoe 鮮佛教青年會) and Association for the Revitalization of Korean Buddhism (Joseon Bulgyo yusinhoe 朝鮮佛教維新會) in 1920 and 1921, respectively, and advocated such reformation policies as the establishment of the unifying central Buddhist organization. They also criticized the Temple Ordinance system of causing various harmful results such as the arbitrary use of power of head temple abbots, the collapse of the temple community, the loss of the ecclesiastic independence, and the clerical marriage. A few nationalist movements were also carried out during this period: for example, Seon Academy (Seon hagwon 禪學院) was established in 1921 to recover the traditional Korean Seon style. Most of all, these reform-minded nationalist young monks confronted head temple abbots who were the main beneficiaries of the Temple Ordinance system at almost all issues, which sometimes developed into bigger social issues.

In the 1920s, the colonial government implemented the so-called cultural rule that softened its military control over the Korean people. Several Buddhists strongly attacked the political subordination of the Korean Buddhist community under the Temple Ordinance system and spearheaded reform efforts with diverse plans. The monk Yi Yeongjae 李英宰 (1900–1927), who had studied in Japan, argued for the establishment of the reformative order for the modernization of Korean Buddhism, based on the idea of democratic republic and the division of power, in the “Treatise on the Renovation of Korean Buddhism” (Joseon Bulgyo hyeoksinnon 朝鮮佛教革新論) of 1922. Baek Yongseong also attempted to strengthen the foothold of Buddhism. For example, he established a college as an extension of his reformation plan while emphasizing the preservation of the Korean Seon and Vinaya traditions. He also promoted the economic independence of the Korean Buddhist community by building

factories and organizing the self-supporting group of laborers and farmers as a means to re-establish the Korean Buddhist order. Han Yongun, an ardent nationalistic Buddhist activist, also worked for the socialization and popularization of Buddhism, strongly condemning the Temple Ordinance system.

In the early 1920s, several reform activists pointed out the political collusion with government authorities as the main culprit of the corruption of Korean Buddhism and appealed to the public for the abolition of the Temple Ordinance. Some newspapers promoted the establishment of the autonomous unifying institution that would directly govern the entire Korean Buddhist community, granting the suffrage to ordinary Buddhist clerics. Diverse plans for the popularization of Korean Buddhism also appeared: to name a few of those plans, the education of general knowledge, the enlightenment of rural areas, the eradication of illiteracy, the translation of Buddhist scriptures into vernacular Korean, and the social and relief activities for natural disasters. Most of all, the reform-minded group tried to transform Korean Buddhism into a lay-followers-oriented social Buddhism in the name of the modernization of Korean Buddhism.

During this period, socialist and anti-religion movements emerged as major ideological streams. Anti-religion activists at first targeted Christianity, but, from the 1930s, began to attack Religion of Heavenly Way (Cheondogyo 天道教) as well. They also condemned the unifying and popularization movement of the Buddhist community as the revisionist way of the ruling class in society. The Buddhist community as a whole basically expressed the negative and skeptical attitude toward the anti-religion movement. Despite this fact, however, the Buddhist reform movement resonated with the anti-religion movement in that both emphasized the economic and practical aspects of human life.

As Japan went into a war mode from the late 1930s and the early 1940s, Korean Buddhists' efforts for the reform and autonomy of Korean Buddhism rapidly declined. Along with other religious and social organizations, the majority of the Korean Buddhist community

joined the Mind-field Development (Simjeon gaebal [Jn. Shinden kaihatu] 心田開發) movement. This movement aimed at facilitating the war mobilization and imperialization (*hwangminhwa* 皇民化) by recognizing the national-body or *kokutai* (Kor. *gukche*) 國體 of Japan with the emperor its head and encouraging people to thank him and repay his kindness. A number of Korean Buddhist leaders contributed to this movement, being actively involved with such activities as lecturing for Imperial Japan, mobilizing student soldiers, and donating war supplies. In this regard, however, Christian, Confucian, and other religious organizations were not different. Korean Buddhism became Buddhism of the Imperial Way (*Hwangdo Bulgyo* 皇道佛教) and ardently supported the Japanese nationalist cause, cooperating with the colonial government's mobilization and imperialization projects. This fact revealed the features of Korean Buddhism under the colonial system. During the war period, the political subordination of Korean Buddhism deepened.

This book includes twelve essays with various topics, all of which were selected from the articles in several Buddhist journals, written during the colonial period.<sup>1</sup> All these twelve essays were published from 1918 to 1933. They explore the past and present of Korean Buddhism of the time from various perspectives such as history, religion, literature, politics, society, and culture. Their authors include not just scholars in Buddhist studies but also renowned scholars in other fields such as Choe Namseon in Korean studies and Yi Gwangsu in Korean literature. The total number of the authors in this collection is eleven since the collection includes two essays by Choe. Most of the essays in the collection came from the journal *Buddhism* (*Bulgyo* 佛教), one of the most successful Buddhist journals during the colonial period. The journal was founded in 1924 and closed in 1933. Han Yongun served as the editor and director of the journal from July, 1931 (bound volume 84, 85) to July 1933 (volume 108). The last five of the twelve essays were published in that time span. The essays are organized in the order of publication. Below are brief introductions of the authors and their essays, following that order.

## 1. Choe Namseon, “Overview of Korean Buddhism: A Diachronic Approach to Korean Buddhism” (1918)

Choe Namseon 崔南善 (1890–1957) was one of the representative scholars in modern Korean studies. He entered the Department of Geology and History at Waseda 早稻田 University in 1906. After quitting the school, he returned to Korea and established a publishing company named Sinmun’gwan 新文館 in 1907. He also opened another publishing company Joseon gwangmunhoe 朝鮮光文會 in 1910 which mostly published Korean classical texts. Choe participated in the so-called New Literature (Sin munhak 新文學) movement, publishing a new form of free-style poems by launching the journals *Boys* (*Sonyeon* 少年) in 1908 and *Youth* (*Cheongchun* 青春) in 1914. During the March First Movement in 1919, he drafted the Declaration of Independence of Korea as one of the thirty three national representatives. From the 1920s on, he devoted himself to the Korean studies. In the meanwhile, Choe served as a member of the committee for compiling Korean history in the Government-General’s Office. In 1938, he became a vice director of Privy Council (Jungchuwon 中樞院) and helped the Japanese colonial government, lecturing to urge young Korean students to apply for student soldier positions. He died in 1957, leaving many writings, including the *Korean History* (*Joseon yeoksa* 朝鮮歷史), the *Treatise on Dan-gun* (*Dan-gun non* 檀君論), the *Guide for the Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms* (*Samguk yusa haeje* 三國遺事解題), and the *History of Korean Independence Movement* (*Joseon dongnip undongsa* 朝鮮獨立運動史).

Before he engaged in pro-Japanese activities, Choe in fact tried to promote and nurture the Korean national consciousness through his scholarship and, as an extension of his efforts, led the re-interpretation and re-discovery of the value of the Korean Buddhist tradition. Although he was not a scholar in Buddhist studies, he showed much interest in Buddhism, publishing many Buddhist texts and lecturing at Central Buddhist Seminary (Jungang Bulgyo jeonmun hakgyo 中央佛教專門學校) in the 1930s. He wrote the essay, “Overview of

Korean Buddhism: A Diachronic Approach to Korean Buddhism,” around the time when he edited Yi Neunghwa’s *Comprehensive History of Korean Buddhism* (*Joseon Bulgyo tongsa* 朝鮮佛教通史). In this essay, Choe argues for the necessity of the reconsideration and international promotion of Korean Buddhism. He deplores the fact that not only Korean monks and scholars, but also scholars of Japan, which is the center of Buddhist studies at the time, look down on Korean Buddhism even without proper knowledge of it. He asserts that the collection of Korean Buddhist materials and research of Korean Buddhism with modern methodology are urgently needed. He also argues that Buddhism and Korean history have been in an inseparable relationship and that Buddhism has had more social and cultural influence on Korea than Confucianism, playing a more significant role in the spiritual life of ordinary people and the spiritual development of the Korean society as a whole. Most of all, in this essay, Choe suggests a new route along which Buddhism was transmitted directly from India to Korea, possibly earlier than to China, and argues that Korean Buddhism with its old origin has developed its own distinctive and independent tradition in East Asia.

## 2. Yi Gwangsu, “Buddhism and Korean Literature” (1925)

Yi Gwangsu 李光洙 (1892–1950) was one of the most important novelists in the modern Korean literature. While he studied in Japan at a young age, he composed poems, literary critiques, and novels. After returning to Korea in 1910, he became a teacher. He entered the Department of Philosophy at Waseda University in Japan in 1915, but came back again to Korea because of health problem. He published the *Heartless* (*Mujeong* 無情), the first Korean modern full-length novel in 1917, opening a new era in modern Korean literature. He actively participated in the Korean nationalist movement, composing the February Eighth Declaration of Independence of Korean students in Tokyo, Japan, in 1919 and running the nationalist newspaper *Independent* (*Dongnip sinmun* 獨立新聞). After coming back

to Korea in 1921, he published the *On the National Reconstruction* (*Minjok gaejoron* 民族改造論) in 1922 in which he argued for the removal of moral corruption from the Korean society. Afterwards, he worked for newspapers such as the *Donga Daily* (*Donga ilbo*) and the *Joseon Daily* (*Joseon ilbo*), producing many literary works. After spending time in prison in 1937, being involved in the Suyang donguhoe 修養同友會 incident, he became pro-Japanese. He served as a chairperson of the Association of Korean Writers (Joseon munin hyeophoe 朝鮮文人協會), a Japanese-government-patronized organization, and changed his name to Kayama Mitsurō 香山光郎. During the Korean War, he was taken to North Korea. He died of tuberculosis in 1950. He left many novels, poems, and essays, including the *Sentimental Beings* (*Yujeong* 有情), the *Earth* (*Heuk* 囂), and the *Great Master Wonhyo* (*Wonhyo daesa* 元曉大師). In particular, the *Great Mater Wonhyo* novelizes the life of Wonhyo 元曉 (617–686), one of the most popular monks in Korea.

In this short essay, “Buddhism and Korean Literature,” Yi argues that the relationship between Buddhism and Korean literature is important because Buddhism has pervaded the spirit of Korean people for the last 1,400 years and has continued to exist in the life of Korean people. Although it seems that Confucianism was dominant on the surface during the Joseon period, it in fact was limited to the higher ruling class. Buddhism has played vital roles as religion, thought, and culture of Korea until Protestantism and Western thought were introduced in modern times. According to Yi, since literature reflects life and thought of people, Buddhism has a tremendous influence on Korean literature, as shown in the fact that many literary works of Korea in modern and pre-modern times adopt Buddhist themes or use Buddhist subjects, for example, famous temples and monks, or Buddhist notions such as impermanence and liberation. Yi concludes that more literary works would be produced regarding Buddhism in the future since the religion has taken a deep root in Korean people’s minds.

### 3. Baek Seonguk, “To Establish a Modern Buddhism” (1926)

Baek Seonguk 白性郁 (1897–1981) became a monk in 1910 and graduated from Buddhist Central Seminary (Bulgyo Jungang Hangnim 佛教中央學林) in 1919. After the March First Movement, he joined the Provisional Government of Korea in Sanghai, China. He went to Paris, France in 1920, and studied philosophy at University of Wuerzburg, Germany, and received a doctorate degree in 1925. After returning to Korea, he became a professor at Central Buddhist Seminary (Jungang Bulgyo jeonmun hakgyo 中央佛教專門學校). After liberation in 1945, he was appointed as minister of internal affairs of Syngman Rhee’s 李承晚 (1875–1965) administration in 1950. Afterwards, he served as a chairman of the board and president of Dongguk University, promoting modern Buddhist education.

In his essay, “To Establish a Modern Buddhism,” he argues that monks belong to the intellectual class and thus should cultivate moral and intellectual trainings to fulfill their social duties. According to him, the goal of Northern Buddhism (i.e. East Asian Buddhism), “saving sentient beings,” represents these social duties. Korean monks should also contribute to the development of the Korean culture and do their duties as leaders of the society. The monks should develop their knowledge because they would be otherwise despised due to the expectation that they receive from the society.

Baek points out various urgent issues of the Korean Buddhist community of his time, regarding ordination certificate, education, mission, finance, and nuns. He argues that the qualification for Buddhist clerics, including monks’ exams, should be strengthened and the institute in charge of the ordination procedure should be established. As for education, he suggests that the traditional lecture and meditation hall system, along with the education for Buddhist art technique, should be preserved while modern scholarly fields, such as liberal arts, science, and medicine, should be taught. Baek even encourages monks to study abroad. He gives some examples for topics of monks’ exams, covering not only Buddhism, but also

modern academic fields. As for mission, he asserts that mission stations should be financially independent and the systematic lay organizations should be founded to provide intellectual and physical education. For work, he emphasizes that temple economy should be managed by conducting businesses and using forest resources, urging the need for Buddhist clerics to engage in social relief activities. As for Buddhist nuns, he argues that their conditions of ordination should be equal to those of monks. According to Baek, Buddhist nuns should not only learn Buddhist doctrines but also receive specialized education that focuses on nursing skills, early childhood education, etc.

#### 4. Gim Taeheup, “Research on Religion and the Development of Social Work” (1926–1927)

Gim Taeheup 金泰洽 (1889–1989) received ordination in Simwonsa 深源寺 Temple in the city of Cheorwon, Gangwon-do. He took great teaching course (*daegyogwa* 大教科), the highest level of the monastic curriculum, at Beopjusa 法住寺 Temple in Chungcheong-do. He went to Toyo University in Japan in 1918 to study Indian philosophy, but graduated the Department of Religion at Nihon University in 1926. He witnessed the Great Kantō 關東 earthquake in 1923 where thousands of Koreans were killed by Japanese people. Gim wrote the article, “Imjin Japanese Invasion and the Activities of Korean Monks’ Militia” (Imjin waeran gwa Joseon seungbyeong ui hwaryak), tinged with the Korean nationalist sense, for the journal *Buddhism* (*Bulygo*) 35 (May 1927), some of which were excised by Japanese authorities. After coming back to Korea in 1928, he worked as a central propagator for Korean Buddhism and also lectured at Central Buddhist Seminary in 1930. He tried to spread Buddhist teachings to the public through the media of radio and public lecture. Gim organized the Buddhist choir and troupe and composed Buddhist hymns and plays. Taking charge in the publication of the *Buddhist Periodical* (*Bulgyo sibo* 佛教時報) from August 1935 to April 1944, he led

pro-Japanese activities. He promoted the Mind-field Development movement, which the Government-General's Office carried out as a part of imperialization project, and wrote essays or gave lectures that supported the Japanese colonial government's name-change policy and war mobilization. After Liberation, Gim actively participated in the project of translating the Buddhist canon to vernacular Korean.

Gim's essay, "Research on Religion and the Development of Social Work" is in fact the overview section of Gim's bachelor thesis. It consists of the three chapters of Religion and Social Work, the Concept of Social Work, and the Historical Overview of Social Work. In chapter one, he explains the origin and essence of religion and social work in Buddhism and Christianity. Most of all, he argues that social work should be carried out from the sense of joint responsibility with which the members of society fulfill their duty and responsibility in their own positions for the betterment of society. In chapter two, Gim expounds the meaning, purpose, and categories of social work. He also deals with the social and individual causes of social illnesses, in particular, poverty, and the arising of social work. In chapter three, Gim gives an overview of the history of social work in the West and the East, including Greece, Rome, medieval and modern Europe, India, China, and Korea. In this essay, Gim presents an analysis on the relationship between religion and social work from a Buddhist perspective.

### **5. Gim Byeokong, "A Concern for Korean Buddhism" (1927)**

Little is known about Gim Byeokong's 金璧翁 personal history and activities. According to the section on temple abbots in the gazette of the Government-General's Office on June 5, 1915, Gim was appointed as the abbot for five temples, including Sangwonsa 上院寺 and Bomunsa 普聞寺 at Panbu-myeon 板富面 in Wonju 原州 of Gangwon-do. At his time, there were serious confrontations between conservative abbots and reformative young monks. The latter formed the Association of Young Korean Buddhists (Joseon Bulgyo

cheongnyeonhae) and the Association for the Revitalization of Korean Buddhism (Joseon Bulgyo yusinhoe), and pushed for the establishment of the unifying central organization, along with the abolishment of the Temple Ordinance. However, young monks' General Bureau (Chongmuwon 總務院) was merged into abbots' Administration Bureau (Gyomuwon 教務院) in 1924. Conservative abbots seized the power of the Korean Buddhist community with the support of the Japanese colonial government. Nonetheless, young monks held the conference of Korean Buddhist clerics in 1929, organized Korean Buddhist Youth Union (Joseon Bulgyo cheongnyeong chongdongmaeng 朝鮮佛教青年總同盟) in 1931, and continued their efforts to abolish the Temple Ordinance.

In the essay, "A Concern for Korean Buddhism," his only extant writing, Gim diagnoses the causes of the dire situation of Korean Buddhism from the historical perspective and provides solutions to overcome the situation. Gim argues that Korean Buddhists themselves take the responsibility for the future of Korean Buddhism and make the utmost efforts, abandoning their erroneous habits. He even goes further to say that the factionalism prevalent in the Buddhist community of his time will otherwise destroy Korean Buddhism completely. He explains the disorderly situation of Buddhism of the time, in particular from the early 1920s, in terms of institution, work, incorporated foundation, education, and mission. Then, he provides some solutions to resolve the issues. According to him, Korean Buddhism needs the unifying institution that will not only unite the entire Korean Buddhist community, but also promote and protect Korean Buddhism. He urges all Buddhist clerics to make every effort to guide people and the society, conducting various works in such areas as education, mission, and medical and charitable activities. He asserts that these are urgent tasks, considering the depleted state of Korean Buddhism in which there is no central, educational, missionary, or youth institution for Buddhism.

## 6. Choe Namseon, “Korean Buddhism: Its Position in the Cultural History of the East” (1930)

This essay was presented at the Pan-Pacific Buddhist Conference (Beom Taepyeongyang Bulgyo daehoe) in July, 1930. Since he did not attend the conference, the essay was read by another person. Choe Bongsu translated Choe Namseon’s original Korean manuscript into English whose title was “Korean Buddhism and Her Position in the Cultural History of the Orient.” Choe Namseon’s essay explains the meaning and value of Korea in the cultural history of East Asia, discussing such topics as the transmission of Buddhism toward the East and Korea, the development of Buddhist doctrines in Korea, Wonhyo, who was the founder of unified Buddhism, Korea in the history of Buddhist art, the Buddhist canon and Korea, the role of Korea in the spread of Buddhism, and the contribution of Korea to Japanese Buddhism.

In the introduction of the essay, Choe argues that Korea should receive a due attention that it deserves in terms of its cultural value. He first gives examples of such renowned Korean monks as Seungnang 僧郎 (fl. ca. 476–512) in Sanlun zong 三論宗 (School of Three Treatises), Woncheuk 圓測 (613–696) in Faxiang zong 法相宗 (Dharma-Character School), and Uisang 義相 (625–702) in Hwaeom jong (Ch. Huayan zong) 華嚴宗 (Flower Garland School). In particular, Choe promotes Wonhyo as the founder of the unique Korean Buddhist tradition that is characterized by a comprehensive and unifying tendency. Borrowing from Japanese Buddhist scholars’ argument, Choe argues that Buddhism of India is introductory; Chinese Buddhism is itemized; Korean Buddhism is conclusive. According to Choe, Wonhyo was the one who finally fulfilled the mission to establish and realize a synthetic, universal, and comprehensive Buddhism: Wonhyo not only reconciled various conflicting Buddhist doctrines with the idea of the one mind (*ilsim*一心), but also popularized Buddhism with diverse devotional practices. Choe then explains the splendid accomplishments of Korean Buddhist art,

including the Seokguram Grotto that boasts the utmost beauty. He also presents the contribution of Korean Buddhism to the collections of the Buddhist canon by giving an example of the Goryeo canon, the so-called “*Palman daejanggyeong*” 八萬大藏經 (Eighty Thousand Canon) that served as a basis for the modern Japanese canon *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經 (The Buddhist Canon Compiled in the Taishō Era). Choe concludes the essay, speaking of the role and contribution of Korean Buddhism to the development of Japanese Buddhism and its art and culture.

### 7. Yu Yeop, “Buddhism and the Trend of Social Thought” (1931)

Yu Yeop 柳葉 (1902–1975) was a writer monk who was ordained at a temple in Geumgangsán Mountain. After studying at the high school affiliated with Waseda University in Japan, he came back to Korea and served as a lecturer at Haeinsa 海印寺 Temple. From 1923, he began his career as a writer, composing many poems, novels, and essays. He served as a dean for Haein Seminary. He also worked for the *Seoul Daily* (*Seoul sinmun*) as an editorialist and served for the *Yeongnam Daily* (*Yeongnam ilbo*) as a chief editor and vice president. He retreated to a hermitage in Goyang, Gyeonggi-do at his later years.

In the essay, “Buddhism and the Trend of Social Thought,” Yu deals with the relationship between Buddhism and social thought as well as the role of Buddhism in modern times. He begins the essay, explaining the *raison d'être* of religion in human society. He argues that religion should develop into the form that can respond to the ultimate demand of human life. According to him, such a religion should be ethically and spiritually ultimate and Buddhism and Christianity are those two religions. Yu then compares and contrasts the two religions in terms of the theory of existence and the questions of creation and epistemology. Through the comparison between Buddhism and Christianity, Yu intends to advocate for the superiority of Buddhism. He argues that Christianity belongs to

religious sentimentalism while Buddhism, religious intellectualism, and that the latter is the most perfect religion that has developed into the ultimate level in the history of religion. According to him, Buddhism is a comprehensive religion that integrates various religions and academic fields. Yu asserts that Buddhism has the most responsibility in modern times when people feel great distress within the complex streams of various thoughts. Therefore, he concludes that the modern times is a golden opportunity for the spread of Buddhism and thus that Buddhists should expect and prepare for its ever increasing social roles.

### **8. Kang Yumun, “Overview of Korean Buddhism for the Last Hundred Years” (1932)**

Kang Yumun 姜裕文 (ca.1898–1941) was a scholar monk of Gounsa 孤雲寺 Temple in Gyeongsangbuk-do. He was one of the first graduates of the Central Buddhist Seminary. He went to Japan in 1931 to study and graduated from Taisho University. He served as a member of the Korean Buddhist Youth Union and served as a lecturer for the Central Buddhist Seminary. He died at the age of forty-four. His writings include “Where is Korean Buddhism Headed” (Joseon Bulgyo neun eodiro), “Review on Sindon” (Sindon go 辛屯考), and “Japanese Buddhism in early Meiji Period” (Meiji chogi ui Ilbon Bulgyo). He also composed a chronological chart of Korean Buddhism.

As the title indicates, the essay “Overview of Korean Buddhism for the Last Hundred Years,” deals with the history of Korean Buddhism from the 1830s to the 1930s. Kang divides this period into six. The first period was the period of passivity and suffering in which Buddhism experienced anti-Buddhist policy of the Joseon court. The lifting of the ban against Buddhist clerics entering the capital signaled the ending of this period. The second period was the period of Management Office, which was established in 1902 as a state office. In this period, the Korean Buddhist temples were organized in terms of one great dharma mountain temple and

the sixteen middle dharma mountain temples, head temples of provinces. The management office, however, was closed in 1906. The third period was the period of Board of Administrative Affairs of Won jong (Won jong jongmuwon 圓宗宗務院) which was established in 1908. In this period, the head of the board Yi Hoegwang signed a treaty with the Japanese Sôtō shū in 1910, which, according to Kang, was tantamount to selling Korean Buddhism. In response to Yi's action, some young monks established the Imje jong 臨濟宗 in 1911. The fourth period was the period of Joint Office (Yeonhap samuso 聯合事務所). In this period, the Japanese Government-General's Office issued the Temple Ordinance which organized Korean temples into the system of the thirty head temples. According to Kang, this period was characterized by abbots' arbitrary use of power. The fifth period was the period of Administration Bureau (Gyomuwon) which was opened in 1922. In this period, General Bureau (Chongmuwon), led by young monks, was merged into Administration Bureau, led by abbots who took side with the Government-General's Office. The period from 1929 to 1932 was the period of Saṃgha Assembly (Jonghoe 宗會). In this period, Korean monks made efforts to build a centralized Buddhist organization, enacting the Saṃgha Constitution (Jongheon 宗憲) at the conference of Buddhist clerics in 1929. Kang concludes that since Korean Buddhism has woken up from lethargy, Korean Buddhists need to strive in union for the development of Korean Buddhism, promoting education and propagation.

### 9. Gim Beoprin, “On the Separation of Religion and Politics” (1932)

Gim Beoprin 金法麟 (1899–1964) was a monk from Beomeosa 梵魚寺 Temple in Busan. He participated in the March First Movement in 1919 and graduated from Buddhist Central Seminary in the following year. He went to France in 1921 and graduated with a degree in philosophy from the University of Paris, France. He went to Japan to study Buddhist studies at Komazawa University in 1930 and organized the union of young Korean people in Tokyo in 1931.

After returning to Korea, he taught Buddhism at temples such as Haeinsa and Beomeosa for ten years. He was put into jail in 1938 due to the Mandang 祀黨 incident, a secret Buddhist nationalist organization, and again in 1942 due to the Joseoneo hakhoe 朝鮮語學會 incident. After Liberation, he worked as a chairperson for the general central bureau of Korean Buddhism and a chairman of the board for Dongguk Academy (Dongguk hagwon), subsequently. He also served as the minister of education in 1952 and UNESCO Korean committee chair in 1953. He became president of Dongguk University in 1963.

Gim's essay, "On the Separation of Religion and Politics," critically portrays the situation of the Korean Buddhist community of his time through the issue of the separation of religion and politics, which, according to him, is one of the main features of modern religions. He first gives a short overview of the relationship between religion and politics, explaining the four different types in which this relationship appeared in human history: religion-state, state-religion, officially-recognized religion, and separation of religion and politics. According to Gim, the first indicates the theocracy in which religion interferes with politics; the second is a system in which politics interferes with religion; in the third system, the state officially recognizes only one religion and grants privileges to the religion while giving people the freedom of choice of religion; in the fourth system, based on the principle of the freedom of religious belief, the state treats all religions equally and avoids interfering with internal affairs of religions. Gim then asserts that the Temple Ordinance distorts the relationship between Korean Buddhism and politics in Korea. Because of the Temple Ordinance, Korean Buddhism is interfered by the state without receiving any privileges. He even goes further to argue that the current problems of Korean Buddhism are mostly caused by the Temple Ordinance and therefore the Temple Ordinance should be abolished to reestablish a proper relationship between Buddhism and politics in Korea and, more importantly, revive the degenerate Korean Buddhism.

## 10. Heo Yeongho, “Foundations and Errors of Anti-Religion Movement” (1932)

Heo Yeongho 許永鎬 (1900–1952) was a monk and politician. He became a monk in Beomeosa. Influenced by Gim Beoprin who came from the same monastery, Heo actively participated in the March First Movement and served his time in prison. Afterwards, he went to Japan and graduated the Department of Culture at Toyo University and the Department of Buddhism at Taisho University. After coming back to Korea, he served as a lecturer for Beomeosa and professor and president for Hyehwa Special School (Hyehwa jeonmun hakgyo) in Seoul. After Liberation in 1945, he became the first president for Dongguk University. He was elected as a representative of the Korean Assembly in 1949, but was taken to North Korea in 1950 during the Korean War. His writings include some introductory works for Buddhist doctrines, along with the works on the main teachings and educational system of Korean Buddhism.

In this short essay, “Foundations and Errors of Anti-Religion Movement,” Heo argues that since religion develops from the human life itself, the anti-religious movement cannot be sufficiently supported. According to Heo, religion cannot be abandoned because it originates from various reasons, for example, not just from ignorance and fear but also from the notion of seeking happiness in the human life. In particular, he defends religion against Marxist criticism. According to Heo, even though Marx dismissed religion as the opium of the people, his argument cannot be a theoretical basis for any anti-religious movements because it targets the flaws and wrongdoings of religious institutions and systems. Heo even argues that Marx did not have a proper understanding of religion in his criticism focusing on religion as an institution. Heo concludes that even though attacked from different perspectives, religion will not be denied as long as human desire for happiness in life is not denied.

## 11. Mong Jeongsaeng (Yi Yongjo), “Examining the Causes of Korean Buddhism Facing a Crisis” (1932)

Mong Jeongsaeng 夢庭生 was Yi Yongjo’s 李龍祚 pen name. According to an article regarding him in the *Buddhism* (*Bulgyo* 佛敎) 101-102, Mong received ordination from Haeinsa. He graduated from Tokyo Medical College and became a medical doctor. He was also involved in the organization of Korean Buddhist Youth Union in 1931, worked for the establishment of an independent Buddhist order and Buddhist reform movement, and actively participated in Mandang activities. After Liberation, he served as a professor at Dongguk University.

In the essay, “Examining the Causes of Korean Buddhism Facing a Crisis,” Mong explains the major reasons why Korean Buddhism was put into crisis. In particular, he gives three outer disruptions and three inner poisons. The first set includes the economic disruption that pervades in the world due to the Great Depression, the ideological disruption that is plagued through materialism and anti-religious movement, and the disruption of laws that applies only to Korea because of the system of Temple Ordinance. The second set, namely the three inner poisons, refers to the poison of factional strife, the poison of abbots, and the poison of taking wife. He argues that the first poison is a chronic problem for Korea, as can be seen in the religious and political factionalisms of the Joseon dynasty. This poison has been inherited as a second nature of Korean people and can be found anywhere from family to society in colonial Korea. According to him, Buddhism, of course, is not an exception. There are serious strives among head and branch temples, parish temples as well as even in the same temple community. Along with this poison of factional strife, he argues, the Buddhist community has been swept away by the poison of abbots who abuse their authorities and power and the poison of taking wife which inevitably causes various ethical and financial problems. Mong concludes the essay, urging the Korean Buddhist community to overcome these outer disruptions and inner poisons and carry out for the revival of Korean Buddhism.

## 12. Gim Yeongsu, “On the Principal Teachings of Korean Buddhism” (1933)

Gim Yeongsu 金映遂 (1884–1967) was a scholar monk and historian. He learned classical Chinese from young ages and became a novice in Yeongwonsa 靈源寺 Temple in 1895 in Hamyang, Gyeongsangnam-do. He graduated from Myeongjin Academy, the first modern Buddhist educational institute in Korea. After the March First Movement in 1919, he was dispatched to the Provisional Korean Government in Sanghai, China, as an envoy for the Buddhist youth organization. He became a professor of Buddhist Central Seminary in 1927 and a professor and a dean at Hye-hwa Special School which was formerly Buddhist Central Seminary. After Liberation, he was faculty in the Department of Buddhist studies at Dongguk University, which succeeded Hye-hwa Special School. After the Korean War, he worked at Jeonbuk National University and Won'gwang University. He participated in the compilation of temple gazettes such as the *Haeinsa ji* 海印寺誌 and *Geumsansa ji* 金山寺誌. His scholarly accomplishments include the establishment of the Korean Buddhist denominational history, such as five teachings and nine mountains (*ogyo gusan* 五教九山) and five doctrinal schools and two meditative traditions (*ogyo yangjong* 五教兩宗) during the Goryeo dynasty. The *Sheaves of Korean Buddhist History* (*Joseon Bulgyosa-go* 朝鮮佛教史藁) of 1939 was one of his most famous writings.

Gim's essay, “On the Principal Teachings of Korean Buddhism,” identifies the principal teachings and sectarian name of Korean Buddhism. He argues that although Korean Buddhism has not disappeared, it has no self-consciousness without its name and principal teachings. Explaining briefly some theories of the Korean Buddhist lineage, he asserts that Taego Bou 太古普愚 (1301–1382) was the founder of Korean Buddhism and since he belonged to the lineage of the Gajisan 迦智山 school of the Jogye jong 曹溪宗, Korean Buddhism is to be called Jogye jong. According to Gim, since Korean Jogye jong was a Seon school, its principal teachings are “Not

establishing words and letters, directly pointing to the human mind, and seeing the nature and attaining Buddhahood” (*bullip munja, jikji insim, gyeonseong seongbul* 不立文字 直指人心 見性成佛). He argues that these teachings do not mean that practitioners should never admire scriptures; rather, they mean that practitioners should practice Seon meditation to attain awakening, not clinging to scriptures and that other practices such as reading scriptures, reciting the name of the Buddha, or chanting spells can be practiced as long as they serve as a preparation for meditation. Therefore, Gim asserts that Korean Buddhism admires all scriptures and employs various practices with these principal teachings.

All twelve essays of this book cover various topics that the Korean Buddhist community dealt with from the 1910s to the early 1930s. The original essays were written in Sino-Korean script, following the writing style of early twentieth century Korea. Although the logical flow of the book is not consistent because it includes diverse fields such as history, philosophy, culture, society, etc, the book shows a complex spectrum of modern Korean Buddhism in a single volume.

From the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries, the Korean Buddhist community focused on the modernization of the Korean Buddhist tradition rather than its preservation and inheritance. The urgent task of the Buddhist community of the time was to search for the value and meaning of Korean Buddhism as a modern religion and to carry out its modernization and socialization. After the March First Movement in 1919, the political awakening to Korean nationalism and Buddhist ecclesiastic independence occurred in the Korean Buddhist community and kindled the Buddhist reformation movement in the 1920s. Some of the renowned Korean scholars of Korean Buddhism wrote essays on the reformation of Korean Buddhism. However, all those efforts and movements eventually failed to overcome the Temple Ordinance system, which was installed by the Japanese colonial government.

Although Korean Buddhists of the time strived to transform their

religion to a modern religion by removing its old conventions, it was almost impossible to achieve their goal just through the imitation of the outward appearance of a modern religion without the thorough reflection of the value of their tradition and the meaning of modernity. Furthermore, Buddhism received more damage from the colonial system than other religions, most notably Christianity that enjoyed the support of western countries. In particular, as several authors of the essays in this book criticized, the Temple Ordinance system obstructed the future of Korean Buddhism, taking away its chance of autonomous and independent development. Despite its efforts, therefore, Korean Buddhism in modern times ended up faltering in their path toward modernization and popularization.

## Notes

- 1 The twelve essays are as follows:
  1. Choe Namseon 崔南善, “Joseon Bulgyo ui daegwan eurobuteo *Joseon Bulgyo tongsa e geupham*” [Overview of Korean Buddhism: A Diachronic Approach to Korean Buddhism], *Joseon Bulgyo chongbo* 朝鮮佛教叢報 11–12 (September to November 1918).
  2. Yi Gwangsu 李光洙, “Bulgyo wa Joseon munhak” [Buddhism and Korean Literature], *Bulgyo* 佛教 7 (January 1925).
  3. Baek Seonguk 白性郁, “Hyeondae jeok Bulgyo reul geonseol haryamyeon” [To Establish a Modern Buddhism], *Bulgyo* 24 (June 1926).
  4. Gim Taeheup 金泰洽, “Jonggyo wa sahoe saeop baldal ui yeon’gu” [Research on Religion and the Development of Social Work], *Bulgyo* 25–30.32–33.36.44–49 (July 1926–July 1928).
  5. Gim Byeokong 金璧翁, “Joseon Bulgyo giuron: I geul eun jeon Joseon Bulgyo seungnyeo ui ge deurineun mal” [A Concern for Korean Buddhism: The Words Addressed to All Korean Buddhist Clerics], *Bulgyo* 32–33 (February to March 1927).
  6. Choe Namseon 崔南善, “Joseon Bulgyo: Dongbang munhwasa sang e inneun geu jiji” [Korean Buddhism: Its Position in the Cultural History of the East], *Bulgyo* 74 (August 1930).
  7. Yu Yeop 柳葉, “Bulgyo wa sahoe sajo” [Buddhism and the Trend of Social Thought], *Bulgyo* 79–83 (January to May 1931).
  8. Kang Yumun 姜裕文, “Choegeun baengnyeon gan Joseon Bulgyo gaegwan” [Overview of Korean Buddhism for the Last Hundred Years], *Bulgyo* 100 (October 1932).
  9. Gim Beoprin 金法麟, “Jeonggyo bullip e daehaeseo” [On the Separation of Religion and Politics], *Bulgyo* 100 (October 1932).
  10. Heo Yeongho 許永鎬, “Banjong undong ui geun’geo wa geu oryu” [Foundations and Errors of Anti-Religion Movement], *Bulgyo* 100 (October 1932).
  11. Mong Jeongsaeng 夢庭生, “Wigi e jingmyeon han Joseon Bulgyo ui wonin gochal” [Examining the Causes of Korean Buddhism Facing a Crisis], *Bulgyo* 100–101.102 (October to December 1932).

12. Gim Yeongsu 金映遂, “Joseon Bulgyo jongji e daehaya” [On the Principal Teachings of Korean Buddhism], *Bulgyo* 105 (March 1933).

# OVERVIEW OF KOREAN BUDDHISM: A DIACHRONIC APPROACH TO KOREAN BUDDHISM\*

Choe Namseon

- Chapter 1 Buddhist Influence on Korean Culture
- Chapter 2 The Relationship between Korean Buddhism and the History of Interaction between the East and the West
- Chapter 3 The Position of Korea in the History of the Transmission of Buddhism
- Chapter 4 Korean Contribution to the Understanding of Buddhism
- Chapter 5 Korean Contribution to Scholastic Schools of East Asia
- Chapter 6 The Three Influences of Buddhism on the Korean Temperament
- Chapter 7 Fellow Buddhists! Have a Historical Consciousness First!
- Chapter 8 Foreigners' Ignorance of Korean Buddhism
- Chapter 9 Japanese History and Korean History in Relation to Buddhism



## Chapter 1

# Buddhist Influence on Korean Culture

Buddhism is a fundamental source of world philosophy and an essence of Eastern culture. Human beings bore mysterious fruits of great wisdom where the light of compassion shone; countries produced wondrous flowers of civilizations. Furthermore, once our country received Buddhism, people were altogether deeply rejoiced and therefore the edifying and nurturing [of Buddhist teachings] were especially great. Because of Buddhism, all ancient cultural products [of Korea] changed their appearances and all new cultures sprouted. Our country grew to suddenly become the oldest Buddhist country in the East. Now, if all that has grown and been nurtured by Buddhism were cut off, there might be nothing left. I have realized that it is proper to say that, for the last 1,500 years, the Korean society has been organized under the background of Buddhism and the life of Korean people has been moved based on Buddhism.

If anyone asks what is the oldest, the most beautiful, the most worth being proud of before the people of the world, and academically valuable in Korea, I will say that the first is Buddhist remains and the second is Buddhist products. Thousands of piles of dirt have been heaped and the splendid and unique appearances and spirits have all degraded. Nonetheless, national treasure exists among these alone and the essence of the nation survives rather within these remains and products. Paintings, sculptures, and architectures are such examples; so are moth-eaten and burned scriptures; so are moss-covered grave stones. Any section of beautiful scenery and any part of a building structure which hold antique colors and glorious names all receive the Buddha's compassionate light.

Buddhism is a religion of great magnanimity and active embracement.

It easily adjusts itself to and intermingles with any places it was introduced to. It also buddhicizes everything there. When Buddhism and Buddhist products came to Korea, there was no unique cultural flavor of Korean land and national color. Such ancient religious forms as “*yeonggo*” (sprit-invoking drums) of Buyeo (second century BCE–494 CE),<sup>1</sup> “*mucheon*” (dance to heaven) of Yemaek,<sup>2</sup> “*cheon’gun*” (heavenly king) of Mahan (third century BCE–third century CE),<sup>3</sup> “*dongmaeng*” (eastern vow) of Goguryeo (37 BCE–668 CE),<sup>4</sup> and “*cheonje*” (heavenly rite) of Baekje (18 BCE–660 CE)<sup>5</sup> all became part of Buddhist rituals and thus their original forms were lost.

Furthermore, the lineage of Dan-gun<sup>6</sup> is found in the *Lotus Sūtra*;<sup>7</sup> an imperial spouse of the Garak<sup>8</sup> Confederation is seen in the *Śrīmālā-sūtra*.<sup>9</sup> Korean folklores and legends, of which the protagonists are immortals or dragon kings, went through a process of intermingling and amalgamating with Buddhist ones. The original forms of those legends were all destroyed. Gim Yusin (595–673)<sup>10</sup> accomplished a great achievement as a reincarnation of one of the Thirty-Three Celestials.<sup>11</sup> Eulji Mundeok (fl. 612)<sup>12</sup> distinguished himself in battles with the protection and help of seven buddhas.<sup>13</sup> Even historical facts were written, relying on Buddhism. Besides, Garak was called Yaya (country name); Duryu, Jiri (land name); Tohae, Talhae; Jidaero, Jijeung (person’s name).<sup>14</sup> In this way, since Buddhist terms for Korean land and persons were deemed more beautiful, the ancient forms of Korean nomenclatures were all lost. All spiritual and material customs were soaked in Buddhism and were born and nurtured again as Buddhist ones.

It is true that the Korean cultural spirit was weakened and damaged because of Buddhism. However, ancient Korean customs now can be found only in Buddhism. The interaction between Buddhism and Korean civilization, as well as the relationship between Korean history and Korean Buddhist history, is very close and significant. Everyone knows this fact very well so that there is no need to mention Gyeonhwon (867–936),<sup>15</sup> Sindon (d. 1371),<sup>16</sup> Bou (1509–1565),<sup>17</sup> and Hyujeong (1520–1604)<sup>18</sup> as evidences.

It is customary to see Confucianism as the background of Korean society and the foundation of Korean people's life. However, this does not break off from a superficial view. Certainly, countless numbers of abstract names and concepts from Confucianism have been sufficiently discussed in scholarly writings. It is also true that countless numbers of common laws have been codified into the official laws of the government. The governmental organs and the social rights were in the hands of Confucians for the last four or five centuries [in the history of Korea]. However, Confucianism did not have something that could be an object of an austere faith or some teachings that could be applied to ordinary life. Thus, it simply existed as a type of intellectual leisure of a special class, being respected as a political means from the beginning during the Yi dynasty [i.e. Joseon] (1392–1910). Generally speaking, it cannot but be accepted that Confucianism did not contribute that much to the intellectual life of common people and the spiritual development of the society as a whole.

During 500 years of the Yi dynasty, it seems that there was no limit in abolishing Buddhism and destroying Śākyamuni. However, the royal court's respectful treatment of Buddhism did not cease even for a moment; neither was commoners' devout admiration for Buddhism weakened. Buddhism took a deep root and built the firm foundation in the Korean society for a thousand years. It did not disappear with some formal persecution. It may have stopped growing for a moment. However, its social power and cultural influences still remained strong.

Leaving aside the ultimate interaction with the spiritual life of common people, there were great things that could keep their beauty to the distant future: for example, the creation of the Korean alphabet, "Hunmin jeongeum" (Correct Sounds for Instructing the People), which is the most brilliant accomplishment of the Yi dynasty; the organization of monks' militia as a product of special circumstances; the construction of the pagoda in Won'gaksa Temple which is the supreme expression of art; the operation of the Office

of Sūtra Translation (Yeokgyeong dogam),<sup>19</sup> which appeared from the greatest vigor. How could one say that Joseon Buddhists were like dead trees or ashes [which do not have any vitality]?

Among Korean cultural products of all times, there is nothing that is not influenced directly or indirectly by Buddhism. Since Buddhism spread extensively among people's minds for a very long time, when it flourished, it seized the political power and even when it declined, it did not lose its status as a great dormant social force. There is no controversy to say that without Buddhism, the potential of Korean civilization cannot be materialized; nor can the essence of Korean people's life be thoroughly understood. Because of these reasons, if one is to really understand Korea in the past and present, it is necessary to examine the transitions of Korean Buddhism first. How could this be only for Buddhism? How could this be only for history? It was a voice of the time to demand a complete history of Buddhism for the general understanding of Korea up to the present. However, this is not an easy task in Korea where there is neither entrustment nor previous work to carry on.

## Chapter 2

### The Relationship between Korean Buddhism and the History of Interaction between the East and the West

Buddhism took a deep and firm root in both realms of mind and matter because of unusual efforts made for a long time. It was neither trivial nor common. Not to mention the old record of Hwangnyongsa Temple or the legend of Seonamsa Temple, judging simply from Minji's (1248–1326) *Record of the Activities in Yujeomsa Temple* (*Yujeomsa sajeok gi*), the first transmission of Buddhism to Korea preceded Mātāṅga's (d. 73) transmission of the religion to Han China (206 BCE–220 CE) by sixty-three years. The *Record of the Garak Kingdom* (*Garakguk gi*), which the *Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms* (*Samguk yusa*)<sup>20</sup> cites, says that forty-four years after the first transmission to Korea, a strand of Buddhism was separately transmitted to the southern part of the peninsula from Ayodhyā.<sup>21</sup> The Memorial Stone of Yeondeungsa Temple (Yeondeungsa sajeok bi) at Anak also records that the temple was built around the time when Baima Temple was constructed at Luoyang. It is hard to take these records at face value. However, as a matter of course, it is not entirely impossible that there occurred the transmission of Buddhist teachings between India and Korea which were connected by both land and sea routes.

The Central Asian monk Shilifang (fl. third century BCE) and his corps who visited Qin (221–206 BCE) court were expelled to the outside of China. If they had not wanted to make their travel to the East in vain, it would have been a natural course to turn toward Hebei and transmit Buddhism to the Liaodong area. Even if this had not been so, there already existed the teachings of a golden person in the country of the Huns.<sup>22</sup> It is clear that the neighboring Yemaek Koreans were destined to be showered by the dharma rains earlier

than people in Han Chinese land. From this vantage point, it is possible to affirm that Buddhism was transferred to Korea around the Han period and that there was a separate transmission directly from India, other than from Han China. If this is true, Western Buddhism was practiced outside China first and then was transmitted by two routes; the south route led to China while the east one, to Korea. We cannot overlook the huge fact that Buddhism then spread throughout the Korean Peninsula and was long practiced under the surface. At the same time, we can see how Korean Buddhism has a long origin, developing an important stream of the religion.

Even if Qin king Fu Jian's (r. 357–385) dispatch of monks, along with Buddhist sūtras and images, during the reign of Goguryeo King Sosurim (r. 371–384), was an origin of Buddhism in Korea, in fact, Korean Buddhism was not something that began from a remnant of China; nor was it influenced by that remnant. When Fotucheng (ca. 232–348) and Kumārajīva (344–413) arrived at Luoyang, Ado (fl. 264) reached Goguryeo and Mālānanda (fl. fourth century), Baekje. When Kālayaśas (383–442) and Guṇavarman (367–431) came to Jiangnan, Baedalda (fl. sixth century) and Yeon'gi (fl. ca. sixth century) came to Korea. The Silla monk Uisin's (fl. sixth century) white mules followed Faxian's (337–422) path toward the West 150 years later. The Baekje monk Gyeomik's (fl. sixth century) raft sailed Yijing's (635–713) sea route toward the West already 150 years prior. There was no shortage of eminent Korean monks and virtuous persons from generation to generation who sought for rolls of esoteric texts in India and witnessed the sacred trace [of the Buddha] in North India. All of them, not satisfied with the remnants of China, directly transmitted the compassionate lamp of India and raised the wise sun up in the sky. There is no need to debate on the fact that the rise and flourishing of the fate of Buddhism in Korea resulted from their active works and creative studies.

As such, from the beginning, Korean Buddhism independently developed an important stream in the transmission of Buddhism. It had its own special historical value, apart from Chinese Buddhism. It is

true that Japanese Buddhism directly received this stream. Today, there are few remaining documents that could prove such circumstances. Furthermore, most of the historical records of Goguryeo which played a pivotal role in the transmission of Buddhism were lost. Therefore, it is almost impossible to discuss on the path and influence of that stream with definite evidence. However, it is not difficult to roughly imagine such circumstances with indirect evidences of historical records and extant remains. For example, among the recently-discovered Goguryeo remains, the pure Indian style, i.e. the Gandhāra style which was not mixed with the Chinese style, was found in Korea, supporting [the existence of Korean stream]. The architectural style of the so-called “Ssangyeong chong” (Tomb of the Twin Pillars) at Anseong-dong, Illyeonji-myeon, Yonggang-gun, [Pyeongannam-do] fits well with the Indian style. Each of the two octagonal pillars which stand both sides on the path between the front room and the main room has a chapter and a foundation stone. Not only that, their entire structure wondrously meets the Western style, which makes viewers feel as if they watch an ancient Greek building. Besides, all the wall paintings in the tomb clearly demonstrate that the pure and fundamental craftsmanship of the empires in the Western Regions, which had not been influenced by the Chinese style, was transmitted to Korea. They show the existence of the active and direct interactions between Goguryeo and empires of the Western Regions. They also provide the materials that help people realize how much and huge debt the great Goguryeo culture owed to empires of the Western Regions.

When dharma-seeking monks travelled to the Western Regions such as Gandhāra, Kashgar, Khotan, and Kāśmīra, they witnessed the Greek architectural style from Bactria and the art customs of Central India and Sassanid in Gandhāra, along with scriptures, buddha images, and other materials. Since the style [of Ssangyeong chong] fully shows the pure Western Regions’ style with few Northern Wei trace, one can see that the cultural exchanges between the two regions [Goguryeo and Western Regions] did not necessarily go through the medium of China. Certainly, there is a reason why it has long been

said that the wall-painting of the Golden Hall in Hōryūji Temple, which strikingly expresses Persian and Indian elements, was the work of the Goguryeo monk Damjing (579–631). By showing such facts, the status of Korean Buddhism in the history of the transmission of Buddhism can be confirmed gradually. Therefore, exploring and revealing the history of Korean Buddhism is needed not only to understand the rise and fall of Korean Buddhism.

### Chapter 3

## The Position of Korea in the History of the Transmission of Buddhism

Whether it was during the reign of Emperor Keitai (r. 507–531) or Kinmei (r. 539–571), Japan was showered by the dharma-rains thanks to Korea. Japanese Buddhism of that time was just the same as Korean Buddhism since Japan relied completely on Korea, importing from the peninsula scriptures, buddha images, hanging banners, persons who burned incenses and gave lecture, sculptures, architectural skills, and the whole art forms. The history of early Japanese Buddhism should be treated as a part of the history of Korean Buddhism in order to understand the historical affairs around the time. Besides, it is also easy to see that the Buddhist group centered around Korean monks played a crucial role in the two greatest disturbances in ancient Japanese history, i.e., the political conflict between Soga and Mononobe clans, and the succession strife surrounding emperors Yōmei (r. 585–587) and Sushun (r. 587–592). There were few political developments and social movements in Japan that were not influenced by Buddhism due to the rather unsophisticated social circumstances. I believe that many people can understand Japanese history around the time of the Japanese reception of Buddhism by studying the history of Korean Buddhism. The relationship between Japanese Buddhism and Korean Buddhism cannot be explained by simply mentioning the transmission of some art skills or the teachings of one or two Buddhist schools.

How about Chinese Buddhism? Korean Buddhism cannot be discussed separately from China just as Japanese Buddhism cannot be apart from Korea. Rather, the relationship between Korean Buddhism and Chinese Buddhism is much more [complex than that

of Korean Buddhism and Japanese Buddhism]. There was an intimacy of the connections and influences [between China and Korea] that surpasses the expectation. For example, it is even needless to mention Woncheuk's (613–696)<sup>23</sup> accomplishments in the offices of translating scriptures and Hyecho's (ca. 704–780)<sup>24</sup> status in the history of dharma-seeking. A number of Silla monks contributed to the flourishing of Buddhism during the Sui (581–618) and Tang (618–907) periods. Goryeo monks revived the Tiantai school, which was the greatest accomplishment after the time of the transmission of Buddhism to the East and, at the same time, the greatest product of Chinese Buddhism. The largest collection of translations, compilations, and commentaries written for a thousand years from the time of the Han dynasty was made in Korea. The most outstanding canon existed in Korea alone.

In Huayan zong or Hwaem jong (Flower Garland School), Uisang (625–702) and Seungjeon (fl. 692) received [the dharma] directly from Zhiyan (602–668) and Xianshou (643–712),<sup>25</sup> respectively. In Tiantai zong or Cheontae jong (Heavenly Terrace School), Hyeon'gwang (fl. sixth century) studied directly under Huisi (515–577); Paya (561–613), under Zhiyi (538–597).<sup>26</sup> In Zhenyan zong or Jineon jong (True Word School), Hyetong (fl. seventh century) learned from Śubhakarasiṃha (637–735);<sup>27</sup> Hyecho and Bulgasau (fl. eighth century), from Amoghavajra (705–774).<sup>28</sup> In the Yogācāra school, Woncheuk studied under Xuanzang (602–664); Sungyeong (fl. seventh century), under Ci'en (632–682).<sup>29</sup> In the Vinaya school, Jajang (590–658) studied with Daoxuan (599–667). In the Seon school, Geumjang (fl. ninth century) learned from Dongshan Liangjie (807–869);<sup>30</sup> Sunji (fl. ninth century), from Yangshan Huiji (807–883).<sup>31</sup> There were also generations of Korean monks who studied under Deshan Xuanjian (782–865),<sup>32</sup> Yunmen Wenyan (864–949),<sup>33</sup> Shishuang Qingzhu (807–888), Yunju Daoying (d. 902), Xuefeng Yicun (822–908),<sup>34</sup> and Fayan Wenyi (885–958).<sup>35</sup> As such, Korean monks received direct and legitimate lineages of various schools of China. The fact that some [developments of Buddhism] originated from China and bloomed in

Silla was not recorded sufficiently. To put it in a sentence, even earlier than Xianshou sent a letter to the person of great virtue in Korea [i.e., Uisang], most of the conclusions for several issues in the history of Chinese Buddhism were made in Korea.

As Korean Buddhism was directly connected to the West by land and sea routes, various doctrines were imported to Korea from everywhere. For example, the teachings of Great and Lesser Vehicles (Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna) as well as other teachings reached Korea via China or directly from regions North and South of the Taklamakan desert such as not only India but also Jushi,<sup>36</sup> Karashar, Kucha, Shanshan,<sup>37</sup> Khotan, Yarkand, Kashgar, Kushan, Kangju,<sup>38</sup> and Partia; several kingdoms East and West of the Pamir Mountains. These teachings were all assimilated in Korea. Although original appearances were lost and records were scattered, [we know that] Ariyabalma (fl. seventh century) stayed at Nālandā Temple; Hyeop (fl. seventh century), at Puti Temple; Hyeon'gak (d.u.), at Dajue Temple in Western India; Daebeom (fl. seventh century), in Central India; Hyeonyu (fl. seventh century), in Eastern India; Hyeryun (fl. seventh century), in Gandhāra; Muru (d.u.), in Pamir.

Other than these monks, countless numbers of unknown Korean monks around this time travelled to those areas to seek dharma. Even though all of them did not transmit the dharma-culture of India, since personnel exchanges mean cultural exchanges, there were more than one or two cases in which ancient customs of those regions had been transmitted to Korea, namely the objects of Buddhist faith and the forms of repentance ritual. For example, in pattra leaves, palm-leaf scriptures, and dhāraṇī texts which have been transmitted for hundreds of years, there are siddhaṃ, Nepal and Devanagari alphabets, along with special letters of other regions which have hardly been known except for a few areas. Look! Have a great quality of old siddhaṃ letters not been found in Hōryūji Temple where Korean monks stayed? The ancient style of Devanagari in our dhāraṇī collections has disappeared everywhere else. It is circulating only in Korea and Japan. Therefore, discussing the Buddhist cultural

products which do not survive in India and Western Regions through the help of the extant Korean materials is not just limited to an old alphabet. The importance of the history of Korean Buddhism for the entire Buddhism is doubled because of these facts.

## Chapter 4

### Korean Contribution to the Understanding of Buddhism

The pride of Korean Buddhism, however, is neither in edifying Korean people nor in spreading the dharma abroad. It is in understanding Buddhism extensively and freely, as well as developing thorough theories. It is a recognized fact that Korean monks' interpretations of the foundational scriptures and treatises of various schools stand out the most. Let us look at one such example!

The Tiantai school of the Sui dynasty finally established the distinctive Buddhist thought of the East. Huiwen (fl. sixth century) founded the school during the period of the Southern and Northern Dynasties (420–588). The school flourished thanks to Zhiyi of the Sui dynasty (581–618). It was the Goryeo monk Jegwan (d. 970) [also called Chegwan] who saved the life of the school hanging by a thread and revealed the profound meaning of its teachings. He took such texts as the *Commentary on the Great Perfection of Wisdom Śāstra* (*Zhilun shu*), the *Commentary on the Benevolent King Sūtra* (*Renwang shu*), the *Essential Contents of the Flower Garland Sūtra* (*Huayan gumu*), and the *Treatise of the Five Hundred Gates* (*Wubaimen lun*), which had been lost in the late Tang, to China and thereby greatly contributed to the re-establishment of the Tiantai teachings. Furthermore, his posthumous work, *Principle of the Fourfold Teachings of the Tiantai School* (*Cheontae sagyoui*),<sup>39</sup> granted an indescribable favor to the younger generations of the Tiantai school. The text is a short piece of work with dozens of pages. However, it includes the essential teachings of the Tiantai school and penetrates the profound secret of contemplation techniques. There is no unnecessary phrase and word in the text. It became the most excellent text and, at the same time, the unparalleled scriptural principle in the Tiantai teachings.

Wherever Tiantai teachings have been taught, the text has always been accepted, admired, and lectured in all ages and countries. This text is indeed a great work of one of our Korean masters. It has circulated most extensively and had the biggest influence. Therefore, the most commentaries have been written on the text since the Yuan monk Mengrun's (1275–1342) *Collected Notes (Jizhu)*<sup>40</sup> and the Japanese monk Echō's (1780–1862) *Mountain Basket (Sanki)*.<sup>41</sup>

Speaking of the Korean Cheontae school, even before Tiantai Zhiyi's foundation, the Silla monk Hyeon'gwang learned directly from Huisi. As for the opening of the Cheontae school, the Goguryeo monk Paya studied under Zhiyi which proves that the school began quite long ago. Beobyung (fl. eighth century) received the dharma from the mid-Tang monk Jingxi (711–782). Ieung (fl. eighth century) and Sunyeong (fl. eighth century) appeared in turn. [The Cheontae school] flourished so greatly that it was transmitted even to the Japanese Islands. Jegwan was indeed a person who penetrated the most important Tiantai teachings. The *Principle of the Fourfold Teachings of the Tiantai School* records the essence of his life-time of contemplations and realizations. Jegwan's text greatly promoted and enhanced the Tiantai teachings.

Woncheuk of the Faxiang (Kor. Beopsang, Dharma Characteristic) school expressed the spirit of Korean Buddhism hundreds times more than Jegwan of the Tiantai school. With acuity, wisdom, realization, wide knowledge, and eloquence, Woncheuk's great scholarship was freely exercised at the sūtra-translation offices of Xuanzang and Divākara (613–687) as if it had had the vigor of flying in the sky over mountains and oceans and of severing land. His conflict with Kuiji [i.e. Ci'en] had the deeper meaning. Woncheuk was the most excellent student under Xuanzang. Even at the time when Buddhism flourished unprecedentedly, Woncheuk was an unrivaled monk of great virtues. Song Fu's (fl. twelfth century) preface to the epitaph for Woncheuk's śāriira-pagoda enumerates Woncheuk's following writings in Ximing Temple: the *Commentary on the Discourse on the Theory of Consciousness-Only (Seong yusingnon so)* in ten fascicles; the *Commentary on the Saṃdhanirmocana-sūtra*

(*Haesimmilgyeong so*) in ten fascicles; the *Commentary on the Benevolent King Sūtra* (*Inwanggyeong so*) in three fascicles; the *Treatise on the Object Conditions of the Adamantine Wisdom* (*Geumgang banyagwan soyeonnon*); and commentaries on the *Heart Sūtra* (*Banruo xinjing*) and the *Sūtra of Innumerable Meanings* (*Wuliang yijing*). Then, the preface added the comment, saying that all these writings “assist secret teachings and attract people’s attention. Woncheuk, by helping Xuanzang, made the Buddhadharma flow toward the East and the teaching of the infinity greatly thrive.”<sup>42</sup> Even this comment is not sufficient to describe Woncheuk’s achievements.

Kuiji was a great monk of the generation who alone received the esoteric tradition of the Faxiang school through Xuanzang’s special treatment. Listening to Woncheuk’s sermon of perfect penetration and unobstructedness on the pulpit of Ximing Temple, Kuiji spontaneously retreated and felt sad for his future. At that time, if Xuanzang had treated both Kuiji and Woncheuk equally, Woncheuk would have founded the Chinese Yogācāra school. However, Woncheuk’s magnum opus *Commentary on the Discourse on the Theory of Consciousness-Only* was criticized as a heterodox interpretation without proper reasons by Ci’en and his followers such as Huizhi (fl. seventh century) and Zhizhou (fl. seventh century). This extreme and irrational case of unfairness exceeded that of Huiyuan (b. 673) in the Huayan school. A great tree attracts the wind. However, the more Woncheuk was envied, hated, and ostracized by Ci’en’s group, the more his true ability was revealed. This was a matter of course. It was not a coincidence that Woncheuk ended up staying at Divākara’s place for scripture translation in Central India where Xuanzang’s influence could not reach. As seen in Choe Chiwon’s (b. 857)<sup>43</sup> words, “In discussing scriptures, he stood out from the rest; in composing a commentary, he alone penetrated into the gist”<sup>44</sup> and “[Woncheuk’s virtuous] actions arose to the level of the highest realm and his name is known all over the world,”<sup>45</sup> it is certain that the shameful ostracism and slandering were not effective enough.

There is no more need to discuss Woncheuk’s position in the

Faxiang school and the value of his commentary on the *Discourse on the Theory of Consciousness-Only*. Kuiji praised the Master Sun'gyeong, saying that "his voice shakes Tang and his scholarship embraces both great and trivial theories"<sup>46</sup> and that "a person from a distant country has profound and acute wisdom that matches the Master Xuanzang. He is an outstanding great master."<sup>47</sup> There is also a record about Taehyeon (fl. ca. mid-eighth century)<sup>48</sup> in the *Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms*: "The posterity of the Eastern Country [i.e., Korea] followed his [i.e., Taehyeon's] teaching and Chinese scholars also took it as a discerning eye."<sup>49</sup> Not to mention Sun'gyeong's scholarship and Taehyeon's writings, one can see how bright and extensive our development of the "logical, perfect, and real learning" [i.e. Yogācāra] was.

## Chapter 5

### Korean Contribution to Scholastic Schools of East Asia

Korean Buddhism is characterized by learning rather than teaching. The Hwaeom (Ch. Huayan) school became a major school of Korea. The great achievements of Korean Buddhism and the most outstanding figures in the Korean Buddhist community all came from this school. Therefore, this school is the biggest source of pride of Korean Buddhism. The Hwaeom school is the oldest school in Korean Buddhism. As it still exists, it is impossible to enumerate the names of its renowned masters and great achievements. The holy Master Wonhyo (617–686) is the exceptionally outstanding master of all ages and countries. He stands so high [in the history of Korean Buddhism] as if to look down a number of small pebbles on a high mountain. The Master Wonhyo's knowledge embraced the sun and the moon as well as penetrated the human and heavenly realms. With this knowledge, he fully obtained the greatness of the right dharma and deeply realized the secret of true suchness. This master is indeed a person who greatly realized and penetrated [the truth] (the Chan Master Yongming Yanshou's [904–975]<sup>50</sup> praise).

It is a matter of course that we should not limit our view of Wonhyo to just one interpretation or one school. He suddenly realized in the middle of night in a tomb that three realms were only in our minds, and then perfectly penetrated the utmost meaning of the four teachings<sup>51</sup> in the ocean of the one-vehicle. He alone had in his own mind the immeasurable dharma-realm which was great, broad, and extremely splendid. The ten volumes of the *Commentary on the Great Flower Garland Sūtra* (*Dae Hwaeom gyeong so*) were a residue [of his realization and penetration] while the so-called “Haedong jong” (School of East of the Sea) or “Bunhwang jong” (School of Fragrant Sovereign) was its byproduct. The

Master Wonhyo's commentary was written earlier than Zhiyan lectured the *Notes on Fathoming the Profundities* [of the *Flower Garland Sūtra*] (*Souxuan ji*). The master's school already spread before Uisang founded Buseoksa Temple. Although Wonhyo did not receive Dushun's (557–640)<sup>52</sup> branch, he was connected to the source of dependent origination [i.e. India]; although he never received a residue of the *Record on Searching for the Profundities* (*Tanxuan ji*), the tenet of the perfect and sudden [i.e. Huayan teachings] was spontaneously embodied [in Wonhyo's writings]. In the foundation of the school that relies on the *Flower Garland Sūtra*, Korea was rather earlier than China. Even if Dushun and Zhiyan preceded the Master Wonhyo, Wonhyo's commentary and his interpretation completely came out of his own study. Fazang's commentary borrows a lot from Wonhyo's in terms of demonstration and interpretation.

Wonhyo's arguments are not different from Dushun's *Calming and Contemplation in the Five Teachings* (*Wujiao zhiguan*) and *Gate of the Dharma-Realm Meditation* (*Fajie guanmen*), and had a significant influence on Fazang's expansion of the Huayan school, along with Zhiyan's *Notes on Fathoming the Profundities*. It is clear that the Chinese Huayan school was established, following the two sources from China and Silla. There is a record, saying, "When Huayan monks of old times composed commentaries and sub-commentaries, they all demonstrated [their arguments], quoting Wonhyo's words. They did not use Wonhyo's name. They simply mentioned, 'Korea says.' Even though his body was in Korea, his virtues reached the Tang land. He is worth being called the 'greatest man that ever lived.'"<sup>53</sup> If people see this record, they know how greatly Wonhyo and his understanding moved a number of people and how deep and earnest faith he spread in every direction even in the field of the Huayan teachings.

In Fazang's time, Xuanzang's Faxiang school dominated the Buddhist community and its power was insurmountable. Fazang established the Huayan school and directly confronted the great camp of the Faxiang school with the majestic theories. To do so, he relied on the sharp weapon of the *Awakening of Faith in Mahāyāna*

(*Dasheng qixin lun*) [hereafter, *Awakening of Faith*].<sup>54</sup> The driving force which made Fazang exercise the effective function of the *Awakening of Faith* without reserve came from Wonhyo's interpretations in his various commentarial writings—annotation (*so*), doctrinal essentials (*jongyo*), and summary (*yogan*). Most parts of Fazang's commentary on the *Awakening of Faith* consist of quotations from Wonhyo's. Fazang often handed Wonhyo's commentaries directly to his students. Fazang's understanding of the *Awakening of Faith* drew from the Master Wonhyo and it is right to regard Fazang as Wonhyo's successor.

From this vantage point, the Huayan school, which went to the battlefield with Fazang as its general and fiercely fought [against the Faxiang school], in fact relied entirely on the general Wonhyo for its provisions and tactics. Among the three great commentaries to the *Awakening of Faith*, Fazang and Wonhyo mentioned each other's work. I repeat that Fazang's is nothing but a remake of Wonhyo's. It can be even said that Fazang danced on the stage, borrowing the Master Wonhyo's clothes. Alas! How can I discuss various aspects of Wonhyo's understanding of Buddhism in every detail? How can I mention every renowned Korean master of the perfect school [i.e. Hwaeom school] of all generations? Wonhyo's commentaries to the *Flower Garland Sūtra* and the *Awakening of Faith* sufficiently reveal the position and accomplishments of Korean Buddhism in the Huayan school.

There were Won'gwang (555–638) and Dojang (ca. 640) in Seongsil jong (School of Establishing Reality); Hyegwan (fl. 625–682) and Hyeheyeon (fl. seventh century) in Samnon jong (Three Treatise School); Hyetong and Bulgasau in Jineon jong; Jajang and Taehyeon in the Yul jong (Vinaya School). There was more than one person who achieved the undefiled works, lighting the flame of the treasure and turning the auspicious wheel. Myeongnang (fl. 647–668) who founded Sinin jong (Divine Seal School), Jinul (1158–1210) who opened Jogye jong (School of Caoxi), Uicheon (1055–1101)<sup>55</sup> who established Siheung jong (School of the Beginning of the Prosperity),<sup>56</sup> and Wonhyo

who began Haedong jong (School of the East of the Sea) all stood high [above all people]. They demonstrated the special features of Korean Buddhism by establishing the views that they alone realized. There is no time to discuss on the essence and influence [of their teachings] in details.

In brief, it is sufficient to prove how great Korean people's efforts and accomplishments were in studying Buddhist doctrines and promoting Buddhist tenets, as already explained above. As Korean Buddhism greatly contributed to the foundation of Eastern Buddhism, it is also necessary to assess and determine the capacity and relevance of Korean Buddhism. Therefore, one should realize the following: examining the development of Korean Buddhism is required to meet the scholarly interest; it is a historical necessity; and it is directly and deeply connected to the ever-changing life of Buddhism as a whole.

## Chapter 6

# The Three Influences of Buddhism on the Korean Temperament

To sum up, what is explained above in details intends to establish Korean Buddhism as an important part of the entire Buddhism. In discussing the actual status of Korean Buddhism, I tried to prove [the greatness of Korean Buddhism] with its accomplishments, confirm its status in history, and thereby demand the need for examining its cultural meaning and relationship to the world. Today, there are names such as Southern Buddhism, Northern Buddhism, Indian Buddhism, and Chinese Buddhism. These names indicate that they are all important elements in Buddhist doctrines and thus come to have those distinctive names which suggest special historical meanings. Korean Buddhism established its own way of interpreting Buddhist texts by revealing countless esoteric meanings and served as a main axis of propagating and spreading Buddhism by actively turning the wheel of dharma. It became a backbone and huge stream of the entire Buddhism. How is it right that such Korean Buddhism does not have a proper name [in the Buddhist academia], its meaning is not clearly explained, neither its influence nor its value is recognized, it is obscure, and it is not known? How could this not be a huge hole in the world academia and a great shame to Korean clerics? Should the humble, dark, and frustrating situation of Korean Buddhism be just ignored altogether as we simply are unaware of?

Looking at a huge stream of the world, the Western civilization is microscopic, analytical, discriminative, active, and materialistic. It gradually reveals its own fault and needs to be fixed or complemented. Therefore, Eastern thought which is macroscopic, inclusive, unifying, static, and spiritual, becomes important. The study of Buddhism which is the greatest reservoir and highest post of Eastern thought

faces the demand of the world. Western people promote the original Buddhism and compare Southern Buddhism and Northern Buddhism. The systematic studies, as well as the global convergence of Buddhism proceeds gradually. However, only after Korean Buddhism is investigated, can the global distribution and Eastern features of Buddhism be overviewed and, at the same time, can the historical development and geographical spread of Buddhist thought and civilization be thoroughly understood. Nonetheless, there is a huge lack of awareness of Korean Buddhism, and the research on Korean Buddhism does not still reach [a certain level]. These are the most worrisome problems.

Looking at the situation in Korea, all the spiritual sources are drowned and all the cultural capabilities are disabled, weakened, and rotten while the society is polarized between materialism and spiritualism. There is not just one thing or two that should be revived and rejuvenated [in Korea]. It is very important to promote Buddhism which has provided a great spiritual ability for thousands of years. Buddhism of the past increased our natural ability in at least three ways: first, it made [our natural temperament] speculative and contemplative and thus have philosophical tendency; second, the religion made [the temperament] artistic and creative so that Korea developed special craftsmanship as shown in Goguryeo's paintings, Baekje's architecture, and Silla's sculptures; third, it made [Korean temperament] adventurous and open so that Korean people saw the fierce oceans with huge waves as flat lands and regarded poisonous dragons and wild beasts as fellow travelers. Numerous brave Korean scholars travelled to India to obtain the dharma or to Central Asia to study. There were also many Koreans who visited China or worked in Japan. All these people thought nothing of hardships on their journeys or differences in language and custom.

There were great accomplishments in Korean history which would embrace both humans and heaven, impose a long-lasting influence, and have global meaning, glory, and value: for example, Hyecho's expedition to India, Uicheon's collection of Buddhist scriptures in

literary Chinese, and King Sejo's (r. 1455–1468) operation of the office for translating Buddhist sūtras. All these accomplishments, however, can be found only in the Buddhist field. It is needless to say how extensive, deep, and wholesome impacts the three temperaments had on our glory and status. Buddhism helped us this much in the past and possesses the infinite potential for the present. There is no need to listen to a wise person in order to know that using such Buddhism beneficially and properly will influence the enhancement of our welfare in the future. Recently, the voice of promoting Buddhism is often heard. This should be a reverberation of the demand of the time. A future plan is often based on past experiences. As matter of course, it is really necessary to have to investigate past affairs to expand the endless fortune of Buddhism in the future.

From the perspective of protecting and revealing the dharma, Korea will easily obtain a state of nobility for itself just with the sage Wonhyo as its personal expression, the Haedong commentaries as its ideological fruit, the wondrous craftsmanship of Seokguram Grotto, and the precious canon of Gogryeo. They are the sun and the moon of all places and the most precious treasure of the human and heavenly realms. Thanks to them, the wise sun increases its sunlight and an auspicious wheel turns fast. It is even unknowable how many such cases occur. Thanks to them, apart from the importance in the records of cultural exchanges and the value in art history, Korean Buddhism has sufficiently played its role. Alas! Korean Buddhism's own value is this huge and its outer interactions, whether known or not, is also this extensive. Are the doctrinal review and historical judgment on Korean Buddhism not a topic for global discussion, which cannot be delayed another day? How do we, Korean people who directly receive its great influences, not concentrate our most significant and greatest power of the mind on this task? It is sad that there is no person who researches [Korean Buddhism] despite its huge importance.

## Chapter 7

### Fellow Buddhists! Have a Historical Consciousness First!

I am a scholar of Korean history. I don't know much about Buddhist studies as well as the history of Buddhism. My opinions may be negligible. Since Buddhism has served as a foundation of Korean culture and a basis of Korean people's life for 1,500 years, we even could not investigate, interpret, and expound any fields of Korean history, such as legislative system, scholasticism, or literature, without Buddhism or Buddhist activities. I have paid some attention to Buddhism and Korea for the last few years. I have come to have three points to make.

First, since Buddhism has influenced the Korean society and its cultural products so thoroughly, there is almost nothing that is not influenced by the religion. Furthermore, when I face new cases and subjects in [studying] ancient and medieval times, I keenly feel at every moment that I have to first look at the history of Buddhism in order to find out the underlying points of those cases and subjects.

Second, since we do not have the *Tales of Karmic Retribution* (*Yinyuan chuan*), the *Biographies of Eminent Monks* (*Gaoseng zhuan*), the *Record of the Three Jewels* (*Sanbao ji*), the *Record of the Journey to the Western Regions* (*Xiyu ji*), the *Record of the Transmission of the Lamp* (*Chuandeng lu*), and the *Accounts of Successive Generations* (*Lidai tongzai*), even one out of ten remarkable accomplishments of the past thousand years does not survive. The light and flame of outstanding wisdom silently disappeared. Even though various materials are found everywhere, just one person's effort at a certain moment can do nothing. No matter how deep my sincerity for remembering the past has been, I have lost my hope a lot because of the difficulty to attain [valid] materials.

Third, from the time of Iryeon's (1206–1289) *Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms* and Gakhun's (fl. thirteenth century) *Biographies of Korean Eminent Monks* (*Haedong goseung jeon*), there appeared Uicheon's compilation in catalogue<sup>57</sup> and Sugi's (fl. thirteenth century) record of collation.<sup>58</sup> Recently, there are a few writings such as the *Overview of Seon and Gyo in the Great East* (*Daedong Seon-Gyo go*),<sup>59</sup> the *Original Lineage of the Buddha-Patriarchs* (*Buljo wollyu*),<sup>60</sup> and the *Biographies of Korean Monks* (*Dongsa yeoljeon*).<sup>61</sup> However, such important texts rarely survive until today and few people know these texts.

Since people have little historical sense in this field, even an intellectual who enjoys tremendous reputation has little knowledge of Korean Buddhism. He neither has any idea of nor feels any emotion for Korean Buddhism. As doubt grows as big as a mountain, there is no one that can correct this situation. Alas! Who recognizes Woncheuk's great accomplishments? Who admires to praise the beautiful trace of Hyecho? How many could enumerate Wonhyo's writings? Who could definitely tell Hyegwan's activities? Although Uicheon's catalogue is the best example in the studies of Buddhist scriptures, we don't even know its title. Many of Wonhyo's writings have long been published in foreign countries. Those writings are highly admired. However, we have thrown away all of the titles and contents of Wonhyo's writings. We destroyed not just their material forms but also their spiritual meanings. Considering the fact that in this way Buddhist themselves hardly raise a thought and make an effort to save and protect their religion, the low status of Korean Buddhist clerics these days is simply a natural outcome [of their attitude]. The stagnant and ruined situation of the Korean Buddhist community is also a logical result. When my thought reaches this point, I feel really sad about the fact that shameless monks of these days (i.e., the extreme darkness) are included with a countless number of eminent monks and wise persons with virtues from the time of the Buddhist transmission (i.e., the great light) in one book as their descendants.

Alas! In order to make Buddhists of these days who are in great despair deeply reflect and thoroughly understand themselves, who will take the lead in realistically and impressively showing in front of their eyes the great, special, and outstanding accomplishments of the past, as well as the original face of virtuous earlier masters! Who feels urgent for the task of making Korean Buddhists themselves clearly recognize the great works of Korean Buddhism? If people look at [Korean Buddhism] as auxiliary academic material, they will definitely realize the necessity and value of the history of Buddhism as much as I do. How deeply do Buddhists who spread the dharma themselves feel its necessity and value? However, there is no one like Zanning (919–1001)<sup>62</sup> or Zhipan (1220–1275)<sup>63</sup> among 10,000 clerics in 1,000 temples [in Korea]. It has led me to lose my small existence in endless history of Buddhism for a very long time.

## Chapter 8

### Foreigners' Ignorance of Korean Buddhism

Today, Japan is regarded as the center of Buddhist studies and the grove for the spread of Buddhism. Various doctrines of all times circulate in this country and all collections of scriptures of the world always converged in this land. Since there are most schools, paintings, texts, art works, and research institutions, the investigation and invention [of Buddhism] flourish by day in this country. If one asks [Japanese scholars] about Korean Buddhism, he or she will be definitely surprised to see that their knowledge is extremely rough and not clear.

To give a few examples from Japanese texts: the *Japanese Supplement to the Buddhist Canon* (*Dai Nihon zokuzōkyō*, hereafter *Japanese Supplement*) includes precious scriptures and valuable texts of Japan and other countries that a number of scholars thoroughly searched for an extended period of time. It consists of 751 books with 150,060 pages. The *Japanese Supplement* includes about 1,750 writings in 7,140 rolls, composed by about 900 Indian, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese authors. Therefore, it is a more massive collection than a regular canon. There has been nothing like this *Japanese Supplement* through all ages in terms of size. Examining the sections related to Korea, when it comes to Buddhist scriptures, commentaries, and sub-commentaries, there are several rare texts that are fortunately found only in other countries, not extant in the peninsula, including the Silla monk Pyowon's (fl. eighth century) *Questions and Answers for the Essential Passages of the Flower Garland Sūtra* (*Hwaeom gyeong munui yogyeol mundap*). Therefore, the *Japanese Supplement* boasts quite a great shape. When it comes to historical records, the *Japanese Supplement* includes only three texts: the

*Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms*, the *Overview of Seon and Gyo in Korea* (*Joseon Seon-Gyo go*), and the *Record of Korean Monks and Nuns* (*Dongguk seungni rok*). Among these three texts, the *Overview of Seon and Gyo in Korea* in which Bak Yeongseon (fl. 1876) is recorded as the compiler is in fact Jeong Yakyong's *Overview of Seon and Gyo in the Great East*.

The dishonor of the *Japanese Supplement* is as great as the honor of its compilation. Last July, the *Biographies of Korean Eminent Monks* was published in the second book of the *Complete Collection of Japanese Buddhism, Collection of Scattered Texts* (*Dai Nihon Bukkyō zensho yūhōbaku sōsho*) (hereafter *Japanese Collection*). Until the time of the compilation of the *Japanese Supplement*, even the title, “*Biographies of Korean Eminent Monks*,” was never known. The *Original Lineage of the Buddha-Patriarchs* and the *Biographies of Korean Monks* were not known in Japan either. They are not included in the *Japanese Supplement*. The so-called *Record of Korean Monks and Nuns* is merely a small booklet with scores of pages though its title sounds grand. The text simply excerpts fragmentary stories about monks' activities from several literary collections, including the *Assorted Writings of Yongjae* (*Yongjae chonghwa*) and the *Topical Discourses of Jibong* (*Jibong yuseol*), without any order or rule. Even in the section of scriptures and commentaries which is compiled through a relatively thorough process, such texts as Wonhyo's *Commentary on the Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* (*Geumgang sammae gyeong non*) which possesses absolute authority and Hamheo's (1376–1433) *Commentaries of the Five Masters on the Diamond Sūtra* (*Geumgang gyeong oga hae*) which has great importance in doctrinal classification are omitted. Such omissions are the huge shortcomings of the *Japanese Supplement*.

Several texts of the *Japanese Supplement*, including Wonhyo's *Doctrinal Essentials of the Sūtra of Immeasurable Life* (*Muryangsu gyeong jongyo*) are not transmitted in woodblock edition in Korea. Fortunately, the *Commentary on the Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* has been published in Korea since of old. It is a sole sub-commentary woodblock edition composed in Korea. From early, the text already

widely circulated in China where the *Song Biographies of Eminent Monks* (*Song gaoseng zhuan*) records its origin and circulation process in details. The meanings, interpretations, and explanations in the *Commentary on the Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* are so wondrous, marvelous, and meticulous that they brought about several miracles even common people mentioned. The eyes, ears, and hands of the compilers of the *Japanese Supplement* unfortunately did not reach this text. Speaking of the *Commentaries of the Five Masters on the Diamond Sūtra*, its classification of the interpretations is clear and its sequence and organization are also in good order. The text provided an easy introduction for scholars so that people in many places sought for it. It circulated in beautiful type with two large volumes and thus spread relatively widely. Even this text could not be recognized by those compilers either, which led to harm the authority of the *Japanese Supplement*.

Judging from the fact that there is a catalogue for the printed version [of the Korean canon] and the origin and process of scriptural transmission is clear, if Korean people had intended to widely spread [those texts] from the start, the collection [i.e. *Japanese Collection*] must not have omitted such important texts since it is a predecessor of the *Japanese Supplement*, though privately compiled. This can be guessed from the fact that the compilation of the writings of China's neighboring countries, led by Yang Renshan (1839–1911), has the most scrupulous perspective. Of course, it is very hard to say that all these omissions were simply caused by the negligence of the *Japanese Supplement's* compilers. It is no doubt that if they had made sufficient efforts with the sincere mind, they would have succeeded in collecting more texts than now. At least, their ignorance of Korean Buddhism caused the huge shortcomings in compiling this absolutely [precious *Japanese Supplement*] that was made through a golden opportunity.

The Wonhyo section in the *Encyclopedic Buddhist Glossary* (*Bukkyō daijii*), compiled by Bukkyō daigaku (Buddhist College), concludes that the two versions (expanded and abbreviated) of the *Commentary*

on the *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* were lost. Even this book, which was meticulous and thorough in searching, examining, and compiling texts, has such a flaw due to the limitation of knowledge [in Korean Buddhism]. A few years ago, I read the following deplorable story in the journal *Research on Buddhist Texts* (*Busscho kenkyū*):

Korea is a more advanced country than Japan in terms of Buddhism. Korea produced great scholars such as Jajang, Uisang, Wonhyo, Uijeok (b. 681), and Taehyeon. The State Preceptor Daegak Uicheon devoted himself to collecting Buddhist texts and acquired texts of various schools. Not only China but also Japan could not match Korea. Dr. Sekino (1868–1935)<sup>64</sup> and other scholars published their researches on Korean Buddhist art. Other than those works, there are not many researches on Korean Buddhism. There is no single specialist of each Buddhist school who began his research [on Korean Buddhism]. How sad and regrettable this is! Since Korea probably has valuable texts that are not included in the Buddhist canons and supplementary canons, it is needless to say that if one could find those texts and provide them for our academia, there will be great outcomes. Since people who work on academic research in Korea are poor at Buddhist studies and do not have an eye, there is no work worth looking at. Even Japanese Buddhist missionaries from each sect neglect their own studies and never do any academic research. This is really odd! How deep our Buddhist academia's disgrace is. Several texts, including the *Literary Collection of the State Preceptor Daegak* [i.e., Uicheon] (*Daegak guksa munjip*), have been transmitted to Japan. Such texts as Wonhyo's *Commentary on the Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* that has been lost or never transmitted in Japan surely exist somewhere in Korea. If these valuable texts are discovered, how glad our academia would be! It is really regrettable that there is no single person caring about this situation among tens of thousands of monks in about 70,000 temples of Japan.

Academic research on Korean Buddhism is not an urgent task for

Japanese Buddhist scholars who would be interested only if they had redundant time and energy. However, it is natural that Korean Buddhism would raise the profound attention and efforts of Japanese scholars who want to become a world leader in Buddhist studies. It is a great shame that though they concentrate their attention and energy on investigating and interpreting [Korean Buddhism], they only produce trivial outcomes, even not knowing whether the *Commentary on the Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* is lost.

## Chapter 9

# Japanese History and Korean History in Relation to Buddhism

When I first read the *Record of Ancient Matters (Kojiki)* and the *Chronicles of Japan (Nihon shoki)*, I discovered that the basic factual elements of Japanese history coincide with those of Korean history. For example, from the very start, the story of the transformation of three gods<sup>65</sup> corresponds to that of the three ancient sages of Korea;<sup>66</sup> the name of heavenly descendants (*tenson*), to that of divine children (*hwanja*); 180 gods, to 3,000 deities; three godly instruments, three heavenly talismans; Imperial Sun Succession (Amatsuhitsugi), to the heavenly king (*cheonwang*); Takachiho no mine, to Taebaeksan Mountain; the myth of Iwadokakure, to the legend of Yeono Se'o; an admirable tale of Tsukino Ikina (fl. fifth century), to the loyal act of Bak Jesang (ca. 363–418). All these correspondences are too strange to simply say that they were coincidences.

Furthermore, there were no differences in the two countries' stories of the introduction of Buddhism. To briefly expound this point, Shiba no Tachitō is a counterpart to Morye; Hyepyeon (Jp. Eben), to Ado and Mukhoja (fl. fifth century). When Soga no Iname (506–570) wanted to practice the Buddha-dharma, other vassals said, "The king of our country always bows and serves a hundred and eighty heavenly deities and gods of the earth and grain in spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Now if we serve other gods, I am afraid it could cause the rage of our gods" (*Chronicles of Japan*).<sup>67</sup> They threw away buddha images and burned Buddhist temples. Hyepyeon also said, "Because this country does not respect Buddhist clerics, I will go mingle with the secular world"<sup>68</sup> (*History of Buddhism of the Genkō Era [Genkō shakusho]*). These stories are similar to that of Ado. When Ado asked for the permission of practicing Buddhism, [Silla

vassals] “never saw [something like Buddhism] which they felt was extremely strange and thus tried to kill him. Therefore, [Ado] sneaked into a village”<sup>69</sup> (*Tales of Wonders* [*Su'ijeon*]). Shiba no Tachitō's daughter, Shima, becoming a Buddhist nun, corresponds to Morye's daughter, Sasi, becoming a nun.

The rise and fall of the fate of Buddhism during the reigns of the three emperors, Kinmei (r. 539–571), Bidatsu (r. 572–585), and Yōmei (r. 585–587) are similar to those during the period from King Nulji (r. 458–479) to King Beopheung (r. 514–540). The [Japanese] recognition of the Buddha-dharma thanks to the boils which emperors Bidatsu and Yōmei and Soga no Umako (ca. 551–626) suffered from has a parallel with the building of temples [in Korea] thanks to [a monk's] cure of Princess Seongguk's (fl. 264) illness.<sup>70</sup> When Emperor Yōmei said, “I think I pay homage to three treasures. Discuss on this!”<sup>71</sup> most of the vassals opposed to the emperor's idea, saying, “How could we betray our country's gods and serve other gods? We don't know if there was such a case in the past.”<sup>72</sup> Kuratsu Kurino Tasuna (fl. sixth century) came forward and said, “As your vassal, I will enter the Buddhist order, cultivate the Way, make six-foot-buddha images, and build temples for Your Majesty”<sup>73</sup> (*Chronicles of Japan*). This is similar to the following story in Korea: when King Beopheung who had an intention to promote Buddhism called all vassals, they said, “Buddhist monks these days have their hairs shaved, wear strange garments, and speak weird words. This is very unusual! If we leave them as they are, we are afraid that something regretful will happen. We dare not to receive the edict even though it means that we commit a serious crime.”<sup>74</sup> Ichadon (ca. 505–527) alone followed the king's words, disagreeing with other vassals, and said, “Now, all these words of several vassals are wrong! An unusual thing happens after there is an unusual person. Listening to profound teachings of Buddhism, one cannot but believe this. . . . I ask you to behead me and thereby settle people's opinions”<sup>75</sup> (*Historical Record of the Three Kingdoms* [*Samguk sagi*]). The Crown Prince Shōtoku's (574–622) this-worldly seventeen constitutions had the same origin with the Dharma Master

Won'gwang's Five Secular Precepts (Sesok ogye).<sup>76</sup> The activities of Toyokuni and Nichira as a political puppet are similar with those of Dorim (fl. fifth century)<sup>77</sup> and Deokchang<sup>78</sup> in terms of intent.

Examining the origins of temples and pagodas, along with the activities of monks [in Japan], whether historical or not, one can find at the first glance that they are extremely similar with what happened in the early history of Korean Buddhism. Those similarities between the two seem even unnatural. The above-mentioned cases are found when one compares Japan only with Silla. If the *Records of the Three Jewels (Sambo gi)* of Goguryeo and Baekje still existed, it might be possible to systematically examine and discover the original form of the early history of Japanese Buddhism. Even from what is mentioned above, it can be understood at least vaguely how the ancient Japanese records were written. Considering that Goguryeo, Baekje, and Silla immigrants took control over Japanese writings and historical records, it is natural that the texts had such characteristics.

For a few centuries after the time of the introduction of Buddhism, the Japanese historical records were centered on the diplomatic relationships with Goguryeo, Baekje, and Silla with Buddhists as main contributors. More briefly, they could be viewed as the records on the transmission of Buddhism from the three Korean kingdoms to Japan. As a simple test, if all the figures and events related to Buddhism were removed from the historical texts of the time in Japan, what remain would be empty books. In the early period of Buddhist transmission to the islands, Japan had no history to speak of apart from Buddhism. Because of this, it can be said that [Japanese history] is simply a reverberation of the history of Korean Buddhism. Not only that, even after Japan directly contacted Sui and Tang, the exchanges of the Buddha-dharma between Korean and Japan remained the same.

There are a number of proofs that Japan owed the development of its Buddhism to Korea. For example, Tendai teachings in the Heian period (794–1185), Zen in the Kamakura period (1185–1333), and Five-Mountains literature in the Muromachi period (1336–1573),

and simultaneous studies of Buddhism and Confucianism in the Edo period (1603–1868) were largely influenced by Korea. It would be silly to think that the interactions between the two countries in the history of Buddhism are just limited to the transmission of the six Buddhist schools of Nara. That is a mistaken view that ignores the following facts. For 500 years of Goryeo dynasty, there were countless numbers of dharma-seeking monks coming and going [between the two countries]. By the middle of the Yi dynasty, Japanese envoys who sought to obtain scriptures came to Korea every year. The political authority of the Ashikaga clan<sup>79</sup> and the wealth and honor of the Ōuchi clan<sup>80</sup> in fact drew from this unusual diplomatic opportunity that relied on Buddhism. Therefore, Korean Buddhism has had the close historical tie [to Japan] in all ages. It is obvious that Japanese Buddhism cannot be explained apart from Korea. How can it not be regretful that Japanese academia's knowledge and understanding of Korean Buddhism is poor and not substantial as mentioned before?

However, the value and fame of Korean Buddhism do not depend on whether their [i.e. Japanese scholars'] knowledge is abundant and profound. The value and fame of Korean Buddhism are not established on the basis of their studies and discussions. There is no reason to feel sad or glad [about the Japanese scholarship of Korean Buddhism]. Japan received Buddhism directly from Korea and is most closely related to Korean Buddhism. Japan is also the country where all various forms of Buddhism in the world converge and Buddhist studies are most flourishing. Therefore, the above-enumerated examples intend to make clear that there is no need to mention [scholars of other countries] in a situation in which even Japanese scholars' knowledge of Korean Buddhism is that poor. Those examples also aim at confirming that Korean Buddhism is forgotten and ignored by the world, and thereby making people keenly aware that the glory of Korean Buddhism is completely tarnished and the humiliation of Korean Buddhists increases as time goes by. What is the greatest cause for such a situation? The loss of texts and the oblivion of facts! In brief, the history [of Korean Buddhism] is not

revealed. Alas! Does Korean Buddhism now not need Max Müller (1823–1900), Hermann Oldenberg (1854–1920), Mark Aurel Stein (1862–1943), or Samuel Beal (1825–1889)? I say, “No, not at all.” There should appear Korean counterparts for Max Müller, Hermann Oldenberg, Mark Aurel Stein, or Samuel Beal. Only then could Korean people themselves take charge in studying Korean Buddhism internally and promoting it externally.

## Notes

- \* This article was published in the *Joseon Bulgyo chongbo* 朝鮮佛教叢報 [The Digest of Korean Buddhism] 11: 21–35; 12 (1918): 38–50.
- 1 *Yeonggo* 迎鼓 was a festival which was held in the twelfth month of a year in Buyeo 夫餘 which was located in parts of southern Manchuria and northern Korea.
  - 2 Yemaek 濊貊 was a Tungusic ethnic group which mostly dwelt in Manchuria and the Korean Peninsula. They had ancestral ties to Korean kingdoms such as Gojoseon, Goguryeo, and Baekje. Here, with the term Yemaek, the author seems to refer to Dongye 東濊 (Eastern Yemaek), which was located in the eastern part of the peninsula from the third century BCE to the third century CE. *Mucheon* 舞天 was the harvest festival of Dongye which was held in the tenth month each year.
  - 3 Mahan 馬韓 was a tribal confederation which was located in the southwestern part of the peninsula. It was formed around the third century BCE and gradually absorbed by Baekje 百濟 until the third century CE. *Cheon'gun* 天君 was the title-name of a shaman who performed the heaven-worship.
  - 4 *Dongmaeng* 東盟 was a harvest festival of Goguryeo 高句麗, one of the three Korean ancient kingdoms, along with Baekje and Silla. The festival, which was held in the tenth month, also commemorated King Dongmyeong (東明王, r. 37 BCE–19 CE), the founding father of the kingdom.
  - 5 *Cheonje* 天祭 was the heaven-worship of Baekje which was located in the south-western part of the peninsula.
  - 6 Dan-gun 檀君 was the legendary founder of Gojoseon (Old Joseon), the first Korean kingdom (?–8 BCE). According to the creation myth of the Korean nation, he was a grandson of heaven and son of a bear-woman who had been originally a bear and turned into a woman.
  - 7 The *Lotus Sūtra* (*Fahua jing* [Kor. *Beophwa gyeong*] 法華經 or *Miaofa lianhua jing* [Kor. *Myobeop yeonhwa gyeong*] 妙法蓮華經, Skt. *Saddharmapūṇḍarīka-sūtra*). It is one of the most popular scriptures in the East Asian Buddhist tradition, especially for its stories and parables. The scripture emphasizes such notions as “expedient means,” according to which the Buddha helps sentient beings with different mental capacities, and “the one-buddha

- vehicle,” according to which those various expedient means ultimately serve to guide all sentient beings, without exception, to the ultimate goal. The *Lotus Sūtra* also became a scriptural basis of the foundation of several Buddhist schools in East Asia, for example, Tiantai zong in China, Cheontae jong in Korea, and Tendai shū and Nichiren shū in Japan.
- 8 Garak 駕洛, better known as Gaya 加倭, was a small confederation located in the southern part of the peninsula between Baekje and Silla. It was absorbed by Silla in 532. Here, “an imperial spouse of the Garak Confederation” refers to Heo Hwangok 許黃玉, who, according to a legend, was a princess of Ayodhyā in India and became the queen of Gim Suro (d. 199), the founder of one of the confederation. She has been revered as Queen Śrīmālā’s reincarnation in Korea.
  - 9 The *Śrīmālā-sūtra* (*Shengman jing* [Kor. *Seungman gyeong*, Jp. *Shōman gyō*] 勝鬘經), or *Śrīmālādevīsīmhanāda-sūtra*, is one of the popular Mahāyāna texts. It particularly emphasizes the notion of tathāgatagarbha (womb of a tathāgata).
  - 10 Gim Yusin 金庾信 was a Silla general and politician. Gim, a descendant of Gaya, contributed to Silla’s unification of the Korean Peninsula.
  - 11 According to Buddhist cosmology, the Thirty-Three Celestials (Skt. Devās Trayas-triṃśāḥ) are the deities who live on the top of Mountain Sumeru.
  - 12 Eulji Mundeok 乙支文德 was a Goguryeo general, famous in Korean history for defeating the invading Sui army.
  - 13 The seven buddhas (*chilbul* 七佛) include Śākyamuni and his six predecessors: Vipaśyin, Śikhin, Viśvabhū, Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, and Kāśyapa. The first three are the last three Buddhas of the previous eon while the last four are the first four Buddhas of the present eon.
  - 14 It is not entirely sure why Choe Namseon here mentions these names as Buddhist, in particular, regarding such names as Yaya 倭倭 for Gaya, Jiri 智異 for Duryu 頭流. However, considering the meaning of the names Talhae 脫解 (liberation) for Tohae 吐解 and Jijeung 智證 (wisdom and realization) for Jidaero 智大路, it is clear that these names have some Buddhist flavor.
  - 15 Gyeonhwon 甄萱 was the founder of Later Baekje (892–936), one of the three kingdoms in Later Three Kingdoms period (892–936) of Korea, which was eventually unified by Wang Geon 王建 (877–943), the founder of the Goryeo dynasty (918–1392). He left Ten Injunctions for his successors, one of which was to encourage Buddhist faith.
  - 16 Sindon 辛旽 was a late Goryeo monk and also personal advisor to King Gongmin (恭愍王, r. 1351–1374).
  - 17 Bou 普雨 was a monk during the mid-Joseon who revived Buddhism during

- Queen Dowager Munjeong's 文定 (1501–1565) regency (1545–1553).
- 18 Hyujeong 休靜 was a Seon monk during the mid-Joseon. He produced a number of important texts, including the *Seon'ga gwigam* 禪家龜鑑 [Mirror of the Seon School], which emphasizes the harmony between Seon meditation and Gyo doctrinal studies. He was also famous for his military contribution to the Joseon court during the Japanese invasion (1592–1598), forming a monks' militia.
  - 19 The name of the office that carried out the Sūtra translation in the early Joseon was in fact Gan'gyeong dogam 刊經都監 (Supervisory Office of the Sūtra Publication), not Yeokgyeong dogam. Gan'gyeong dogam was established in 1461 during the reign of the pious Buddhist King Sejo 世祖 (r. 1455–1468) and published a number of Buddhist texts in vernacular Korean, including the *Lotus Sūtra* and the *Diamond Sūtra*. It was closed in 1471.
  - 20 The *Samguk yusa* 三國遺事 [Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms] was compiled by a monk named Iryeon 一然 (1206–1289) during the Goryeo dynasty. It is a collection of the legends of historical figures and places, stories, poetry, and songs that were not included in the *Samguk sagi* 三國史記 [Historical Record of the Three Kingdoms], the earliest extant historical chronicle of Korea, written by the Goryeo literocrat Gim Busik 金富軾 (1075–1151). Reflecting the compiler's religious association, the *Samguk yusa* is full of Buddhist themes, providing valuable information of earlier forms of Buddhist beliefs and practices in Korea.
  - 21 Ayodhyā was an ancient Indian city located at the south end in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. It was the capital of Kosala Kingdom.
  - 22 The Huns were a nomadic people who lived in Central Asia between the first and the seventh century.
  - 23 Woncheuk 圓測 was a Korean Buddhist monk who was active mostly in China. He was famous for his knowledge of Yogācāra doctrines which made him influential both in Chinese and Tibetan Buddhism.
  - 24 Hyecho 惠超 was a Silla pilgrim monk. He departed China around 721 and arrived in India in 724 where he spent about the subsequent three years, visiting many Buddhist sacred sites. After he returned to China in 727, he translated esoteric Buddhist scriptures into Chinese.
  - 25 Xianshou 賢首, better known as Fazang 法藏, is traditionally regarded as the third patriarch of the Huayan school. He was often invited to the imperial court by Empress Wu (624–705) to preach on the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*. Fazang produced a number of writings, including the *Dasheng qixin lun yiji* 大乘起信論義記 [Commentary on the *Awakening of Faith in Mahāyāna*],

- which is one of the most important commentaries on the *Dasheng qixin lun*.
- 26 Zhiyi 智顛 was the de facto founder of the Tiantai school of China. He was a prolific author, writing approximately thirty works among which the *Mohe zhiguan* 摩訶止觀 [Great Calming and Contemplation], the *Fahua xuanyi* 法華玄義 [Profound Meaning of the Lotus], and the *Fahua wenju* 法華文句 [Phrases of the Lotus] are known to be the Tiantai *san dabu* (three great Tiantai commentaries).
  - 27 Śubhakarasiṃha (Ch. Shanwuwei 善無畏) was an Indian monk who propagated Tantric Buddhism in Tang China. He was best known for his translation of the *Vairocanaḥbhisambodhi-sūtra*.
  - 28 Amoghavajra 不空, greatly revered by the Tang imperial court, made a great contribution to the introduction and translation of important Tantric Buddhist texts, translating more than 150 texts.
  - 29 Ci'en 慈恩, also known as Kuiji 窺基, was one of the prominent disciples of Xuanzang 玄奘 and also regarded as the first patriarch of the Faxiang school. His commentary on the *Cheng weishi lun* 成唯識論 [Discourse on the Perfection of Consciousness-Only] became the foundational text for the Faxiang school. Since he dies in Daci'en Temple (大慈恩寺), he has also been known as Ci'en Dashi 慈恩大師 (Great Master Ci'en).
  - 30 Dongshan Liangjie 洞山良价 was regarded as one of the founders of the Caodong school 曹洞宗 of Chan.
  - 31 Yangshan Huiji 仰山慧寂 is regarded as one of the founders of the Weiyang school 滬仰宗 of Chan.
  - 32 Deshan Xuanjian 德山宣鑒 was a Chinese Chan master, famous for expressing his understanding of the dharma and giving an instruction to his students through “beating.”
  - 33 Yunmen Wenyan 雲門文偃 is considered as the founder of the Yunmen school of Chan.
  - 34 Xuefeng Yicun 雪峯義存 was a Chinese Chan master, one of the leading disciples of Deshan Xuanjian. Xuefeng's disciples included Yunmen Wenyan, the founder of the Yunmen school, and Xuansha Shibe 玄沙師備 (835–908) whose students established the Fayan school.
  - 35 Fayan Wenyi 法眼文益 is believed to be the founder of the Fayan school of Chan.
  - 36 Jushi 車師 was the Chinese name for the Turpan basin area which is the present-day Xinjiang region in China.
  - 37 Shanshan 鄯善 was a kingdom located at the north-eastern end of the Taklamakan Desert. It was originally known as the Loulan Kingdom, but

- renamed Pichan in 77 BCE.
- 38 Kangju 康居 was the Chinese name of an ancient kingdom in Central Asia, which was probably related to the Iranian Sogdians.
- 39 The *Sagyoui* 四教儀, or *Cheontae sagyoui* 天台四教儀 [Principle of the Fourfold Teachings of the Tiantai School], was an important primer of the Tiantai doctrine. This text is best known for its summary of the Tiantai doctrinal classification, which is commonly called the “*osi palgyo*” 五時八教 (five periods and eight teachings).
- 40 The *Jizhu* 集註, or “*Tiantai sijiaoyi*” *jizhu* 天台四教儀集註 [Collected Notes on the *Principle of the Fourfold Teachings of the Tiantai School*], is an annotated version of Jegwan’s *Cheontae sagyoui*.
- 41 The *Sanki* 山簍, or “*Tendai shikyō gi*” *sanki* 天台四教儀山簍 [Mountain Basket for the *Principle of the Fourfold Teachings of the Tendai School*], is a commentary on the *Cheontae sagyoui*, written in three fascicles in 1848 by Echō 慧澄.
- 42 *Da Zhou Ximingsi gudade Yuance fashi foshelitaming bingxu* 大周西明寺故大德圓測法師佛舍利塔銘并序 [Preface to the Epitaph for Great Ancient Dharma Master Woncheuk’s Śārīra-Pagoda at Ximing Temple of Great Zhou]: “羽翼秘典 耳目時人 所以贊佐奘公 使佛法東流 大興無窮之教者也。” Song Fu 宋復 (fl. twelfth century) composed the preface in 1115.
- 43 Choe Chiwon 崔致遠 was a renowned Korean Confucian scholar-official and a poet of the Unified Silla period (668–935). He went to Tang China to study, passed the imperial civil examination, and rose to a high governmental position. He returned to Silla in 885 where he retired early, after his failed attempt to reform the Silla politics.
- 44 “譚經則必居其首 撰疏則獨斷于心。”
- 45 “行高十地之中 名達九天之上。”
- 46 “聲振唐蕃 學包大小。”
- 47 “遠國之人 有茲利慧 擔突奘師。”
- 48 Taehyeon 太賢 or Daehyeon 大賢 was a Silla monk during the reign of King Gyeongdeok (景德王, r. 742–765). He was a reputed founder of the Korean Yogācāra tradition. Although he never left Silla, his works circulated throughout East Asia. In particular, more than twenty commentaries on his *Beommang gyeong gojeok gi* 梵網經古迹記 [Record of Old Traces of the *Sūtra of Brahmā’s Net*] were written in Japan.
- 49 “Hyeon Yuga Hae Hwaeom” 賢瑜珈海華嚴, *Samguk yusa*: “東國後進 咸遵其訓 中華學士 得此爲眼目。”
- 50 Yongming Yanshou 永明延壽 was a renowned Fayan lineage monk during the Song dynasty and best known as the author of the *Zongjing lu* 宗鏡錄 [Record

- of the Mirror of the Principles and Mirrors].
- 51 The four teachings refer to the categories of doctrinal taxonomy, thus implying the entire doctrinal or scriptural teachings.
- 52 Dushun 杜順 is considered as the founder of the Chinese Huayan school. He was the author of the *Wujiao zhiguan* 五教止觀 [Calming and Contemplation in the Five Teachings] and the *Fajie guanmen* 法界觀門 [Gate of the Dharma-Realm Meditation].
- 53 “雜華諸師 古著疏抄 引證曉言 稱海東曰 不舉其名 身在東夷 德被唐土 可謂不世出之偉人矣。”
- 54 The *Dasheng qixin lun* 大乘起信論 [Awakening of Faith in Mahāyāna] was traditionally attributed to the famous Indian monk Aśvaghōṣa. However, it is now widely accepted that the treatise was an indigenous Chinese text, written around the sixth century. The text highlights that the notion of the one-mind (Skt. *eka-cittena*) contains the two aspects of suchness and birth-and-death. Hence, the text harmonizes the two important Buddhist concepts of *tathāgatagarbha* and *ālayavijñāna* with the notion of the one-mind. Several prominent figures of East Asian Buddhism, including Huiyuan 慧遠 (523–592), Wonhyo, and Fazang, composed a commentary to this text, making it one of the most influential texts in the development of East Asian Buddhism.
- 55 Uicheon 義天 was one of the prominent scholar monks in Korea during the Goryeo period. He was the fourth son of King Munjong 文宗 (r. 1047–1082) and founded the Cheontae school in Korea to reconcile the tension between Seon and Gyo teachings. He collected a number of Buddhist works from across East Asia, which were later carved on wood blocks and titled *Goryeo sokjanggyeong* 高麗續藏經 [Goryeo Supplement to the Canon].
- 56 Some scholars believe that Siheung jong 始興宗 was the Korean Nirvāṇa school while scholars like Choe Namseon regarded it as associated with Cheontae jong.
- 57 Choe here refers to Uicheon's *Sinpyeon jejong gyojang chongnok* 新編諸宗教藏總錄 [Comprehensive Catalogue of the Doctrinal Repository of All the Schools], which is a catalogue of more than 1,500 Buddhist texts, collected from throughout East Asia.
- 58 Choe refers to Sugi's *Goryeoguk sinjo daejang gyojeong byeollok* 高麗國新雕大藏校正別錄 [Supplementary Record of Collation Notes to the New Carving of the Great Canon of the Goryeo Kingdom]. It is a collation of sixty-five different texts.
- 59 The *Daedong Seon-Gyo go* 大東禪教考 [Overview of Seon and Gyo in the

- Great East] was composed by the renowned late Joseon Confucian scholar-official Jeong Yakyong 丁若鏞 (1762–1836).
- 60 The *Buljo wollyu* 佛祖源流 [Original Lineage of the Buddha-Patriarchs] was written by the Joseon monk Chaeyeong 采永 (fl. eighteenth century).
- 61 The *Dongsa yeoljeon* 東師列傳 [Biographies of Korean Monks] was authored by the late Joseon monk Gagan 覺岸 (1820–1894).
- 62 Zanning 贊寧 was the author of the *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 [Song Biographies of Eminent Monks].
- 63 Zhipan 志磐 was the author of the *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀 [Complete Chronicle of the Buddha and Patriarchs]. Choe mistakenly uses “qing” 磬 for “pan” 磐, the last word of Zhipan’s name.
- 64 Sekino Tadashi 關野貞 was a Japanese scholar of architectural history who participated in the research and conservation project of the traditional Korean architecture in the early twentieth century. He was the author of several books, including the *Chōsen no kenchiku to geijutsu* 朝鮮の建築と藝術 [Korean Architecture and Art].
- 65 The three gods refer to Amenominakanushi 天御中主神, Takamimusuhi 高皇產靈神, and Kamimusuhi 神皇產靈神.
- 66 The three ancient sages refer to Hwanin 桓因, Hwanung 桓雄, and Dan-gun 檀君.
- 67 *Nihon shoki* 日本書紀 [Chronicles of Japan]: 19, the tenth month of the thirteenth year of Kinmei 欽明: “我國家之王天下者 恒以天地社稷百八十神 春夏秋冬祭拜爲事 方今改拜蕃神 恐致國神之怒。”
- 68 *Genkō shakusho* 元亨釋書 [History of Buddhism of the Genkō Era]: “此方不敬少門 故我混俗。”
- 69 *Su’ijeon* 殊異傳 [Tales of Wonders]: “以前所不見爲怪 至有將殺之 故逃隱于 續村。”
- 70 Princess Seongguk (Seongguk gongju 成國公主 or Seongguk gungju 成國宮主) was Silla King Michu’s (味鄒王, r. 261–284) daughter.
- 71 *Nihon shoki* 21, the fourth month of the second year of Yōmei 用明: “朕思欲歸三寶 卿等議之。”
- 72 Ibid.: “何背國神 敬他神也 由來不識若斯事矣。”
- 73 Ibid.: “臣奉爲天皇 出家修道 又奉造丈六佛像及寺。”
- 74 *Samguk sagi* 4, the fifteenth year of King Beopheung (法興王): “今見僧徒 童頭異服 議論奇詭 而非常道 今若縱之 恐有後悔 臣等雖卽重罪 不敢奉詔。”
- 75 Ibid.: “今群臣之言非也 夫有非常之人 然後有非常之事 今聞佛教淵奧 恐不可不信 . . . 請斬小臣, 以定衆議。”
- 76 Sesok ogye 世俗五戒 (Five Secular Precepts) was composed by Won’gwang 圓光 around 600 as a code of conduct for Hwarang Youth. The five precepts

- are as follows: (1) to serve the king with loyalty; (2) to respect one's parents with filial piety; (3) to trust among friends; (4) not to retreat in battle; (5) not to take life indiscriminately.
- 77 Dorim 道琳 was a Goguryeo monk who served as a spy in Baekje for the Goguryeo King Jangsu (長壽王, r. ca. 412–491).
- 78 Deokchang 德昌 (fl. seventh century) was a Goguryeo monk and spy who worked in Silla for the Goguryeo king Bojang (寶臧王, r. 642–668).
- 79 The Ashikaga 足利 clan established the Muromachi shogunate (室町幕府) that ruled Japan from 1336 to 1573.
- 80 The Ōuchi 大内 clan was one of the most powerful clans in Japan during the reign of the Ashikaga shogunate from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries.

## Glossary

### Korean

Ado 阿道 (fl. 264)  
 Anak 安岳  
 Anseong-dong 安城洞, Illyeonji-myeon  
 日連枝面, Yonggang-gun 龍岡郡  
 Ariyabalma 阿離耶跋摩 (fl. seventh  
 century)  
 Baedalda 倍達多 (fl. sixth century)  
 Bak Jesang 朴堤上 (ca. 363–418)  
 Bak Yeongseon 朴永善 (fl. 1876)  
 Beobyung 法融 (fl. eighth century)  
 Beopheung, King (法興王, r. 514–540),  
 Silla  
 Bulgasui 不可思議 (fl. eighth century)  
 Buseoksa 浮石寺  
*cheonwang* 天王  
*Dae Hwaecom gyeong so* 大華嚴經疏  
 Daebeom 大梵 (fl. seventh century)  
*Daegak guksa munjip* 大覺國師文集

*Dongguk seungni rok* 東國僧尼錄  
 Duryu 頭流  
 Gakhun 覺訓 (fl. thirteenth century)  
*Garakguk gi* 駕洛國記  
*Geumgang sammae gyeong non*  
 金剛三昧經論  
*Geumganggyeong ogabae* 金剛經五家解  
 Geumjang 金藏 (fl. ninth century)  
 Gyeomik 謙益 (fl. sixth century)  
*Haedong goseung jeon* 海東高僧傳  
 Hamheo 涵虛 (1376–1433)  
*Hwaeom gyeong munui yogyeol mundap*  
 華嚴經文義要決問答  
 Hwangnyongsa 黃龍寺  
 Hwanja 桓子  
 Hyeoep 惠業 (fl. seventh century)  
 Hyehyeon 惠顯 (fl. seventh century)  
 Hyeon'gwang 玄光 (fl. sixth century)  
 Hyeonyu 玄遊 (fl. seventh century)

Hyepyeon (Jp. Eben) 惠便  
 Hyeryun 惠輪 (fl. seventh century)  
 Hyetong 惠通 (fl. seventh century)  
 Ichadon 異次頓 (ca. 505–527)  
 Ieung 理應 (fl. eighth century)  
 Iryeon 一然 (1206–1289)  
 Jajang 慈藏 (590–658)  
*Jibong yuseol* 芝峯類說  
 Jidaero 智大路  
*jongyo* 宗要  
*Joseon Seon-Gyo go* 朝鮮禪教考  
 Morye 毛禮  
 Mukhoja 墨胡子 (fl. fifth century)  
 Muru 無漏 (d.u.)  
*Muryangsu gyeong jongyo* 無量壽經宗要  
 Myeongnang 明朗 (fl. 647–668)  
 Nulji, King (訥祗王, r. 458–479), Silla  
 Paya 波若 (561–613)  
 Pyowon 表員 (fl. eighth century)  
*Sambo gi* 三寶記  
 Samnon jong 三論宗  
 Sasi 史侍  
 Seonamsa 仙巖寺  
 Seongsil jong 成實宗  
 Seungjeon 勝詮 (fl. 692)  
 Siheung jong 始興宗  
 Sinin jong 神印宗  
*so* 疏  
 Sosurim, King (小獸林王, r. 371–384),  
     Goguryeo  
 Sugi 守其 (fl. thirteenth century)  
 Sun'gyeong 順璟 (fl. seventh century)  
 Sunji 順支 (fl. ninth century)  
 Sunyeong 純英 (fl. eighth century)  
 Taebaeksan 太伯山  
 Tohae 吐解  
 Uijeok 義寂 (b. 681)  
 Usin 義信 (fl. sixth century)  
 Won'gaksa 圓覺社

Won'gwang 圓光 (555–638)  
 Yaya 伽伽  
 Yeokgyeong dogam 譯經都監  
 Yeon'gi 烟起 (fl. ca. sixth century)  
 Yeondeungsa sajeok bi 燃燈寺事蹟碑  
 Yeono Se'o 延島細鳥  
*yogan* 料簡  
*Yongjae chonghwa* 慵齋叢話  
*Yujeomsa sajeok gi* 楡岾寺事蹟記

## Chinese

Baima Temple 白馬寺  
*Banruo xinjing* 般若心經  
 Daoxuan 道宣 (599–667)  
 Dongshan Liangjia 洞山良价 (807–869)  
*Fajie guanmen* 法界觀門  
 Faxian 法顯 (337–422)  
 Fotucheng 佛圖澄 (c. 232–348)  
*Gaoseng chuan* 高僧傳  
 Hebei 河北  
*Huayan gumu* 華嚴骨目  
 Huisi 惠思 (515–577)  
 Huiwen 慧文 (fl. sixth century)  
 Huiyuan 惠苑 (b. 673)  
 Huizhi 惠治 (fl. seventh century)  
 Jiangnan 江南  
 Jingxi 荊溪 (711–782)  
 Liaodong 遼東  
*Lidai tongzai* 歷代通載  
 Mengrun 蒙潤 (1275–1342)  
 Qin 秦 (221–206 BCE)  
*Renwang shu* 仁王疏  
*Sanbao ji* 三寶記  
 Shilifang 室利防 (fl. third century BCE)  
 Shishuang Qingzhu 石霜慶諸 (807–888)  
*Song gaoseng chuan* 宋高僧傳  
*Souxuan ji* 搜玄記  
*Tanxuan ji* 探玄記  
*Wubaimen lun* 五百門論

*Wujiao zhiguan* 五教止觀

*Wuliang yijing* 無量義經

Yang Renshan 楊仁山 (1839–1911)

Yangshan Huiji 仰山慧寂 (807–883)

Yijing 義淨 (635–713)

*Yinyuan chuan* 因緣傳

Yunju Daoying 雲居道膺 (d. 902)

Zhenyan 真言

*Zhilun shu* 智論疏

Zhiyi 智顓 (538–597)

Zhizhou 智周 (fl. seventh century)

### Japanese

Amatsuhitsugi 天日嗣

Bukkyō daigaku 佛教大學

*Bukkyō daijii* 佛教大辭彙

*Bussō kenkyū* 佛書研究

*Dai Nihon Bukkyō zensho yūhōhaku sōsho*

大日本佛教全書 遊方傳叢書

*Dai Nihon zokuzōkyō* 大日本續藏經

Echō 慧澄 (1780–1862)

Iwadokakure 岩戸隱

*Kojiki* 古事紀

Kuratsu Kurino Tasuna 鞍部多須奈 (fl. sixth century)

Mononobe 物部

Nichira 日羅

*Sanki* 山簣

Shiba no Tachito 司馬達等

Shima 嶋

Soga no Iname 蘇我稻目 (506–570)

Soga no Umako 蘇我馬子 (ca. 551–626)

Takachiho no mine 高千穗峯

*tenson* 天孫

Toyokuni 豐國

Tsukino Ikina 調伊企能 (fl. fifth century)

### Sanskrit

Amoghavajra (705–774)


Mātāṅga's (Ch. Moteng [Kor. Madeung]  
摩騰, d. 73)

Śubhakarasiṃha (637–735)



BUDDHISM AND KOREAN LITERATURE\*

Yi Gwangsu





The relationship between Buddhism and Korean literature is an extremely important matter. This is an academic matter that should be researched historically. This is not an ordinary matter at all that can be said in a way people express their feelings. Therefore, in order to resolve this matter, we first need to take a look at the history of Korean literature. However, no research on the subject has been done yet. There is Mr. An Jasan's (1886–1946) book titled *History of Korean Literature (Joseon munhaksa)*.<sup>1</sup> However, although the book is titled this way, it is just useless.

The recent New Literature Movement (Sinmunhak undong) in Korea is worth watching. However, any movement regarding the research on Korean literature has not yet arisen. Although there are some works of Western literature introduced to Korea, there are few yet academically researched. There is no introductory work on the history of Western literature: neither is there an introductory or commentarial work on famous Western authors and their works. Such words as “English literature” or “Russian literature” are circulating fragmentarily. However, these literatures have not yet been introduced academically. In other words, we have no serious intention to study literature as an academic field yet.

Even for the Western literature that we try to emulate and admire, we look down on the academic research on that subject. What need is there to mention Korean literature that we do not even know whether there is such a thing?

Truly, we doubt if Korea has literature. Among not just young people who receive education from schools of a new system but also teachers who are supposed to know such a thing, there are extremely few who can give a clear answer to the question of whether Korea has literature and, if so, what it is.

As a matter of fact, it is quite a difficult matter to define a boundary of Korean literature.

First, when a certain literary work is written in classical Chinese, do we have to identify the work as one of Korean literature if its author is a Korean? If the answer is yes, a number of literary collections

and literary works that have been there since the period of Three Kingdoms (57 BCE–668 CE)<sup>2</sup> would belong to Korean literature. If this is the case, Korea is not a country that does not have its own literature.

Second, do we have to limit Korean literature to something that is written only in Korean? If so, the number of the works that could be categorized as Korean literature would be extremely limited. In this case, excluding the Korean literary works of modern times that accept Western literature, all that is left is just such works as native songs (*hyangga*) written in *idu*<sup>3</sup> scattered in the *Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms* (*Samguk yusa*)<sup>4</sup>, a small number of traditional Korean lyrics (*gagok*), traditional Korean poems (*sijo*), and story books (*niyagi chaek*), including the *Songs of Dragons Flying to Heaven* (*Yongbi eocheon ga*) and the *Songs of the moon's reflection on a thousand rivers* (*Worin cheongang gok*) that King Sejong (r. 1418–1450) himself composed.<sup>5</sup>

Let us look at how other countries define their history of literature. The history of English literature includes the works written only in English, excluding the works in Latin or French. The history of Japanese literature also limits Japanese literature to the works written only in *manyōgana*<sup>6</sup> (that corresponds to the Korean *idu* system) or *gana*. Considering these cases, we also have to define Korean literature as the works in Korean, i.e., *idu*.

However, there are differences between Chinese-written literature in Korea and Latin literature in England or Chinese-written literature in Japan. The differences are: (1) there are a huge number of the literary works written in Chinese in Korean land; and (2) Chinese characters have been disseminated for so long among Korean people that they have been used just like Korean characters. Although Chinese characters were also introduced to Japan, there were few who could understand Chinese because these characters were not disseminated to the extent that they were in Korea. For this reason, there remain extremely few literary works written in Chinese in Japanese islands. Therefore, Chinese literature has had little to do with the life of Japanese people. However, if we excluded Chinese-

written works from Korean literature, we would end up with cutting off the near-entirety of the spiritual life of our ancestors. This is not something that we cannot bare to do.

If this is the case, what should we do? I think that it is suitable to divide our Korean literature into two parts: Korean literature in Chinese on the one hand and pure Korean literature on the other.

So far, we have set an approximate boundary for Korean literature.

Then, what kind of relationship do Korean literature and Buddhism have? Buddhism has soaked our people's minds at least for 1,400 years. Therefore, the spirit of Buddhism has permeated even the lives of those who claim to reject the religion and has become a part of power that controls the lives of these people. At first glance, since Joseon, Confucianism seems to have controlled our life. However, Confucianism has remained on the surface and affected the ruling upper class alone. What governed the life of a majority of populace was the unique Korean spirit (something that Choe Yukdang called the "Way of light" [*bakdo*]).<sup>7</sup> This is a nameless spirit which has unconsciously constituted most of the Korean national consciousness thus far. Shamans also represent a part of it.) and the Buddhist spirit. Although I don't illustrate it, I think, this is something each and every Korean knows if they think about it. This situation continued until Christian and Western thought came to Korea.

Therefore, whether written in classical Chinese or Korean, in the literary works, composed before the introduction of Christianity and Western thought that is based on Christianity, there was probably nothing that was not influenced by Buddhist thought. Literature reflects the life of people. Since Buddhism constituted a half of power that governed the life of Korean people, there is no way that it did not govern Korean literature.

Let us see the poetry collection of Po'eun (1337–1392),<sup>8</sup> who is called the father of Korean Confucianism:

### **To the Japanese Monk Yeongmu in a Rocky Cave**

A temple is on the top of a high mountain;  
Inside, a renowned monk sits in silence.  
Countless numbers of houses below the mountain bloom like an  
ocean;  
Attaining Buddhahood, he is in Tuṣita Heaven.  
Looking east toward my hometown which faces a blue ocean;  
I sit alone with my legs crossed at the high house after spring has  
already passed.  
The wind from the south blows the door open in the middle of the  
day;  
Petals blown by the wind stick to a Buddhist robe.<sup>9</sup>

### **To Goam<sup>10</sup>**

Looking up or down for my traces of the past,  
I cannot find them because they were as remote as the beginning of  
time;  
Once I have mindfulness,  
Countless eons become like the present moment;  
The rocky mountain is really lofty as if it could reach the blue sky;  
Once I lift my leg,  
The great chiliocosm is in my palm;  
Since a mountain monk is also astonished with these words,  
People have difficulty in emulating this;  
I just think that I will see a moon rise at home another day with  
gentle words.<sup>11</sup>

### **To a Monk**

With the wind from the pine trees, the reflection of the moon on the

surface of the river touches the empty space;  
 This is the time when the monk in the mountain first enters into  
 concentration.  
 How laughable those who are busy studying the Way!  
 They try to find suchness outside the realm of form and sound.<sup>12</sup>

Here, I am not necessarily trying to select the most representative one among the literary works that use Buddhism as a subject. I am just trying to show that there are a number of literary works that take Buddhism as a subject or are full of Buddhist thought. Indeed, such words as a mountain temple, an evening bell, a monk, and the Buddha are among the materials that can be seen most often in our ancient literature. Such ideas as the impermanence of all things (*jehaeng musang*), the causes and conditions in three lives (*samsaeng inyeon*), the ocean of suffering in three realms (*samgye gobae*), meditative concentration (*seonjeong*), and liberation (*haetal*) can be found everywhere in many Korean literary works, including poems and proses, whether they were written in classical Chinese or Korean. It is needless to say that the song of conversion (*hoesim gok*) or the song of Hyangsan (*Hyansan ga*) belongs to the category of Buddhist literature. Besides, everyone knows that classical *sijo* poems or story books also do so.

I have digressed from the main subject. However, the song of conversion is not something that we can think little of. There is no reason to look down on this work with an excuse that monks have sung the song. I think that Buddhist literature occupies an important position in Korean literature in that it has been accepted extensively by general populace and has literary value itself. Of course, I am not saying that there is something original or value from the contemporary perspective on Buddhist literature. I mean that it is still better than others.

In pure Korean literature, we have no great work that uses Buddhism as its subject, like the *Journey to the West* (*Xiyou ji*)<sup>13</sup> in China. However, such works as the *Tale of Simcheong* (*Simcheong*

*jeon*)<sup>14</sup> can be said to accept the most Buddhist ideas.

Since modern Korean literature models after Western literature, there are few influenced by Buddhism. Many of my works include Buddhist elements. Although the *Travelogue of Geumgangsan Mountain* (*Geumgangsan yeohaeng gi*) has few Buddhist ideas, the Buddhist mood permeates the work. In the *Leader* (*Seondoja*), there is a part describing the evening worship service in Hwagyesa Temple. Although the “One Morning” (Eoddeon achim) (*Joseon mundan 3*) is an extremely short piece, it illustrates the Buddhist morning service. However, from now on, I believe, there will be more and more literary works that adopt Buddhism as their subject. This is largely because Buddhist thought has taken a deep root in our spirit and therefore cannot but emerge, being transformed into a literary form.

P.S. I try to avoid admonishment with this unworthy manuscript of mine as the great Seon Master Toegyeong (1879–1965)<sup>15</sup> has urged already three times.

## Notes

- \* This article was published in the *Bulgyo* 佛教 [Buddhism] 7 (January 1925) with the words “unrevised manuscript” (mijeonggo) added within parentheses after the original title.
- 1 An Jasan 安白山, also known as An Hwak 安廓, was a scholar of Korean studies during the Japanese rule (1910–1945). Jasan was his literary name. His book, *Joseon munhaksa* 朝鮮文學史 [History of Korean Literature] was published in 1922.
  - 2 The Three Kingdoms (Samguk 三國) refer to the three ancient Korean kingdoms of Goguryeo 高句麗, Baekje 百濟, and Silla 新羅 competing for dominance of the Korean Peninsula. Silla eventually unified the kingdoms in 676 with the military aid of Tang China. The Unified Silla lasted until 935 when it fell to Goryeo 高麗. Goryeo was succeeded in 1392 by Joseon which was colonized by Imperial Japan in 1910.
  - 3 “*Idu*” literally means “clerk reading.” It is a system which employed some Chinese characters for their meanings and others for their sounds. The system basically aimed at clarifying government documents written in Chinese for Korean readers. The oldest known *idu* text dates from 754; it lasted until the nineteenth century.
  - 4 The *Samguk yusa* 三國遺事 [Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms] was compiled by a monk named Iryeon 一然 (1206–1289) during the Goryeo dynasty. It is a collection of the legends of historical figures and places, stories, poetry, and songs that were not included in the *Samguk sagi* 三國史記 [Historical Record of the Three Kingdoms], the earliest extant historical chronicle of Korea, written by the Goryeo literocrat Gim Busik 金富軾 (1075–1151). Reflecting the compiler’s religious association, the *Samguk yusa* is full of Buddhist themes, providing valuable information of earlier forms of Buddhist beliefs and practices in Korea.
  - 5 King Sejong 世宗 was the fourth king of Joseon Korea. The king, often called “King Sejong the Great” (Sejong daewang) is respected as the greatest sage king of Korea with his accomplishments in various fields, including science, culture, and economy. In particular, the king invented the Korean alphabet called “Hunmin jeongeum.” Unlike Yi Gwangsu’s argument here

- on the two of the earliest works written in Hunmin jeongeum, the *Yongbi eocheon ga* 龍飛御天歌 [Songs of Dragons Flying to Heaven] was not created by the King himself. It was composed by such literocrats as Jeong Inji 鄭麟趾 (1396–1478), An Ji 安止 (1377–1464), and Gwon Je 權踈 (1387–1445) under the King's command while the *Worin cheongang gok* 月印千江曲 [Songs of the Moon's Reflection on a Thousand Rivers], a hymn to Śākyamuni Buddha, was made by the king himself.
- 6 *Manyōgana* was an ancient writing system of Japan to use Chinese characters for Japanese. The name comes from the *Manyōshū* 万葉集 [Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves], the oldest extant collection of Japanese poetry, compiled around 759.
  - 7 Choe Yuktang 崔六堂, better known as Choe Namseon 崔南善 (1890–1957) first spoke of the “Way of light” (*bakdo* 晝道) in the *Joseon yeoksa tongsok ganghwa gaeje* 朝鮮歷史通俗講話開題 [Overview of the Customs in Korean History] in 1922 and explained it in detail in the *Bulham munhwaron* 不咸文化論 [Treatise on Bulham Culture], published in 1927.
  - 8 Po'eun 圃隱 was the literary name for Jeong Mongju 鄭夢周 who was a literocrat in the late Goryeo period. He was also a famous poet whose “Dansim ga” 丹心歌 [Song of Loyal Heart] is known to many Koreans even today.
  - 9 “Jeung ambang Ilbon seung Yeongmu” 贈岳房日本僧永茂, *Po'eun seonsaeng munjip* 圃隱先生文集 2: “一間蘭若壓層巔 中有高僧坐默然 山下萬家花似海 真成身在率陀天 故園東望隔滄波 春盡高齊獨結跏 日午南風自開戶 飛來花片點袈裟。”
  - 10 “Goam” here probably refers to Goam Cheon'geung 古巖天亘 (fl. fourteenth century), one of the eminent monks in the late Goryeo. He was close to several renowned Confucian literati of the time, including Yi Saek 李穡 (1328–1396) and Jeong Dojeon 鄭道傳 (1342–1398).
  - 11 “Goam gwonja” 古巖卷子, *Po'eun seonsaeng munjip* 2: “俯仰已陳迹 古初邈難尋 我乃一攝念 億劫猶現今 巖石萬仞高 上可磨蒼穹 我乃一舉足 大千如掌中 山僧此說亦可愕 畢竟令人難模搦 但思他日軒中 軟語與之看月出。”
  - 12 “Jeungseung” 贈僧, *Po'eun seonsaeng munjip* 2: “松風江月接中虛 正是山僧入定初 可笑紛紛學道者 色聲之外覓真如。”
  - 13 *Xiyou ji* 西遊記 [Journey to the West] is a Chinese novel published in the sixteenth century. It is attributed to Wu Cheng'en 吳承恩 (1500–1582). The novel, inspired by the monk Xuanzang's 玄奘 (602–664) sixteen year pilgrimage to India, narrates fictional stories about Xuanzang and his company's encounters with various demons and spirits during the journey.
  - 14 *Simcheong jeon* 沈清傳 [Tale of Simcheong] is one of the few novels written in vernacular Korean in the Joseon period. The tale emphasizes Confucian

filial piety, which is demonstrated in the tale by Sim Cheong sacrificing herself to cure her father's blindness. It also includes some Buddhist ideas based on the law of causality.

- 15 Toegyong 浪耕 was the dharma-name of Gwon Sangro 權相老 who was a scholar monk in the colonial and post-Liberation periods. In particular, he was one of the leading Buddhist figures during this time.

## Glossary

### Korean

An Jasan 安自山

“Eoddeon achim” 어떤 아침

*gagok* 歌曲

*Geumgangsán yeohaeng gi* 金剛山旅行記

*haetal* 解脫

*hoesim gok* 回心曲

Hwagyesa 華溪寺

*hyangga* 鄉歌

*Hyansan ga* 香山歌

*jehaeng musang* 諸行無常

*Joseon mundan* 朝鮮文壇

*niyagi chaek* 이야기책

*Samguk yusa* 三國遺事

*samgye gohae* 三界苦海

*samsaeng inyeon* 三生因緣

*Seondoja* 先導者

*seonjeong* 禪定

*sijo* 詩調

*Simcheong jeon* 沈清傳

Sin munhak undong 新文學運動

*Worin cheongang gok* 月印千江曲

*Yongbi eocheon ga* 龍飛御天歌

### Chinese

*Xiyou ji* 西遊記

### Japanese

*gana* 假名

*manyōgana* 萬葉假名



# TO ESTABLISH A MODERN BUDDHISM\*

Baek Seonguk

- Chapter 1 Ordination Certificate
- Chapter 2 Education
- Chapter 3 Mission
- Chapter 4 Bhikṣuṇī
- Chapter 5 Institution
- Chapter 6 The Expulsion of a Buddhist Monk
- Chapter 7 Monk Examination
- Chapter 8 Economic Life



In all societies, regardless of nation, the so-called “monk” is a noun which refers to the intellectual class of the society. It is an unavoidable fact throughout history that ignorant monks reveal the irresponsibility of people in society and those monks themselves face humiliation. Therefore, in a case like this, the society as a whole should disfavor monks so that they themselves regret the situation and mend their ways, and at the same time, recognize their social status by the influence they have on the society.

“Why does a society demand the existence of Buddhist clerics?” There are different answers to this question depending on the time and situation of nations. Limiting our focus to Korea, the answer is as follows: most of all, monks are in a position to easily resolve difficult spiritual problems. They are in a better condition in terms of everything, including leisure time. Furthermore, they aim at treating everyone equally, renouncing ignorant and selfish desires with the calmest contemplation that ordinary people could not reach. At the same time, Buddhist clerics seek for the happiness of all the existences in the entire universe, going beyond the level of benefiting themselves with the fierce moral self-cultivation.

Regardless of society, when a difficult problem, which lasts long enough for members of that society to feel unhappy, is neither handled properly nor easy to be resolved, it is true that the intellectual class should be held responsible for the situation and punished. Since the intellectual class takes such a responsibility, it receives a special status and treatment from commoners. Furthermore, the Buddhist community is different from other religious organizations in that it is realistic and practical, not satisfied just with the ideal or theoretical salvation of the society. Taking a step further, Korean Buddhism has an idea of making this world *Sukhāvati* (Ultimate Bliss) from the standpoint of the mundane world, an idea that characterizes Northern Buddhism [i.e., *Mahāyāna*], rather than the Southern Buddhist [i.e., *Theravāda*] way of contemplation. Therefore, such phrases as “When sentient beings get sick, all buddhas also get sick”<sup>1</sup> or “The illness of

sentient beings is my illness”<sup>2</sup> (*Vimalakīrti-sūtra*) became a Buddhist platitude. In Northern Buddhism, it is clearly shown that society and Buddhism are neither one nor two. Therefore, Buddhist clerics spontaneously took responsibility for the goodness or badness of the entire society.

So, for now, to speak of Korean Buddhist clerics, on the question of whether they are qualified for the intellectual class, people have different opinions. However, generally speaking, they are hardly qualified. Clerics themselves probably admit this fact themselves to some degree. As a matter of course, I am not saying that this is so from the historical point of view. History belongs to the past, not the present. It is our society’s problem to ignore the present over the past. We need at least a realistic person rather than a historical or imaginary one.

In any society, no single case has been found that a monk begs for people’s respect. This is because clerics do not care about people’s respect or contempt since their way of life transcends the mundane world. Ignoring both glory and shame, they work for the relief of people in the society who face difficult problems. Consequently, the society as a whole spontaneously respects Buddhist clerics as a token of its recognition and gratitude for their service. At the same time, society finds its order not just by politicians. In fact, it is moralists who also initiate the social order. Therefore, there is a common saying, “The more Buddhist clerics in Geumgangsān Mountain, the more wise officials in the court.”

Why do current Korean monks and nuns not deserve our respect? This is a complex question. On the one hand, the Korean society does not respect scholars. At the same time, it is true that it has not had many respectable scholars. Most of the scholars just opposed each other, trying to discourage others with worthless comments and pointing out colleague’s flaws with an empty boast. The society as a whole blindly follows the arguments of these scholars. On the other hand, it is also true that the self-governance on the side of Buddhist clerics has been insufficient. The phrase

“self-governance” demands a lot of explanations. Here, I will explain some urgent matters regarding the phrase, as follows. However, since I am not an official, I will just give a broad outline rather than detailed data.

## Chapter 1

### Ordination Certificate

Looking at how monasteries and temples issue an ordination certificate, it seems that they care only about increasing the number of Buddhist clerics, no matter how. At the same time, they have no fixed qualifications. Seen from the experience of the past, such a way of issuing an ordination certificate just adds unhappiness [to the Buddhist community]. There is no merit [in it]. Therefore, it is urgently necessary to revise such a convention as soon as possible in order for the Buddhist ecclesia to be stable. Regarding the question of how it should be revised or improved, those who are in charge probably think a lot. However, an ordination certificate should be given through a standardized test at a fixed location. For example, an ordination ceremony should be held at head temples (*bonsan*) as it is. Once every year, on a fixed date, a pre-selected applicant submits his or her application with the sponsorship of more than one person (for example, his or her master) to an ordination committee member in the form of recommendation. Then, a certain number of ordination committee members are selected to take charge in determining the qualification of the applicant. The qualification is as follows: the applicant should prove his or her education higher than the middle school level with a diploma or else; more than one year of postulancy and grades higher than average; proof of identity by the police; older than seventeen years old. With the report of the qualification examination committee that he is qualified, an ordination certificate is issued. As for the management of the ordination process, the Monks Qualification Office should be established somewhere in the peninsula to be exclusively responsible for controlling the administrative works related to monks' qualification and ordination

permission. The office should try to uniformize the [process of] granting ordination certificate and improve the qualities of Buddhist clerics. At the same time, then, since the monks and nuns who are not associated with the office are false monks, they should be sanctioned accordingly so that they cannot pretend to be ordained monks or nuns anymore. In carrying out what is said above, there surely will be difficulties. Hence, I think it is good to have training schools throughout the peninsula for the convenience of applicants under the name of the “Monks Qualification Office.”

## Chapter 2 Education

Regarding this part, there is nothing to comment on. This is because the object for commenting is not clear. Therefore, I believe, it is necessary to speak of the future plan. The traditional lecture hall is the most appropriate for [carrying out] academic research of Buddhism. If possible, it should be maintained so that [people there] can study as they are pleased. Regardless of how old they are and whether they are monks or laypersons, those who want to get in the lecture hall should be allowed to do so. The lecture hall should also be equipped with an appropriate size of a library for research and study. People who excel in both virtue and knowledge are to be selected in a special way as lecturers, so that [the legacy of] the prominent figures in the Buddhist intellectual community should be assured to continue. Lecturers themselves should teach and lead students more freely than before and thereby reveal the truth through thorough discussions between teachers and students. The location of the lecture hall should be in the mountains like before. There should be rules and regulations for the lecture hall to keep an order.

As for the meditation hall, the traditional customs should be applied. It also should have a proper size of a library for the convenience of researchers. Depending on the audience, the keynote lecture (*gaedang boseol*) can be given by someone other than the master. Also depending on the value of the lecture itself, it is printed and distributed to Seon masters everywhere for their comments with the intention of galvanizing the Buddhist intellectual community altogether. Regardless of how old they are and whether they are monks or laypersons, applicants are allowed to enter the meditation hall only if they can observe the rules of the hall and respect the public order [of the temple

community].

Since a significant level of academic system (college rules and institutions) is not yet created, a training school should be opened to prepare for the lecture and meditation halls and not to hinder [the development of] younger generation. On the one hand, to train students as professional Buddhist clerics, the traditional Buddhist music and songs (*beomeum beompae*)<sup>3</sup> should be taught at a fixed location. In order to conserve traditional Buddhist art, Buddhist painting, sculpture, and construction, the fields that were traditionally related almost exclusively to Buddhist clerics, should be taught. As far as financial circumstances allow, Western style of painting, sculpture, and music also can be taught to be used industrially. If what is said above is to be fully carried out, a significant amount of funds will be needed. Therefore, in the beginning, it is proper to choose just one or two places throughout the peninsula and begin the work there, depending on the capability and financial situation. Since facilities and equipment are not urgent, the feasible work should be launched first mainly not to lose Buddhist traditions that we have inherited. The work should be carried out as the situation allows. To provide convenience for monks in the mountains, at two or three places, such subjects as zoology, botany, pharmacy, physics, and chemistry should be taught in the level higher than middle school so that Buddhist monks can come out of ignorance in their lives and, at the same time, practice what they learn from the class while living in the mountains. Furthermore, they improve their knowledge on these fields so that they can be hired in the respective college departments when a college is established. Physiology and general medical techniques should also be lectured for monks to obtain some sanitary knowledge which is necessary for monastic life.

For the purpose of training missionaries, special facilities will be required. [Applicants] have to study for academic research in a higher than intermediate level. They also have to study psychology, pedagogy, history of Korean Buddhism, Korean history, and history

of world religions. Besides, they also have to possess some knowledge of one of European countries' languages. Afterwards, missionaries are selected among those who have experienced more than two years in the lecture hall and more than one year in the meditation hall.

In order to train teachers for all these plans, those who have significant knowledge of Korea and Buddhism should be sent abroad to study and focus only on specific disciplines not to waste excessive time and money.

## Chapter 3

### Mission

Mission stations should be supported in a way that they can run independently and autonomously as much as possible. For Buddhist followers to practice how to live their lives economically, “Co-operation Society” will be encouraged. The organization which promotes mutual aid and assistance among the followers will be formed to nurture solidarity and friendship. Not to lag behind the outside intellectual community, academic lectures and philosophical conferences will be held on fixed dates. A significant size of libraries and sports meetings will be organized not to neglect intellectual and physical education. Such organizations as the Buddhist Youth Association (Bulgyo cheongnyeonhoe)<sup>4</sup> should be made into a purely lay organization though Buddhist clerics can join on demand. The organization should be maintained as a sort of a republic system in which clerics are not allowed to ask for a special status. Lay organizations should be unified throughout the entire peninsula. This society then should publish a proper journal to connect Buddhist followers and encourage them to become cooperators. This intends to promote mutual understanding among the followers to make sure that Korean Buddhism as a whole will not lose people who are devoted to the cultural movement in the peninsula.

## Chapter 4

### Bhikṣuṇī

Bhikṣuṇī (Buddhist nuns), in regard to receiving a certificate, has same requirements as monks except education. Nuns should finish compulsory education. A training school should be built where they can be taught Buddhist doctrines, as well as spinning and weaving, nursing skill, and literature in order for them to develop their capability of studying themselves. The school should also be equipped with a library that can accommodate them for improving their knowledge. Kindergartens will be also built attached to nunneries for nuns to put their pedagogical knowledge into practice. The nunneries should be run autonomously as much as possible. Monks avoid visiting nunneries randomly. At the same time, nuns are regulated to behave properly to keep order. If nuns demand meditation or lecture halls, meditation or lecture halls for nuns will be built. However, if they have any other inconvenience than these halls, special considerations will be needed.

## Chapter 5 Institution

All the facilities should be built for the benefit of others, not just for the benefit of ourselves. [We monks] should not focus too much on minor details. Therefore, if there is any facility that is related to the mission work for now, it should be maintained until a lay organization is formed. Afterwards, it will be handed over to that organization with or without conditions. If possible, an autonomous lay organization should be established. [Buddhist monks] should make efforts in assisting the organization to grow to accomplish its purpose. In this way, the inside [i.e. monks] and the outside [i.e., lay followers] try to cooperate for the national and cultural improvement, which ultimately aims at the unified goal of human betterment. Monks themselves should always understand and digest various ideologies and all sorts of social problems to maintain their status as leaders so that they can avoid becoming an obstacle on the way toward the improvement of national culture. In order to carry out what is mentioned above, the highest level of an academic institution should be founded where members can be selected from both monks and lay followers to practice the intellectual life. The institution also should seek criticism and comment from the society by announcing members' accomplishments monthly, quarterly, or randomly.

## Chapter 6

### The Expulsion of a Buddhist Monk

Clerical marriage should not be allowed. However, those who were forced to take a wife because of the situation should not be insulted. They just cannot be officially recognized [as monks]. It is probably a good strategy during the transition period to regard clerical marriage as a personal and individual behavioral issue.

The expulsion of a Buddhist monk (i.e., forfeiture of a certificate) is as an important matter to the Buddhist ecclesia as the issuance of a certificate. Since it affects the whole ecclesia, the head temple abbot should never be allowed to decide by himself. This is because a head temple is only a head temple. It does not represent the whole ecclesia. In the Korean Peninsula, there is only one school of the “Two Traditions of Seon and Gyo” (Seon-Gyo yangjong). Therefore, the expulsion of a monk is a significant matter that has an impact on the entire Korean Buddhist community. Therefore, when unfortunately there is a monk who should be expelled from the ecclesia, a statement of reasons for his expulsion should be written down and distributed to several places for comments six months prior. If half of the head temples agree with the expulsion, it is announced under the name of Monks Qualification Office that he is expelled from the ecclesia.

## Chapter 7

### Monk Examination

It is thought to be necessary that monk examinations should be divided into bhikṣu and master (*jongsā*) exams.

#### 1. Bhikṣu Exam

It is divided into approximately five different exams to classify monks. The exam intends that monks do not lose their prestiges as a member of the intellectual class of the society. If a monk passes any of the five exams that he wants to take, he will be qualified [as a bhikṣu]. This will be a standard qualification for the ordinary class of a monk. A monk should be more than twenty-five years old to take one of the exams. After passing the exam, he will receive the great precepts for bhikṣu.

##### Section a

Transmission of the Lamp (Jeondeung) <sup>5</sup> and Enlightenment Verses (Yeomsong) <sup>6</sup>	2 hrs.
history of Korean Buddhism	30 mins.
Flower Garland (Hwaecom) <sup>7</sup> and Perfect Enlightenment (Won'gak) <sup>8</sup>	2 hrs.
history of world Buddhism	30 mins.
history of Korean literature and Korean history	1hr.
history of world religions	30 mins.
	(total 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ hrs.)

**Section b**

Transmission of the Lamp and Enlightenment Verses	2 hrs.
history of Indian philosophy and history of Western philosophy	1 hr.
history of Korean literature and Korean history	1 hr.
European languages (choose one among English, French or German)	30 mins.
history of Korean and world Buddhism	30 mins.
	(total 5 hrs.)

**Section c**

Transmission of the Lamp and Enlightenment Verses	2 hrs.
Eastern languages (choose one between classical Chinese and Japanese)	1 hr.
history of Korean Buddhism	1 hr.
art (choose one among painting, sculpture, or architecture)	1 hr.
	(total 5 hrs.)

**Section d**

Perfect Enlightenment	1 hr.
zoology and botany (with pharmacy)	1 hr.
history of Korean Buddhism	1 hr.
Buddhist music, along with Korean music	1 hr.
Korean history and geography	1 hr.
	(total 5 hrs.)

**Section e**

Perfect Enlightenment	1 hr.
European languages (choose one)	1 hr.
Korean history and geography	1 hr.
history of Korean Buddhism	30 mins.
physics and chemistry	1 hr.
	(total $4\frac{1}{2}$ hrs.)

This bhikṣu exam is a gateway as well as a qualification for monks to contact the society. The exam becomes a foundation for everything.

## 2. Master Exam

A monk is qualified for the exam as soon as he passes the bhikṣu exam. In order to take the master exam,

1. One should have an academic writing which is more than 100 octavos. The writing should be about Seon, Gyo, Buddhist apologetics, doctrines, or history of Buddhism. Beside these topics, the writing should be something that can be recognized as useful to the society from the Buddhist point view.
2. One should also take an oral exam about doctrines and history of Buddhism for an hour. He also should take an exam for an hour about a subject that he chooses among the bhikṣu exam fields as he wishes.

If the applicant's writing is submitted to the Buddhist Academy (Bulgyo haksawon), the academy decides pass or fail by the agreement of half of its members. The academy then prints and distributes a copy of the passed writing to several libraries in order to promote the harvest of mental production. Those who are qualified receive the great bodhisattva precept and obtain recognition in the Buddhist academia. Therefore, they are allowed to enjoy a special status, acting freely within the limits of not harming their scholarly honor.

Since the missionary exam requires facilities, though it is urgent, [here] I cannot discuss details about it. However, even in the future, the eligibility for the exam should be limited to the monk exam passers alone. Depending on the amount of knowledge and need of the mission target group, [the details of the exam] should be arranged. Therefore, I think there is nothing to be discussed yet.

## Chapter 8

### Economic Life

Currently, as for the clerical way of life and business, monks are just consumers in the economic field. All they have done is spend inherited properties or interest from them. This is of course a huge problem in carrying out business. Therefore, it is a more urgent task than anything else to continue to practice economic life.

Monks should avoid any financial trouble in their work through a steady source of revenue by running an effective business, for example, some cultural business, in or outside the temple. Such fields as printing, paper manufacturing (abundant raw materials thanks to vast forest regions), snack making, medicine making (with chemistry), food processing, and fruit growing businesses are, I believe, the most suitable inside the temple. To run these businesses in a modern industrial way would require a significant amount of funds. Thus, they should first launch a small scale business with an elaborate plan. As for the location, temple-owned land would be more convenient than urban areas for obtaining raw materials or else. To generate hydroelectric power, using an existing watermill and operate manufacturing machines reduce costs. Probably, at first, operators will be needed. However, it is a natural demand to educate monks as apprentices for the future and, if possible, send them abroad to be trained to be specialists.

Furthermore, when one factory settles, we should build another factory in another place and thereby increase the number of factories. Depending on the progress and the credit status, it will be possible to invite investors and issue stocks. There will be no difficulty in this whole process. It will just need leaders and persons with knowledge.

Temple-owned forests in the peninsula and dusted sawdust

can be made into paper for newspapers for the benefit of cultural movement; the roots and leaves of therophytes, into medicine. Streams flowing in the valleys can be exploited to generate hydroelectric power and operate machines. If printing machines continue to work in a full scale and paper-making machines produce steadily, what else will be needed for cultural movement and what will hinder our business?

We should not relieve the society with a fluke or a makeshift. We should not just admonish people who are not well-educated and thus do not understand elegant philosophical principles. Rather, we should feed those who starve, give jobs those who do not have jobs, and buy books for those who ask for knowledge. Only afterwards should we launch our business. We should think carefully. We should continue to plan scrupulously, putting practice over theory. When experience reaches a level to carry out business, we should begin our business. In the beginning, we should not purchase useless expendable supplies. When production increases, the need for them will decrease. Speaking of business, production is the most important. If production is low and expenditure is high, that business is hard to survive. To prepare various sources of profits and avoid a luxurious and pompous appearance is a businessman's [first] principle. A difficult problem in the current business management is about export markets. However, since lay people's partner companies throughout the country will be willing to use our products, there will be few difficulties in launching business. Besides, depending on the progress, if we strive for self-support and self-sufficiency from daily good to the entire Korean economy and build a healthy economy, how can it not be called "cultural movement" and at the same time "social reform"? If monks were in this position, leading these projects, would they be despised from the society? No! The society would respect them spontaneously.

One should understand himself very well. This is the beginning of building a solid business. One should firmly understand himself from his own very foundation. Only then do others begin to

recognize him. Now even though the society might want to recognize monks' position, how could it recognize and respect monks in a situation in which monks do not know themselves? Much worse in our Korean society where people only like things of others, disliking and despising ours!

At Donam-ri,<sup>9</sup> May 1

## Notes

- \* This article was published in the *Bulgyo* 佛教 [Buddhism] 24 (June 1926).
- 1 “衆生病故諸佛病.”
  - 2 “衆生病是我病.” *Vimalakīrti-sūtra* (T475.14.544b21): “一切眾生病是故我病.”
  - 3 *Beomeum beompae* 梵音梵唄 or simply *beompae* 梵唄 is a Buddhist ritual chanting. *Beompae* (Ch. *fanbai*) was transmitted to China around the time of the introduction of Buddhism and was introduced to Korea as early as the seventh century.
  - 4 *Bulgyo cheongnyeonhoe* 佛教青年會 (Buddhist Youth Association) was created in 1920 to reform Korean Buddhism. The association carried out various social and educational activities and demanded autonomy of Korean Buddhism from the colonial government.
  - 5 “Transmission of the Lamp” seems to refer to the *Jingde chuandeng lu* 景德傳燈錄 [Record of the Transmission of the Lamp Published in the Jingde Era], a comprehensive collection of the hagiographical anecdotes of ancient Chan masters, completed by Daoyuan 道原 (d.u.) in 1004.
  - 6 “Enlightenment Verses” seems to refer to the *Seonmun yeomsong jip* 禪門拈頌集 [Collection of Enlightenment Verses of the Seon School], a collection of the ancient precedents compiled by Hyesim 慧諶 (1178–1234) during the Goryeo dynasty.
  - 7 “Flower Garland” here refers to the *Huayan jing* 華嚴經 [Flower Garland Sūtra], which is one of the most important scriptures in East Asian Buddhism. In particular, the text was influential in many of East Asian Buddhist schools, in particular, Huayan (Kor. Hwaeom) and Chan (Kor. Seon).
  - 8 “Perfect Enlightenment” here refers to the *Yuanjue jing* 圓覺經 [Perfect Enlightenment Sūtra] which was an apocryphal scripture, composed in China probably in the early eighth century. It was particularly important in the Korean Seon tradition.
  - 9 Donam-ri 敦岩里 is a name for the present-day Donam-dong 敦岩洞 in Seoul from 1894 to 1936.

## Glossary

*bonsan* 本山

Bulgyo haksawon 佛教學士院

*gaedang boseol* 開堂普說

*jongsa* 宗師

Seon-Gyo yangjong 禪教兩宗



# RESEARCH ON RELIGION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL WORK\*

Gim Taeheup

Introduction

Chapter 1 Religion and Social Work

Chapter 2 The Concept of Social Work

Chapter 3 Historical Overview of Social Work





## Introduction

Before taking up the main subject, I will first explain the motive of this article and give an overview of it. According to theories of countless numbers of scholars, religion is a byproduct of human society and, at the same time, is created to serve the society. Sure it is. Anyone can see this fact even without a demonstration in the form of a philosophical logic.

The so-called the three world religions of Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism arose to save sentient beings and the society. The followers of these religions take pride in the founders' humanitarianism and praise their spirit of great compassion with one voice.

However, I have found some contradiction here. Even though those followers praise the humanitarianism and spirit of compassion of the founder of their religions and advocate the idea of saving people and the world, they simply satisfy themselves by leading an ascetic life and benefiting themselves. I overcame the four kinds of difficulties<sup>1</sup> thanks to good karmic causes from previous lives and followed Buddhism from a very young age. However, what I learned for ten years was just a pessimistic view of life. Although Buddhists say that they are eventually to save people and the society as buddhas and bodhisattvas would do, they just live their whole life, taking scripture-reading, recitation, and meditation as their daily task and worshipping the Buddha day and night. (These days, even those who do these practices are hardly seen.) Of course, it is right to cultivate those practices as a preparation for saving people and the world. However, it probably goes against the Buddha's real intention to take these practices as the ultimate goal and get intoxicated with religious rapture. Looking at the history of Buddhism, Buddhism in medieval times mostly

followed this form. Not just Buddhism but also Christianity did so. Medieval education in the West was Christian education. Ascetic practices occupied most of the education: the so-called ascetic life in the monastery and nunnery was primary in medieval Christianity. It seems that Catholicism these days still promotes this practice.

Since I do not understand the original meaning of religion, I have grappled with the following questions. As other scholars argue, is religion a byproduct of human society and thus created to save the society? Or is religion something that has nothing to do with the human society, pursuing only for the heaven or paradise outside the [human] world? Can only such perfect saints as the Buddha or Christ save human beings? Is it simply impossible for us ordinary human beings to do so? What is the idea of a bodhisattva in Great Vehicle (Mahāyāna) who wishes to save others though he or she is not yet liberated? I have seriously thought about these questions. Entering the department of religious studies, I fortunately came to study religion. I have focused on such major subjects as religious philosophy, the history of religious development, and religious psychology. At the same time, I have researched the topic of in what relationship religious faith and relief activities have developed. This is how I came to write this article.

Although it seems an unnecessary additional remark, I would like to add that all religions originated from an extreme form of pessimism and developed into an extreme form of salvation-ism (*guse juui*). How did all religions start from pessimism? Religion aims at transcending the ugliness of the reality of the human life and realizing the ideal realm of the permanent pure pleasure. In Christianity and Islam, followers wish to go to paradise after death and reside with the heavenly father; In Pure Land Buddhism, followers pray for being reborn in the Pure Land after death and living with the Buddha and bodhisattvas. These practices appear because people hate the impermanence and ugliness of the real life.

Buddhism compares the secular life to the burning house of suffering or to the world of transient illusion and dream. This is

definitely because it attempts to discover the pure and permanent ideal.

The thoughts of Lesser Vehicle (Hīnayāna) and Great Vehicle appear contradictory to each other at first glance. Lesser Vehicle that advocates an extreme pessimism becomes the gateway to Great Vehicle of an extreme form of salvation-ism. The Lesser Vehicle thought that presents the pessimistic worldview, directly facing the suffering of the real life, serves as the inevitable path toward the lofty teaching of Great Vehicle that arouses the mind of compassion transcending the mundane world. Therefore, Śākyamuni Buddha, who practiced the Way in the mountain, giving up his kingdom, wife, and child, eventually became an enlightened being who saved the world, going beyond pessimism. Considering this fact, pessimism is the cause of the world-salvation. At the same time, those without thorough pessimism cannot have thorough progress toward enlightenment. For this reason, Christians in medieval times were dedicated to social work and relief activities while advocating the ascetic life in the monastery. Even in these days, Catholics focus on social services more than Protestants. In Buddhism too, whether it was in China, Korea, or Japan, renowned and virtuous monks in medieval times were wandering mendicants, being dedicated for such social and charity works as building a stone bridge. Even these days, they provide free accommodations for patients and travellers. All these are examples of realizing the spirit of salvation from the thorough pessimism.

However, those who commit suicide, feeling despondent of their lives, or satisfy themselves, living their whole lives at the monastery in the mountain, fall into a wrong type of pessimism, although they are also pessimists. This is because their pessimism will remain as pessimism for good, never turning to the spirit of salvation.

Although it is an inevitable principle that pessimism causes salvation, it is rather a general principle. It does not mean that you should practice pessimism with pessimistic thought. In other words, I am not saying that you Buddhists should practice six years of asceticism as Śākyamuni Buddha did or that Christians should

sacrifice themselves on the cross just as Jesus shed his blood on the cross. Taking another analogy, we who enjoy the benefits of civilization do not necessarily need to take pains to invent modern machines as early inventors did. Relying on the dying injunctions of the Buddha who attained the great enlightenment, we only have to proceed toward the right Way while carrying out relief works. This is our goal and mission!

What I have explained thus far is an answer for all questions that I have grappled with for years and, at the same time, the motive with which I am writing this article. Now, I will get to the main content. This article is divided into the two parts: general overview and itemized discussions. In the first part, as the table of contents indicates, the first and second chapters explore the question of in what relationships religion and social work have developed, along with the meaning and goal of social work. The third chapter first discusses the history of the development of social work in the East and the West and then explains the close relationship between religion and social work. The second part of the itemized discussions deal only with the Korean social work, divided into five chapters. I tried to publish this article from early. However, I submitted it to my school as a graduate thesis to fulfill a requirement for an academic degree. Although my advisor reviewed it quickly, it took a lot for the professor committee to approve it. Eventually, the thesis I had submitted last summer was finally approved this spring. For this reason, the publication of the article is delayed until today. I plan to first publish the overview part today and then the itemized discussions gradually, revising the original draft. Here, I would like to especially mention that I could finish this article, though short, thanks to many instructions by the dearest friend Yi Yeongjae<sup>2</sup> and assistance by Gim Jeongwon. I also could publish my humble writing on the *Buddhism (Bulgyo)* thanks to Sir Gwon Sangro's (1879–1965)<sup>3</sup> recommendation. I would like to express my thanks to Mr. Yi and Mr. Gim as well as Sir Gwon and wish them to give me more guidance in the future as well.

## Chapter 1

# Religion and Social Work

### 1. The Arising of Religion and Social Work

In regard to the arising of religion or the origin of religion, scholars present various theories. However, in discussing this issue, we cannot rely on simple historical surveys. This is because religion originated in prehistoric times as human beings did. Religion existed before philosophy. All barbarians had a religion. Judging from this fact, wherever there are human beings, there is always religion. Higher forms of life before human beings may have had a religion. It is said that monkeys in the Sanda Island have a habit of climbing up to the top of the tree before sunrise and worshipping, screaming aloud in a high pitch toward the sun. It may sound an exaggeration to say that animals have a religion. However, it is true that religion is as old and universal as human beings. The first sprout of the human civilization was religion.

The origin of religion can be investigated in three different ways: psychologically, socially, and historically. Regarding the psychological perspective, it is necessary to discuss religious consciousness. Then, what is religious consciousness? Human beings have different personalities and possess desires to express these personalities in their behaviors. In other words, they have firm desires to enjoy their lives forever and reach self-realization. All human efforts begin from these desires, which can be divided into three kinds: desires for food, sex, and freedom. These are the fundamental desires to control the entire human life. The desire for food is a desire for self-preservation that starts as a need to sustain oneself. Human beings have this desire from birth to death. The desire for sex is not expressed from the time

of birth. However, this desire is gradually manifested as a person grows. It is the desire for the preservation of the species that begins as a need to expand oneself. It is the instinct that is most fierce and can make a person blindly pursue its satisfaction. These two desires are basic desires of living organisms that are shared by not only human beings, but also animals as conditions for the preservation of life. The desire for freedom arises as a need for voluntary actions. This desire is not that strong compared to the two basic ones. Some plants show a tendency for this desire in their lives. Animals have stronger desire for freedom while human beings even risk their lives to satisfy this desire. For example, plants tend to grow up against the law of gravity; animals enjoy doing freely what they want to do, whether walking or jumping; human beings seek for freedom to the extent of saying, "Give me freedom or give me death!" To say the least, the creative culture of human beings is built on the foundation of these three kinds of desires. To give an explicit example, though it is rather shallow, because of this fact, a large city inevitably has various kinds of mental or spiritual institutions as well as great restaurants and adult entertainment facilities where beautiful women gather.

It is obvious that all human beings are subject to these three kinds of desires. Whether religion, philosophy, science, or art, all these start from these three kinds of desires. Most of all, religion arises to most satisfy these desires. This is because we human beings have a desire for limitless life and yet are imperfect individuals. Our body is just about five *cheok* (approx. 150 cm); our life expectancy is shorter than 50. Therefore, because of this [limitation], human beings arouse the desire to have a super-individual and perfect limitless life. We human beings' lives have elements that are individual and super-individual simultaneously. Looking at the outside appearance, human beings seem to be independent individual lives without any connections with each other. However, this is not the ultimate independence. Behind the individual lives, there exists the great life that can unify them. The ultimate foundation for the individual lives should be sought from the great life underlying them. This demand

inevitably appears in the human psychology and becomes religious consciousness. To explain this point, I will discuss the origin of religion, based on the development of the psychology of primitive people.

## **1) Psychological Perspective**

### **(1) The Origin of Primitive People's Religion**

Primitive people aroused religious faith, based on those three kinds of desires or the demand to sustain and develop life. Let me explain this more concretely in terms of objects that they worshipped. Primitive tribes faced simple natural phenomena rather than complex social ones. As their objects of worship, they took the following totems: nature (heaven, earth, sun, moon, water, lightening, wind, rock, stone, grass, tree), spirits (human ghosts), and magical materials (natural and artificial materials, hats, dolls, etc.). In other words, since their lives were completely passive, they were often governed by natural power or some incomprehensible situation that could not be witnessed (called "destination" or "fate").

In the meanwhile, the natural power or incomprehensible unobservable situation was a benefactor of their lives on the one hand and intimidator threatening their lives on the other hand. Therefore, believing that this power or unobservable situation had the mind, they worshipped and ingratiated themselves with it to remove insecurity and acquire happiness in their lives.

Philosophy originated from the feelings of surprise, doubt, and curiosity while religion began from the feelings of fear, dependence, and gratitude. Only when these feelings developed in their psychology, could the sprout of religious consciousness shoot out. Like today's religion, primitive people's religion was this-worldly, praying for the longevity, happiness, and welfare of this life. As they came to realize that their demand for the ultimate life, dormant in their mind, was not satisfied by this-worldly happiness and welfare, the religious consciousness for religious faith certainly emerged.

Therefore, not just in this world (even if they sacrificed this-worldly happiness and welfare), but also in the original eternity, they tried to enjoy and experience the ultimate life. This became the ideal focus for higher religions and made religion of life, like philosophy of life, emerge today.

In summary, the religious psychology of primitive people arose from life instincts such as the desire for food to sustain a self, the desire for sex to preserve the species, and the desire for freedom to freely enjoy life. Therefore, in order to more satisfy these desires, people came to absolutely obey the unknown world that their power could not reach. Through this experience, such notions as spirit, myth, magic, habit, worship, and prayer observance had deeper implications.

## **(2) The Relationship between Religion and the Desire for Food.**

I will explain the relationship between the three kinds of desires and religion in more detail. I will first discuss the relationship between religion and the desire for food. In the primitive age or the Stone Age, there were a number of close relationships between human beings and nature. Primitive people worshipped the sun, the moon, mountains, and rivers, as well as foodstuffs such as grasses, roots, trees, and fruits. In the nomadic age, however, the relationship between humans and animals was deepened. People of this period worshipped animals like sheep as a totem as if they were holy gods. As the population grew and food ran short, the agricultural age began. People valued cows as their only property and, at the same time, worshipped them as holy gods. The evidence of this is Jehovah, the object of primitive people's worship as their god. In the nomadic age, Jehovah was expressed in the form of a sheep while, later in the agricultural age, it was manifested in the form of a cow. Judging from this fact, it is no doubt that there was a very close relationship between religion and the desire for food.

### (3) The Relationship between Religion and the Desire for Sex

Those who discuss sexual desire regard it as being connected to physical pleasure rather than something valuable in the preservation of the species, and thus dismiss it as nothing worth speaking of. However, the reproductive desire to preserve the species was the most important to primitive people whose lives were threatened by wild animals or beasts. For this reason, they worshiped male or female genitals as sacred objects. These forms of worship later developed into, for example, the worship of Maria in Christianity or Avalokiteśvara<sup>4</sup> in a female form in Buddhism.

### (4) The Relationship between Religion and the Desire for Freedom

It is needless to say that the desire for freedom is none other than a religion to enjoy life forever. In other words, a religion of speculative truth in philosophy, a religion of practical justice in moral ethics, or a religion of creative mystery in art is a religion that is expanded from this desire for freedom.

## 2) Social Perspective

Now, I will discuss the origin of religion from the social perspective. As mentioned before, there is no need to say that religious psychology arose from human desires and eventually emerged as religious consciousness. However, this is an individual phenomenon. Each individual goes through diverse phenomena and experiences in religious faith. The psychological perspective is thus primarily based on the individual experience and interpretation of such phenomena.

However, individual experiences are not limited to that individual. Each individual's experiences are transformed to social ones through the society. The highest ideal of religion could show its absolute power through social experiences. We human beings have both social and individual features. For this reason, we live a communal life.

What is a "communal life"? This is a life in which an individual

life is unified with the super-individual life and one's life is realized in others' lives and vice versa. In this process of unification and realization, each other's life becomes complete. In other words, benefiting others causes an individual person to complete him or herself. There is a need to realize the existence of other lives, embody this realization within his or herself, embrace myriad existences in his or her life, and in return, entrust his or her life to others. This is the need from a social religion. Therefore, this will become a social individual's religious consciousness. From this consciousness, the love for humanity as well as the notion of relief grows.

The way of relief is reached through social experiences. In other words, since our social life gives allusions to our individual life, the consciousness to relieve or save others clearly appears in our mind when the notion of relief is shown to us in our social experiences. Therefore, just as an individual's personal religious experiences save the individual, his or her social religious experiences save the society.

Primitive people's individual experiences were transformed into social ones this way. Therefore, they happened to obtain religious consciousness with each individual's ideal being unified, in particular, without relying on religious geniuses, founders, or prophets. However, since they sought for the object that they liked respectively, they could not be unified socially. As the society developed, however, the social consciousness emerged. Hence, they abandoned the objects of their faiths that they personally clung to and came to seek for something that could be an object of social faith.

### **3) Historical Perspective**

I will now discuss the origin and development of religion from the historical perspective. The historical investigation gives the same conclusion that the previous psychological and social investigations provide on the issue of the origin of religion. Therefore, here, let me explain the development of religion more concretely.

As soon as primitive people began civilized, going through the

childish state, they felt the need of a communal life and worshipped a tribal god. Eventually, they formed a nation and adored a national god. Ancient and inferior religions of Babylonian, Egyptian, Greek, Indian, Persian, and German people are such examples. As human culture developed from the beginning of history, their religions changed into higher religions of civilized people.

The notion of a god that received the prayer to protect each individual was elevated to the level of family. This notion of a god that granted a family happiness was again promoted to the level of a tribe. The notion of a god that protected a tribe was heightened to the level of a nation. The notion of a god that granted a nation happiness and welfare was finally changed to a god that gave the peace to the entire humanity. Two of the examples of these religions are such world religions as Christianity and Buddhism. (Though the latter has no major object for the practice of worshipping gods, it belongs to this category in that it promotes the peace of humanity.)

In summary, as the ideal of the human kind progressed with the development of culture, the ideal of religion was also expanded. This expansion of the religious ideal in fact happened in response to the need for the ideal of humanity. For this reason, the idea of relieving or saving people occupies an important position in the religious ideal of today's civilized people. Then, what is the goal of relief? There is no need to say about this. However, the lives on earth struggle to acquire the world of the ever-lasting happiness because they do not stand the suffering of the world of reality any more. Religion grant them comfort, light, and power of no-fear so that they can expel all the sufferings of this world and reach the world of the permanent ideal happiness. Religion aims at striving ceaselessly to arouse the vow of relieving human beings and make them put the vow into practice.

#### **4) The Relationship between Religion and Social Work**

Let me stop here on the origin and development of religion. Now, I will discuss the relationship between religion and social work. As

mentioned above, the origin of religion has long been discussed. However, the beginning of social work has started recently. Charity and relief works have developed from ancient times with religion. However, the name, “social work,” was created thanks to the arising of social science in modern times.

As social science gradually develops, there arise violent groups of people endorsing radical and dangerous ideologies such as communism that tries to establish an ideal new society by denying and destroying the current social system. On the other hand, there are moderate charity groups promoting the idea of social reformism that makes efforts until the establishment of the perfect ideal society by affirming the current social system and solving the flaws and problems that come from this system. Since I support the idea of non-violent resistance and follow a religion, I agree with the latter and try to substantialize it. This is the foundation for social policy and the source of social work.

However, whether the former or the latter, they not only arise in response to the demand of the human ideal, but also originate from the religious charity and relief works whose fundamental ideas have existed from ancient times. Therefore, although ancient religious relief work and modern scientific social work are different in terms of time, content, and way of enforcement, they are the same in terms of ideal and goal. For this reason, we should not forget that religion originated for relief work, i.e., social work.

## 2. The Essence of Religion and Social Work

What is the essence of religion? It is a difficult question that cannot be answered lightly. As explained above, religion is the source of human life. For this reason, religion can be called the father of philosophy and science, as well as the mother of moral ethics and art.

There is a nation that has no philosophy and science. There is also a nation that has no politics, morality, and law. However, there

is no nation in the world that has no religion. Savages or barbarians, however ignorant, show religious behaviors in whatever form they are.

In this way, religion has had close relationships with the human kind and unified the spirit of mind of the entire human world. However, philosophy, science, and art have become separated from religion and established independent fields with their own distinctive features, respectively. They not only have shown no favor for, but also betray and criticize religion.

To take an example, positivists in the field of modern philosophy argue the following: “In the uncivilized age, since religion was an alternative for natural science, it served in pursuing for this-worldly welfare by revealing the relationships among phenomena and predicting the future. However, as human beings control nature most definitely, properly, and rationally with the growth in wisdom and knowledge these days, religion become a useless antique. Not only that, it is a delusion and misdiagnosis. Therefore, this superstition and misdiagnosis should be expelled through firm scientific knowledge.” In this way, they deny the ever-lasting essence of religion and the universal validity of religious truth claims.

On the other hand, as social science developed, there was a growing tendency to criticize and eradicate religion. Marx (1818–1883), the so-called founder of socialism, said, “Religion is a moral opium and obstacle to social reformation.”<sup>5</sup> Kropotkin (1842–1921)<sup>6</sup> and Bakunin (1814–1876)<sup>7</sup> excluded religion, saying, “God is a persecutor of free thought.”

There is no need to say more about this. Anti-religion movement in modern times demonstrates this tendency most eloquently. More than seven out of ten Korean intellectuals of Korea these days agree with this [critical attitude toward religion].

As a matter of fact, churches decline and temples perish. If this trend goes on, what will happen to religion in the end? Whether it will disappear is a question that we explore. However, I do not intend to defend religion. Since I devote myself to a religion, I will

try to investigate the essence of religion from as an objective point of view as possible and explain the relationship between religion and the society or relief work.

Is religion superstitious or worthless as positivist philosophers or scientists argue (though it cannot be said that there is no superstitious element)? Then, if the world of “philosophy-supremacy,” “science-supremacy,” or “materialism” is realized, will human beings be able to earn the highest happiness and satisfaction?

However, the philosophers and scientists who criticize religion rather feel the failure of philosophy or science themselves. Although they say that there is nothing to be seen in the established religions, they seek for religion and study the religious truth and thereby create rather a strange scene. Socialists, who dismiss religion as useless, saying that religion is patronized by the aristocracy, sacrifice themselves in a certain form of religious faith with passion more than that of a martyr. There are many such cases. How is possible? This is really self-contradictory.

The argument that the established and patronized religions are useless causes no problem. Rather, we should study the pure essence of religion, removing the diseases and evil effects of the established and patronized religions. This is because religion continues to exist as an inevitable product and refuge of human life, shedding light to human mind, until mankind perishes. Now, I will discuss the essence of religion from the perspective of philosophy which is critical to religion.

The discussion on the essence of religion revolves around the judgment of the religious value. Therefore, I will focus on this value judgment. The essence of religion is based on the real facts of religious faith. It respects the actual practices of faith. Otherwise, this discussion would be nothing but a speculation without any evidence.

However, the permanent essence of religion and the content of its universal and rational truth are not necessarily decided or changed by facts. Then, what is the relationship between essence and facts? The essence is inherent in facts and gives a meaning to those facts. The

essence can be recognized when the reason realizes its own essence by transcending facts and returning to itself. If this is so, how is it possible that something transcendent of the facts is inherent again in those facts and becomes a principle that gives them a meaning? This question cannot be solved theoretically. This is a mystery of human life that has religious consciousness and rather a conviction that belongs to the deep experience of life. This conviction becomes the fundamental expectation of every meaningful life.

From this vantage point, the essence of religion cannot be demonstrated in theory. However, although the theoretical demonstration is impossible, its value cannot be denied. This indemonstrability rather shows the uniqueness and independence of religion that is distinct from knowledge. Let us define the essence of religion in regard to this fact. The essence of religion lies in what we experience as a manifestation of the transcendent and absolute reality that realizes the universal and rational value of the reason. This is the so-called value judgment.

There are two kinds of value judgment. The first one is a value judgment in terms of pleasure and displeasure, based on whether our natural desires are satisfied or not. This kind of value judgment is contingent on personality and thus empirical and practical. It inherently has no universal validity. The values, related to this type of judgment, belong to the category of emotional and natural ones.

The second is the judgment of such values as true and false, good and evil, beautiful and ugly. This type of judgment demands many people's agreement whether it is a fact or not. The recognition of these universally valid values is nothing other than reason. This type of values is called rational values. The philosophical consideration of religion starts with the rational values.

However, we cannot assert that all people approve the universal validity of the rational values in the real world. Nonetheless, whether it is approved does not matter. Since the rational values are not subjective but objective; not relative but absolute; not realistic but transcendental, the universal validity of those values can be

supported. In other words, the essence of values lies in the universal validity. For this reason, values are valid to real and concrete subjects, demanding not only the practical approval but also the real contents that are concrete and individual.

Then, how is it so? This is because this [essence], as mentioned above, is the mystery and secret of human life.

Therefore, this [essence] is a rational consciousness, human spirit, and fundamental fact, as well as fundamental condition for leading the truly meaningful life. How religion looks at this mystery is the fundamental question of religion. This question can be discussed in two aspects: (1) ought-ness approval; (2) value realization.

Let us talk about the first aspect! The rational value demands ought-ness. Since the rational value is absolute, it becomes the limitless ought-ness to each individual. The limitless ought-ness means carrying out what should be done with autonomous will. From moral perspective, this ought-ness refers to conscience. The absolute value demands unconditional obedience through this conscience. Then, where does this right to demand or the possibility of conscience come from? This comes from the recognition of the value. The value not only orders the world of existence but also possesses the power to control existence. Only when there is a real connection [to the world of existence], is the right to demand secured.

If this value is not the same with the true reality, the value of conscience is irrational and incomprehensible. However, since the value is based on the reality, there is the possibility of conscience and the right to demand. However, it cannot be academically demonstrated that this value is based on the reality. It can be demonstrated only by faith. In other words, only with faith can people affirm that life has a meaning and have inevitable and universally valid conviction. Then, they experience the unity between this rational value and the absolute reality and take the rational value as the content of the absolute reality. This is religion. The philosophical basis to argue that religious consciousness is sacred is based on this fact.

This is a value judgment in regard to the rational aspect of religion. Second, this rational value is realized only through the real existence.

For example, the value “true” becomes philosophy through the judgment of the truth; the value “good” becomes morality through a real good action; the value “beauty” becomes art through the creation of a beautiful reality; the mysterious and sacred value which combines true, good, and beauty becomes religion through the experience of a sacred reality.

However, there is no inevitable connection between value and reality. A value demands the realization of this fact. However, a reality is not just indifferent but also opposed to that realization. Afflictions and anguishes arise here. The recognition of the gap between oughtness and existence, as well as the unbalance between the demand of reason and the capability of reason in reality, is removed by identifying reason with the reality higher than realities. This reality can be experienced through our reason as the supreme power that realizes the reality itself. This is religion.

In relation to this [experience], the notion of God appears. In comparison with this sacred reality of God, human beings’ incompetence creates the sense of sin. There arises the demand to be liberated or saved from this sense of sin. However, since we cannot meet this demand ourselves, the demand is met by the absolute reality or God who gives up his own extremely sacred self for human beings. This [event] becomes an essence of religion. In other words, God is fearful and at the same time friendly and beneficial. The essence of religion lies in experiencing this [fact].

In summary, critical philosophy defines the essence of religion in the following three aspects: experiencing the rational value as a manifestation of the absolute reality; experiencing what is called “sacred” and “love” in the absolute reality; experiencing the absolute reason which is transcendent to and inherent in ourselves.

## 1) The Notion of God

Here I will discuss the notion of God. It is necessary to maintain the close relationship between the approval of the rational value and the personal life or reality in order for the notion of God to become the essence of religion. Defining God in this way is related to the notion of a personal god. There are two more types in the notion of God: deism that regards God as the cause of the world; pantheism that sees God as the realization of the world. However, critical philosophy always adopts the notion of a personal god in its theistic point of view. Such a viewpoint takes God as the supreme ideal reality in our personal life. This notion of a personal god is in fact shared by various religions throughout the world. As long as people demand comfort and power, religion never hesitates to argue for God's personality. However, since personality is an individual character, it is limited. On the contrary, since God is absolute, it is limitless. Thus, it is contradictory to exclusively argue for the personality of God.

Buddhism's atheism sees through the contradiction. Buddhism is established from the standpoint of self-power. It denies the notion of God. The practice of worshipping gods that can be seen today in many temples in fact came from later corruptions of the original Buddhism. This practice disagrees with the fundamental tenet of Buddhism. Buddhism never posits the notion of God. The religion understands the mind which is numinous nature or Buddha-nature as inherent, subjective, numinous knowledge of the Buddha-mind, and advocates it as the lord of the manifestations of the universe. Buddhism aims at expressing the lofty and mysterious meaning of the mind above [human beings'] personalities. Śākyamuni Buddha is the most representative case. However, even though [ordinary] human beings agree that the immanent God, Buddha-mind, numinous nature, and consciousness are endowed with every human being, they seek for a god that exists objectively, feeling unsatisfied. Even in Buddhism which began as a self-power religion, belief in other-power like worship of Amitābha Buddha sprouted. Human beings

originally have both aspects of self-power and other-power, or subjectivity and objectivity. Therefore, it is difficult to avoid such a contradiction. Nonetheless, I believe that since these two aspects are originally endowed, this contradiction is reconcilable. In other words, human beings have both finitude, which is weak and individual, and infinity which is super-individual.

Individuals are not mere finite entities. Since they are finite and infinite simultaneously, the super-individual value or the value of nature-principle is embodied in them. For this reason, they perfect themselves in their lives. The more human beings perfect themselves, the closer they get to God. Eventually, they could become God. To put this in another way, God is a true and perfect human being. Śākyamuni and Jesus most perfected their personal natures and, at the same time, they are God or buddhas. Since we human beings are imperfect, we have to personally communicate with the perfect and absolute being, integrate ourselves with his or her essence and power, and thereby eventually achieve the spiritual unity with him or her. This is a pure practical form of the essence of religion.

The closer human beings are to God, the more they discover their essence. The freer they are, the more they feel subordinate. This is the so-called mysterious realm of religious experience. This is the mystery of the feasibility of the transcendent value, the approval of oughtness, the individualization of the universal, the temporalization of the eternal, and the internalization of the transcendent. Therefore, we can live a meaningful life by believing this fundamental fact. This is the fundamental expectation of our life. Religion sheds light on this mystery.

In brief, since our life is a mystery, we should realize this mystery and experience the unity between god and ourselves through the individualization and internalization of the transcendent and absolute reality. This is the essence of religion. This is the essence of religions of other-power such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Shintō. However, our Buddhism, which is a pure self-power religion, does not posit the notion of god. Not only that, Buddhism denies and

excludes this notion. Buddhism instead puts the most importance on the dharma and adopts it as the fundamental ideal of the religion. For example, experiencing without interruption, i.e., believing, understanding, practicing, and realizing wondrous dharmas of the “origination of dharma-realms” such as “the origination of true suchness,” “the origination of sentient beings,” and “the origination of afflictions” is the essence of Buddhism. The Buddha was a practitioner who made offerings to the dharma-realms in his life and admired those realms. Therefore, if you enumerate countless numbers of buddhas in the past, present, and future, as well as countless numbers of Buddhist lands in the ten directions of four cardinal directions, their four intermediate directions, the zenith, and the nadir, you spread the words about the dharma-realms. This is why the dharma treasure is most respected among the three treasures of the Buddha, the dharma, and the saṃgha. From this vantage point, although the notion of God in other religions and that of dharma in Buddhism are different in content, they are same in that they are absolute and transcendent. Other religions take the communication and unity between God and human beings as their essence. The essence and vitality of Buddhism lie where one realizes the ultimate truth or the wondrous dharma of the true form which is omnipresent, where one experiences the origination of the dharma-realms, and where human beings and dharma are unified. (Although I do not intend to compare the dharma to God, I just want to mention the essence of Buddhism since those who discuss the essence of religion are infatuated with Christianity.)

## **2) The Notion of Relief**

From now on, I will talk about the notion of relief in religion. As explained above, the essence of religion lies in the experience of the mystery. The notion of relief is most important in this experience. Broadly speaking, the appearance of the notion of relief presupposes the existence of evil. However, if the ultimate reality is ultimate, why does evil happen? This is an extremely difficult question to answer.

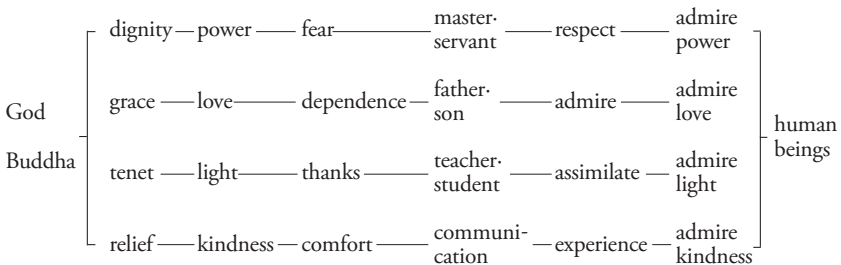
Although there are many different answers from scholars, a theoretical solution is simply impossible. (Although there is a unique theory of the origination of good and evil in Buddhism, I will skip it.) However, since the notion of relief implicates the immanence of the absolute good as opposed to evil, it unconditionally forgives evil and resolves the problem of evil. This is the mysterious relief of religion. Religious consciousness is an inevitable fact that expresses this profound mystery. It is endowed and granted to those without the right to receive.

### 3) The Object of the Mystery

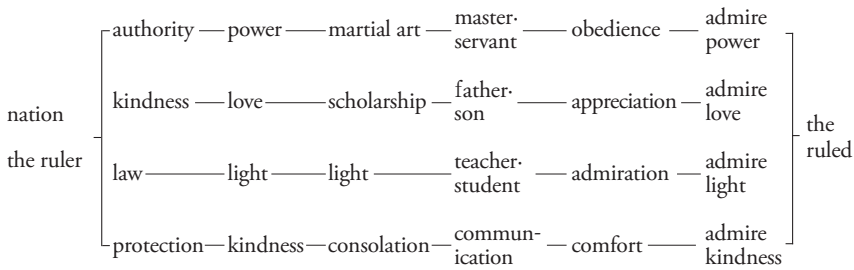
The object of the psychological mystery of religion is dignity, grace, tenet, and relief. Power in dignity, love in grace, light in tenet, and kindness in relief which combines all these three [i.e., power, love, and light] are granted to us human beings. Therefore, we human beings respect, admire, assimilate, and experience establishing such relationships as master and servant, father and son, teacher and student, or communication in religion.

### 4) The Object of Reality

As the object of religious mystery develops into that of social reality, human beings repeat what is mentioned above in regard to the country and the society. This can be charted as follows:



**The object of the psychological mystery of religion**



### The object of national and social reality

There are many different theories about which one originated first between the two concepts of mysterious objects and real objects. Scholars of religious studies argue that the notions of master-servant, father-son, and teacher-student developed in relation to a nation and a society after those notions were created in relation to God which is the mysterious object. This is because the law originates from God’s will and the authority of the sovereign becomes meaningful only if it borrows God’s authority. It can be confirmed through the facts that the unity between cult and politics existed in ancient times and that the power of the pope was strong [by representing God’s authority].

On the other hand, scholars who study a state or a society say the following: although religion and nation arose simultaneously as the same body, they had no close relationship. In the chaotic period of the unity between cult and politics, religion established the relationships of master-servant, father-son, and teacher-student, borrowing the formats in a nation or a society. However, religion and nation are different in essence. The difference of the two can probably be shown in the ancient idea of “rendering to God the things that are God’s and to the nation to the things that are the nation’s.”<sup>8</sup>

I will not judge between right and wrong on these problems. I will not discuss on the statement that religions take charge of cults while nation deals with politics either. Religion has the notion of relief in regard to human beings while state and society

aim at protecting people. This is my paper's focus. Therefore, it is unquestionable that we need to understand the following: religion not only has inseparable relationships with society, but also undertakes the task to save people with its light, power, and consolation by unifying the human spirit on the basis of the ideal of the human society. This is the ideal of religion in a broad sense and the essence of religion in a narrow sense.

It is the ideal of religion to resolve the difficult problems that affect the very existence of the modern society such as the problems of population, poverty, labor, women, social morals, and ideology. Although religions are different in rite and doctrine, they are same in that they make efforts for the benefit of the society. In other words, Christianity and Buddhism, Catholic and Protestant churches, and different Buddhist schools hate one another, ceaselessly causing troubles and conflicts in regard of doctrine, ritual, and religious claim. However, they all work for the one-shared cause without dissension regarding social or charity work. This is because the essence, ideal, or goal of religion lies in saving people and practicing charity for the peace of human kind and the happiness of the society.

### 3. Buddhism and Social Work

If someone asks what kind of religion Buddhism is, it is difficult to simply answer the question because Buddhism is really broad in scope. As Buddhists say, Buddhism has 84,000 scriptures which speak of not just religious thought but also all thoughts and fields of learning, including ethics, morality, art, philosophy, science, politics, and law.

However, to simply put Buddhism in a word, it is a religion of compassion (*jabi*, lit. kindness and pity). Kindness (*ja*) gives pleasure and pity (*bi*) expels suffering. Buddhist compassion is different from Christian love or Confucian humaneness. Śākyamuni Buddha possessed all sorts of wisdom and virtues and took all sorts of

compassion as his original vow. Therefore, Buddhism is a religion that aims at saving people with compassion for the human kind and the society.

Śākyamuni Buddha entered the snow mountains and cultivated ascetic practices for six years. After he attained enlightenment, the first vow he made was to save all sentient beings. Going down the mountains, the Buddha, first of all, claimed to abolish the four social classes. Thus, he attempted to physically and spiritually save the sentient beings who suffered. Of course, Śākyamuni Buddha was just a religious genius and saint, not a social worker or philanthropist of these days. He was only a monk who begged for food without his own property or house. For this reason, he had never run professionally such facilities as school, hospital, orphanage, or nursing home. However, Śākyamuni Buddha's all sermons for fifty years were the sermons that materialized his compassion and the teachings that urged for the charity and edifying works. If this was the case, Śākyamuni Buddha should be called a great philanthropist who was excelled in the social and charity works. His sermons regarding charity and relief works were numerous. I will give just two or three of such examples as follows:

You Buddhists! (disciples and all sentient beings that have Buddha-nature) bodhisattvas (those who benefit the mundane world and save sentient beings) become great almsgivers, offer all they have, and make their minds impartial. Thus, they are never stingy. They neither want reward nor seek for name or long for profit. They make efforts to save and benefit all sentient beings broadly. (*Flower Garland Sūtra*)<sup>9</sup>

If bodhisattvas are not able to see extremely poor sentient beings, they have no causal connections to arouse the mind of compassion. If the mind of compassion does not arise, the mind of granting happiness does not arise either. Therefore, they give comfort and pleasure to sentient beings through the causal connections made by their offerings. They offer food, cart, clothes, flowers and incense, bed,

house, and lamp. However, when they make those offerings, they do so without restrained and greedy mind. (*Nirvāṇa Sūtra*)<sup>10</sup>

When bodhisattvas make offerings, they do not grudge elephants and horses, seven treasures, countries and cities, wife and child, master and servants, marrows and brains, flesh, hands and legs, and life. (*Lotus Sūtra*)<sup>11</sup>

In this way, Śākyamuni Buddha emphasized the charity work, i.e., almsgiving. Such his thought came from the mind of granting compassion and repaying the kindness that was present deep in his heart. What is repaying kindness? We human beings are born, grow old, become sick, and die under the kindness of the society. In other words, we maintain our life because we human beings are protected by the society. Therefore, we should try to repay the kindness of the society, which can be divided into four types according to Buddhism: the kindness of rulers, the kindness of parents, the kindness of teachers, and the kindness of sentient beings. Among these four, the last one is most important. The *Sūtra of Contemplation of the Mind Ground* (*Xindi guanjing*) says,

What is the kindness of sentient beings? Since time immemorial, all sentient beings have wandered around the five destinies (hell, hungry ghosts, animals, human, and gods).<sup>12</sup> The countless eons already have passed. Through a number of lifetimes, they have become each other's parent. For this reason, all males are kind fathers while all females are pitying mothers. There was kindness in numerous previous lifetimes, which was as great as that of present parents. However, we human beings cannot repay such a great kindness yet. Rather, we like or dislike things because of delusion or arouse grudge because of attachment. This is because the past karma from ignorance covers bright wisdom and makes us unaware of the fact that other sentient beings were our parents in previous lifetimes. We should repay the kindness to and benefit those whom we should do so. If we do not

strive to benefit them, we are called unfilial. Because of these causal connections, there is no one who does not grant the great kindness. This kindness is really difficult to repay. Therefore, this is called the kindness of sentient beings.

To repeat this scripture, all sentient beings become each other's parent or child in the ocean of birth-and-death and show great kindness. The kindness in previous lifetimes is the same with that which we receive from our parents in the present. Therefore, we should repay the great kindness.

To think about the meaning of these words, not only all human beings, but also small, insignificant creatures and animals could be our parents if they have souls or spirits. A grass which germinates in the spring and dies in the fall may have had some deep causal connections with us if they have life. Therefore, we should show compassion even to animals, grasses, trees, and stones ceaselessly without being frustrated. This is Śākyamuni Buddha's essential view of repaying the kindness and fundamental idea of the mind of compassion.

Looking at this matter with our common sense, we human beings cannot survive by ourselves in the present life, let alone our distant previous lifetimes. Everything, even a small piece of bread or clothes, is made with someone's help. From this vantage point, we can see the fact that we receive various kindnesses or favors from people in the society. Recognizing those kindnesses, we should not arouse the mind of hatred and violence. We should serve all people in the society.

Buddhism has practiced charity work with the idea of serving or repaying the kindness of people in the society which can be understood as social joint responsibility. It is true that the charity or social work in ancient India, China, Korea, and Japan was significantly influenced by Buddhism. It is not an exaggeration to say that the social work of these countries cannot be discussed without Buddhism.

However, since Eastern thought is static and passive, it is regretful that there are not many dynamic and aggressive [charity] activities [in the East], unlike in the West. It is really great that recently, Buddhists in China, Japan, and Korea realize the situation and make their efforts for charity and social works.

#### 4. Christianity and Social Work

It is needless to say that Christianity is a religion of love. Jesus realized his mission and appeared in a dark society in order to establish an ideal society with love. The person(s) who witnessed Jesus strive for the mission wrote as follows:

Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. (Matthew 4:23)

This is the record of Jesus' first step he took for social work. We can think about this record from the following three perspectives: "teaching" refers to his educational work; "proclaiming the good news," to his work of propagating his religion and saving people's souls; "healing every disease and sickness," to his charity work. Jesus thought that he should start first from these three fields in order to build an ideal social organization.

Jesus pioneered these three fields at the time when the society was in disorder. This fact, I believe, is a reason Christianity has thrived until today. For three years after he appeared in the society, he marshaled all his strength in these three fields.

As people know, Jesus died, shedding his blood on the cross. However, afterwards, his life was transmitted to his direct disciples. It again has become the life of a number of Christians until now. Therefore, wherever Christianity is transmitted, schools, hospitals, and churches are built and charity work thrives. After Jesus'

appearance, regardless of time and space, these phenomena always happen wherever Christianity spreads, whether it does among civilized or barbarian people.

As mentioned above, Jesus worked in these three fields. However, he prioritized charity work. Most of all, he made his efforts to save the poor, the sick, and the people in misfortune. John the Baptist sent his disciples to ask Jesus on something. Jesus answered as follows:

The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.  
(Matthew 11:5)

When Jesus proclaimed his mission at the synagogue in Nazareth, he said, “The Spirit of the Lord is on me to proclaim good news to the poor, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the prisoners, to set the oppressed free, and to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”<sup>13</sup>

To give some more examples regarding his remarks on charity work:

If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor. (Matthew 19:21)

Sell everything you have and give to the poor! (Luke 18:21)<sup>14</sup>

You will always have the poor among you. (John 12:8)

Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. (Luke 12:33).

Try to relieve poor and indebted people. (Deuteronomy 15:1–11)<sup>15</sup>

When you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. (Matthew 6:2)

Christianity starts education for the blinded, encourages the propagation in prisons, establishes mental hospitals, nurses lepers, and spreads the good news to the brokenhearted. All these activities are based on Jesus' spirit. The social and charity work of Christianity flourishes not only in the West, but also recently in the East, including China, Japan, and Korea. This is the fact that we look at right before our eyes.

## 5. From the Idea of Repaying Kindness to the Joint Responsibility

As for Buddhism or Christianity, either Śākyamuni Buddha or Jesus did not appear in the society with the idea of seeking for reward or repaying kindness. The land of the ultimate bliss (*geungnak*) or heavenly kingdom refers to not a delusion like a mirage but an ideal kingdom that should be established on earth. Although there is a separate place after death, like the land of the ultimate bliss or heavenly kingdom, it is nothing but an inevitable provisional means. This can be verified from the following examples: the *Flower Garland Sūtra* says, "When you practice almsgivings, you should neither want reward nor seek for name or long for profit. You should just protect all sentient beings"; the Gospel of Matthew says, "When you give to the needy, do not do so in order to be honored by others."

However, after the death of Śākyamuni Buddha or Jesus, there were many in the Buddhist or Christian society who carried out charity or social work with the idea of seeking for reward or repaying kindness in order to receive well-being in the present human realm or to be reborn in the Pure Land or heaven. In other words, most of the religious followers who did charity or social work in ancient, medieval, or present times began their work, based on utilitarianism that calculated gains and losses. This may be regarded as something that came from religious thought. However, this is a misunderstood religious thought. To take some examples of people who were led by mistaken religious thought, Zoroaster,<sup>16</sup> the elder of Persia, said, "Treasures will go to those who save the poor." A Jewish prophet

said, “Those who do not open the door for the poor will open the door because of illnesses.” The early Christian thinker Chrysostom<sup>17</sup> said, “If you give up your wealth for the poor, its merits will be great and become the power to extinguish all sins. If those who do not do so, they will be like a bird trying to fly without wings, however they repent and pray.” All these are biased views of those who consider the gains and losses of seeking for reward or repaying kindness, being addicted to mistaken religious thought. Of course, there is such a thought in Buddhism too. For example, the *Sūtra of King of Samādhi* (*Yuedeng sanmei jing*) says, “Those who like to constantly practice almsgiving will be reborn to a wealthy family after death.” The *Sūtra of Upāsakas Asking Questions* (*Youposai suowen jing*) says, “Those who practice almsgiving, always providing food, clothes, and medications without greed, will receive good rebirths in the heavenly realm because of the merits they make. Even though their merits are exhausted and thus make them reborn in the human realm, they will be rich.” However, these words are nothing but expedient means that encourage people who hardly practice almsgiving to practice almsgiving [as frequently as possible].

Buddhism thoroughly advocates the almsgiving without abiding in forms (*mujusang bosī*).<sup>18</sup> Since you will certainly recognize this, if you read the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, I will quote nothing [about this].

However, speaking of the Christian or Buddhist charity works in ancient and medieval times, they were carried out not for common good. They did not arise from the mind of compassion toward the poor, either. They came from the idea of seeking for a sort of reward [for one’s charity works]. In other words, although this idea seems similar with the altruistic communalism, it is in fact nothing other than a selfish idea of seeking for reward. In modern times, however, this idea is replaced by the obligatory notion of the joint responsibility for social service. In other words, it is not that the idea is really replaced. Rather, people become awakened from the mistaken religious thought and return to the original and genuine religious and social thought of Śākyamuni Buddha or Jesus.

It is needless to say that a society is a sort of an organism. Since it is like our human beings' body, it consists of all sorts of organizations that have special functions. If any one part of those organizations does not function properly and thus slows down the development of the society or makes people in the society feel uncomfortable, all the organizations that constitute the society should be held accountable for this situation. It is not that the part which does not function properly should be responsible by itself. That is to say, since a problem of an organization becomes a problem of all organizations that constitute the society, the problem cannot be ignored. Therefore, all organizations should volunteer to share that responsibility.

To compare this to our body, if your left hand is bitten by a venomous snake or stung by a poisonous bee, your right hand cannot ignore the situation. Your right hand should drive the snake or bee away. This is because although the direct victim of the bee is the left hand, if this situation is ignored and a proper action is not taken, the poison will reach not just the right hand but also the whole body. Therefore, when the right hand volunteers to expel the bee on the left hand, it is not an act of compassion. Rather, it is a natural reaction.

Frankly speaking, this act only fulfills the joint responsibility. If all sorts of social organizations do not try to keenly feel the joint responsibility and share joys and sorrows, the organism cannot be sustained. If different organizations have joint responsibility, each and every individual person who is also an element of the social organism should share this joint responsibility.

It is a natural principle that the socially strong has the duty to protect the socially weak when the latter need protection as a part of the society. However, all classes of the society, whether rich and poor, high and low, should share the responsibility and duty to help each other, uniting and cooperating together. Unlike ancient times, the social work cannot be undertaken by a handful of benefactors or philanthropists these days. Now we reach a point when the entire society should share the responsibility to protect and improve the poor and weak.

However, since the notion of the joint responsibility does not spread yet today, people just say that the socially strong and rich, the religious professional, and the benefactors should hold the duty to protect the socially weak who can be compared to social illness. As long as they are not the persons directly involved, they look at this situation as if it is a fire on the opposite shore. For example, when people see a poor person crying outside the door of their house, many of them just think that this is none of their business. This act probably does not violate a law. However, from the perspective of moral ethics or social joint responsibility, it can never be forgiven. Therefore, the rich and the poor should help each other. Looking at the recent situation of the society, all people, except for some bourgeois, make unreasonable demands, arguing that they have the right to be protected by the socially strong since their poverty and suffering come from the problems of the society itself. This may make sense theoretically. However, I feel sorry that both groups aggressively argue for their own positions without the sufficient mutual understanding through the notion of joint responsibility.

Regarding the issue of working hours, the system of twelve hours or ten hours per day is extremely unreasonable. Therefore, it is natural to demand the system that reduces the working hours to eight hours. However, there should be a notion of a joint responsibility to obligatorily work for a certain length of hours. Of course, it is needless to say that I support the idea of reducing daily working hours to eight and expect the idea to be materialized. However, without this joint responsibility, people would wish to reduce the working hours to six and four. Then, eventually, they would end up with living idle without working.

In brief, since social joint responsibility is mutual, not only the rich and strong, but also the poor and weak need to have the mind to fulfill their duty and responsibility. To those who have no spirit to make efforts spontaneously, others' support and protection simply become useless. Even though you are in a dire poverty because of social flaws, you should have the spirit to strive to the last. You

should be like living beings that have self-healing ability. When a part of living beings is hurt, not only that part but also its surrounding area makes the best effort to recover through self-healing ability. When a doctor treats a patient, he or she just assists this ability.

As long as you recognize a society as an organism, you should accept its self-healing ability. Since social joint responsibility is not unilateral but mutual, you should not forget making efforts together. My original vow is that this spirit will spread to the entire society as soon as possible.

If this happens, I believe, the problems of labor and capital, as well as class struggle, which make noise in society, will disappear. If we, regardless of class, all fulfill their own duties, all problems will be solved. The joint responsibility of each social class can be compared to our body: torso, hip, leg, and foot do not complain though they belong to the lower body while head, eye, mouth, and hand are not arrogant though they belong to the upper body. Just like this, if all classes of the society meet their own responsibility, all conflicts will disappear. However aloud people raise their voices and however greatly they create a disturbance, it is impossible to make the job, social position, and personal property of each class absolutely equal. This is because we human beings have inherently different intellects and dispositions. Since a society is an organism, being similar with our body, it is impossible that all of us serve as a head or leg [of the society]. To summarize what is discussed above, each of us should fulfill our own duty and responsibility in our own positions with the sense of joint responsibility.

If the members of a society do not have this spirit, it will be as if that society does not possess self-healing ability and thus it will bring misfortune such as decline or collapse to itself. Therefore, regardless of class, whether high or low, we should do our duties with this precious and universal notion. The service to individuals is necessary in the society where individuals become the object of the service. In the present society where the society itself becomes the object of the service, we need a spirit to strive for the society by expanding

the spirit of the service to individuals. This is called social service or social joint responsibility. If this spirit thoroughly spreads and thus each individual of the society does his or her own responsibility, this society will smoothly develop without such catchphrases as “Make efforts for religious charity work, social charity work or social service” and reach an ideal society by promoting welfare throughout the society. Even though this is impossible, I believe we should hustle toward this ideal and we are trying to do so.

## Chapter 2

# The Concept of Social Work

### 1. The Meaning of Social Work

What is social work? This is a very difficult question that cannot be easily answered with a light mouth. However, to put it briefly, I should start with explaining the origin of the term “*sahoe*” (Ch. *shehui*, society), which consists of the two words, “*sa*” (Ch. *she*) and “*hoe*” (Ch. *hui*). The word “*sa*” or “*she*” can be seen in Lushan Huiyuan’s (334–416) “Bailian jieshe” (White Lotus Society) in early China. The word “*hoe*” can be seen in, for example, “*manilhoe*” (ten-thousand-day society) at famous temples in Korea. Judging from these facts, the term “*sahoe*” (society) was used from early in the East to refer to a certain form of group.

However, as the field of sociology developed, the meaning of the term “society” became clear. Sociology was created by the French scholar Comte (1798–1857) in 1838. It was transmitted to the East very recently. Therefore, the term “social work” was known to the East quite recently. According to a Japanese sociologist, the term “sociology” was transmitted to Japan around the fourteenth year of the reign of Emperor Meiji (1881). Since the term itself was new to Japanese people, those who studied sociology or researched social issues were suspected as communists. Since there is such a tendency even today, we can guess the situation at that time.

There has been a concern that the social work which should be definitely carried out would be rejected or boycotted in the society as a whole. Therefore, people who engaged in social work did their service under the name of charity work or relief work until a few years ago. Even when books on the social work were published, they

could not use the word, “social work.” Instead, these books were published, using such expressions as “the system of charity work” and “the development of charity work.”

As the society developed, the government established the department of society and promoted social policy and work. In the non-government level, whether public or private, people also participated in social work. They now tend to avoid using such words as charity or relief work.

Then, what is the meaning of social work? There are many explanations for this question. However, to put it briefly, social work is totally different from the charity or relief work that simply served in an individual level in ancient times. Social work forestalls the social illnesses that arise from the social system. When those illnesses already occur, social work focuses on their treatment. With the notion of the joint social responsibility, it also protects the socially weak and prevents people from falling to that level beforehand. Social work just refers to nothing but these activities.

The so-called social illnesses indicate all sorts of illnesses that occur from the shortcomings of the social or industrial system in modern times. As for the notion of the socially weak, it expands the same perspective to the personal level. Generally speaking, therefore, social work refers to all the activities in which the society makes efforts to protect individuals by making up for the shortcomings of the society itself and change the things that do not meet the social needs by amending the existing systems.

In regard to this, what is the most important object [of social work] is the threat to life, i.e., poverty in a broad sense. The so-called social illnesses or socially weak are all deeply related to this object. The meaning of social work is to improve the society through the efforts to investigate the causes of the poverty and make the poor disappear.

## 2. The Purpose of Social Work

What is the goal or purpose of the activities of the society organizing all sorts of institutions? Individuals have individual wills and individual purposes of their activities. The universe has its own will and purpose of its activities. Just like this, the society has its will and purpose of its activities. This is because the sum of the individual wills and the sum of the individual purposes are the will of the society and the purpose of the society.

Then, what is the purpose of the society? It is nothing other than achieving our human beings' greatest happiness. Then, what is our greatest happiness? It is securing the stability, being relieved from the uneasiness of the threat to life, and obtaining pleasures, being saved from the sufferings caused by the social shortcomings. In order to live such a stable and safe life, food, clothing, and shelter should be freely secured. Not everyone can freely obtain those three things. Some are deprived of the heavenly-given human rights and forced to become slaves. At times, such shameful things as human trafficking happen. Eventually, there arises an enmity among each class of the society, envying and challenging one another. This can be demonstrated in French and Russian revolutions. Since there is a need to break down these unequal systems and achieve an ideal society, all sorts of social problems occur and dangerous thoughts arise.

Therefore, the purpose of social work lies in making efforts to meet this need. In other words, the purpose of social policy and the fundamental goal of social work are to strive to establish an ideal society without something like French or Russian revolution that caused tragic sacrifices.

## 3. The Categorization of Social Work

The range of social work is too complicating to decide even in many countries in the West. Recently, it becomes more so. Therefore, it

seems impossible to categorize social work. However, categorizing the social work that is currently managed by the Office of Society in the Department of the Interior in Japan, it is as follows:

### **The categorization of social work**

The first category: general institution

1. Administrative institution
  - a. Central institution
  - b. Local institution (department of society in prefectures, office or department of society in cities)
2. Liaison unifying institution (associations for social work)
3. Research and education institution
4. Commissioner system (relief commissioners, child-protection commissioners)
5. Aid institution

The second category: rescuing the poor

1. Facility rescue (orphanages and nursing homes)
2. Outside-facility rescue

The third category: special rescue

1. Military rescue
  - a. Rescuing injured soldiers
  - b. Helping the surviving families of the dead soldiers
2. Disaster relief
3. Wayfarer relief

The fourth category: medical relief

1. Hospitals and sanatoria
2. Clinics
3. Consignment treatment and patient consolation
4. Circulating nursing

The fifth category: financial protection

1. Job placement
2. Employment
3. Lodging supply
4. Housing supply
5. Public bathhouses
6. Temporary eating places
7. Public markets
8. Small loan (public pawnshop)

The sixth category: social edification

1. Rectifying social customs (no-smoking, no-drinking, married women support, customs improvement)
2. Social welfare for lagging regions
3. Village improvement
4. The prevention of cruelty to animals

The seventh category: child protection

1. Fetal/infant and infant protection
  - a. Pregnant woman protection (free midwives and maternity hospitals)
  - b. Infant and infant protection (child health clinics, daycare centers and health centers)
2. School children protection
  - a. Education for children from poor families (schools, night schools, schools for baby-sitters, and school children protection committee)
  - b. School meals
  - c. Alternative schools
3. Working children protection (employment service centers for boys, dormitories for boys in workplaces)
4. Entertainment, physical training, and education
  - a. Entertainment (children entertainment, amusement arcades)
  - b. Education (children's libraries)
5. Movement to improve children's welfare (children protection associations, children protection exhibitions)

6. Exceptional children protection
  - a. Children differentiation and temporary protection (children differentiation offices, children protection offices)
  - b. Abused children protection
  - c. Infant care service (child care expense support, nursery or commissioned home care)
  - d. Reformatory education (reformatories)
  - e. Disabled children protection (child education and protection, disabled child protection, and stuttering treatment)
  - f. Protection of children with mental disorder (mentally deficient and imbecile children protection)
  - g. Protection of sick children

#### 4. The Illnesses of the Society

As explained thus far, the meaning and purpose of social work are nothing but treating the illnesses of the society that come from the shortcomings of the social system and establishing the wholesome society. Then, what are the so-called illnesses? The range of those illnesses is too broad to enumerate them one by one. However, to put them in a sentence, they are the illnesses of poverty that arise from economic privation. Marx wrote the *Capital*. The tensions between labor and capital spread like signal fires. Tenant farmers go on strike in farming regions. General strikes also occur in large factories. All of these happen mainly because of economic problems and therefore the solutions for these problems also should come from economic matters. This is because economic problems originally constitute most of the social problems.

If economic privation or poverty can be removed from the society, the society as a whole will be able to peacefully pursue happiness and comfort. However, this problem is not still resolved. Thus, there are countless numbers of mentally or physically disabled people, unemployed people, prostitutes, orphans, abandoned

children, vagrants, ill wayfarers, juvenile delinquents, and robbers and thieves who are caught and sent into prisons, along with the epidemics that make us shudder, just thinking about them. All of these people should be called the illnesses of the society. The most important cause of these social illnesses is again economic privation. Therefore, they are nothing but the illnesses of poverty.

However, since Industrial Revolution, competition for survival has reached the extreme level. With today's mammonism, nothing can be done about those social illnesses. As the gap between the rich and the poor gradually and systematically grows these days, the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. There are phenomena in which social illnesses are fostered or cultivated.

Under the notion of joint responsibility, economists, sociologists, educators, moral leaders, and bourgeois and proletariat classes should seek to study and examine the causes of these problems and eventually peacefully solve them. At the same time, religious people, in particular, should stand at the front line of social illness relief and make all efforts to spread good news and help the seed of conscientiousness sprout in people of every class.

## 5. The Diagnosis of the Society

When our body is sick, we receive a doctor's examination, find out the cause of that sickness, and accordingly take proper medications. Just like this, in order to treat social illnesses, examining the illnesses is the first thing to do. This can be called "the diagnosis of the society."

However, in examining these illnesses, we should first diagnose their causes. If a doctor misdiagnoses a patient and administers wrong medications, the patient will not fully recover the illnesses and even lose his or her life. The same can be applied to the social illnesses. Proper diagnoses are necessary.

Then, what is "the diagnosis of the society"? Many sociologists

call this “social pathology.” That is, it is a field of study that focuses on diagnosing and treating the social illnesses. What methods are applied in that diagnosis? To answer this question briefly, it first investigates the living conditions of poor laborers who suffer from economic privation and systematic shortcomings of the society, discovers the causes of those conditions or crimes, along with all the other social problems, and strives for rescuing people from such conditions. Rowntree’s (1871–1954) notion of poverty line came from one such investigation.

In many western countries, people in religious organizations take the lead in social work and social illness diagnosis and relief. They preach in the church every Saturday or Sunday and promote belief in the Heavenly Lord or God. Among their congregations, there are poor laborers who cannot join the worship service in the church because these people are busy meeting their daily livelihood needs. Preachers realize the situation, make their own research on social problems, and strive for material relief as a premise for spreading their faith. They investigate the living conditions of poor laborers in their precincts and use a part of their church building as an office of social work to help these laborers. In that office, they also open, for example, free clinics, employment service office, day-time nursery, amusement arcade, temporary eating place, or library. As they conduct all sorts of works in both material and spiritual areas, their activities gradually stimulate the society in general and thereby officials and people in the society work together and expand social works. It is not an exaggeration to say that Christians or religious people have become a motivation for the social work in many Western countries. Not only in the West, but also in the East, including China, Korea, and Japan, religious people have contributed to the foundation of the social work.

Looking at the current situation in the Korean Buddhist community, there is a difference as huge as cloud and mud. Buddhism in medieval times, whether in Korea, China, or Japan, conducted the social work of saving the world and sentient beings

and made great contributions to all fields such as constructing buildings and bridges, digging springs, planting trees, and treating illnesses. In modern times, however, Buddhist clerics speak of charity and compassion with their mouths while, in reality, they ask for offerings from lay followers and live comfortable life with those offerings. They make a distinction between material-offering and dharma-giving and cunningly argue that material offerings are something that they are naturally entitled to receive. However, if they are asked about their dharma-giving activities, they cannot answer with their faces turning red, feeling embarrassed. I urge Buddhist clerics to wake up to this situation.

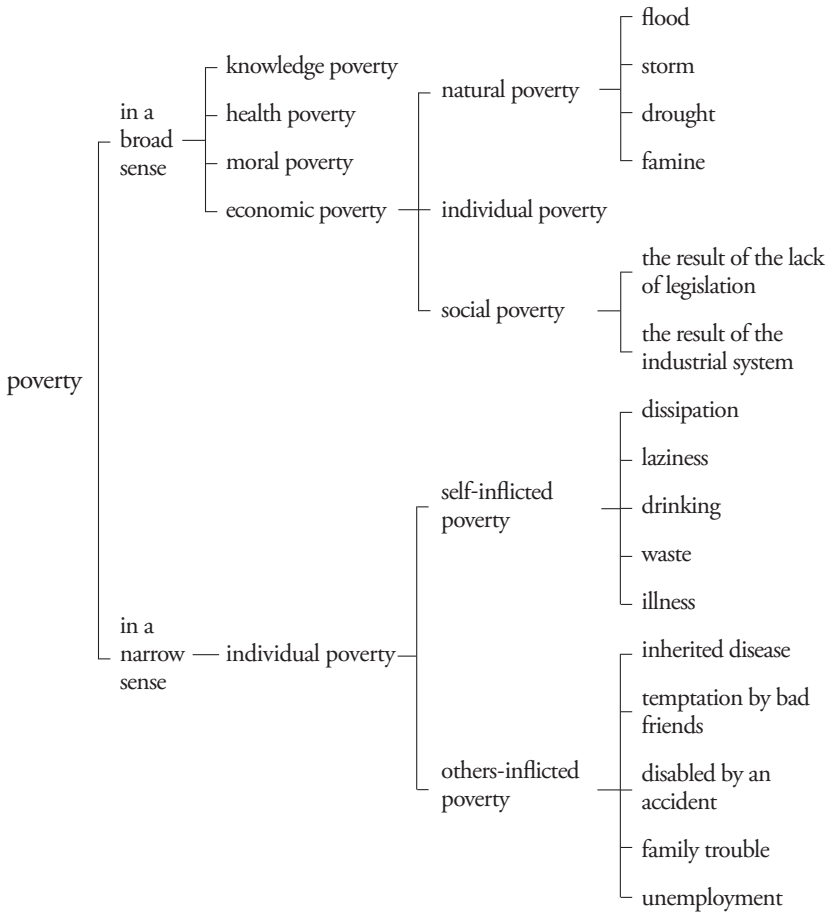
Recently, as my fellow Buddhists are gradually awakened, they pay attention to social diagnosis and seek for the improvement of the society both materially and spiritually. However, this tendency can be seen only in Chinese and Japanese Buddhist communities. It is deplorable that Buddhism is still in decline in Korea. I hope that Korean Buddhists become much more active, take the lead in the social work of the East, and make every effort in the social service with people in the society in general.

## 6. The Causes of Poverty

It is necessary to categorize various kinds of poverty in order to investigate its causes. In the *Overview of Social Work (Shakai jigyo kōyō)*, Namae Takayuki (1867–1957), an authority in the research on social work, categorizes poverty into two: in a narrow or broad sense. According to him, in a broad sense, there are poverty of knowledge, health, morality, and economy. To put it plainly, people with little knowledge, people whose bodies are infirm, people with little moral sense, and people whose livelihood is threatened.

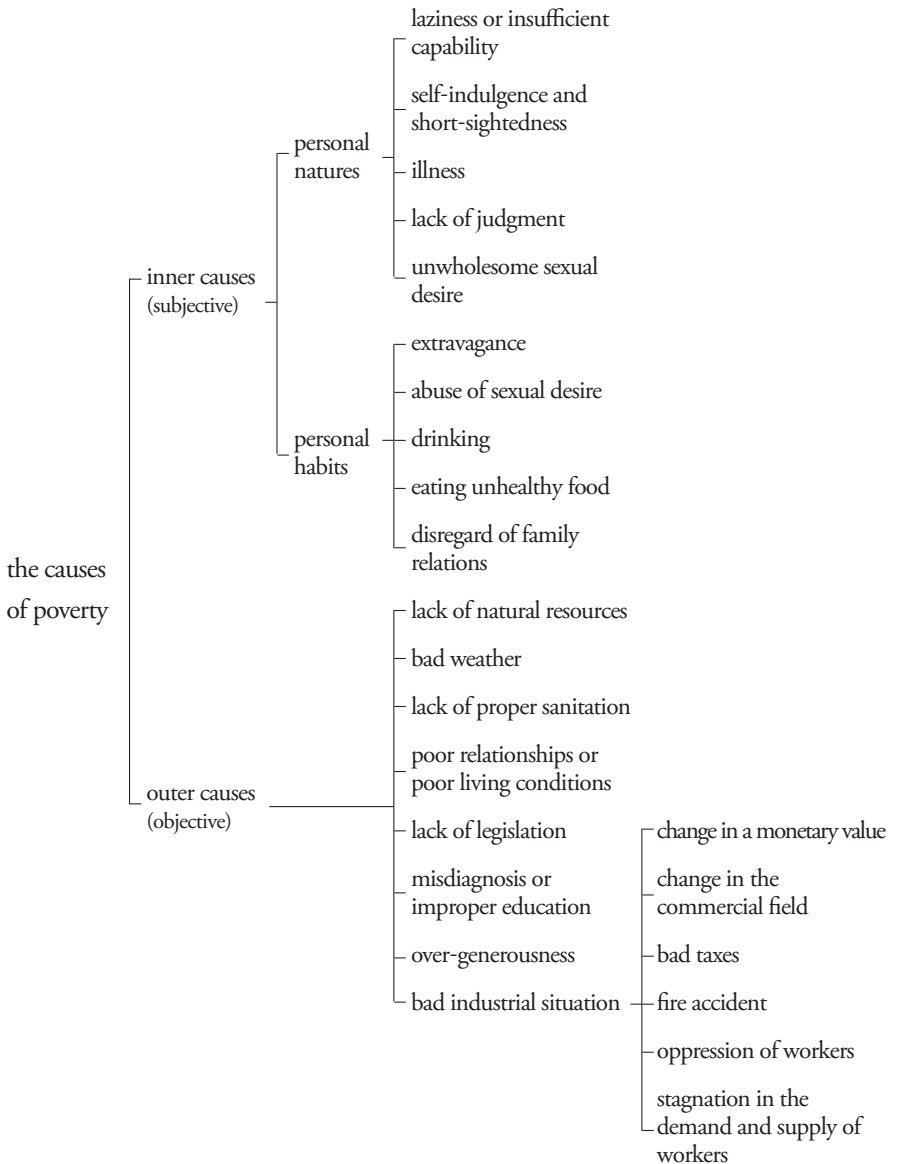
However, the main social problem or main object of social work is economic poverty alone. It is not that the poverty of knowledge, health, or morality is not an object of the social work. I only mean

that economic poverty is the major object [of social work]. To further categorize this economic poverty, there are three kinds: natural, individual, and social poverties. Here, individual poverty in a narrow sense is the main object. To further divide this individual poverty, there are self-inflicted and others-inflicted individual poverties. All these categories of poverty can be charted as follows:



Thus far, I have categorized poverty. Now, I will discuss the causes of poverty. There is no fixed explanation about the causes of poverty. In the *American Charities*, the American scholar Dr. Amos Griswold

Warner divides the causes of poverty as social illness into two: inner and outer causes. The inner causes refer to the subjective causes that bring poverty while the outer causes indicate the objective causes. These outlines can be charted as follows:



Dr. Warner's categorization of the causes of poverty is not much different from the Japanese scholar Namae's categorization of poverty. I will discuss the inner and outer causes based on these two categorizations.

### 1) What Belongs to the Inner Causes

I will first explain the inner causes of poverty. The inner causes refer to the inherited mental and physical illnesses; the lack of judgment, i.e., the so-called poverty of knowledge, health, or morality; physical infirmity; the lack of moral consciousness; the inherited unwholesomeness in knowledge, virtue, or health; and other inherited or acquired characteristics, for example, dissipation, laziness, drinking, waste, indulgence, and overeating.

The book titled *Poverty and the Protection of the Old and the Infirm*<sup>19</sup> categorizes the causes of poverty into twenty three. To enumerate, crimes, drinking, laziness, the socializing only among the poor, inheritance, low intelligence, short-sightedness, incompetence, early marriage, a number of family members, extravagance, flippancy, celibacy, negligence, illnesses, the death of the spouse, the death of parents, misfortune, unexpected disaster, failure at the job, and the lack of jobs. According to one of the Western scholars in the field of social welfare, the causes of poverty include incompetence, laziness, drinking, waste, early marriage, gambling, and over-generousness. Looking at all these categorizations, the objective or social causes are also included as the causes of poverty. However, their influences are limited. Thus, the major causes of poverty are individual characteristics. This fact has no big difference from Dr. Warner's categorization. In other words, most of the poor have mental and moral problems.

However, it is also true that such problems are inherited. Rather than these inherited problems, the bad living conditions of the poor make the problems habitual routine and form unwholesome tendency. The poor, thereby, have few minds of righteousness

and embarrassment. They instead develop the minds of laziness, selfishness, and dependence.

With the development of science and humanities, eugenics was created and thus the inherited mental or physical defects were improved. The social workers should investigate these inherited unwholesome characteristics and remove the bad influences of the surrounding conditions by thoroughly improving those conditions. Why? Although the individual poverty is caused by individual and natural problems, it is also included in the others-inflicted poverty which occurs from the failure of the social system.

## **2) What Belongs to the Outer Causes**

It is needless to say that the outer causes refer to both the natural poverty which is nature-made and the social poverty which is human-made. What is the natural poverty? It refers to the situation in which the poverty, whether temporary or persistent, is caused by extraordinary natural phenomena. This type of poverty was often found in the uncivilized times when the human kind was ruled by the nature.

The civilization has developed from the fishing, ranching, and farming periods through the handcraft period to the machine-driven industry period. Until the early agricultural period, people lived their lives in accord with the nature and developed little knowledge of how to protect themselves from the nature. Thus, they could not escape the situation in which they could fall into painful poverty at any time as the nature wielded its fierce power. For example, flood, storm, drought, and famine occurred one after another in China, India, Africa, and Asia Minor.<sup>20</sup> Flood and drought caused tens of thousands of people to suffer from famine in Korea too. Earthquakes in Kantō and Kansai regions [in Japan] produced a number of poor people. All these belong to the natural poverty.

What is the social poverty? This poverty arises as a result of legal or social system. To look at this from the historical perspective, the

“result of the legal system” refers to the period after the liberation of serfs. Although serfs existed throughout Europe, they were not regarded as human beings who possessed their own rights. They were simply treated as private property. The land lords protected the serfs as a way of protecting their property. If a serf became ill, his or her lord treated the serf. Even though the serf’s work was temporarily ceased, the lord excused the serf. However, European feudalism changed as time went by. Due to random incidents, serfs were liberated. As a result, those serfs became independent farmers, i.e., free men with their own rights.

However, although their physical bodies were freed, they had difficulty in living independent lives because they were originally serfs and thus did not have their own property. Therefore, if they were not employed by land lords again, they could not live their lives. Although they were employed, they were paid low and financially strapped. They even often lost their jobs. Although the laws of the time granted the freedom to farmers on the surface, those laws, in fact, protected land lords and the bourgeois or aristocrat class while suppressing and adding sufferings to the farmers under the surface. For example, the laws forbade laborers’ wages to rise and prevented them to change their residences. If laborers fled, the laws gave them severe punishments. It is needless to say that the legislators of the time were bourgeoisie and made those laws to protect themselves. For this reason, the livelihood, labor, and social issues arose like blazing torches. It was natural that social and economic poverty occurred.

Speaking of the result of the industrial system, Adam Smith who was the founder of economics wrote the *Wealth of Nations* in 1771. James Watt received a patent for a steam engine in 1769 and applied it to a factory in 1785. By doing so, a small number of capitalists captured a number of cottage industries which constituted the major industrial system of the time and thus economic free competition became wide-spread. As a result, the wealth was distributed unequally and unjustly. There arose an unbridgeable gap between capitalists and laborers. No matter how much laborers tried, most of

them could not escape the financial threat in their lives. Although they worked all day every day, they could not eat and wear as they wished.

For this reason, it cannot be said that this type of the poor fell into poverty because of their own faults or other personal matters. If a group or a number of people who belong to this class face the financial threat in their lives under the same system, this cannot but be called social poverty, which is caused by the society. Social workers should thoroughly investigate and improve not just the natural poverty which is caused by a natural disaster but also the social poverty which is human-made.

## 7. The Arising of the Social Work

Primitive thought, i.e., charity or relief work which is the source of social work has been regarded since ancient times as the individual service to or relief of individuals, conducted by religious persons or philanthropists under the notion of karmic retribution. With the development of the human civilization, all social phenomena became complex. The individual poverty of poor individuals developed into the poverty of society as a whole.

From the nineteenth century to the present century, there occurred social problems, i.e., labor problems which were considered as grave issues. This was caused by people's awakening to class consciousness after [the publication of] the *Social Discovery*, the subsequent struggle, and the proletariats' awakening.<sup>21</sup> What is social class? This largely refers to a group of individuals who have equal amounts of private property and equal levels of jobs, along with the similar interests in their lives. The capitalist and laborer classes were divided. Since then, there have arisen class struggles. In farming areas, tenancy disputes occur; in factories, labor strikes happen. There arise many difficult problems such as women's and children's issues. All these are caused by the industrial system. Regarding the question

of how to solve these problems, two ideas are developed: socialism which advocates that the industrial system should be fundamentally destroyed; social reformism that makes efforts for affirming the current social system and solving the flaws and problems that come from this system.

The origin of socialism can be traced back to the English scholar Owen (1771–1858) who organized producers' cooperation in 1817, planning to establish a communist society. Afterwards, the so-called Christian socialism was formed by a group of people, including the Christian preacher Charles Kingsley (1819–1911). In France, Saint-Simon (1760–1825) and Fourier (1772–1837) advocated the idea of the state-owned land and capitals in order to save laborers from poverty in 1821 around the time of industrial revolution. In Germany, Karl Marx issued the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848 and began to organize the socialist party. This was the beginning of socialism. Marx again composed the *Capital* around 1867 which provided the foundation for the socialist party. Marx's *Communist Manifesto* and *Capital* are called the philosophy of socialism and at the same time the bible of socialism.

In Russia, anarchism arose with Kropotkin and Bakunin as its central figures. Proudhon published *What Is Property?* in 1840 and Stirner published *The Ego and His Own* five years later in 1845. These two writings became the bible of anarchism. All these streams of thought were divided into idealistic socialism, scientific socialism, Christian socialism, art socialism, state socialism, communist socialism, guild socialism, anarchist socialism, syndicalism, and Bolshevism. There are moderates and radicals among them.

In summary, they see that there is no other way but to destroy the current social system in removing the evil effects of that system, believing that a new construction will certainly follow this destruction, and thus rely on radical means to destroy the system. However, although their ideal may be great, it will be extremely difficult to materialize this ideal in the actual world since people involved are all ordinary human beings. Whether it is the world

of communist socialism or anarchist socialism, we cannot expect that the world of equal pleasures or the perfect society of ideas without sufferings and anxieties will be achieved. Looking at the current situation in which a handful of capitalists act high-handedly and wallow in luxury, we cannot but grind our teeth with rage and hatred. At the same time, seeing that although a number of proletariats or poor laborers work hard their entire lives, they still cry from painful poverty, we cannot but shed tears of compassion. However, it is not an exaggeration to say that tribes and nations have fought each other and such ideal worlds as the heaven or the world of bliss has never been materialized ever since the beginning of history. I am afraid that the ideal society like the world of ideas will never be realized even tens of thousands of years from now. This is because the society possesses both good and evil just as does the human kind. Rather, it would be the best for people of each class of the society to reflect on themselves morally and religiously and make efforts to remove harmful effects of the current social system with the spirit of unity. The arising of religious relief work and scientific social work is related to the awakening to this fact.

The charity work in ancient times was equal to the idea of seeking for reward or repaying kindness. However, it has gradually developed into humanism, which again comes to plan to thoroughly help and protect [the people in need] based on scientific methods. Then, what are scientific methods? They include planning a rationally appropriate work rather than emotional charity activities that may cause harmful effects; seeking to nurture the spirit of self-respect and independence among people in need and prevent them from falling into poverty; paying attention to solving the causes of poverty, not to mention recovering from the poverty; making a thorough and careful investigation and put the result of the investigation into practice; and avoiding overlapping in charity work. Modern scientific social work takes these methods as its guide lines.

In order to carry out social work scientifically and rationally, charity societies or associations were organized. Therefore, charity

work became more active and constructive. Not only that, taking a step further from simple charity activities or individual philanthropists' works, the society itself undertook social work with the notion of social joint responsibility. However, it is impossible that each and every member of the society engages in this work. For this reason, a proper institute that could represent the society was built and a public or private organization focused on social work.

Any form of social work was then regarded as something that should be conducted with the notion of social joint responsibility and, therefore, could not rely only on the government or individual charity or sympathy. Almost all forms of social work are carried out in Western countries. However, what is now conducted in Japan includes relief of the poor, prevention of poverty, child protection, social edification, unification of contacts, and research institution. I have thus far discussed the causes of the arising of religious relief work and scientific social work, along with the development path of social work.

## Chapter 3

# Historical Overview of Social Work

### 1. History of Social Work in the West

#### 1) Development of Social Work in Ancient Times

I will examine the development of social work from the historical perspective. There is no thought or scholastic work that is formed without a historical context. This is because human life thus far has been evolved in both temporal and spatial historical backgrounds. The forms of social work that are carried out today do not arise randomly. Rather, they have a long history. I will first explain the ideal and reality of relief work in ancient West. In order to explain the ancient Europe, it is necessary to discuss the Greek and Roman periods. Let me first take a look at the Greek period! Although the ideal of ancient times, whether the West or the East, was certainly individualism, more so was the case of the West. For this reason, the ideal of relief work began from individual utilitarianism. Relief work was not performed for common good. It did not originate from the mind of compassion for the poor either. Rather, it came from utilitarianism that wished to receive a certain reward. It was one of the ancient religious streams.

However, in the Greek period, the charity work of civicism was carried out. This was related to the characteristics of a city-state which ran the Greek society, the ray of light and pioneer of European civilization. All fields, including ethics, education, and politics, developed as a part of city-states. Therefore, the notion of a city-state also became a motive for the ideal of social work or discussions on it. In other words, social work focused on citizens. To speak of the

Greek social situation of the time, there were two classes of citizens and slaves. Citizens took a direct charge of operating their city-state, including education, war, and politics. They belonged to the ruling class while slaves, to the subjugated class. The latter had no freedom or right. They only served for citizens, providing materials for them. The object of social work was these two classes. On the one hand, there arose theories about how to protect the citizens, investigating the situations of the citizens' families or clans. On the other hand, there appeared theories about how to improve the slavery. Charity work was performed, based on this. Solon's (ca. 638–ca. 558 BCE)<sup>22</sup> rules were made to forbid luxury and encourage hard work.

To look at the real contents of the charity work in the Greek society, there were four kinds of charity work. Most of all, the associations of merchants and capitalists were organized, enforcing debt relief, encouraging moving, distributing grains, and paying wages. They also rectified a harmful custom of taking those of working class who could not pay their debts as slaves. They established the relief system inside and outside their associations, helped ordinary workers and slaves become citizens, and granted the political rights to citizens and paid them. This was the reality of social work in the Greek period. To speak of [social work] from the ideological and theoretical perspectives, in the period of the cosmological philosophy, there was no thought or theory of the society. In the period of the philosophy of human affairs, such city-states as Athens created state-nationalism while Socrates and sophist philosophers advocated individualism, crying for individual freedom and discussing on the improvement of the society.

I will then talk about the Roman period. Social work in Greece was performed, centering around citizens. Roman social work, however, was conducted as a political strategy. This is because the clan system became dominant in the Roman society. Social work also focused on this clan system. For this reason, Roman politicians regarded social work as a means to conciliate ordinary people. Speaking of the social classes in the Roman society, the clan or family

system played a central role. There were nation-chiefs or family chiefs, citizens, and slaves. There were roughly three different classes. Therefore, the upper classes, including aristocracy, monopolized political power, living idle lives. On the contrary, citizens, i.e., commoners engaged in farming or stockbreeding while being required to fulfill military service every year or pay heavy taxes.

However, since they were not entitled to have political rights, they were more pushed to the state of poverty. Therefore, the aristocrat politicians of the time saw this as an opportunity and lent money to commoners at high interest. When those commoners could not pay back on time, these politicians took the debtors as their slaves. For this reason, those commoners stopped farming and gathered at busy towns, enjoying themselves, going to theatres and pubs. When they became out of cash, they wandered around place to place with their wives. Ambitious persons of the time exploited these poor people and showed gladiators or wild animals fighting. Then, they used those poor people as a means to increase their property. Therefore, as commoners' antipathy [against politicians] all of a sudden became intense, the voices of relieving commoners from poverty by amending marriage laws and [rewarding] military merits were raised.

In order to ingratiate themselves with poor people, the Gracchus brothers<sup>23</sup> issued a grain law, along with a system of grain distribution, and put a cap on grain price, forbidding high price. Thereby, they won people over. The governments after these brothers felt the need of a virtuous rule. Therefore, Ceasar (100–44 BCE) fixed the market price and set up a rule for public bathhouses. Thus, scholars tried to reform the society, preventing capitalists from monopolizing raw materials, amending agricultural law, and carrying out charity work, such as giving grains for free. However, all these practices came out as a political strategy.

To examine them from the ideal and theoretical perspectives, since the theories of the Stoic school thrived [in the Roman period], their influences were significant. They imagined an ideal country and advocated cosmopolitanism, along with justice and fraternity.

Therefore, starting from Seneca, they cried for the abolition of slavery. However, in the Roman period, there was this political strategy and, at the same time, the idea of seeking for reward, which aimed at extinguishing the influences of evil actions. This is because Christianity secretly spread among the lower-class people such as workers and slaves and performed charity work. Those Christians carried out numerous charity activities. To enumerate a few of the outstanding activities: the improvement of prisons, Sunday schools, the organization of the Salvation Army, the Young Men's Christian Association, and the Young Women's Christian Association. They said that all these activities did not have any other intention but to realize God's will. However, it was a telltale fact that the idea of seeking for a reward lay behind those activities.

## **2) Development of Social Work in Medieval Times**

It is needless to say that medieval times were the heyday of Christianity. Therefore, relief or charity work was regarded as a task that Christians should take charge of. Breaking away from a strategic means in ancient times, [social work in medieval times] was generally understood with the notion of serving God's will that attempted to realize the religious idea, i.e., the spirit of sympathy and fraternity. However, the idea of seeking for reward gradually unwittingly penetrated into this notion which eventually fell into the harmful effect of too much relief work.

There were two shortcomings of the Christian relief work of this time. First, it was carried out by institutions. Second, those charity institutions were not communalized. In other words, each institution conducted relief work in its own way and carried out the same type of work in many different places without being concerned with the other institutions' activities. Without a liaison unifying agent, each group of Christians separately built the same kind of institution. What was this institution then? It was a hospital which started from France. It did not just belong to a religious group. As time went on,

it arose among the free cities of the Crusades or the bourgeois.

However, the fundamental meaning of a hospital was not separate from religion. This is because a hospital did not only intend for medical relief work. It also aimed at resurrecting the spirits by protecting and thus saving the physical bodies. The task of a hospital, therefore, centered around Christianity. It helped sick and poor people, orphans, cripples, and, in particular, lepers within the precinct of a Christian organization. [The religion] was dedicated especially to social or relief work with the construction of not only hospitals but also monasteries. However, the basic idea came from the humanism and benevolence of Christian disciple who served God's will. In fact, the religious idea of seeking for reward or repaying kindness became dominant. For this reason, just as politicians in ancient times performed relief work to gain public popularity, those who ran hospitals saved the poor without any investigation only to show their kindness and authority or to seek for rewards for their activities. Eventually, they fell into the harmful effect of too much relief work and in turn created poor people. For example, since the words, "Those who were negligent in making offerings to divine shrines are just like people who let the poor in need die of hunger. Those who used the property that God will give to the poor for themselves use it mistakenly," became wide-spread, people donated all their personal property to the church for relief work and became beggars, living their lives as wandering pilgrims.

However, [they] soon turned into hypocrites. Even though speaking God's love with their mouths, they developed an aspiration for personal glory and a desire for wealth and thus fulfilled their own personal ambitions, relying on the authority of the church. They used [relief work] as a means to seek their own good. Therefore, some scholars condemned the relief work of the church as "spraying charity." There were many people everywhere arguing, "The relief work of the church does not pursue the relief of the poor. Rather, it intends to lead monks and poor people to self-indulgence and laziness. Since there is no slightest benefit except the creation of a

permanent group of the poor, confiscate the church property!” From this fact, we can guess how strongly the idea of seeking for reward was rooted in the relief work of the time. In the late medieval times, the voluntary relief work was carried out for poor, sick, and disabled people while the compulsory labor was imposed on people with physical health. This was the reality of the relief work in medieval times.

### **3) Development of Social Work in Modern Times**

Taking lessons from the failure of the relief work performed with the ideas of the individualistic strategy in ancient times and seeking for a religious reward in medieval times, the social work in modern times was carried out as a public ideal of the society. There was an awakening to the fact that social work should be conducted to increase the public welfare of the society. In other words, social work should not be performed based on God’s will as it was in medieval times. Rather, it should be treated as [fixing] a social problem regarding people’s lives. In addition to this awakening, the differences in reality were also discovered. We should not forget that such a progress [in understanding social work] was the result of the arising of a new economics.

Some Italian and English scholars severely denounced the relief work in medieval times, saying that such relief work, which was based on a religious ideal, poisoned the society and increased beggars. Afterwards, a number of economists and sociologists appeared and attacked the religious relief work in medieval times. Malthus wrote *An Essay on the Principle of Population* and argued that charitable relief caused more harm than good. The French sociologist Comte laughed away the relief work in ancient and medieval times and asserted that now is the time of a practical ideal. Then, new economists in England and France demonstrated that the economic theories of the medieval times regarding only on the relationship between wealth and production was not the main focus of economics. They

advocated a new theory that promoted the research in increasing the well-being of the society, based on the philanthropism of humanism treating human beings humanely, by discussing the relationship between human and the society. The social work of the relief system brought a number of changes with the arising of this new theory. The religious notion of relief work, based on the idea of seeking for reward and repaying kindness, naturally disappeared while the concept of the relief system for the public good of the society thrived instead.

This turned into humanism and moderatism in England where workers avoided random direct acts and both the rich and the poor worked together to increase the public good of the society. In Germany and France, diagonally opposite to England, it turned into democratic revolutionism, appealing quite often to violent methods. Therefore, it always seems that the French relief system was often made based on communist socialism. However, today is the time of making efforts under the moderate, steady, and wholesome idea, i.e., the idea that the social work of the relief system throughout the world intends to increase the public well-being of the society and each individual of the society carries out social work obligatorily as a member of the society with the sense of social joint responsibility. This is the general situation of the social work in modern and contemporary times.

## 2. History of Social Work in the East

### 1) Development of Social Work in India

In order to look at the relief system in ancient East, it is necessary to first examine Indian and Chinese cases. I will first talk about Indian system. The relief work in the West focused more on the material aspect rather than the mental or spiritual one and tried to save the spirits through the material relief. This was the religious

relief thought in the West. It later fell to the harmful effect of the concept of repaying kindness. However, the relief work in the East aimed at liberating the spiritual nature, i.e., the mind, emphasizing the spiritual aspect rather than the material one. This is the religious relief thought in the East and the spirit of the relief work in India. However, since India does not pay attention to history, highlighting only ideals, we cannot see any firm historical fact about the relief system in India. However, the history of Indian Buddhism is the history of Indian religions and, at the same time, the history of India. Thus, I will look at [the relief work in India], based on the history of Buddhism.

India was the country that Aryans who belonged to the Central Asian–European race came down and established in the regions between the two rivers of the Ganges and the Indus approximately 4,000 years ago. In ancient India, there were no social classes. However, as a religion called “Brahmanism,” which worshipped Brahma, appeared and *The Law Code of Manu* was made, the four different classes were formed: the first class, *brahman* (priests); the second class, *kṣatriya* (warriors); the third class, *vaiśya* (commoners); the fourth class, *śūdra* (slaves). The *brahman* occupied the highest position, performing sacrifice rituals and taking charge of scholarship. The *kṣatriya* assumed politics and military activities. The *vaiśya* engaged in various kinds of industry, including stockbreeding, plowing, and commerce. The *śūdra* did not belong to the Aryan race. They served others, performing humble menial tasks such as plowing, transportation, and butchery. They were abused as slaves. In this way, India was strictly stratified. However, the country is originally included in tropical regions. Its land is fertile; grains grow abundantly; and it has a great deal of precipitation. Therefore, [people of ancient India] could live their lives, focusing only on spiritual contemplation or speculation, transcending material and livelihood problems. For this reason, extreme optimism and pessimism existed together. People were sometimes threatened by extraordinary natural disasters. However, while these people did not care about

such external disasters, they agonized over the class system that caused the sufferings of the man-made environment rather than material livelihood problems and demanded the liberation from the world. Therefore, they hoped that the wheel-turning king, the ideal monarch who could remove these sufferings, would appear in the world.

At that time, there was a crown prince named Siddhārtha (Śākya) of the king of Kapila who belonged to the *kṣatriya* class in Northern India. The prince saw that the priests of Brahmanism thrived in India of the time while others suffered from these priests' oppression. He keenly felt the corruption of the society and the fleeting nature of human life and thus aroused the vow of saving sentient beings. He left his palace and entered the snow mountains. Cultivating ascetic practices, he finally discovered the law of liberation, founded Buddhism, and advocated compassion and relief. He preached that all sentient beings, regardless of social status, could enter the realm of the great Way, i.e., liberation and extinction, if they practiced the wholesome Way and removed their desires. First of all, he cried for the abolition of the four-class system. For this reason, people of all classes who suffered from the *brahman's* oppression rejoiced his teaching and took refuge in this new religion. As such, the notion of social class gradually disappeared. Every kingdom in India was transformed to a Buddhist one. Therefore, people everywhere abandoned their personal desires and thought highly of giving alms to the poor. However, afterwards, this pure religious thought changed to the notion of repaying kindness.

After the death of the venerable Śākyamuni, King Aśoka<sup>24</sup> of Magadhā<sup>25</sup> in central India and Emperor Kaniṣka<sup>26</sup> of the Kushan dynasty in Central Asia appeared one by one. They both revered Buddhism and strived for the propagation of Buddhism and, at the same time, ruled people humanely.

To look at the historical records about King Aśoka, there are inscriptions [about him] that were recently uncovered. In particular, in those inscriptions, there are fourteen [articles] on the rock and eight

on the pillar. Some important excerpts are as follows:

First, this edict was carved under the order of the king of the heavenly love and goodness. People are not allowed to take the life of any living being. They are not allowed to give a banquet either.

Second, the king of heavenly love and goodness administers two kinds of medications for every neighboring country he reaches, i.e., medication for human kind and animals or he digs a well on the side of big roads for human beings and animals.

Third, the king of heavenly love and goodness gathers local magistrates every five years, imperatively preaches sermons of the dharma, and makes people do their duties to parents, friends, acquaintances, and relatives or give alms to *brahman* or *śramaṇa*, cherish the lives of living beings, and avoid extravagance and verbal abuse.

The inscriptions are too many to quote all of them. However, the above could be the summary of their main points. To speak of the contents, the inscriptions were carved sometime between the twelfth and thirteenth year of the king's reign. "The king of heavenly love and goodness" refers to King Aśoka.

As mentioned above, these [instructions] provided a model for kings of many generations and thus relief or social work was carried out. This can be accredited to Buddhism. Buddhism was transmitted to China, Korea, and Japan. I believe that the religious relief work in ancient East was greatly influenced by Buddhism.

## 2) Development of Social Work in China

Chinese culture was created by the Chinese Han people. This people who belonged to the Central Asian race now resides in China proper. They invaded the Yellow River regions and occupied there. Before the invasion, the Miao people<sup>27</sup> had probably been in the regions. The Han people occupied the shores of the Yellow River, replacing

the Miao people. The Han people produced monarchs.

According to ancient records, there were great holy rulers called “Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors” (Sanhuang wudi).<sup>28</sup> They laid the foundation for the Chinese culture, teaching farming, trade, and medicine as well as creating music, calendrical science, and letters and making ships and carts. However, this is more like a mythology. The period of Yao, Shun, or Yu<sup>29</sup> is not fictional. This period can be accepted as real to some degree. Yao, Shun, and Yu are all respected as sage-monarchs and admired as ideal human beings. Regarding Yao, there are two stories: the calendrical system and the selection of Shun. [At Yao’s order,] Mr. Xi and Mr. He created the calendrical system, dividing a year into twelve months and 360 days and separately setting up a leap month. Yao selected Shun to solve the difficulties in water control.

Around the sixty-first year of Yao’s reign, there was a flood of the Yellow River which flew into the Huai River and the Yangtze River. All plains and high heels were submerged by flood waters and thus people lost places to reside in. Water control became an urgent issue. Then, Yao ordered Gun to solve the issue, but Gun failed to make a contribution. Shun punished Gun and appointed Gun’s son, Yu, to replace Gun. Yu made every effort, staying outside for eight years. Even though he passed the gate of his house, he did not go inside. After a great struggle, he finally succeeded and pacified the world. Since Yu succeeded Shun and arose to the throne, he had avoided extravagance and led the frugal life, eating coarse food and not embellishing his palace. He rested his people, built land system, set up a tribute law, opened roads, and appointed competent persons as officials. There is a story about a man named Yidi who brewed a great alcohol and offered it to Yu. Yu then drank it and spoke of its sweet taste. Disliking the drink, however, he said that alcohol would certainly destroy his country in the future. He distanced himself from Yidi and prohibited alcohol. There is also a story that showed how much Yu cared for his people. When he happened to see a criminal on the street, he got off his cart, listened to the whole story of this

person becoming a criminal, and said to his accompanying retainers, “People of Yao and Shun took their minds with the minds of Yao and Shun. While I am at the throne, people should take their minds with my mind.” Judging from all these facts, it can be guessed that there was a policy that intended to perform charity work for people in the period of Yao, Shun, and Yu. However, since all instruments and facilities were crude in this period, there was no system worth seeing in relief work either. In the Zhou period (ca. 1046–256 BCE), a system called “control of famine” (*huangzheng*) was established to focus on social work. Then, what is “control of famine”? This is a policy for the time of famine.

Natural disasters accidentally occur regardless of time and space and take human life and property. Therefore, they often threaten the peace of the country and the society. Although nothing can be done with human power to prevent these disasters from arising, people cannot but be prepared for them in time of peace. For this reason, the so-called “control of famine” was enforced. Three policies were included in “control of famine” to aim at perfection in its enforcement: precautionary, reactionary, and post-cautionary policies. Precautionary policy prepares for a famine in advance before it happens. This is called “the preparation for famine” (*beihuang*). Reactionary policy takes a proper action in response to a disaster. Post-cautionary policy focuses on the recovery from a disaster after it happens. The latter two policies combined are called “famine relief.”

For example, encouraging farming and silk-farming, planting trees extensively, filling the barn, and forbidding extravagance belonged to precautionary policy. Exempting taxes, distributing gruels, sending money and grains, reducing the price of grains, treating the injured and burying the dead belonged to reactionary policy. Beginning construction, distributing seeds, and alleviating laws were included in post-cautionary policy. The control of famine should be equipped with all these three policies. This [control of famine] had been implemented from the Zhou period to the Qing dynasty (1644–1911).

Speaking of the Zhou period first, the control of famine in that period could be divided into twelve. The first was loaning seeds; the second was reducing taxes; the third was alleviating punishments; the fourth was ceasing to impose corvée labor; the fifth was lifting prohibitions; the sixth was exempting the taxes of markets on borders; the seventh was removing the cumbersome formalities of all rituals; the eighth was simplifying funerals; the ninth was prohibiting entertainment; the tenth was encouraging marriage; the eleventh was performing a rite for the ghosts to which a rite could not be performed; the twelfth was removing thieves through firm punishments. These were the twelve policies of famine in the Zhou administration. These policies were probably actually enforced during the Zhou period.

Not only that, there was a system called “ensuring prosperity” (*baoxi*). “Ensuring prosperity” consisted of six policies: (1) taking care of children; (2) taking care of the old; (3) helping the people in need; (4) saving the poor; (5) exempting the taxes from the sick; (6) consoling the rich. Since this [system of ensuring prosperity] was largely identical with the control of famine, I will not explain each of these policies. How the Zhou administration made every effort for relief work can be seen in the following sentence: “Whenever there is [a sign of] misfortune in the sky and people are sick, [officials] go around the country even to the fields outside towns and grant beneficence at the king’s command.”<sup>30</sup> There were also the systems of charitable granary (*yicang*) and ever-normal granary (*changpingcang*). They were implemented as a precautionary policy to prepare for famine. In particular, later from the Han period, these two systems were expanded for famine preparation. Then, what are charitable granary and ever-normal granary? Charitable granary was an office that collected two *sheng* [approx. two liters] of seedlings as a tax on each furrow every year, saved them in granaries, and distributed them in a bad crop year after reporting to a higher office. Ever-normal granary was an office that bought millet grains at a price higher than the market price in a good crop year, saved them in granaries, and sold

them at a price lower than the market price in a bad year.

In the Han period, various [relief] actions were enforced: granary grains were distributed based on the systems of charitable granary and ever-normal granary; grains from the privy treasury (*neitang*) or great granary (*taicang*), as well as millet grains from local granaries were used for relief; taxes were exempted or postponed; the poor were moved to other regions. However, all these just belonged to the administrative policy. Since Indian Buddhism was introduced after the Eastern Han period, it was obvious that such religious activities as scripture translation, pagoda and temple construction, and ritual performance, were active and, at the same time, the relief work, based on the religious notion of relief, was earnestly carried out. This can be guessed from the fact that temples in many places allowed displaced people to stay at parts of their precincts and provided food and clothes.

In the Sui (581–618) and Tang (618–907) periods, government-owned granaries were established and grain taxes were reduced; people were moved to places away from their home towns; charitable granary and community granary (*shecang*) were re-organized for relief work. One such example was Sun Ping (fl. ca. late sixth century), a local magistrate of the Sui dynasty. In the fifth year of Emperor Wen's (r. 581–604) reign (589),<sup>31</sup> he made a petition to the emperor to establish community granaries, modeling after the famine relief system of the Zhou period. Then, accepting his petition, the emperor issued an edict that a community granary should be established in every province. In the Tang dynasty, in the eleventh year of Emperor Taizong's (r. 626–649) reign (637), the law [for relief work] was made and community granaries and ever-normal granaries were established in many provinces to save the poor. However, it was after the Song period (960–1279) when [relief work] gradually developed. In the Song period, the fourth year of the Qiande era<sup>32</sup> of Emperor Taizu's (r. 960–976) reign (963), charitable granary was established in all provinces and prefectures under the imperial edict; during the reign of Emperor Renzong (r. 1022–1063), Jia An (1022–1065) made

a petition to establish community granary and charitable granary (1040). Afterwards, Zhuzi (1130–1200) also argued for the necessity of community granary. Community granaries were also privately established [in some places] for relief work.

The relief system in the Song period was more fully implemented than the previous dynastic periods. In a bad crop year, [the government] regulated prices, loaned seeds, and distributed grains with the millet grains from various granaries, including ever-normal granaries, throughout the country. When these acts were not sufficient, the millet grains from the provincial granaries were used; grains from other regions were transported; rich people's money and grains were collected. Even when these were not enough, gold and silk from the Privy Treasury were used for relief. In addition, many other relief actions were enforced: taxes were reduced; the whole taxes for markets on borders were reduced; punishments were alleviated; tolls were exempted for displaced people; grains were supplied for the places where displaced people reached; displaced people were allowed to stay at government offices and temples; old and weak people were treated at government offices; the dead were buried and money and grains were given to their surviving family members; beans and millet grains were exchanged for locusts.

The [relief] system in the Yuan period (1271–1368) was similar with that of the Song period. Taxes were reduced; millet grains from charitable granary were distributed; rich people who donated their property for relief work were granted an honorary banner; the delinquent taxes were reduced by inviting merchants and promoting the sales of grains; those who wanted to move to other places among the displaced were allowed to stay in government offices and temples during their journey by lifting the ban against staying mountains and rivers; those who returned to their home towns were given travel expenses; children and women who were sold were saved; the deceased were buried in precincts.

In the Ming period (1368–1644), three types of precautionary actions were enforced: the first was encouraging farming and silk-

farming with a magistrate in charge of agricultural administration; the second was storing grains by establishing community granary and charitable granary; the third was catching locusts which aimed at eradicating the locusts at outbreaks. Six types of reactionary actions were implemented: the first was reporting damages from a disaster; the second was assessing the levels of damages; the third was exempting taxes; the fourth was distributing grains and rations; the fifth was selling grains of ever-normal granary at a lower price; the sixth was loaning seeds.

In the Qing period (1644–1911), in consult with the Ming system, a new twelve-fold system of famine relief was implemented, modeling after the Zhou counterpart. As for this new twelve-fold system, the first was preventing disasters from occurring; the second was exterminating the locusts; the third was enforcing both of Ming's actions of reporting and accessing the damages; the fourth was saving starved people, using granary grains, and at the same time, reporting the damages; the fifth was selling grains of ever-normal granary at a price lower than the market price; the sixth was loaning rations or seeds for sowing; the seventh was reducing land taxes; the eighth was postponing the imposition of land-tax; the ninth was selling grains by inviting rice merchants to the disaster areas; the tenth was encouraging government officials and merchants to send money and grains despite financial loss; the eleventh was launching construction projects and hiring victims for feeding themselves; the twelfth was returning displaced people to their home towns and giving jobs. The first and second actions were precautionary; the third to tenth actions were reactionary; the eleventh and twelfth were post-cautionary.

In the Qing period, the system was fully set up as explained above. However, since the reality was worse than ancient periods, many of those policies simply ended in empty phrase. In local areas, nonetheless, such activities as reducing and predicting land taxes, encouraging donations, and regulating prices were probably conducted. It seemed that this system was applied to not only China, but also Korea or Taiwan. [The Chinese government] through all ages

paid careful attention to famine control because of the following reason: China was very large and had poor transportation. Thus, once a disaster occurred and caused tremendous damages on a certain area, there was always a possibility that victims rose up with bandits, plundered local areas, and eventually threatened the order of the country. For this reason, politicians and scholars sought [for solutions]: one dimension [of those solutions] was the benevolent works of such religions as Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism; the other dimension was the policy of peace preservation police. In the period of the Republic of China, Christianity was introduced to China. It devoted itself to social work, building schools and hospitals.

### **3) Development of Social Work in Korea**

The relief work in Korea can be traced back to the benefits from the humane rule of the royal family in ancient Silla (57 BCE–668 CE). During the reign of King Yuri (r. 24–57) (the fifth year of the third king of Silla, the fifty-seventh year of Japanese Emperor Suinin [r. 29 BCE–70 CE], 28), when the king went around the country and saw an old woman who was about to die from hunger and cold, he felt pity for her and granted food and clothes to save her. Then, he sought out those who could not support themselves among the widowers, widows, orphans, childless people, sick people, and old people, and helped them. This is the first relief work in Korea. Wise and humane kings of the Three Kingdoms charitably helped them. As these kingdoms fought one another for unification, they trained military horses and stored military provisions and, at the same time, saved people from famine, feeling the need to prevent them from being displaced. Afterwards, the relief work [in Korea] was carried out as a state policy.

After Silla unified the Three Kingdoms and Goryeo (918–1392) succeeded [the Unified] Silla (668–935), [the Korean monarchs of these periods] who were influenced by Buddhism regarded compassion as one of the kingly virtues. Therefore, [the relief work of the periods]

was conducted as the kings proudly carried out the humane rule during their reign. Various relief systems were implemented during the Goryeo dynasty: ever-normal granary [equivalent to Chinese *changpingcang*] was established to prepare for famine; charitable granary [equivalent to Chinese *yicang*] was founded to relieve people of hunger and poverty; Infirmary (Daebiwon) was opened to provide medical treatment. Thus, it seemed that the relief work of the Goryeo administration materialized [the Confucian ideal of] governing the state and saving its people. For example, in the third lunar month of the twenty-second year of King Uijong (r. 1146–1170) (1168), the king felt pity for the poverty of his people and issued a royal edict to remove their corvée labor. He also established East and West Infirmaries, along with other emergency medical stations, and used them as institutions to help widowers, widows, orphans, childless people, sick people, and old people. This later became a system called “reduction and exemption” (*gyeonmyeon*), which reduced grain taxes and exempted various labor or delinquent taxes.

During the reign of King Chunghye (r. 1330–1332, 1339–1344) (1343), there was a great famine. The king issued an edict to help people by distributing grains of local offices, annex the archery training centers to the East and West Infirmaries, and order the infirmaries to gather and treat the sick and poor people throughout the country or give food and clothes to them. This later became a system called “aid relief” (*jin’geup*), which helped people through the privy treasury or taxes. A renowned monk named Hakseon (fl. fourteenth century) was a central figure in the relief work of this time. In fact, many relief activities during the Goryeo period were carried out through his petitions.

In the period of Yi dynasty (1392–1910), the Buddhist spirit of the Goryeo dynasty became dormant while the Confucian spirit increased its power. [The relief work of Joseon] thrived even more as this Confucian spirit served as a driving force. The guiding principle of the relief policy of Joseon was that if any person in the country suffered from famine and cold, the king was held

responsible. Expanding the systems of Silla and Goryeo, [the court] during the reign of King Taejo (r. 1392–1398) established medical station (*guryowon*) and dispensary (*siyagwon*) in Gwangju and Suwon, Gyeonggi-do. During the reign of King Sejong (r. 1419–1450), [the court built such public medical clinics and dispensaries as] the Office of Benefitting People (Hyemin'guk), the Office of Saving People (Hwarinwon) or the Bureau of Benefitting People (Hyeminseo), the Bureau of Saving People (Hwarinseo), and the Office of Curing People (Yominwon) at Hanyang, the capital of Joseon, to help the poor and sick.<sup>33</sup> During this time, there were three monks named Josaeng (fl. ca. fifteenth century), Jongnim (fl. ca. fifteenth century), and Tanseon (fl. ca. fifteenth century) who were very active in relief work. In particular, Tanseon served as a military doctor, along with 300 his fellow monks, and devoted himself to treating injured soldiers. Afterwards, he lived his later life, helping sick and poor people.

In summary, the spirit of the social work in ancient, medieval, and modern Korea has been based on the humane rule of kings and the compassion of religions. From the Silla period to the early Joseon period, as the society as a whole welcomed Buddhism and religion and politics were united, officials and people devoted themselves to social relief work. However, from the mid-Joseon when Confucianism gained power, the state only emphasized formality which was nothing but a hollow shell and sought for the prosperity of the royal family alone. Government officials organized factions for no use and created ranks. They were immersed in worshipping Confucianism and China and excluded Buddhism, destroying temples and pagodas in towns and villages. They also issued a ban against the entry of the Buddhist clerics into the towns. As a result, clerics were forced to retreat to the mountains and only temples in the mountains could survive. Buddhism became estranged from the society and, therefore, relief work gradually declined. Nonetheless, though Buddhist clerics were excluded from the society and thus stayed deep in the mountains, they made every effort for relief work for the society. For example, when they went outside the temples,

they helped people through various works such as draining water from land for poor people in the villages, repairing waterways, building bridges and roads, and teaching farming. In the precinct of the temples, they established guest rooms and an annexed building (present day, free lodging house) to provide free accommodation for travellers and guests, i.e., pilgrims, merchants, poets, monks, nuns, mendicant friars, and beggars. They also built sickrooms, “house of extending life” (*yeonsuwon*), “hall of nirvāṇa” (*yeolbandang*), etc, to treat patients, poor and old people, and disabled people.

Besides these Buddhist clerics, people also carried out relief work. Retired officials and rich people established village schools, Confucian academies, and shelters, encouraging children’s education on the one hand and nurturing infants, aiding elderly people, and helping chaste women and poor people on the other hand. However, those relief activities were conducted in some local villages and temples. Those activities were not carried out in the society as a whole. Social work was widely recognized in the society finally around the twenty-eighth year (1895) of Meiji (r. 1867–1912) when Catholicism, which was introduced directly from France, built churches, schools, and hospitals to declare the gospel and, at the same time, launched its relief work. Afterwards, American Protestant missionaries came to Korea, building schools, hospitals, and churches. They dedicated themselves to relief work, educating the children of poor people and giving medications to sick people. I originally planned to explain the history of social work in Japan. However, I will skip it for lack of space for now and hope to introduce it sometime in the future when the occasion arises. Here, I will finish the overview of the research on religion and the development of social work. I will skip itemized discussion and also take a rain check on it.

## Notes

- \* This essay was published in the *Bulgyo* 佛教 [Buddhism] 25–29 (1926); 30, 32, 33, 36, and 44 (1927); 45–49 (1928).
- 1 The four kinds difficulties refer to the difficulties that sentient beings face in the path toward Buddhahood, explained in the *Dhammapada* (*Faju jing* [Kor. *Beopgu gyeong*] 法句經, Dharma-Phrase Sūtra): (1) a human birth is difficult to achieve; (2) difficult is the life of mortals; (3) difficult is the hearing of the true teaching; (4) difficult is the attainment of Buddhahood.
  - 2 Yi Yeongjae 李英宰 (1900–1927) became a monk in 1918. He graduated from the Department of Religion at Nippon University and entered the Department of Indian Philosophy at Tokyo Imperial University in 1924. He died in Sri Lanka in 1927 during his pilgrimage to Buddhist sacred sites in India. He wrote the *Joseon Bulgyo hyeoksinnon* 朝鮮佛教革新論 [Treatise on the Renovation of Korean Buddhism] when he was at Nippon University.
  - 3 Gwon Sangro 權相老 was a scholar monk in the colonial and post-Liberation periods.
  - 4 Avalokiteśvara (Gwaneum [Ch. Guanin]) is the bodhisattva of compassion. He is one of the most widely worshipped bodhisattvas. According to a legend, the bodhisattva was born from a beam that radiated from the forehead of Amitābha Buddha who was deep in meditation. The bodhisattva appears in numerous forms. The eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara (Sibil myeon Gwaneum [Ch. Shiyi mian Guanyin] 十一面觀音) is one of them. His cult has been very popular in East Asia.
  - 5 Karl Marx used these words in his “A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right,” published in 1844.
  - 6 Peter Kropotkin was a Russian activist and philosopher who argued for anarchism and decentralized government.
  - 7 Mikhail Bakunin was a Russian revolutionary anarchist.
  - 8 Gim Taeheup here seems to refer to Mark 12:17 which says, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”
  - 9 The *Flower Garland Sūtra* (*Huayan jing* [Kor. *Hwaeom gyeong*] 華嚴經, Skt. *Avatamsaka-sūtra*) is one of the most important scriptural texts in East Asian Buddhism. It is traditionally believed to describe the insight that

- Śākyamuni Buddha gained the moment he attained enlightenment. The text was influential in many of East Asian Buddhist schools, in particular, Huayan (Kor. Hwaeom) and Chan (Kor. Seon) schools.
- 10 The *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* (*Niepan jing* [Kor. *Yeolban gyeong*] 涅槃經) is a name for a group of scriptures called *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, which is known as describing the events at the end of Śākyamuni's life.
  - 11 The *Lotus Sūtra* (*Fahua jing* 法華經 or *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經, Skt. *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra*). It is one of the most popular scriptures in the East Asian Buddhist tradition, especially for its stories and parables. The scripture emphasizes such notions as “expedient means,” according to which the Buddha helps sentient beings with different mental capacities and “the one-buddha vehicle,” according to which those various expedient means ultimately serves to guide all sentient beings, without exception, to the ultimate goal. The *Lotus Sūtra* also became a scriptural basis for the foundation of several Buddhist schools in East Asia, for example, Tiantai zong in China, Cheontae jong in Korea, and Tendai shū and Nichiren shū in Japan.
  - 12 There are six destinies or six kinds of rebirth that sentient beings go through in accord with their good or evil actions: hell, hungry ghosts, animals, human, asura (demi-gods), and gods. Gim here seems to mistakenly drop asura.
  - 13 He quoted with small changes from Luke 4:18–19.
  - 14 Luke 18:22.
  - 15 His summary of Deuteronomy 15:1–11.
  - 16 Zoroaster was the founder of Zoroastrianism, the official religion of Persia. According to Arabic and Persian sources, he lived from 628 to 551 BCE.
  - 17 John Chrysostom (347–407) was an early Church Father, commemorated as a saint in the Catholic tradition.
  - 18 *Mujusang bosi* 無住相布施 (almsgiving without abiding in forms) refers to the almsgiving without attachment, i.e., without the thought of offering almsgivings to others.
  - 19 It seems that the book was written by a Western scholar. However, the book is hard to identify. I cannot find a book entitled *Poverty and the Protection of the Old and the Infirm* or with a similar title, published before 1926 when this article came out.
  - 20 Asia Minor or Anatolia is a region that covers most of the present-day Turkey.
  - 21 The *Social Discovery: An Approach to the Study of Functional Groups* was published in 1924. Its author was Edward Lindeman (1885–1953) who was

- an American educator.
- 22 Solon was a Greek statesman. His failed reform paved the way for Athenian democracy.
  - 23 The Gracchus brothers, Tiberius (ca. 164–133 BCE) and Gaius (ca. 154–121 BCE), were Roman politicians in the second century BCE.
  - 24 Aśoka was the third Mauryan king, known as a great patron of Buddhism. After ascending to the throne, he waged a series of wars and conquered the most of the Indian subcontinent. According to a Buddhist legend, seeing the ravages of the wars, the king repented his deeds and converted to Buddhism. He greatly promoted Buddhism, sending missionaries to many other countries, for example, west to Macedonia and Egypt and east to China.
  - 25 Magadhā was the largest of the sixteen states in ancient India that thrived from the sixth through third centuries BCE in the northeastern part of the Indian subcontinent.
  - 26 Kaniška was the third king of the Kushan dynasty in the northwest of India. According to a Buddhist legend, he was a great patron of Buddhism, rivaled only by King Aśoka. Most notably, he convened the fourth Buddhist council, which led to the compilation of the *Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā* [Great Exegesis of Abhidharma]. It has been traditionally known that the Kushan Empire was a major conduit for the introduction of Buddhist materials through the Silk Road to China, thanks to King Kaniška.
  - 27 The Miao people (苗族) is one of the ethnic minority groups of China which now live primarily in the provinces of Guizhou, Hunan, Yunnan, Sichuan, Guangxi, Hainan, Guangdong, and Hubei.
  - 28 The Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors (Sanhuang wudi 三皇五帝) were legendary rulers of ancient China, traditionally believed to have provided the essentials of existence such as fire, writing, houses, etc.
  - 29 Yao 堯, Shun 舜, or Yu 禹 were legendary rulers of China, belonging to the five emperors (Wudi 五帝). Contemporary historians believe that they were not real historical figures though Chinese and Korean people have traditionally treated them so.
  - 30 “凡歲時有天患民病 則以節巡國中及郊野 而以王命施惠.”
  - 31 It was 585 CE, not 589 CE.
  - 32 Qiande 乾德 was one of the three era-names that the Song emperor Taizu 太祖 used. It lasted from 963 to 968.
  - 33 Hyemin'guk 惠民局 (Office of Benefitting People), renamed later Hyeminseo 惠民署 (Bureau of Benefitting People), was in charge of the provision and sale of medicines while Hwarinwon 活人院 (Office of Saving People), renamed later Hwarinseo 活人署 (Bureau of Saving People) focused on treating patients.

## Glossary

### Korean

Chunghye, King (忠惠王, r. 1330–1332, 1339–1344), Goryeo  
 Daebiwon 大悲院  
*geungnak* 極樂  
 Gim Jeongwon 金正源  
*guryowon* 救療院  
*guse juui* 救世主義  
*gyeonmyeon* 鑄免  
 Hakseon 鬻仙 (fl. fourteenth century)  
*jabi* 慈悲  
*jin'geup* 賑給  
 Jongnim 宗林 (fl. ca. fifteenth century)  
 Josaeng 祖生 (fl. ca. fifteenth century)  
*manilhoe* 萬日會  
*sahoe* 社會  
*siyagwon* 施藥院  
 Taejo, King (太祖, r. 1392–1398), Joseon  
 Tanseon 坦宣 (fl. ca. fifteenth century)  
 Uijong, King (毅宗, r. 1146–1170), Goryeo  
*Xindi guanjing* 心地觀經  
*yeolbandang* 涅槃堂  
*yeonsuwon* 延壽院  
 Yi Yeongjae 李英宰 (1900–1927)  
 Yominwon 療民院  
*Youposai suowen jing* 優婆塞所問經  
*Yuedeng sanmei jing* 月燈三昧經  
 Yuri, King (儒理王, r. 24–57), Silla

### Chinese

Bailian jieshe 白蓮結社  
*baoxi* 保息  
*beihuang* 備荒  
*changpingcang* 常平倉  
 Gun 鱖  
 He 和  
 Huai River 淮江  
*huangzheng* 荒政  
 Jia An 賈黯 (1022–1065)  
 Lushan Huiyuan 廬山慧遠 (334–416)  
*neitang* 內帑  
 Renzong, Emperor (仁宗, r. 1022–1063), Song  
*shecang* 社會  
 Sun Ping 孫平 (fl. ca. late sixth century)  
*taicang* 太倉  
 Taizong, Emperor (太宗, r. 626–649), Tang  
 Taizu, Emperor (太祖, r. 960–976), Song  
 Wen, Emperor (文帝, r. 581–604), Sui  
 Xi 羲  
 Yangtze River 揚子江  
*yicang* 義倉  
 Yidi 儀狄  
 Zhuzi 朱子 (1130–1200)


### Japanese

Namae Takayuki 生江孝之 (1867–1957)  
*Shakai jigyō kōyō* 社會事業綱要  
 Suinin 垂仁 (r. 29 BCE–70CE)



A CONCERN FOR KOREAN BUDDHISM:  
THE WORDS ADDRESSED TO ALL KOREAN BUDDHIST CLERICS\*

Gim Byeokong

- Chapter 1 Introduction
  - Chapter 2 Past
  - Chapter 3 Present
  - Chapter 4 Institution
  - Chapter 5 Work
  - Chapter 6 Incorporated Foundation
  - Chapter 7 Temples
  - Chapter 8 Education
  - Chapter 9 Propagation
  - Chapter 10 Conclusion
- 



## Chapter 1

### Introduction

I am only a Buddhist whose heart and spirit are most closely connected to Korean Buddhism. My affection is also directed only to Korean Buddhism. Now, I will briefly speak of the past, present, and future of Korean Buddhism. I hope that my words can become a guide for all Korean Buddhist clerics through the real facts that I have experienced, and can have grand effects in all material and spiritual matters by helping actual workers make a firm determination to reform Korean Buddhism which is in disorder. Briefly speaking, whether abbots or ordinary clerics, everyone has a connection to and responsibility for Korean Buddhism. It is not that only abbots are responsible for Buddhism and should make it prosper, but that the rise and fall of Korean Buddhism depend on the entire seven thousand Buddhist clerics. If the entire Korean Buddhism is affected by whether an abbot, a cleric, or a branch or head temple performs a good job, who could avoid responsibility? Some judge on whether a certain abbot, head temple, or branch temple is right or wrong, good or bad. Let us think about this again! Are these things not affairs of our Buddhist community? Are these clerics not Korean Buddhists? Are these temples not our Korean temples? The whole-day-debates on right or wrong, good or bad of these clerics and temples belong to the affairs of our own Buddhist community. It is needless to say about good or bad things in our entire history. Let us talk about the situation in the past ten years, in particular, from the time of the so-called “reformation.”<sup>1</sup> Is the current situation of Buddhism that has survived until today optimistic or pessimistic?

## Chapter 2

### Past

Let us examine the periods of Goguryeo (37 BCE–668 CE) and Silla (57 BCE– 668 CE) when the Korean culture sprouted. Korea greatly developed its culture, politics, diplomacy, art, and religion [in this period]. Buddhism, introduced to the peninsula during the reign of King Sosurim (r. 371–384), provided tremendous benefits for our society and nation. Our nation as a whole that had received such benefits was happy. If you read a page or two of a history book about the Three Kingdoms period,<sup>2</sup> you will agree that the history of our country is in fact the history of our Buddhism. You will also find out that there was no king or person who did not serve Buddhism and there was no Buddhist cleric who did not work for societies and nations. There are still many surviving temples in the beautiful land of Korea that were built in this period of Silla and Baekje (18 BCE–660 CE). There are also a number of surviving buddha statues, sculptures, paintings, and inscriptions that were produced by Buddhist clerics. Although many Buddhist temples and statues were destroyed through the persecution of the government during the Joseon dynasty (1392–1910), Buddhism has survived five hundred years of the hatred of the government with its clerics who had the indomitable spirit. There are still thirty-one head temples<sup>3</sup> and their branch temples, along with about seven thousand clerics. There are also temple land and forest that are worthy of a lot of cash. To whom are all these owed? How many difficulties and crises did Korean Buddhism go through for the long five-hundred years of the fierce governmental persecution? If you think about the fact that our ancestors and former masters saved Korean Buddhism from death with the spirit of their blood and the power of their love, you will be

able to see how great and influential their virtuous acts were. Now, you abbots and all Buddhists should appreciate that seven-thousand clerics, along with the thirty-one head temples and their branch temples, still exist [thanks to our Buddhist ancestors]. You should thus feel a sense of shame. You also have to support temples and praise the Buddha-dharma, protecting the three jewels, and thereby repay the kindness of our ancestors and former masters. Then, fulfill the old dream of [revitalizing] the thriving Buddhism during the Three Kingdoms period within your Samādhi!

## Chapter 3

### Present

I will leave it to the dharma-eyes of Buddhist clerics to determine whether Korean Buddhism has thrived or declined since the time of reformation. I can guess how much Korean Buddhism was changed or disrupted for the past ten years and how much danger and hardship it went through in the process of that change. It experienced [institutional organs such as] Board of Administrative Affairs (Jongmuwon), Joint Office (Yeonhapso),<sup>4</sup> General Bureau (Chongmuwon), and Administration Bureau (Gyomuwon).<sup>5</sup> The Temple Ordinance (Sachallyeong)<sup>6</sup> was issued and, thereby, the system of the thirty-one head temples was implemented. Korean Buddhism also encountered Imje jong, Sōtō shū,<sup>7</sup> and Jōdo shū,<sup>8</sup> youth and abbot groups; southern and northern temples;<sup>9</sup> Central Seminary (Jungang hangnim), Myeongjin Academy (Myeongjin hakgyo),<sup>10</sup> Donggwang School (Donggwang hakgyo),<sup>11</sup> Boseong School (Boseong hakgyo), Buddhist Seminary (Bulgyo jeonsu hakgyo), and Missionary Training Center (Pogyosa yangseongso); revival meetings, Buddhist Youth Association (Bulgyo cheongnyeonhae),<sup>12</sup> and Revitalization Association (Yusinhoe);<sup>13</sup> local seminaries, mission stations, and an incorporated foundation; land mortgage, forest sale, temple abolition, misconduct of abbots, and struggle over abbotship; a council, abbots' convention, and so on. All these constitute the history of Korean Buddhism from the time of reformation. Korean Buddhism went through these many affairs. Then, what fruit and result does it have now? Are all these caused by the characteristics of the Korean people? Is the passion of Korean people for Buddhism weak? Everyone can guess that Korea has perished like today because of the political factionalism during the Joseon dynasty. Comparing this to Korean

Buddhism, if Buddhism is divided into factions of old and new forms that fight each other, what will be left at the end? I assert that there will be ruin and enslavement at the end. It is needless to say about anything else. I can easily guess that Korean Buddhism will be like this, judging from the situation it has already faced. Seeing the remaining temples and clerics, you may feel at ease; however, if you see corruptions and Buddhist clerics who encourage such an atmosphere behind the scene, you cannot but feel disappointed and desponded. You will probably say that there is nothing to be hopeful.

## Chapter 4 Institution

In general, there is an institution named government in a country, an executive [committee] in a society, and a chief's office in a town. If there is no government in the country, whatever this country may be, its people will lose peace and happiness and cannot be called the people of civilization. They will not have the right and ability to trade and exchange goods with people of other countries. Therefore, we will see how important an institution is to the country. So is in the society, town, and organization. Korean Buddhism has been a huge religious organization for thousands of years. Korean Buddhism surely has an institution that befits its responsibility to guide the whole Korean nation and edify the entire society. In recent years, Korean Buddhism has been in the state of disorder and disunity, being divided without the head. Although the Temple Ordinance was issued and the temple laws were established, the thirty-one head temples and their branches were scattered throughout the country, exercising their own autonomy. Just like army commanders (*dujun*) in China, [Korean clerics] are not united, hating each other, and become significantly estranged. If the great Buddhism of Korea is destroyed by such inharmonious disputes, everyone will feel pity. Even in the period of Joint Office, General Bureau, and Board of Administrative Affairs, there was no so-called central institution but a sort of a gathering place. The foundation of Korean Buddhism is not yet firmly established. The old and new trends conflict with each other. At a period like this, there should be a fully autonomous unifying institution that has its own constitution. Each group of Buddhists should give up wild chivalry of saying, "I am a general or hero. I belong to a head temple and so do you!" The thirty-one head

temples and their branches should take initiative by organizing a unifying institution. In Korean Buddhism of today, when something happens, people submit petitions to the Bureau of Academic Affairs (Hangmu guk) or the Department of Religions (Jonggyo gwa) at the Government-General's Office (Chongdokbu) or they get busy filing a complaint or lawsuit to the court or police station. These kinds of acts not only degrade their own community but also despise their own rights and self-respects, as well as the dignity as religious leaders. How could this [situation] not be contemptible? Is this because they want to promote Buddhism in order to protect temples for Korean Buddhism? No! Only for their personal benefits do they serve as an abbot or else. These are all evil acts only to satisfy their personal desires. All these kinds of things happen because there is no complete institution.

## Chapter 5

### Work

Do you think that Buddhists truly pursue to reside in the valleys of deep mountains, forgetting worldly affairs, and lead a complacent life, benefiting themselves? The Buddha preached for sentient beings and non-Buddhists at urban market areas for forty-nine years and led his followers to attain sudden enlightenment to the Great Way. Buddhism is a religion that the Buddha first founded for sentient beings, society, three realms, and six destinies. If Buddhism turns back on the mundane world and confines itself in mountain temples and hermitages, how could this be called a “religion” and what benefits could Buddhism provide for people in the world? In the so-called Buddhist spirit of benefiting people, the principle penetrates into phenomena and phenomena penetrate into the principle; phenomena and phenomena, as well as principle and principle, interpenetrate each other. This is what the [Buddha]’s attainment of enlightenment during the six years of stay in the snow mountains revealed. During five hundred years of the Joseon dynasty, Buddhism was forced to go deep into the mountains, being separated from people and the society. What power is left in Buddhism that has endured five hundred years of the governmental persecution and limitless hatred? Nonetheless, it has survived until now thanks to the incalculable power of the Buddha’s vow and the efforts of our Buddhist ancestors and former masters. Now, it is the right time and destiny! In this time of reformation, we should restore Buddhism that has been stagnant for five hundred years and make efforts to guide people and the society. We should work to complement what we have not done for the past five hundred years. There are a number of things for which we should have a good spirit, abandoning the five

hundred years of evil habits. Be not negligent in serving people and the society! There are piles of works cumulated as high as Mountain Tai<sup>14</sup> in such areas as education, hospital, charity, and mission. Those who receive the Buddha's kindness are Buddhists and they will cry, thanking for his kindness. Do not seek Buddhism only in mountain temples and hermitages because it is present in the realm of phenomena and human beings! The Master Pyeonyang (1581–1644)<sup>15</sup> realized the Way by seeing the nature at Yeon'gwangjeong Pavilion, Pyeongyang. Therefore, do not assume that Buddhism exists only in a secluded place! Who knows Great Vehicle Buddhism, True Buddhism, and Sentient Beings' Buddhism? Since the time is right, we have to practice Buddhism that carries out various works and serves the society in order to guide people.

## Chapter 6

### Incorporated Foundation

What is called a foundation is stipulated in the current laws that the world shares. Buddhism organizes a foundation in order to conduct social work in a full scale by collecting its property. I will not discuss the motivation for organizing an incorporated foundation because everyone knows it. It is said that the endowment for the foundation should be at least 600,000 won. As a matter of fact, however, considering the entire Korean Buddhist community, this amount is not enough for the foundation. An individual, a group, or a corporate body which is smaller than the Buddhist community has two- or three-million won of a basic endowment and still worries that this amount of endowment is insufficient. Such a large community as Korean Buddhism has not been able to collect 600,000 won. Temples throughout the peninsula showed little sincerity: as the government authority urges, they reluctantly provided a tiny endowment, not taking the lead themselves in this matter. It is just unbearable. Buddhist clerics make a fuss, doing everything to become an abbot of a head or branch temple. However, they lack sincerity in and unconsciously oppose to the idea of doing Buddhist works that use temple property, not their personal one. I do not know what they really think. How many years have already passed since the incorporated foundation was established? Probably, not a big amount has been collected to meet 600,000 won of endowment. Temples still have different types of property quite a lot. Do you readers know how much money would cost to re-construct or maintain Boseong School and build and maintain the Buddhist Seminary? 600,000 won is not enough. Then, how could all these works be done when endowment is collected less than this amount?

There would be no problem if this foundation project were to be cancelled. However, if Korean Buddhism conducts its first work after reformation in this way, it will not only lose its face to the society but also have difficulty in making progress in edifying people. Since this foundation has been already started, the thirty-one head temples and their branches should voluntarily establish a complete managing organization as soon as possible without hindering their works and relying on the government's sponsorship which is difficult to earn. If Buddhism could make a beautiful contribution to the society [with this foundation], how good would this be? All Korean Buddhist clerics are responsible for collecting the endowment. Since this is the work that we should strive for, let us discard the conventional habits for the past five hundred years and do this work with a new spirit and new people! All works are for people and the society; all works are the dharma-gate of the Buddha's guidance. Taking this year of rabbit (1927) as the beginning of a new era, may there be the light in Korean Buddhism!

## Chapter 7

### Temples

Temples are the Brahma's palace where the three jewels of the Buddha, dharma, and Saṃgha are present. They are the forest to protect Korean Buddhism. Thus, they can be called "the places where the life of Korean Buddhism is." From the historical point of view, Korean temples were built in the Silla period and [many of them] were reconstructed in the Joseon period. They are as old as a thousand or one thousand five hundred years. Therefore, because of the erosion from wind and water, their huge wooden pillars are rotten. If you look at any temple, it creates rather a sad scene that appears to be collapsing. The so-called abbots are those who represent their temples. Then, what do they do for their temples? It would be even fortunate to see a case where they do not put their temple in danger by abusing temple property. There is no single temple among the thirty-one head temples and their branches that has no debt or whose buildings have not collapsed. This is a really pitiful situation for Korean Buddhism. If a country has a lot of debts to other countries, the country will perish. If a family has a lot of debts to other people, the family will be destroyed. Since each and every temple has a debt, the total debts of all Korean temples are probably more than 600,000 won. Do temples come to have this amount of debt because they reconstructed temple buildings or spent money in education, propagation, and charity works? How have all the temples, whether they are head temples or branch temples, become debtors? All harmful effects have originated from the so-called abbots' selfish interests and desires. Because of them, all temples have been destroyed and scriptures and buddha statues have been damaged. These things are troublesome for Korean Buddhism.

Does any abbot reconstruct his temple or clean the training facility? Of course, there is an abbot of great virtue who respects the Buddha and protects temples. However, in general, abbots destroy temples. I think that the clerics who construct and repair temples are the true clerics, abbots, children of the Buddha, or believers [of Buddhism]. [Abbots] often request permission for reconstructing a temple building and selling temple land or mountain. Then, what do they do with the money that they have obtained by doing so? Alas! Let us keep our eyes open!

## Chapter 8

### Education

If education thrives in the country, the country will become civilized; if there is no education in the country, the country will inevitably perish. This is well-proved throughout history. Korean Buddhism [of today] is truly lazy and negligent in education. Renowned monks in Goguryeo and Silla travelled to China and India to study. How many efforts did they make in crossing lands and oceans? Since Joseon, Korean Buddhism has paid little attention to education or going abroad to study. Recently, there are a number of Buddhist clerics who travel to Japan, China, or Europe. There are also some who have born the fruits of their own diligent studies. However, there is a strong trend for secularization [among the clerics who returned from their study abroad] and there are many among those clerics who commit despicable things. Therefore, they are disliked by temples and admonished by old masters. Thus, studying abroad becomes a kind of thing that brings hostility and a sense of discomfort. There are also fundamentally problematic people among those who go abroad. Some people travel abroad not for Buddhism or temples, but for themselves. Thus, coming out of a middle school, they study law or politics in seminary or college. After graduation, they flee to the secular world to follow their career that fits what they study. They study with the money from temple property and pursue career for their wife and child, not even looking back. Therefore, temples end up becoming like a dog just looking up at the chicken on the roof after trying to chase it. This is why the so-called those who go to Japan to study are mocked. Although Buddhist clerics have to focus on Buddhist scriptures, however, it is good for them to learn law, politics, economics, philosophy, art, agriculture, or what they wish

to learn in conformance with the stream of the time. If Buddhists study secular fields and work for Buddhism with [a sincere] mind, how could this not be pleasant or joyful? Wherever you are, be careful not to regress in your faith in the Buddha-dharma and thus become a secular person! Make every effort for Buddhism! Our Korean Buddhism should select talented students and send them to other countries to become writers, philosophers, politicians, or artists. Buddhism that has few talented persons is now finding ones: it is finding upright persons, scholars, and Seon practitioners. May an outstanding person, two, or many appear! We should learn. We should learn for Buddhism. Teach a lot! If we teach good materials, students will become such persons as Wonhyo (617–686) or Noemuk (fl. 1594).<sup>16</sup> Be not negligent in learning and teaching! Then, outstanding persons will appear. How immense the power of education is!

## Chapter 9

### Propagation

“The dharma-gates overlap as if clouds appear in the vast sky.” There should be such teachings as this. Who could know eighty thousand scriptures of Buddhism if nobody teaches them? Who could know the Buddha’s truth if nobody teaches it? We should propagate Buddhism by letting sentient beings know the immeasurable dharma-gate and teaching the truth of Seon and Gyo. Let us look at the acts of the so-called propagators of today! Those who cannot understand the meanings of scriptural texts, not to mention the tenets of scriptures, sit on the dharma-platform and wear a Buddhist robe, deceiving lay followers and betraying the Buddha. These racketeers wander around residential districts. This is really the time of the latter dharma! They betray the Buddha-dharma and sentient beings by deceiving ignorant people for a handful of rice grains or a penny. How could these “masters” propagate Buddhism? Let us go and see every missionary station throughout the peninsula! Let us count how many lay Buddhists come to these places every week! There are just children or old women. If propagation is carried out this way, it is not the propagation of Buddhism. It is a false propagation or propagation just in name. We should be truthful in doing anything. There is nothing false but truth in Buddhism. If you follow Buddhism by deceiving, you will just become a jackal. I have heard the following words: Central Administration Bureau tried to find proper candidates among all Buddhist clerics throughout the Korean land in order to appoint propagators. They eventually failed to find one to be qualified for a propagator. Those who have morality and scholarship lack in discipline and potential while those who have discipline and morality lack in scholarship and personality. Propagators are

really important and yet it is true that there is no one in the Korean Buddhist community who is qualified for a propagator. Some may say that I am looking down on the community too much. However, it is not an exaggeration to say that there is no able person in the entire Korean Buddhist community, whether old or young or whether in this or that temple. It is difficult to understand Buddhism. Then, how can we teach it to others? Therefore, we should encourage education. We should learn, study, and understand Buddhism. Educating propagators is not something that we Buddhist clerics look over. This is what we should keep in our mind.

## Chapter 10

### Conclusion

Although I have rambled thus far, what I have said is my feeling about Korean Buddhism that came out of the sincere faith in it. You probably know that Japanese Buddhism suffered the governmental persecution shortly after Meiji Reformation. According to newspapers, Russia expels clerics; the Southern Chinese Revolutionary Army confiscates Chinese Buddhist property. All these are not somebody else's business. They could happen to Korean Buddhism. There is a rumor going around about a public foundation in regard to Korean Buddhism. Thinking about all other issues that circulate now, how could we not be afraid about [the current situation]? How could we Buddhist clerics not keep our eyes open? As there is a magic of non-permanence, the situation always changes. Who could prophesy [the future] to prevent [bad things] from actually happening? When we look at the situation of Korean Buddhism, how could we feel at ease? This is not the time when we should leave things alone.

1. Is there a complete central institution?
2. Is there a complete educational institution?
3. Is there a complete missionary institution?
4. Is there a complete incorporated foundation?
5. Is there a complete meditation hall and sūtra hall?
6. Is there a complete youth institution?

Looking at every aspect of Korean Buddhism, one cannot say that this messiness is auspicious for Buddhism. Do Korean Buddhists practice Seon? Do they study doctrines? Do they reconstruct temples? Do they make efforts to propagate Buddhism? Do they work for

education? Do they conduct social works? They do nothing! Is this really nothing to worry about? Giving up all hopes in succeeding in their works and disputing on the matter of abbotship are the two things that Korean Buddhists are good at these days. If we abandon all erroneous things and do well in everything, what was wrong in the past will become what is right in the present and what was in decline will thrive again. I really hope for this to happen with a joyful heart. All followers of the thirty-one head temples and their branches will join this Buddhism. Hoping that Korean Buddhism will become Buddhism of the light, I will put down my pen here.

## Notes

- \* This article was published in the *Bulgyo* 佛教 [Buddhism] 32–33 (February–March 1927).
- 1 The time of reformation here refers to the early 1920s when Buddhist organizations such as Joseon Bulgyo yusinhoe 朝鮮佛教維新會 (Association for the Revitalization of Korean Buddhism) and Bulgyo Cheongnyeonhoe 佛教青年會 (Buddhist Youth Association) were established to carry out the reformation movement.
  - 2 The Three Kingdoms (Samguk 三國) refer to the three ancient Korean kingdoms of Goguryeo 高句麗, Baekje 百濟, and Silla 新羅 that were competing for dominance of the Korean Peninsula. Silla eventually unified the kingdoms in 676 with the military aid of Tang China. The unified Silla lasted until 935 when it fell to Goryeo 高麗. Goryeo was succeeded in 1392 by Joseon which was colonized by Imperial Japan in 1910.
  - 3 The Japanese Government-General's Office in Korea issued the Sachallyeong 寺刹令 [Temple Ordinance] in 1911 by which all the temples in Korea were organized around the head-branch system. Originally, thirty temples were selected as head temples. Hwaeomsa 華嚴寺 Temple in Jeolla-do was added to the list in 1924, which made the number of the head temples thirty-one.
  - 4 Yeonhapso 聯合所 (Joint Office) or Samsip bonsan yeonhap samuso 三十本山聯合事務所 (Joint Office of Thirty Head Temples) was a central Buddhist institute in early colonial period. It was established in 1915 and closed in 1922 when Joseon Bulgyo jungang gyomuwon 朝鮮佛教中央教務院 (Central Administration Bureau of Korean Buddhism) replaced it. The first office-head was Kang Daeryeon 姜大蓮 (1875–1942).
  - 5 Gyomuwon 教務院 (Administration Bureau) (Jungang gyomuwon 中央教務院 [Central Administration Bureau] or Joseon Bulgyo jungang gyomuwon) was established in 1922 as a central organization. It competed with the young-monks-led more nationalistic Chongmuwon 總務院 (General Bureau) or Joseon Bulgyo chongmuwon 朝鮮佛教總務院 (General Bureau of Korean Buddhism), which was eventually absorbed into Gyomuwon.
  - 6 Sachallyeong was issued in 1911 with seven articles and enforcement-regulations. With Sachallyeong that introduced the head-branch system,

- the Government-General's Office in Korea came to have a full control over the Korean Buddhist community.
- 7 Japanese Sôtō shū in Korea attempted to merge with Won jong 圓宗 (Consummate School) that was founded by Yi Hoegwang 李晦光 (1862–1933). This attempt failed due to the strong opposition by Korean monks who established Imje jong.
  - 8 Japanese Pure Land school Jōdo shū was involved in the Bulgyo yeon'guhoe 佛教研究會 (Society for Buddhist Research) that Hong Wolcho 洪月初 (1858–1934) and Yi Bodam 李寶潭 (b. 1859) established in 1906.
  - 9 Southern and northern temples refer to Imje jong and Won jong, respectively.
  - 10 Myeongjin hakgyo 明進學校 (Myeongjin Academy) was a modern Buddhist educational institute, founded in 1906. It is the present-day Dongguk University.
  - 11 Donggwang hakgyo 東光學校 (Donggwang School) was a modern Buddhist educational institute. It was merged into Boseong hakgyo 普成學校 (Boseong School) or Boseong godeung botong hakgyo 普成高等普通學校 (Boseong High Common School).
  - 12 Bulgyo cheongnyeonghoe was created in 1920 to reform Korean Buddhism. In particular, it carried out various social and educational activities, demanding the independence of Korean Buddhism.
  - 13 Yusinhoe 維新會 (Revitalization Association) or Joseon Bulgyo yusinhoe 朝鮮佛教維新會 (Association for the Revitalization of Korean Buddhism) was an offshoot of Bulgyo cheongnyeonghoe. Yusinhoe was established in 1921 and actively participated in Buddhist reform movement, demanding the abolition of the Temple Ordinance system.
  - 14 Mountain Tai (泰山) is a mountain located in Shandong Province, China. The tallest peak is reportedly 1,545 meters high.
  - 15 Pyeongyang Eongi 鞭羊彦機 was a monk in the mid-Joseon period. He was the last disciple of Hyujong 休靜 (1520–1604) who was revered as the revitalizer of Korean Buddhism. Pyeongyang's lineage has dominated the Korean Buddhist community ever since.
  - 16 Noemuk Cheoyeong 雷默處英 was a monk in the mid-Joseon period. He was a disciple of Hyujeong 休靜 (1520–1604). Noemuk is best known for his leading role in monks' militia during the Japanese invasion (1592–1598).

## Glossary

### Korean

Donggwang hakgyo 東光學校

Hangmu guk 學務局

Jonggyo gwa 宗教課

Jungang hangnim 中央學林

Yeon'gwangjeong 練光亭

### Chinese

dujun 督軍

# KOREAN BUDDHISM: ITS POSITION IN THE CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE EAST\*

Choe Namseon

- Chapter 1 Korea and Its Position in Cultural History
- Chapter 2 General Trend in the Transmission of Buddhism toward the East and Korea
- Chapter 3 The Development of the Buddhist Doctrines and Korea
- Chapter 4 Wonhyo: The Founder of Unified Buddhism
- Chapter 5 Korea in the History of Buddhist Art
- Chapter 6 Buddhist Canon and Korea
- Chapter 7 Korea in the Spread of Buddhism
- Chapter 8 Japanese Buddhism and Korea
- Chapter 9 Eastern Culture and Korean Buddhism



## Chapter 1

### Korea and Its Position in Cultural History

Approximately a half century ago, one of the Western writers called Korea a “hermit nation” in a book that introduces Korean history and folk culture.<sup>1</sup> Korea is not known to the world though it is an important country in the East not just from the political and international, but also from the cultural and academic perspectives. It is strange that the cultural value of Korea which preserves ancient traditions has not been yet justly appreciated up to the present when even savages in African jungles or a remote island in the Pacific Ocean play a significant role on the stage of academic research.

The stream of world civilization moves as if it were the sea current in the zone of trade and antitrade winds. It has travelled back and forth between the West and the East ever since the human race existed on the earth. Since it is assumed that the human race originated in the West, the historical development of the ancient Asia depended mainly on peoples and cultures moving from the West to the East. The Korean Peninsula is located at the farthest point of the East. It was the ending point of the West-bound movement of peoples and cultures. Just like a net thrown in the sluice gate, Korea was insatiable in devouring all the elements coming from the West.

Without doubt, India and China have served as treasuries of the Eastern cultures. Nonetheless, Korean culture clearly has showed the movement of human civilization and the growth of the Eastern cultures by accepting all the cultural developments from the inception of the human kind and putting them within a small canvas layer by layer. Therefore, the Korean cultural history indeed holds a special meaning and value. Korean history attracts people’s attention because it is something like a live museum of the cultures of the

human kind in a certain sense.

Those who carefully look at the ancient history of Korea are surprised to see that the structure of its legends and the names of deities are identical with those of Egypt, similar with those of Assyria and Babylon, and connected to those of Greece and Rome. The legend that the founder of Korea hatched from an egg and was the son of the Sun God is nothing but a variation from that of “Pharaoh” in Egypt. The words, “*bal*,” meaning the supreme god, and “*al*,” meaning the sense of holiness, in ancient Korean cults are equivalent to “Bael” and “El” of Semitic languages, respectively. The story of King Midas in Phrygia who had donkeys’ ears in the Greek mythology is similar with that of the Silla king Gyeongdeok (r. 742–765) around the ninth century.<sup>2</sup> There is also another interesting case. The name of the Roman deity, Vulcan, god of fire or volcano, is possibly connected to Bulham, the greatest volcano and supreme mountain god in the Korean Peninsula.

From the archeological perspective, a number of relics with very fine gold granulation have been recently discovered from ancient tombs throughout the Korean Peninsula and in the southwestern region of Japan, which had active cultural interactions with the peninsula. This filigree technique was popular in Etruria, Italy, and in many Greek colonies along the Black Sea coastline around the third or fourth century BCE. These facts definitely prove that there was a close genealogical relationship between the West and the East. Besides this, there are many other examples linking the Mycenaean and Korean cultures.

The interaction between the West and the East had been consistent for long centuries and the two were closer than generally expected. Of course, this interaction was not diplomatic, and therefore, not recorded. The aspiration and longing of the human race for happiness were stronger than the power of armies and the tactics of heroes. Those people in the East and the West tried to materialize the concept that the world was one family, overcoming the obstacles such as harsh natural environments and social discriminations based on race and

national origin. Therefore, in the actual connection between the East and the West, there was no need for such great pioneers as Alexander the Great (356–323 BCE) and Zhang Qian (d. 114 BCE).<sup>3</sup> The Korean Peninsula, located at the geological ending point of the link between the West and the East, naturally ended up being the final station for all cultures.

## Chapter 2

### General Trend in the Transmission of Buddhism toward the East and Korea

The teachings of the Buddha were established as the ultimate true dharma to relieve human and heavenly beings. The equalitarian and universal truth of the teachings could not be limited to a certain area or nation. The truth held a promise that even though it was forsaken, the sweet dew of its compassion would spontaneously soak the great world thoroughly. However, around two centuries after the death of the Buddha, Aśoka (r. ca. 268–232 BCE),<sup>4</sup> king of Magadhā,<sup>5</sup> dispatched the propagators of Buddhism in all directions with the wholehearted devotion in order to spread the great dharma. As if a lion rushed fiercely, the true dharma travelled through a geographical area as wide as Mediterranean coastal regions such as Syria, Egypt, Macedonia, and Epiros to the west, Ceylon to the south, Burma to the east, and Afghanistan to the north.

However, it seemed that Buddhism was destined from prior lifetimes to grow in the East. For, of all the directions in which the current of Buddhism had flowed, one stream that went around the Himalaya Mountains to the north and then moved toward the East has achieved by far its greatest development. When Śākyamuni Buddha preached the *Lotus Sūtra*,<sup>6</sup> the supreme teaching of generations, on Vulture Peak, a ray of light from the middle of the Buddha's forehead shone on 18,000 worlds in the East. This incident was in fact a mysterious sign that Buddhism would develop in the East.

When Aśoka was alive, the Greek founded the kingdom of Bactria (Daxia in the *Book of the Later Han* [*Houhan shu*]) in the region watered by the Amu River in Central Asia. This kingdom was conquered by Kushan Empire (Ch. Dayuezhi) around 130 BCE.

Around the mid second century CE, the famous Kaniṣka (ca. 127–151)<sup>7</sup> became the king of the Kushan dynasty, expanded its area of influence to the present Khotan, Kāśmīra in the Pamir Mountains, and established its capital city in the southern area of the Kabul River (present Peshawar), a western branch of the upper Indus River. This area is well-known under the name of Gandhāra.

Buddhism was introduced to Kushan quite early. Especially, King Kaniṣka was devoted to protecting, developing, and spreading Buddhism. Great Vehicle (Mahāyāna) Buddhism, regarded as one of the most important developments in the history of Buddhist doctrines, was in fact nurtured in the Kushan area. Through the interactions with Greek beliefs and Iranian religions, an idea of the rebirth in Pure Land definitely arose in this region.

Another important event in Kushan Buddhism was that Buddhist art greatly developed in the Kushan period. It is not that there were no Buddhist paintings and sculptures before this period. However, the statues of buddhas or bodhisattvas had not been created yet even in the time of Aśoka. The statues of buddhas were finally carved from around the time when Kushan advanced to the Indus River. From the Bactrian period, Greek sculptors expressed the thriving Buddhist faith in their favorite forms, modeling after various deities of the Greek pantheon.

Recently, there have been discovered many relics of the buddha statues through archeological excavation projects in the northern area of Afghanistan. The faces, hairs, and clothes of those statues showed the Greek and Roman influences. Moreover, we can see that the Greek-Roman style of Acanthus vine pattern, as well as Ionic and Doric style of pillar heads, arcades, and consoles was applied to their architectural decorations. The Gandhāra style expressed Indian ideas with Greek-Roman art forms. This style has been known as one of the great treasures in the history of human cultures and that of the East-West cultural exchanges. The Buddhist art and teachings that arose from India and grew in Gandhāra spread under the protection of King Kaniṣka to Kāśmīra, Khotan, Kucha, and

further to the Taklamakan Desert region. With this, the so-called Western Regions (Ch. Xiyu)<sup>8</sup> of China were fully bathed by the great light of the Buddha. This natural spread of Buddhism went through Yumenguan.<sup>9</sup> Eventually, the country of Confucius and Laozi was permeated with Buddhism. Among the peoples of this path of Buddhism, there were Turk and Uigur people. There were also other groups of people. While there was a great diversity in their ethnicities, languages, customs, and cultures, there were no differences in their devotion and enthusiasm to spread the true dharma. There was nothing that could not be subsumed and subjugated on the path of the wheel-turning sage king.<sup>10</sup> The light of the Buddhist ideal and the power of the cultivation increased as the religion advanced toward the East.

There were largely two routes of the cultural movements from the West to the East in the Asian continent. The first route was from West Asia through Turkestan and Tarim Basin to Gansu Province in China. This one had a branch route where one went across the Mongolian Desert before coming into China and entered *saiwai*<sup>11</sup> in China. The other route started from Eastern Europe by which travelers went around the Black Sea, crossed the Don and Volga rivers, and the Kirghiz Plain, and went to Gobi Desert. This route led to China to the South or North East Asia to the East. Among these routes, the Northern one has hardly received academic attention. However, as recent excavation projects in Mongolia have made progress, the value of this route in terms of the cultural exchange between the East and the West has been deeply recognized.

We are not sure of the exact time and path in which Buddhism was transmitted to Eastern China. According to one of the ancient records,<sup>12</sup> envoys of Emperor Ming (r. 57–75) in the Later Han dynasty (25–220) went to India in 65 and brought the monk Kāśyapa Mātāṅga (d. 73)<sup>13</sup> back to China in 67, along with buddha statues and Buddhist scriptures. In the same year, Dharmaratna (fl. first century) came to China. With these two monks, Buddhism was first introduced to China. However, there are several different theories

about the first transmission of Buddhism to China. Moreover, since there are some questionable points about the story of Emperor Ming seeking for Buddhist teachings, it should not be accepted at face value. As a matter of fact, it is thought that by the Han period (206 BCE–220 CE) Buddhism was gradually transmitted to China from the Western Regions or Mobei.<sup>14</sup> For about 200 or 300 years from this time, Indian and Central Asian Buddhist teachers came to China, translated a number of Buddhist scriptures with the help of Chinese people, and transmitted various ritual manuals. By the Tang period (618–907), Buddhism enjoyed an unprecedented success in China. We can even say that the center of Buddhism finally moved to China.

Speaking of [the transmission of Buddhism to] the Korean Peninsula, located east of China, Buddhism was introduced in 372 about three centuries later than to China when Qin king Fu Jian (r. 357–385),<sup>15</sup> who controlled the northern China at that time, dispatched Buddhist monks with buddha statues, scriptures, and commentaries to Goguryeo, the northern kingdom in the peninsula. Twelve years later, in 385, the Indian monk Malananda (fl. late fourth century) came to Baekje, a kingdom in the southern part of the peninsula, by way of China. About a half century later, a Central Asian monk entered Silla, located southeast of the peninsula, through Goguryeo.<sup>16</sup> With this, it is said that the entire Korean land was under the influence of the Buddha's teachings.

However, just like the Chinese case, the story of the first transmission of Buddhism to the peninsula is dubious. Judging from various factors, it seems that one of the Buddhist schools that had advanced to Mobei from the Western Regions came to the peninsula around the time of the Chinese transmission. This is because, considering the trend of cultural movement in Northern Asia in ancient times or the implications of the legends about early Chinese Buddhism, it is not necessary to see that Buddhism was transmitted to Korea under the Chinese influence.

The peninsula of the East [i.e. Korea] originally had the plain and

simple elements of Northern Asia [in its culture]. On top of this, it received the Nile, Mesopotamian, Mycenaean, and Iranian cultures, one by one. Weaving various patterns from them, Korea already created a beautiful silk fabric of culture. Then, the great teaching of the king of enlightenment [i.e. Buddha], the ultimate teaching of human and heavenly realms, brought its art, the unprecedented amalgam of the East and the West, to Korea, and added a beautiful flower pattern to that silk fabric. With this addition, the numinous cultural capability which had been asleep in the *ālaya* consciousness<sup>17</sup> of the Korean people brightly and fiercely came to arise. Immediately, Korean people developed their own sophisticated Buddhist scholasticism and art. The glorious light of their culture came to shine toward the West.

The peninsula, which had been a mere recipient, came to take a more dynamic attitude to the current of human cultures by accepting Buddhism.

## Chapter 3

### The Development of the Buddhist Doctrines and Korea

It should be considered that, aside from the ostensible fact of the spread of the Buddhist teachings, there was a hidden meaning of the expansion of Buddhist doctrines, i.e., the self-realization of Buddhism, in the transmission of Buddhism to the Eastern land. Buddhism arose in the form of Lesser Vehicle (Hināyāna) in India and developed in the form of Great Vehicle in the Western Regions. However, in order for Buddhism to fully manifest its vitality, advancing from expedient means (*gwon*) to the truth (*sil*), from nature-form (*seongsang*) to perfect-sudden (*wondon*), from cognition (*sigin*) to embodiment (*chebyeon*), it should wait for efforts of future generations. As a matter of fact, it was the mission of Eastern Buddhism to create the great and complete Buddhism by bridging these theoretical and practical gaps. Aware of its mission, Eastern Buddhism tried to fulfill it step by step.

Korean Buddhists' devotion and accomplishment in this mission was indeed surprising.

The development of Chinese Buddhism had few interactions with the lives of ordinary people from its inception till the Jin period (265–419) when Daoist philosophy prevailed. After countless numbers of trials and errors, the period of Southern and Northern Dynasties (439–589) finally saw the movement of the vivid and unique characteristics of Eastern Buddhism. While the Southern and Northern Dynasties confronted each other in almost all aspects, the former accepted the Indian, Central, and Western Asian cultures by land and the latter absorbed the Indian culture by sea. Therefore, in China, Buddhism thrived along with the secular culture.

Through the ardent studies and trainings for about 150 years

during the period of the Southern and Northern Dynasties, Chinese people produced the wondrous flower of the remarkable achievement of Eastern Buddhism. This flower was the Buddhism of the Sui (581–618) and Tang dynasties which have been regarded as the unparalleled golden age of the history of Buddhism.

The rapid development of Buddhist philosophy in Chinese Buddhism started with its understanding of the doctrine of emptiness. This doctrine attracted Chinese people because it was easy to apply to Daoist philosophy.

Roughly speaking, the period of approximately 300 years after the transmission of Buddhism to China can be designated as the period of translation. Naturally, there were few noticeable developments in terms of Buddhist doctrines during this time-span. In 401, Kumārajīva (344–413), a prince of Khotan, who had studied in many Buddhist countries and acquired extraordinary wisdom, was brought from Kucha to Chang'an of the Later Qin (384–417). He translated three hundreds Great Vehicle scriptures. Apart from translation, he was also devoted to the studies of Buddhist doctrines, along with his 3,000 students of whom there were a group of four sages and ten philosophers. Thanks to him, China witnessed a dramatic development in Buddhist doctrines. One of the first fruits was Sanlun zong (School of Three Treatises).

The Sanlun school taught “all things are empty without forms,” the teaching that is related to Nāgārjuna’s (ca. 150–250) school.<sup>18</sup> This teaching of “without forms” (*musang*) was one of the two great philosophical assertions in Indian Great Vehicle Buddhism, along with the teaching of “dharma-form” [or “dharma-characteristic”] (*beopsang*). The name, “Sanlun,” (lit. three treatises) came from the fact that the school was founded on the three treatises: Nāgārjuna’s *Middle Treatise* (Skt. *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*) and *Twelve Gate Treatise* (Skt. *Dvādaśanikāya-sāstra*); his disciple Āryadeva’s (ca. 170–270) *One Hundred Verses Treatise* (Skt. *Śata-sāstra*). Kumārajīva translated these texts and his students taught them.

The Chinese Sanlun school was founded by Kumārajīva. The

school produced many renowned scholars such as Daosheng (355–434), Tanji (411–475), Seungnang (fl. ca. 476–512), Sengquan (fl. sixth century), and Falang (507–581). Jizang (549–623) in the Sui dynasty greatly developed the school. However, in its inception, the followers of the school studied other scriptures and treatises such as the *Treatise on the Establishment of Truth* (Skt. *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra*), along with the three main treatises. Therefore, its doctrinal orientation was not so clear. It was Seungnang who clearly defined the school's identity in terms of doctrine, focusing only on the three treatises. Considering this fact, Seungnang was indeed the first patriarch of the Sanlun school as well as the forefather of the foundation of Eastern Buddhism. As a matter of fact, Seungnang who marked a new era of Chinese Buddhism was originally a monk from Goguryeo. He studied Buddhist doctrines in Dunhuang<sup>19</sup> and served as a midwife to give life to the profound and supreme Eastern Buddhism by opening a great path and establishing a new tradition for the Buddhist community in a chaotic and disorderly situation.

The importance of Goguryeo in the history of Eastern Buddhism can be guessed to some extent through the case of Seungnang. It can be also seen in numerous numbers of names and achievements recorded in the *Biographies of Eminent Monks* (*Gaoseng zhuan*)<sup>20</sup>, compiled by a Chinese person. With the Sanlun school, Chinese Buddhism took the first step for the doctrinal development. Then, various schools appeared, conquering castles of mysterious secrets layer by layer. Whenever a new school emerged in response to the situation of the time such as Chan, Shelun, Tiantai, or Niepan (Skt. Nirvāṇa), Buddhists from the Korea Peninsula, first from Goguryeo and then Baekje and Silla, made ever-increasing contributions. This can be also seen in biographical records.

Let us turn our attention to the Korean Buddhist contributions to the development of the teaching of “characteristics” (*sang*), which was affiliated with Asaṅga (ca. 320–ca. 390)<sup>21</sup> and Vasubandhu (fl. ca. fourth or fifth century).<sup>22</sup> This teaching of characteristics formed the Yogācāra school in India, which has recently received the great

deal of academic attention from Western scholarship. This teaching became rather popular in China, establishing the Dilun and Shelun schools. In early Tang (645), Xuanzang (602–664), famous as a great traveler and translator, returned to China with a number of Sanskrit texts and launched a huge translation project. He translated the commentaries of the ten great exponents of Yogācāra Buddhism such as Dharmapāla (530–561) and Sthiramati (475–555) on Vasubandhu's *Thirty Verses* (Skt. *Triṃśikā*).<sup>23</sup> Xuanzang then combined those translations into a ten-volume text titled “*Discourse on the Perfection of Consciousness-Only*” (*Cheng weishi lun*). By doing so, he added a new aspect to this Yogācāra philosophy. He also attracted many scholars and eventually founded the school of Consciousness-only (Ch. Weishi zong), also called Dharma-character school (Faxiang zong). With the foundation of this school, Chinese Buddhism saw a great turn of its fortune.

Xuanzang had a number of outstanding students. However, he favored Kuiji (632–682) (also, known as Great Master Ci'en)<sup>24</sup> and tried to secretly transmit profound words and esoteric tenets [of his school] only to Kuiji. Xuanzang had 3,000 students. Among them, there were seventy who were more advanced. Among those seventy students, the scholar-monk named Woncheuk (613–696)<sup>25</sup> who stayed in Ximing Temple was most outstanding. Although he was not taught, he penetrated into the mysterious principles of the Consciousness-only school. He entered a numinous realm in terms of understanding and realizing those principles. Therefore, Kuiji was not a match for him. From time to time, Woncheuk was excellent even in Xuanzang's precepts. Xuanzang and Kuiji ended up committing unbuddhist actions to Woncheuk to harass him. For example, when Woncheuk was about to lecture on his own interpretation of Yogācāra theories in Ximing Temple, Kuiji was not pleased to hear that. Xuanzang consoled him, saying that although Woncheuk wrote a commentary on Yogācāra Buddhism, he must not have mastered Buddhist logic (Skt. *hetuvidyā*). Then, Xuanzang taught this to Kuiji. However, we can assume that Woncheuk was

versed at Buddhist logic as well because there was a commentary on the *Gateway to the Buddhist Logic* (*Yinming zhengli men lun*)<sup>26</sup> among his writings.

Woncheuk's biography also proves that he was outstanding in terms of learning as well as virtues. Considering the fact that Woncheuk established his own school and attracted many people, staying right next to Xuanzang and Kuiji whose power in both Buddhist and secular worlds culminated at that time, we can see how great Woncheuk's teachings were in moving people's minds. Aside from Kuiji, his excellent disciple Huizhao (648–714) also made every effort to disprove Woncheuk's theories by writing the seven-volume *Lamp of the Discerned Meaning of the Cheng weishi lun* (*Cheng weishi lun liaoyi deng*). This also shows that how deeply Woncheuk's teachings took root in people's minds. There are some extant writings of Woncheuk. Unfortunately, however, since all his writings about Yogācāra philosophy are missing, it is impossible to know the details of his theories. If Xuanzang and Kuiji alienated Woncheuk for emotional reason, not doctrinal one, this was probably because they envied Woncheuk's brightness and thorough understanding of Buddhism. On the other hand, if they contested on some basic issues of Consciousness-only, it is reasonable to assume that Woncheuk founded a separate Yogācāra school apart from Xuanzang's branch. Either way, we can conclude that Woncheuk occupied an important position in the history of Yogācāra school. To our surprise, he came from Silla.

Unlike Woncheuk who went his own way, there were renowned scholar-monks in Korea who followed Xuanzang's orthodoxy and became a great lamp for Yogācāra Buddhism. Taehyeon (fl. ca. mid-eighth century)<sup>27</sup> and Sun'gyeong (fl. ca. late seventh century) were such monks. Their writings were deeply cherished in ancient and modern days. During the Silla period when Korean Buddhism reached its height, great renowned masters continued to appear. However, I will skip the detailed account [of these Korean Yogācāra masters]. Let us now turn to Korean Buddhists' relationship with Huayan

or Hwaeom (Flower Garland) philosophy, the climax of Eastern Buddhism as well as culmination of the philosophy of the entire Buddhism.

Huayan or Hwaeom is the most excellent and highest teaching, based on the *Flower Garland Sūtra* (Skt. *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*).<sup>28</sup> The meanings and characteristics of the discourses in the scripture reached the supreme level by directly expressing the mysterious realm of the Buddha's realization. Huayan or Hwaeom was built on the huge foundation which had been made through 600 years of preparation from the time of the introduction of Buddhism to China. As such, it demonstrated the utmost limit of the thinking ability of East Asian people.

Dushun (557–640) of the Sui dynasty was regarded as the first patriarch of the Huayan school. Zhiyan (602–668) spread the Huayan teaching during the Tang dynasty. However, it did not get its fame until the Great Master Xianshou Fazang (643–712) developed the school greatly. This is a generally-accepted story. However, we should think about a humble recluse who forgot himself in giving Fazang an honor of the great patriarch of the Huayan school. It was Uisang (625–702) who was a Silla monk. He studied under Zhiyan and was senior to Fazang. When Uisang was with Zhiyan, Uisang's wisdom and virtues were especially lofty. Uisang had a reputation that he had already surpassed his master. Students gathered in Uisang's residence. The fame of the Huayan school relied on Uisang alone. However, he yielded his position to his fellow Fazang and returned to his country. In Korea, he became the first patriarch of the Korean Hwaeom school. As a matter of course, Uisang made a great contribution to the establishment of the Chinese Huayan school. Therefore, since the Chinese Huayan and Korea Hwaeom schools were founded almost simultaneously, it is impossible to tell which one was first and essential. After coming back to Korea, Uisang preached Huayan-Hwaeom philosophy and had 3,000 students. Many of the students were talented. Uisang's teaching of Huayan-Hwaeom in Korea laid the foundation of Korean Buddhism in which Hwaeom became a

main current. Whenever Fazang composed a commentary, he sent a copy to Uisang for comments whenever there was a person who would go to Silla Korea.

The *Chart of the Dharma-Realm of the One Vehicle* (*Ilseung beopgyedo*), one of Uisang's many writings, expressed the essence of Huayan-Hwaeom philosophy only in 200 or 300 words. As people know, it was the gist of Buddhism, and at the same time, a unique masterpiece in the history of religious literature.

However, there is another source of pride for Korean Buddhism regarding the development of Huayan-Hwaeom philosophy. It is Wonhyo's (617–686) Haedong jong (School of East of the Sea, also called Bunhwang jong [School of Fragrant Sovereign]). This school was associated with neither Chinese scholastic tradition nor old Korean tradition. From his own independent point of view, Wonhyo founded this unique Korean Hwaeom school and opened up the ultimate meaning of Huayan-Hwaeom philosophy. In his early years, Wonhyo studied with Uisang and penetrated into the fundamental tenet of Buddhism with his erudition. Later Uisang went to China to study under Zhiyan while Wonhyo realized his own mind, studied by himself with great devotion, and eventually established his own school on the summit of Buddhism. His Haedong school was indeed the true foundation of the Huayan and Hwaeom schools in the history of Buddhism, and at the same time, completion of Buddhist philosophy. In many writings of Chinese Huayan masters from Fazang to Li Tongxuan (635–730),<sup>29</sup> there are many quotes from Wonhyo with or without mentioning his name. In particular, Fazang competed against the Faxing school, which swayed the Buddhist community as a rising power, and planted a banner of the Huayan school. He could do so with the weapon of the *Awakening of Faith in Mahāyāna* (*Dasheng qixin lun*, hereafter *Awakening of Faith*).<sup>30</sup> Fazang's commentary on the treatise quotes a lot from that of Wonhyo. When Fazang taught the *Awakening of Faith*, he used Wonhyo's commentary as a textbook. We can imagine Wonhyo's hidden contribution to the Huayan school as a whole.

## Chapter 4

### Wonhyo: The Founder of Unified Buddhism

Korean Buddhists went to China, the center of Eastern Buddhism, and secretly or openly made huge contributions to the development of Buddhist doctrines, cooperating with Chinese people. Although this fact cannot be ignored, the true pride and unique status that Korean people hold in Buddhism have come from the unique development of Korean Buddhism. In other words, the special nature of Korean Buddhism lies in the fact that it harmoniously unifies theories and practices by fully developing the true vitality of Buddhism or perfecting a salvific role of Buddhism. Buddhism of India and Central Asia is introductory; Chinese Buddhism is itemized; while Korean Buddhism is conclusive. Establishing such Korean Buddhism is the true source of the pride for Korean people. Wonhyo was the one who fulfilled the honorable mission of Korean Buddhism. He has been called a “great sage” since his time.

Wonhyo has been known as a Hwaeom master. Surely, it is true that Wonhyo founded the unique Korean Hwaeom school without any direct relationship with Chinese scholarship and that his Haedong jong was a different name for the Hwaeom jong. However, his whole philosophy cannot be wrapped up under the name of the Hwaeom school alone. Wonhyo established the ultimate philosophical meaning of Buddhism with Hwaeom, and at the same time, carefully investigated and deeply pondered to strengthen the practical and soteriological role of Buddhism as well as popularize it with the conviction that philosophy was not a main realm of Buddhism. Religion is neither a poem, a theory, or a speculative amusement nor an ideological debate. Most of all, religion should be about salvation from beginning to end. Other than saving ordinary

sentient beings from the burning house of the three realms, there was nothing in the original mind of the World-Honored One. Buddhism is not respected with its mysterious and wondrous philosophical principle. The vitality and value of Buddhism lies in its strong soteriological power. However, when Buddhism was transmitted from Śākyamuni Buddha through Nāgārjuna and Kumārajīva to Dushun and Zhiyan, it became more and more theoretical and speculative. The sole great purpose for the Buddha's appearance in this world was about to become useless. It is true that, just like other ideologies, the more Buddhism moved toward the East, the more profound it became and the higher its philosophical quality advanced. However, to tell the truth, the development of Buddhism in the East occurred largely in philosophical area rather than practical one. As time went, there appeared a tendency that theoretical debates increased while soteriological and practical benefits decreased.

“Let us transform theoretical Buddhism into practical one! Let us return Buddhism to the hands of Śākyamuni Buddha from those of philosophers!” This was Wonhyo's vow. Therefore, he came down from Sumeru<sup>31</sup> of the perfect awakening on which he had climbed up with his superb wisdom and extraordinary realization. After he returned to the world to transfer his merits to ordinary people, he began to guide them with teachings easy to understand and follow. Wonhyo tried to bring Buddhism from forests to villages, towns, and cities, from buddha halls to streets, and from the scholarly field to the lives of ordinary people.

This change in Buddhism might be a natural process of Buddhism that had reached its height from the theoretical perspective. However, who could open up a new aspect of Buddhism and putting a halt to the crazy current except a great man (*daejangbu*)? Whenever we read Wonhyo's biography, we cannot but realize that he was a buddha who manifested himself again in this world even after doing so 8,000 times.

Wonhyo was born in a town near the capital city of Silla kingdom in 617 (thirty-ninth year of Silla King Jinpyeong's reign [r. 579–632]). He

taught people in the peninsula in most of the seventh century. People who admired his virtues recorded his various wondrous activities from his birth to death. After tonsured in his youth, Wonhyo was devoted to studying Buddhism. He mastered three learnings (*sambhak*).<sup>32</sup> Since his understanding of Buddhism was profound, extensive, clear, and bright, there was no one whose understanding equaled his. Therefore, people of his time said that he was an enemy of all people. Wonhyo interpreted all the scriptures and commentaries of Buddhism in the past and present times. In doing so, he always broke old frames and cleared confusions. In particular, as mentioned earlier, his commentaries on the *Awakening of Faith* and the *Flower Garland Sūtra* were introduced to China and contributed to the establishment of the Huayan school. His commentary on the *Diamond Absorption Sūtra* (*Geumgang sammae gyeong*)<sup>33</sup> was referred to as a treatise by a great Buddhist scholar of the Western land who was versed in the tripitaka. In general, the word, “treatise,” refers to a text that was composed by a great bodhisattva, explaining a Buddhist scripture. The word, therefore, is an honor given only to the writings of a few outstanding Buddhist scholars, such as Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, and Vasubandhu.

However, Wonhyo was not satisfied with the situation in which even Mañjuśrī’s<sup>34</sup> wisdom and Pūrṇa Maitrāyaniputra’s<sup>35</sup> preach became useless. Wonhyo, most of all, realized that his mission was to clean up the deep-rooted evils from Buddhism that made the religion a simple leisure activity, being socially stratified and speculative, and to revive its main function as an equalitarian and universal teaching that would awaken all sentient beings. For this purpose, he stepped down from the lion seat of speculation. He gave up a silk robe granted by a Silla king and threw away a fly whisk of the ecclesiastical authority of Buddhism. Breaking away from the firmly locked ivory tower, he all alone took to the streets bravely as an ordinary fire fighter to extinguish the fierce fire of human suffering. He returned to the mundane from the supramundane. He served people rather than commanded them. First of all, he liberated himself from conventions and formalism. Only with a

burning sense of responsibility for the salvation of the world, then, he dedicated himself to offering even just one drop of dharma-milk to all people. Wonhyo himself tried to transmit Buddhism to people rather than waited for them to seek for it. However, he did not press people, but made them voluntarily follow the religion. He did not infuse Buddhism to people through their eyes and ears. Rather, he let Buddhism which was originally endowed within each individual's mind emanate spontaneously.

For this purpose, he infused Buddhism into the dance songs that all people of the time liked and imbued Buddhism into the lyrics that all people enjoyed. As occasion served, then, he wandered around the country, singing and dancing while visiting mountain and river villages, taverns, and brothels. Seeing that everybody had accepted the religion though not sure of exactly when and how, Wonhyo realized that Buddhism spread all over the country. Then, he taught Buddhism to uneducated people, explaining it with vernacular language and popular analogies. He let ordinary people know that there was a type of Buddhism that could be easily understood and practiced without unfamiliar theories and complex behavioral procedure. He helped people grasp that Buddhism was truly the religion of all people. In order to explicitly express how Buddhism was humane and present in real life and why it could neither turn its back on even one person nor give up on that person alone even just for a moment, Wonhyo designated his religion not as Buddhism but as the "Way of the Mind Serenely Strolling in the Land of Peace and Bliss" (Yusim allakdo). Such a guidance was unprecedented in the history of Buddhism and its effect spread. When he became a lay practitioner, seceding from the monastic order and returning to the secular life from pure practices (Skt. *brahmacaryā*), people in the secular world sneered at him, saying that he was nothing but an ordinary person. Educated monks in the Buddhist tradition criticized him as crazy and dismissed him as a heretic. However, there was a great fact that the whole world was Buddhized at his time because his deeds completed the salvific aspect of Buddhism. A literary man

recorded this achievement in Wonhyo's biography, saying, "Poor and ignorant people all know the name of Amitābha Buddha and chant that name."<sup>36</sup>

As Buddhism spread eastward, its depth increased quite a lot. In fact, its height rather than depth increased enormously. However, the dharma-citadel (*beopseong*) existed separately and Buddhist practitioners gathered separately [from the secular world]. Therefore, Buddhism had no true universality and broadness. It belonged only to Buddhist temples and clerics, not the whole world and ordinary people. As a matter of fact, Nāgārjuna was an exegete after all. Kumārajīva was a scholar. Huiyuan (334–416)<sup>37</sup> was from a privileged class.

[All these masters] spoke about the causes and conditions in the guidance of Buddhism. However, they did not exert themselves to providing adequate opportunities for ordinary people to grasp Buddhism.

If it can be said that Buddhism targets ordinary people and the vitality of Buddhism comes from its salvific role, Buddhism up to that time was not complete enough in that it lacked the means to guide people. Now, after perfectly understanding the philosophical principles of Buddhism, Wonhyo established an equation for popular practices. By doing so, he finally materialized the ideal of the one vehicle in Buddhism. Ah! The benefits of Sage Wonhyo's guidance are the most after Śākyamuni. The essence of Buddhism which was embodied in his life will be revered as the supreme revelation of Buddhism for a very long time. Therefore, Sage Wonhyo is a consummator of Buddhism in the true sense of the word.

However, we have to know that when Wonhyo is called a consummator of Buddhism, there is a much broader and larger value he created beside his contributions in making Buddhism practicable and easy to spread. It should not be overlooked that his Buddhism is a realization of synthetic Buddhism (*tong Bulgyo*), universal Buddhism (*jeon Bulgyo*), comprehensive Buddhism (*jonghap Bulgyo*), and unified Buddhism (*tongil Bulgyo*), not just as a realization

of the Buddhist salvation. Even though division is a necessary process for development, Buddhism until that time was divided into too many factions, which were opposed to each other from such a shallow and narrow perspective. Since there were too many independent kingdoms, waving different banners, in the world of Buddhism, people became confused, not knowing which kingdom they should go to. Even within each kingdom, there were conflicts and competitions to decide which was superior and which was right. People say that Chinese Buddhism is the culmination of the entire Buddhism and that Chinese Buddhism was in its height during the Tang dynasty. On the other hand, however, Buddhism during the Tang dynasty reflected an appearance of Buddhism in a period of dispute (*tujaeng gyeon'go*)<sup>38</sup> that the Buddha had already been afraid of it to come. Buddhism of the Tang dynasty which had reached the climax of division demanded its re-formation as one single organism and its powerful expression as such an organization. It demanded unification from division and reconciliation from factionalization.

As it came from India to China, Buddhism spread and developed centrifugally. However, it gradually showed a centripetal tendency in the Korean Peninsula and eventually achieved its final completion by means of one single doctrine Wonhyo created. The inner need of Buddhism for its unification found its unparalleledly great architect in Sage Wonhyo.

Now, there is no way to draw the entire picture of how grand Wonhyo's scholarship was and how many his writings were. Just to look at his extant works, along with the titles known as his work, there are about fifty different texts in 100 volumes, covering various topics from scriptures, treatises, vinaya, Great Vehicle and Lesser Vehicle texts, and expedient and true teachings. Such Wonhyo's voluminous works enable us to understand his intent to express a unified Buddhism by discovering the ultimate source of all different factions of Buddhism. Wonhyo covered various fields not because he wanted to boast his scholarship or he was simply disputatious. This was in fact an inevitable preparatory process to promote the unifying

Buddhism by embracing all the different and partial teachings. Wonhyo's Buddhism was built on this conception. His Buddhism put forth Hwaeom as a comprehensive expression of Buddhist philosophy and presented Amitābha<sup>39</sup> worship as a direct shortcut in Buddhist training by which people could experience and master the perfect harmony of wisdom and practice based on their own daily emotions and activities. Therefore, his new Buddhism is perfectly completed and unified. It took its first stride by giving Buddhism which had previously belonged to privileged people to ordinary people.

Wonhyo's scholarship was broad in scope, as can be seen in a number of his writings. Unlike ordinary exegetes, however, he did not meticulously delve only into words and phrases to the point of making his writings tedious. Rather, as shown in the names such as "doctrinal essential" (*jongyo*), "objective" (*jigwi*), and "analysis" (*yogan*), he discovered and explained a major tenet of a treatise or a scripture in one or two-volume book. In particular, he composed the *Commentary on the Flower Garland Sūtra* (*Hwaeom gyeong so*) in ten volumes and, at the same time, exerted himself to expound the original vow of Amitābha Buddha. This shows that Wonhyo tried to reveal the fundamental spirit of Buddhism.

Wonhyo understood that the history of Buddhism aimed at the realization of synthetic or universal Buddhism. His holy aspiration for such realization was materialized in the *Reconciliation of Disputes in Ten Perspectives* (*Simmun hwajaengnon*) in two volumes. Just as Indian philosophy is divided into six non-Buddhist masters' teachings, in Wonhyo's *Reconciliation of Disputes in Ten Perspectives*, Buddhist doctrines are opened up from ten perspectives to provide the logical foundation for the unification of Buddhism by resolving various difficult issues and reconciling differences. With his own realization and self-imposed duty, Wonhyo dedicated his lifetime to carrying out a type of "refuting the false and disclosing the correct" (*pasa hyeonjeong*), which was different from old ones and yet most meaningful. In so doing, he manifested the true life and spirit of

Buddhism through synthesis and unification. This is the historical mission and, at the same time, real major characteristic of Korean Buddhism.

Wonhyo's aspiration, of course, was not the one that could be fulfilled overnight. However, his spirit has since been actively present in the life of Korean people, hurrying its steps toward the fulfilment of that aspiration, overcoming many difficulties. Later, recognizing his representative achievements in harmonizing Buddhism, the Goryeo court praised Wonhyo's virtues and bestowed the honorary title, "State Preceptor Hwajaeng (resolving controversy)" (Hwajaeng guksa).<sup>40</sup> Joseon Buddhists analyzed and summarized Buddhist doctrines and re-divided Buddhism into the two schools of Seon (meditation) and Gyo (doctrine) though they were in a difficult situation. Wonhyo's spirit of harmony latently worked here as well.

In summary, "from Śākyamuni to Wonhyo" means "from creation to division" and, then, "from division to synthesis." Because of Wonhyo, Buddhism of the one vehicle can exist. Because of Wonhyo, there is a light in Korean Buddhism. Because of Korean Buddhism, there is a meaning in Eastern Buddhism. However, Wonhyo's Buddhism has not been fully substantialized yet. Rather, the opening of its womb will be awaited from now. Wonhyo should live in the mind of Buddhists as a mirror, example, and ideal goal of Buddhism for a very long time.

## Chapter 5

### Korea in the History of Buddhist Art

When it was introduced to Korea, Buddhism at first conflicted with indigenous religious faiths and also contradicted the historical trend of the time. Therefore, the spread of Buddhism was greatly delayed. However, as time went, there occurred an ideological compromise: Buddhists gradually developed strong this-worldly tendency in response to the demand of the time. Eventually, the Korean society and culture came to revolve around Buddhism. Buddhism, with its great philosophy, literature, art, and in particular, pantheistic feature, had little difficulty in suppressing or subsuming autochthonous Korean traditions. The social status of Buddhism was heightened day by day because the religion often provided a good opportunity in diplomatic relations with China and other countries, which were a key for the upturn in the fortune of the country at that time.

If a pond is deep, fish and a dragon freely swim around. The great shade of Buddhism produced many prominent figures. For example, look at Korean history from the Three Kingdoms to the Unified Silla periods! One cannot but admire the facts that Buddhists of the time had accomplished numerous achievements in both Buddhist and non-Buddhist fields and that numerous outstanding figures, [whose significance was] commensurate with those achievements, appeared in the Buddhist community. If all events involving Buddhism of the time were removed from Korean history, there would be few pages left in the history book describing this period. It is true that most of the Korean cultural heritages that Korea can boast about to the world were either directly related to or influenced by Buddhism.

Anyone who speaks of Korean art would first mention Seokguram Grotto in Gyeongju. Gyeongju was the capital city of Silla for about

1,000 years until the mid-tenth century. Silla was the first to unify the kingdoms of the Korean Peninsula. Silla concentrated the wealth and production of the country on its capital. On the other hand, just like the Tang empire, Silla also actively absorbed the cultures of the Western Regions of China through the empire. At that time, therefore, Gyeongju was one of the two cities that represented the wealthy and glorious civilization of East Asia, along with the Tang capital Chang'an.<sup>41</sup> In Ibn Khurdādhbeh's (fl. mid-ninth century) geographical text, through which Columbus (ca. 1450–1506) fantasized about a golden kingdom in the East and eventually discovered a new continent, there appears a golden kingdom named "Syla," which in fact refers to Silla of this time.<sup>42</sup> In the capital city of this Silla, there were approximately 180,000 houses and numerous temples, standing in a row in the center of the city. Each of these temples was full of gold, silver, colorful silk, and works of art made from these materials which were probably the most sophisticated works in the world. The kingdom, however, collapsed and became desolate. Its gold and silver treasures were scattered and its wooden structures grew rotten. Only some of its stone works survive until now, enduring thousand years of wind and rain. Among these Seokguram on Tohamsan Mountain illustrates the essence of the art of the time most eloquently.

Tohamsan was one of the sacred mountains of Silla, which was located forty *lis* [app. ten miles] east of Gyeongju. On the mountain, there is a massive Buddhist temple called "Bulguksa" which houses a great stone and gold relics from the time. The grotto sitting near the top of the mountain faces the East Sea. This grotto was built by a Silla aristocrat in the mid-seventh century. A stone grotto was an architectural style that typically developed in a region where there were many proper stone mountains with little trees, such as Ellora and Ajanta in India and Dunhuang of Gansu, Yungang and Mountain Tianlong of Shanxi, and Mountain Longmen of Luoyang in China. Most of the stone grottoes in East Asia are associated with Buddhism though there are some with non-Buddhist origin. However, later, as a stone grotto became necessary for Buddhist

architecture, Silla also planned to build one of such. However, since Tohamsan was not a stone mountain, many proper stone blocks were collected from different regions and used in order to artificially construct a grotto that imitated a natural cave. Any similar case for this Seokguram has never been found in the world. It was a uniquely Korean cave, reflecting a wondrous architectural development of the time.

Its overall form modeled after an Indian style of a Buddhist tabernacle. In the grotto, there is a circular room with a vaulted ceiling. A grand and splendid lotus decoration is carved at the center of the ceiling. There is a lotus-pedestal at the center of the room. A huge nine-*cheok* [3.26 meters] high Śākyamuni statue, carved from a milky-white granite stone, sits in the cross-legged position on top of the pedestal. The beauty of the statue's posture, which is grand, solemn, gentle, and merciful, is indescribable. The holiness of the statue which is humanlike or realistic, and at the same time, transcendent of humanity is the utmost beauty and wonder in religious sculptures. Just taking a glance, one cannot contain his or her admiration.

On the walls surrounding Śākyamuni, there are various real-size carvings of bodhisattvas and heavenly deities in half-relief. Right behind the main Śākyamuni image, there is a carving of the eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara.<sup>43</sup> The ten principal disciples of the Buddha are carved on both sides of the bodhisattva. There is Mañjuśrī and Brahma<sup>44</sup> on the right side of the entrance, and Samantabhadra<sup>45</sup> and Indra<sup>46</sup> on the left side of it. Among these carvings, in particular, the eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara, Brahma, and Indra are unprecedentedly great master pieces. On top of the surrounding walls, several stone niches enshrined small images of bodhisattvas such as Vimalakīrti,<sup>47</sup> Mañjuśrī, and Kṣitigarbha.<sup>48</sup> The marvel of the grotto's structure and the delicacy of all the carvings evoke the extraordinary, elegant, and abstruse mood.

There is also a path from the entrance to the inner room. On both sides of this path are the carvings of the four heavenly kings<sup>49</sup> and humane kings.<sup>50</sup> It seems that these carvings were later additions.

Although these carvings fall short of the previously-mentioned ones in terms of technique, they are still worth seeing. The whole structure of the grotto is balanced left and right. The arrangement of the carvings is wondrous for a few reasons. First, all the images on the wall of the grotto are enshrined in the following ways: (1) any of them does not hurt the beauty of the main Śākyamuni Buddha image; (2) as one walks inside the grotto, he or she always comes face to face with any one of these carvings. A carving of a halo on the wall behind the Śākyamuni image is also wondrous. Seen from the entrance, this circle of the lotus flowers is right behind the head of the Śākyamuni statue. However, as one walks into the grotto, the circle gradually appears to come down, which is doubly marvelous.

Although there are a number of stone grottoes, in most cases, architectural technique always falls short of size. The grotto in Gyeongju alone, though it is the smallest in size, not only each and every part of the grotto shows outstanding technique, but also the entirety of all parts constitutes one perfect work of art. All the parts and the entirety radiating their beauty layer by layer make people lose their tongues and senses in raptures.

Some say that since Buddhist architecture existed in the world, there has been nothing compared to the Gyeongju grotto. Some also say that the grotto is the most beautiful among the extant Buddhist works of art in any sense or it is the Gyeongju grotto that most skillfully and comprehensively expresses all the techniques and decorations of those in Ajanta, Gandhāra, Sassania, Western Regions, and the Six Dynasties (220–589) of China. Some argue that the grotto is not just a product of techniques but also a divine and unrepeatable product that was built with the great technique that encompasses those of the world, mixing the growing fortune of the Silla state with the great ideal of the nation.

Some people go further to say the following: seeing that people of the present Gyeongsang-do (Silla area in ancient Korea) resemble the Śākyamuni Buddha image of Seokguram just as the people on some islands of Dadohae (Archipelago Sea) have a look of Greek statues, the

Śākyamuni image surely modeled after Silla people, vividly describing their appearance, and, as a matter of fact, represented not just their appearance but also their vigor and spirit. Considering the fact that all the highest praises human beings could give are concentrated on this small statue, one could recognize its greatness and special value. The grotto in Gyeongju originated from the perfect and wondrous mind of Buddhism in an unprecedentedly auspicious milieu of the time. The statue is a national treasure that expresses the great vigor and spirit of Korean people in one single form of art, and at the same time, a summation of Buddhist art that integrates all the ages and countries of the world in cultural history.

Just in Tohamsan, there are other great works of art such as twin stone pagodas, Dabotap (Pagoda of Prabhūtaratna<sup>51</sup>) and Seokgatap (Pagoda of Śākyamuni), as well as the Vairocana<sup>52</sup> image in Bulguksa. In the Gyeongju area, there is more than one treasure which is extremely precious and worthy of boasting: for example, the pagoda in Bunhwangsa Temple and the bell in Bongdeoksa Temple. In the entire country, gold and stone relics from the Silla period alone are too numerous to enumerate. Here, let us take Seokguram as a symbol of the value of all these works and turn our attention to other achievements by which Korea has enhanced Buddhism greatly.

## Chapter 6

### Buddhist Canon and Korea

All religions worship their canons. Compared to other religions, however, the Buddhist deification of the canon is more profound.

One of the traditional Buddhist beliefs is that even just carrying or circulating a tiny fragment of a Buddhist scripture or poetic verse (Skt. *gāthā*) generates numerous merits. However, carving a text on a woodblock became popular relatively late in the East. Hence, Buddhist scriptures circulated in a handwritten form. The publication of Buddhist scriptures during the Tang dynasty can be verified through the case of the *Diamond Sūtra*<sup>53</sup> whose copy is currently housed in the British Museum. This scripture has the word “the ninth year of Xiantong<sup>54</sup>” (868) on it. Based on Chinese records, many believe that the carving of the Buddhist canon was first launched as a national project in the present-day Chengdu of the Sichuan Province, in the fourth year of Kaibao<sup>55</sup> (971) during the reign of Emperor Taizu (r. 960–976) in the Northern Song (960–1127) approximately a century and a half after the first publication of a Buddhist scripture. The project was completed twelve years later in 983 with 5,048 texts carved. The so-called *Shu-Edition Buddhist Canon* (*Shuben dazangjing*), published in Chengdu, was in fact simply a printed version of the 5,048 texts which were enlisted in Zhisheng’s (669–740) *Catalogue of Śākyamuni’s Teachings Compiled during the Kaiyuan Period* (*Kaiyuan Shijiao mulu*).<sup>56</sup> This Shu canon became a basis for most of the later canons. Six years after its completion in 989 (the eighth year of the Goryeo king Seongjong [r. 981–997]), the Shu canon was transmitted to Korea. (However, according to the *History of Goryeo* [*Goryeosa*],<sup>57</sup> the monk Honggyeong [fl. tenth century] brought a copy of the Buddhist canon from Minfu in China by sea in the eleventh year

of King Taejo [r. 918–943] in 928. Furthermore, in the *Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms* [*Samguk yusa*],<sup>58</sup> there is a record that the monk Boyo [fl. tenth century] came from Wuyue (907–978) with a copy of the Buddhist canon in the late Silla.<sup>59</sup> Judging from these records, one can guess that the first publication of the Buddhist canon was in fact already made in the southern China before the Song dynasty [960–1279].)

However, when the Shu canon was carved in Chengdu of China, the publication of the Buddhist canon was also prepared in Goryeo Korea. Twenty-eight years after the completion of the Shu edition in 1011 in the second year of the Goryeo king Hyeonjong (r. 1009–1031), the carving of the Buddhist canon was finally launched in Goryeo with a wish to ward off foreign invasions. By the end of the king's reign, about five thousand texts enlisted in the *Catalogue of Śākyamuni's Teachings Compiled during the Kaiyuan Period* were published just as the Shu edition was. By the twelfth year (1058) of the next king Munjong (r. 1046–1083), the texts in the *Supplementary to the Catalogue of Śākyamuni's Teachings Compiled during the Kaiyuan Period* (*Zhuoyuan xu Kaiyuan Shijiao lu*), along with the newly translated texts during the Song dynasty, were also published. After forty-seven years of work, a huge corpus of the woodblocks for 6,557 texts was housed in Buinsa Temple. This was the second carving of the Buddhist canon, which meticulously corrected and perfected the Song edition. However, the temple was damaged and its woodblocks were burnt to ashes in the Mongol invasion during the reign of King Gojong (r. 1213–1259). The king and all high and low bureaucrats bowed down, made a vow, and launched the project of re-carving the Buddhist canon. For fifteen years from the twenty-fourth year (1237) to the thirty-eighth year (1251) of King Gojong, painstaking and sincere care was given to every page and each word on each page, and finally, the total of 81,240 woodblocks were carved, along with some additional miscellaneous woodblocks. These blocks have survived intact in Haeinsa Temple, Hapcheon-gun, Gyeongsang-do. This is called “the second Goryeo edition” (Jaegakjang). In general, the *Goryeo Edition of the Buddhist Canon* refers to this second edition.<sup>60</sup>

The Goryeo canon needed an amazing preparation on all counts. Durable, sturdy, and compact timbers were collected. Then, they were soaked in sea water for an extended period of time or simmered in salt water a few times, and dried to prevent them from expanding or contracting. Then, they were cut to equal-sized blocks of a certain length, width, and thickness. Every jot and tittle was carved with a thorough care and pious mind. After preservative treatment was applied, wooden ends were attached to both sides of a block and nails were driven into its four corners. The typical woodblock of the Goryeo canon was made in this way. However, much more work was exerted before this stage of carving. First, the various editions of the scriptures from all ages and countries, not only Korea but also Song and Liao (907–1125), were carefully collated and then the most accurate reading was established. Specially-trained calligraphers, called “sūtra copying officer” (*sagyeongwon*), wrote the texts with a sincere and respectful mind, bowing after writing each and every word. Meticulous care was also given to this writing process to check whether similar words were miswritten. Finally, woodworkers carved the calligraphy onto each block. The work of carving was divided to each regional governmental office. Then, the finished blocks in all regions were gathered into the Supervisory Office (Dogam).<sup>61</sup> It was indeed a superhuman accomplishment to make hundreds of thousands of pages of woodblocks for the printing of the Buddhist canon, going through decades of hard work. The Goryeo court repeated this project a few times.

The Buddhist canon was carved more than twenty times in both Korea and other countries. However, Goryeo canon is the oldest surviving Buddhist canon. It is only one that had thoroughly accomplished the great beauty in contents and external splendor with the utmost devotion and rationality. Therefore, the accuracy of any carved canons had been judged with the Goryeo canon as a criterion. The Buddhist canons that have been recently published in China and Japan were based on the Goryeo canon. The standard of today’s Buddhist canon is the canon in Chinese. In turn, the standard of

the canon in Chinese is the Goryeo canon. Therefore, the Goryeo edition canon was the fundamental canon of Buddhism.

Speaking of the printing and publication of the Buddhist canon in Japan, commissioned by the government, a renowned monk Tenkai (1536–1643) who had received respect from the three shoguns from Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616) printed the Buddhist canon, using a form of moveable type, for twelve years from the fifteenth year to the twenty-sixth year of Joseon king Injo (r. 1623–1649) (the fourteenth year of Kanei<sup>62</sup> to the first year of Keian,<sup>63</sup> 1637–1648), in Kaneiji Temple in Edo.<sup>64</sup> This canon, also known as the Tenkai edition or Japanese canon, is the sole Japanese governmental edition of the Buddhist canon. This Tenkai's project of carving the Buddhist canon was inspired by Shūzon's (fl. seventeenth century) printing, which imitated the Goryeo canon, as will be mentioned below. Nonetheless, since the Tenkai edition was produced with the financial support from the government, its appearance was quite great. However, since it was based on the Southern Song Sixi edition, the fourth Chinese carving, the Tenkai edition was riddled with errors. A very small number of copies were printed from this edition, which is why there are not many extant copies. Twenty-one years after the completion of the Tenkai edition, another project to have a Japanese edition of the canon was launched with the Zen monk Tetsugen's (1630–1682) resolve at Ōbakusan<sup>65</sup> in Uji in 1669. The project was completed thirteen years later in 1681, producing the private canon called "Ōbaku edition, completely carved on woodblocks in a sewn form," or simply, "Tetsugen edition." This was convenient in printing and thus contributed to the spread of Buddhist scriptures. However, the Tetsugen edition was the reproduction of the Wanli edition from the Ming dynasty. Thus, it was shame that the former had the same errors that the latter had. As scholar monks pointed out errors of both editions, the Goryeo canon proved its value as a standard.

Then, the Jōdo shū monk Ninchō (1645–1711), in particular, was determined to produce a source edition for the Japanese canon. After thirty years of work, he finally began his project with the help of ten

other scholar monks. He borrowed the Goryeo canon from Kenninji Temple and collated about six thousand texts three times, examining the differences and correcting the errors, in Shishigatani Hōnenin Temple, Kyoto, for about five years from the third to the seventh year of Kanei (from the thirty-second year to the thirty-sixth year of Joseon king Sukjong [r. 1674–1720], 1706–1710). He finally produced a Japanese standard canon. Two centuries later, the Jōdo shinshū monk Zyungei (1785–1847), along with his father and two sons, produced another edition deriving from the Goryeo canon after ten years of work with the Goryeo canon of Kenninji Temple from the ninth year of Bunsei<sup>66</sup> to the seventh year of Tenpō<sup>67</sup> (from the twenty-sixth year of Joseon king Sunjo [r. 1800–1834] to the second year of King Heonjong [r. 1834–1849], namely from 1826 to 1836). Thanks to these two monks' cherished wish, the printing of the Buddhist canon was completed based on the Goryeo canon, producing the *Small-Type Canon* (*Shukusatsu zōkyō*), which was published for six years between the thirteenth year to the eighteenth year of Meiji (r. 1867–1912), namely from 1880 to 1885. This canon heralded the popularization of the Buddhist canon, being made to be easily shelved not just in temples but also near the desks of scholars. The recently completed *Buddhist Canon Newly Compiled in the Taishō Era* (*Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*), which has become the biggest collection of Buddhist scriptures since the existence of the canon, is, so to speak, an expansion of the *Small-Type Canon*, and at the same time, development from the Goryeo canon in terms of spirit and style. It is needless to say that the old and new supplementary canons (*sokjanggyeong* [Ch. *xuzangjing*]) can be traced back to Uicheon's (1055–1101)<sup>68</sup> *Supplement to the Buddhist Canon* (*Sokjang*).

On the other hand, speaking of China, unlike other countries, it did not take an example from foreign countries because of its inveterate disease of pride. China simply ignored the Goryeo canon, the oldest and best example in terms of contents. A few editions of the canon during the Ming and Qing periods used previous clumsy editions of theirs as primary sources. They took much work, but their

merits did not correspond to the level of work exerted. [Recently,] whether it followed the contemporaneous trend, China became humble, correcting its old behaviors and learning other countries' strengths. The Pinjie canon, published in Shanghai in the third year (1911) of Emperor Xuantong (r. 1908–1912) during the Qing dynasty (1644–1912), was a sheer copy of the Japanese *Small-Type Canon*. This meant the transmission of the Goryeo canon to China and, at the same time, the final unification of the Chinese canon through the Goryeo edition. Later, China succeeded in photoprinting the *Supplementary Buddhist Canon* (*Zokuzōkyō*) of Japan. Through this, Korea paid a huge reward to China for its transmission of Buddhist texts.

It is needless to say that the Goryeo canon occupies the absolute and unequalled status in the scholastic Buddhism. In assessing this canon as a work of art, many people have already admitted that it is the supreme expression of the mind in woodblock art and general crafts because: (1) there has been no set of such many and complete woodblocks for texts in the world; (2) there is no extant set of such old woodblocks even a small number; (3) it is a treasure to which optimal care has been paid in all counts in terms of woodblock itself, including the quality of raw wood, craftsmanship, and preservation care; (4) with fine font and vigorous writing, it possesses great beauty in terms of calligraphy and carving. It is also possible to regard this as a manifestation of the Korean national spirit or a spiritual lesson that Korea gave to humanity.

Besides the contents of the woodblocks of the Goryeo canon, the woodblocks themselves are rare treasures. From early, Japan coveted these woodblocks. Its efforts to obtain them were truly deep and persistent. It seems that the Goryeo canon was transmitted to Japan shortly after the completion of the carving. However, the exact details of that transmission are difficult to know. What can be proved through records is that the first Japanese request for the canon was made when the Kyūshū constable (*tandai*) Imagawa Sadayo (1326–1420) returned 250 hostages, who were taken by Japanese

pirates, and demanded the canon as a reward in the first year of King Chang (r. 1388–1389) in the late Goryeo (1389). Four years later when Goryeo collapsed and Yi dynasty [i.e. Joseon (1392–1910)] arose, the Japanese Ashikaga shogunate volunteered to extinguish the Japanese pirates, which Korea had long aspired since Goryeo, and asked for the woodblocks as something similar to a reward. Although the Yi dynasty was different from Goryeo in revering Buddhism and its scriptures, the former was not different from the latter in recognizing the woodblocks as a dharma treasure of benefiting the state and comforting its people. Therefore, the Yi court gracefully refused to grant the demand. Nonetheless, Japan persisted to demand even just a copy of the blocks. Finally, King Sejong's (r. 1418–1450)<sup>69</sup> court bestowed the woodblocks of the *Tantric Buddhist Canon* (*Milgyo daejanggyeong*) and the *Commentary on the Flower Garland Sūtra*, and thereby soothed the earnest mind [of Japanese people]. Even after this, the tension between the two countries revolving around the woodblocks continued quite long. However, besides woodblocks, there were many cases of Japanese officials standing in a row in the street publicly or privately requesting printed scriptures.

Counting the number of the texts recorded to be transmitted to Japan, it reached almost fifty texts for about a hundred years. Adding what was omitted or lost, the number must have been much greater than this. As Korean historical records designate the Ashikaga<sup>70</sup> envoys as “sūtra-seeking envoys” (*cheonggyeongsa*), not “return-of-courtesy envoys” (*hoeryesa*), unlike other countries' counterparts, the relationship between the two countries of the time centered solely around the Buddhist canon. In this way, the Japanese request [for Buddhist scriptures] was made ceaselessly and it was difficult for Korea to print the canon as requested. As needed in a hurry, the Yi dynasty responded the request by collecting the scriptures housed in temples from earlier times. Many old texts that were lost or printed after the first Goryeo canon survive in Japan because of this reason. However, because reprinting Buddhist scriptures, which were the only effective means of conciliating Japanese people at that time, was

a hassle and old texts became scarce, bestowing scriptures on them gradually ceased sometime during the reign of king Yeonsan'gun (r. 1494–1506) or Jungjong (r. 1506–1544). As historical records reveal in details, since around this time, the relationship between the two countries had grown unamicable.

There were some reasons for Japan to have such a special reverence for the Goryeo canon. First of all, as constant warfare from the time of the Kamakura shogunate (1185–1333) greatly stimulated people's religious consciousness, Japanese Buddhism of the time which emphasized its popular and practical aspects thrived immensely. Many old and new temples sought to house dharma treasure. In the meanwhile, as scholarship extremely decreased with the chaos and disruption caused by warfare, Japan had no capability and technique to manage such a huge corpus of texts such as the Buddhist canon. Furthermore, since Japan was overwhelmed by the splendor of the Goryeo canon, it did not even dare to have a mind of independently carving the Buddhist canon. Just in time as there was a request from Korea for Japan to join the campaign to eliminate pirates, Japan demanded woodblocks for doing so. Japan was sometimes not ashamed of persistently demanding them at all. Even there was a case in which a private temple in Japan without an official request form forged the Japanese national seal in order to receive woodblocks from Korea. After this vital conduit had been blocked since the reign of King Jungjong [during the Joseon dynasty], Japan's inconvenience grew greatly. However, its people could do nothing. Even during the Imjin Invasion,<sup>71</sup> they failed to extort the woodblocks of the Goryeo canon. Finally, they ended up coming up with an idea of carving the canon, exactly imitating the Goryeo canon.

There are some separate texts from the Buddhist canon in Japan, printed with wooden type, which had an uncertain origin. At the end of the texts, there is a record, "Carved by Daizō tokan of Great Japan in the year of *mizunotoushi*<sup>72</sup> (or in the year of *hinotomi*),<sup>73</sup> following the royal edict."<sup>74</sup> Judging from the printing, font, and paper quality

of the texts, it can be guessed that they were produced sometime during the Keichō (1596–1615) era,<sup>75</sup> which signaled the beginning of Japanese modern carving. However, exactly when, where, why, and who created these texts have been unknown. Eventually, after a long and arduous study, it is recently found that they belonged to the body of texts that Shūzon of Ise seijōbō published when he launched the publication of the canon with donations from various sources, starting from rather easy and simple texts, for five years from 1613 to 1617 (from the fifth year to the ninth year of our Joseon king Gwanghaegun [r. 1608–1623]). The record of “Carved by Daizō tokan, following the royal edict” in a certain era at the end of each text comes directly from its source, the Goryeo canon. The text uses the title of the Korean governmental directorate “Daejang dogam”<sup>76</sup> (Jp. Daizō tokan, Supervisory Office of the Buddhist Canon) with no change. Even in some texts, the word “Goryeo” appears as the first word of the final page, just like in the texts from the Goryeo canon, being forgotten to be changed into “Great Japan.” Because of these facts, the inside story of how these texts were created was eventually revealed. Although it is true that the act of copying the Goryeo seal was clumsy and careless, the act also proves how great their admiration for the Goryeo canon was.

However, the honor and pride that Korea holds about the Goryeo canon does not end here. Korean Buddhists felt that it was their duty to complete a thorough collection of Buddhist texts when their Eastern counterparts did not even think about doing so. Generally speaking, the Buddhist canon should include every Buddhist text without exception. However, speaking from the Chinese convention, because there were strict rules on which text should be canonized, there should be an imperial grant for each and every case. Therefore, because of this limitation, there were not a few cases that even a useful and valuable text, being excluded from the canon, circulated independently for a while and eventually became lost with no trace left. However, a person who was born in Goryeo grieved this situation and gave an equal opportunity to all Buddhist

texts to be preserved long, recognizing their proper values. This person was National Preceptor Uicheon whose meritorious name Daegak (great awakening) shines in history books. He was a restorer of comprehensive Buddhism (*jeon Bulgyo*) during the Goryeo dynasty, who has been commemorated in Korean Buddhism in many ways. He was a prince of King Munjong (r. 1047–1082) who had completed the first Goryeo canon. Uicheon became a monk when young. He was smart and learned. He grieved the difficulty in acquiring old and new scriptures and treatises from various Buddhist schools since they were unorganized and rare. He decided to travel to Song China in order to collect, compile, and transmit them to posterity. Since his father King Munjong did not grant his wish, Uicheon secretly took a Song merchant's ship to China in 1085.<sup>77</sup> There, he not only visited renowned monks in temples which were located in noted mountains, but also collected uncanonized texts as many as he could. With 3,000 such texts, he returned to Goryeo in the subsequent year. He established the Bureau of Doctrinal Repository (Gyojangsa) (which served as the office of the publication of the *Supplement to the Buddhist Canon*) in Heungwangsa Temple, one of the largest temples of Goryeo which became the center of scriptural studies after being built around that time. Then, he collected the texts which had been omitted from catalogues from Liao, Song, and Japan, carefully examined these texts, and carved them onto woodblocks. The number of the texts, published this way for several years, reached approximately 4,740. The corpus of these texts constituted the famous so-called "Uicheon's *Supplement to the Buddhist Canon*" (Uicheon *Sokjang*).<sup>78</sup> This supplement took more efforts than the carving of the Goryeo canon itself and therefore had more accomplishments.

Uicheon's *Supplement to the Buddhist Canon* could not avoid the damage from warfare. Few of its woodblocks and printed texts have survived until today. However, most of today's extant texts of various Buddhist schools come from Uicheon's supplement. There still exists a Japanese reprint version of the *Comprehensive Catalogue of the Doctrinal Repository of All the Schools* (*Sinpyeon jejong gyojang*

*chongnok*), a catalogue for the published texts from the supplement. The catalogue is a treasure in Buddhist academia since it provides a valuable example of how East Asian Buddhist scholars in pre-modern times actually compiled different recensions of Buddhist texts. There are two more works of Uicheon: the *Literary Compendium of the Perfect School* (*Wonjong mullyu*), which compiled short teachings of renowned monks and classified them by subjects, and the *Forest of Words from Śākyā's Garden* (*Seogwon sarim*), which collected literary writings of Buddhists. Both of these Uicheon's works are famous for their collections of unknown masterworks in the world of Buddhist texts, though most of them were lost.

Korean Buddhists' persistent sincerity in preserving Buddhist texts did not stop with Uicheon's *Supplement to the Buddhist Canon*. They were aware of the fact that there were some texts omitted from Uicheon's collection and some new texts composed after him. Their conscience that could not ignore this fact went beyond the transition of dynasties, leading the subsequent Joseon dynasty to continue this marvelous work. Joseon adopted anti-Buddhist policy on the surface because of various circumstances. However, it secretly exerted itself to protect the religion as much as the previous Korean dynasties had done. One of the things worth praising was that the seventh Joseon king Sejo (r. 1455–1468) established the Supervisory Office of the Sūtra Publication (*Gan'gyeong dogam*), the state office for publishing Buddhist scriptures, in 1457, just two years after his enthronement, and produced the *Additional Supplement to the Buddhist Canon* (*Jae sokdaejang*), following Uicheon's *Supplement to the Buddhist Canon*. The office carried out such large projects as translating the canon into vernacular Korean and publishing it. Therefore, there are not many who know the fact that the main goal of the office was to collect and carve supplementary materials to the canon. According to recent researches, the office explicitly aimed at carving Buddhist scriptures, which would demonstrate the Yi court's sincerity in protecting dharma. Translating scriptures, therefore, was just one of its subsidiary projects. Anyway, some of the woodblocks for many

commentarial texts that were omitted from [Uicheon's] *Supplement to the Buddhist Canon* have recently been found. The Supervisory Office of the Sūtra Publication assigned the work of carving these woodblocks to several local governments especially in Gyeongsang-do. All these evidences prove that there was a large scale project of carving the Buddhist canon during the Yi dynasty as well.

In summary of Korean accomplishments regarding the canon, Goryeo king Hyeonjong launched the project of carving the canon when China began its own project of the canon carving, believing that the protective power of dharma-treasure should be on our land which had long been connected to Buddhism. Finally finishing this huge project, however, Korea planned the fundamental expansion of this canon. As a result, Uicheon's *Supplement to the Buddhist Canon* was created. This wisest way to express their sincerity in the protection of dharma had always been kept in Korean people's mind. During the Yi dynasty, this sincerity was materialized in the establishment of Supervisory Office of the Sūtra Publication, an extension of the Bureau of Doctrinal Repository in the Goryeo court. Goryeo king Gojong's second canon, was, so to speak, a collateral byproduct to replace Hyeonjong's canon. However, the second canon proved extraordinary sincerity in Goryeo Buddhists' determination to make the final authority regarding the Buddhist canon when it was fundamentally redacted. The Yi dynasty set up the Supervisory Office of the Sūtra Publication for the traditional mission of completing the Buddhist sacred canon. We can see here once again how thorough and practical Korean people's sincerity regarding the canon was in that the governmental office planned to not just carve original copies but also popularize the use of scriptures by translating them into vernacular Korean.

As the Chinese Tiantai school lost its dharma-lineage and texts during the upheaval of the late Tang and Five Dynasties period, the Goryeo Cheontae scholar Jegwan (d. 970) went to China in 960, along with a number of Buddhist texts, and revived the Tiantai school there. It is also a well-known fact that Jegwan's *Principle of the*

*Fourfold Teachings (Sagyoui)*<sup>79</sup> has served as the most excellent guide for Tiantai and Cheontae scholars until today. Later, some of the texts that had circulated independently and considered lost later, such as Huilin's (737–820) *Sounds and Meanings for All scriptures (Yiqie jing yuinyi)*, were found in the Goryeo canon and re-circulated in the world. There will be more such cases especially in the texts of Uicheon's *Supplement to the Buddhist Canon*.

One of the things that cannot be overlooked regarding Korean Buddhists' special contribution to the Buddhist canon was the completion of the *Tantric Buddhist Canon*. In most of the cases Buddhism was introduced to people in certain regions, its devotional aspect rather than the doctrinal one first became popular among those people. In Korean Buddhism too, Tantric Buddhism that claimed to protect and guide sentient beings with its wondrous spiritual power had gained popularity from early. In the Goryeo dynasty, since there was an intimate relationship between the court and the Tantric Buddhist school, Tantric Buddhism greatly thrived. As the court and ordinary people tended to rely more on the supernatural power with ceaseless national crisis, their admiration and faith in Tantric Buddhism became deeper. This tendency increased when Lamaism penetrated into the Korean society because of Goryeo's relation with the Mongolian Yuan dynasty (1206–1368). Therefore, there was a special connection between Tantric Buddhism and Goryeo culture. From early, the *Tantric Buddhist Canon* of ninety volumes was compiled in accordance with the Buddhist canon. In 1228,<sup>80</sup> King Chungshuk's (r. 1313–1330 and 1332–1339) court added forty more texts to this canon, compiling approximately 130 texts, and went further to carve the woodblocks for those texts. This was an unprecedented event in Tantric Buddhism and the most distinctive compilation of the Buddhist canon. In the sixth year of Yi dynasty King Sejong (1424), these woodblocks were bestowed on Japan. Therefore, how it was transmitted down was unclear. Since there is no surviving text, it is hard to know the details on this Tantric canon. Probably, it was not much different from the expansion of

the *Dhāraṇī Collection Sūtra* (*Tuoluoni ji jing*),<sup>81</sup> to which Siddham scripts and Lamaist texts were added. Its appearance somewhat can be guessed from various editions of mantra<sup>82</sup> collections.

Ever since the introduction of Buddhism to the peninsula, there were rather frequent direct or indirect communications with the Western Regions. After spending five years in Changgana dalusi Temple, located in the middle of India, the Baekje monk Gyeomik (fl. sixth century) returned to his home kingdom in 530,<sup>83</sup> along with the Indian monk Beidaduo (fl. sixth century), bringing the Indian Abhidharmaṭīka<sup>84</sup> and the five different versions of vinaya.<sup>85</sup> Gyeomik later led the project of translating seventy-two vinaya texts. In 620, the Silla monk Anhong (ca. 579–640)<sup>86</sup> brought Vimalā Paramārtha (fl. seventh century) and Nongjiatuo (fl. seventh century) of Udyāna, a kingdom to the north of Gandhāra, along with Fotuosengga (fl. seventh century) of Mathurā, and translated the *Sūtra of a Young Lady Adorned with Scented Flowers and Lights of Stars* (*Zhantan xianghua xingguang miaonu jing*). In the twenty-first year of the Goryeo king Taejo (938), the Magadhā monk Zhilimoriluo (fl. tenth century) came to Korea with the *Karma Platform Sūtra* (*Jiemotan jing*). In the fifth year of King Chung Suk (1228),<sup>87</sup> the Magadhā monk Tinabaotuo (1289–1363)<sup>88</sup> came with the *Sūtra of Mañjuśrī Giving Rise to No Precepts* (*Wenshushili wushengjie jing*). As shown in these few cases, translating secret words of the three baskets (Skt. *tripīṭaka*) was not uncommon [in Korea]. There are a few Buddhist texts that were directly transmitted from the Western Regions: for example, several old Buddhist scriptural pattra leaves in Hwajangsa Temple and Jangdansa Temple, and scriptures in Uigur language housed in Songgwangsa Temple. Regarding Buddhist texts, Korea is not important as a country of their translation or composition. Rather, Korea had a special mission as a compiler or preserver of the Buddhist canon, and in relation to that mission, it had achieved the greatest accomplishments.

In the canons and supplementary canons, in the exoteric and esoteric canons, in the collation and translation of scriptures, and in

two to three times of carving the Buddhist canon, Korean people's consistent sincerity and indomitable will led them to fully enjoy the honor of being a consummator of the Buddhist canon in the history of Buddhism. Even if all other contributions of Korean people to Buddhism should disappear, Korean Buddhism would still thrive for a very long time just with their contributions to the Buddhist canon. All the Buddhists could not but pay their praise and gratitude to Korea as long as the Buddha-dharma survives in the form of canon.

## Chapter 7

### Korea in the Spread of Buddhism

In Buddhism, spreading Buddhism is an important responsibility of Buddhists because Buddhism is not satisfied with each individual's salvation. Rather, its ultimate ideal is to guide all the sentient beings of the three realms to the shore of enlightenment. In Buddhist scriptures, there are three divisions: (1) introduction (*seobun* [Ch. *xufen*]), which explains the origin of the given scripture; (2) main content section (*jeongjong bun* [Ch. *zhengzong fen*]), which discusses the main teaching of the scripture; (3) dissemination section (*yutong bun* [Ch. *liutong fen*]), which describes the merits of the scripture and encourages people to transmit its teachings. Such Buddhist scriptures as the *Lotus Sūtra* and the *Vimalakīrti-sūtra* have a “chapter of entrustment” (*chongnu pum* [Ch. *zhulei pin*]), which emphasizes the necessity to disseminate the true teaching. Therefore, as Buddhism came to a certain country, its people transmitted it to their neighboring countries. This was the most meaningful task to express their allegiance and faithfulness as a Buddhist. Furthermore, as a peninsular country, the geographical endowment of Korea is in the transmission of culture. Right near the Korean Peninsula, there are Japanese islands which were lagging behind Korea in all aspects. Even before Buddhism was introduced to Korea, Japan had absorbed all various cultural nutrients from Korea. One of these two countries was supposed to transmit Buddhism while the other was supposed to drink the milk of Buddhism.

The regions that Korea had shared its joy and pleasure through Buddhism were not just limited to this southern island country. Several ethnic groups who resided in the region between Baekdusan Mountain and Heilong River converted to Buddhism through

Korean guidance. Goguryeo's relationship with Mohe people is one such example. However, picking just one country that Korea developed the most intimate relationship through Buddhism and even had some dharma-lineage connection, Japan is that country. Japanese Buddhism's connection to Korea was deeper than Chinese Buddhism's to Khotan. It is the relationship between root and branches or between mother and her son. Japanese Buddhism at its inception was nothing more than a branch of Korean Buddhism which was deeply rooted into the ground of Japan and blossoming. In terms of personnel and academics, Japanese Buddhism was not an independent entity at all. Japanese primitive culture and all its elements in terms of matter and mind originated from the peninsula. Confucianism, literature, and all continental cultural benefits, including various techniques, came to Japan through the medium of Korea. This is also a case for Buddhism that is the last of the four kinds of birth<sup>89</sup> and the utmost religion of all countries. Japan had to wait for Korea to transmit Buddhism to it.

As for the introduction of Buddhism to Japan, though it is not certain, according to the official history of Japan, the Baekje king Seongmyeong (r. 523–554) had a mind of transmitting Buddhism to the eastern region, i.e., Japan, from the sixth year of the Japanese Emperor Kinmei (r. 539–571).<sup>90</sup> The king finally sent Norisachigye (fl. sixth century) in the thirteenth year of the emperor (552), along with a gilt bronze Śākyamuni image, banners and canopies, and several copies of scriptures and treatises, and said the following words: "Buddha-dharma is a wondrous teaching that is superior to Confucianism of the Duke of Zhou and Confucius. Thus, faithfully receive and respectfully practice this."<sup>91</sup> The beginning of Buddhism in Japan is described this way. There is a different story in some later unofficial documents. However, regardless of the actual time of the introduction, it is obvious that the Buddha-dharma was transmitted to Japan through the Korean Peninsula. It is also true that Buddhism first spread as a religion for Korean immigrants in the Asuka region, which occupied a superior status as a center of a new culture in the

Japanese islands. Since Japan had its own deep-rooted indigenous religion and, thus, some political tensions occurred, unfortunately, the dissemination of Buddhism was at first delayed for a while. However, with its splendid artistic beauty and contents as well as cultural backgrounds, Buddhism soon attracted people from all classes of Japan. It was inevitable that Japan became a Buddhist country where its emperor, believed to be a god appearing as a human (*ara-hito-gami*), designated himself as a servant of the three jewels.<sup>92</sup>

In the early history of Japanese Buddhism, Japanese people were just faithful followers of the religion. Most of the leaders, major figures, and even craftsmen were the monks, invited from Goguryeo, Baekje, and Silla, and the immigrants from the Korean Peninsula. During approximately a century after Empress Suiko (r. 592–628) moved the capital to Asuka, all of the important construction projects had been carried out by these people. The construction style of this period had been called “Baekje (Jp. Kudara) style” or “Korean style.” Starting from Hōryūji Temple which has acquired world-wide fame in many ways, all the temples, built after the reign of Empress Suiko, including Sitennōji, Hōkiji, Chūgūji, and Kumagori-dera, as well as the buddha statues and other objects, housed in those temples, belonged to this style. Here, in Asuka, Korean monks spread the main teaching and style of Korean Buddhism.

Buddhism did not take its firm root into the Japanese islands until Empress Suiko moved the capital to Asuka, where Korean immigrants resided, about a half century after the introduction of Buddhism in the period of Emperor Kinmei. This was a great and unprecedented change of the fate in the history of Japan ideologically and politically. It was possible because of the union of Korean Buddhists and the Imperial Crown Prince Umayado (574–621) who served as a regent for the empress. Before and after the reign of Empress Suiko, there were turbulent power struggles in the imperial court. There were constant tragedies occurring between the court and aristocrats. Prince Umayado converted to Buddhism from early

and purged his opponents with the help of Korean immigrants, based on his faith [in Buddhism]. As Japanese historical records praised, he achieved great accomplishments by using Buddhism in improving the country's fortune in both internal and diplomatic matters. To summarize his accomplishments, Prince Umayado accepted both Buddhism and the continent's culture, adopted the religion as the underlying ideology for the unity of Japan, initiated the union of Buddhism and monarchy, and guided Japanese people to the path toward material and spiritual civilization. Although he was personally condemned a little due to his power struggle after all, he was respected later by many people, in particular, Buddhists, and given the honorary title of "Prince of Holy Virtues" (Shōtoku Taishi) or "Dharma King" (Hōō). This is not in vain at all.

The Suiko-Asuka period which adorned the beginning of the cultural history of Japan, in particular, its art history, as mentioned before, was highlighted by the hands of the Korean immigrants and their descendants with the protection of Prince Umayado. At first, imperial palaces or aristocrats' residences were used as Buddhist temples. Buddha statues were imported from Baekje. According to the record, in the sixth year (577) of Emperor Bidatsu (r. 572–585), several Buddhist priests, along with sculptors for buddha statues and engineers for temple building, were invited.<sup>93</sup> In the first year (588) of Emperor Sushun (r. 587–592), a number of technicians, including temple architects, casting specialists, tile specialists, and painters, were also brought to Japan.<sup>94</sup> In this way, with the help of the technicians (mostly monks) who were invited from Korea, temples, pagodas, buddha statues, and other Buddhist instruments were made in Japan. Grand, solemn, and splendid temples which modeled after Korean counterparts continued to appear from this time. One example is Hōryūji Temple. It boasts the majestic beauty of the so-called "seven-hall temple" (*shichidō karan*), having withstood 1,300 years of winds and rains since its foundation in the fifteenth year (607) of Empress Suiko. The temple has been cherished by both Japan and other countries as the oldest wood building in the East.

It may be safe to say that Hōryūji Temple was a product of Korean Buddhist art around the time. In fact, the term “Baekje” was added to the name of imperial palaces and major large temples in the Asuka capital of the time. It can be guessed that the term was used as an indication to refer to something of a high quality or class.

The construction of large temples also has the significant implication in general cultural history. Thanks to the construction, architecture and its various accompanying techniques, along with mining industry, lacquerwork, metalwork, embroidery, dying, and printing, dramatically developed. On the other hand, Buddhism reduced the influence of the Japanese old custom of fearing the impurity of death, and at the same time, dropped the practice of moving the capital whenever the monarch died, and thereby contributed to the thriving of cities and rapid cultural progress.

Besides its architectural beauty, Hōryūji Temple is famous for the great works of art it houses. Until the wall-paintings of Goguryeo tombs, as well as the old paintings of Dunhuang and Western Regions, were uncovered, the paintings of Hōryūji Temple were famous as the oldest in the East. The “Pure Lands of Four Buddhas” (“Shibutsu jōdozu”), the wall-painting in the golden hall of the temple which has artistic importance in many aspects, is one such example. From ancient times, this painting has been known as Damjing’s (579–631)<sup>95</sup> work. He was a Goguryeo monk. Some say that it was a painting of Tori (fl. late sixth to early seventh centuries)<sup>96</sup> who was a famous sculptor of the time. He was a descendant of the Shiba clan which had immigrated from the peninsula about two centuries before that time. Either way, it was nothing other than a work of the Korean immigrant art. It was created after the period of Nara<sup>97</sup> (710–794) when these immigrants were completely integrated into the Japanese society. By the Asuka period, being “Koreans” was a source of pride or honor. Therefore, even generations after immigration, many immigrants firmly remained as a foreigner.

Apart from the wall painting, judging from the inscription on its halo, the gilt bronze Śākyamuni triad in the Golden Hall of

Hōryūji Temple was built by Tori for Prince Umayado in the thirty-first year (623) of Empress Suiko. The sculptor Tori was also greatly praised for making a six-*jang* [approx. eighteen meters] buddha image from copper and silk under the order of the imperial court. This image, known as the Asuka Great Buddha, still survives in the old site of Gangōji Temple. His father Tasuna (fl. late sixth century) and grandfather Tatsuto (fl. sixth century) were devout Buddhists and masters of sculpture. Some say that Tatsuto was the one who first transmitted Buddhism [from Korea] to Japan.

Baekje Avalokiteśvara (Kudara Kannon), which is now displayed at Imperial Household Museum (Teishitsu Hakubutsukan) in Nara, was also originally enshrined in the Golden Hall of Hōryūji Temple. Recently, a full-scale replica of the image was displayed separately in one of the rooms in a museum in Berlin. It has received praises from many art historians, including the Austrian Karl With (1891–1980), who was the author of the *Buddhistische Plastik in Japan*. It had suddenly acquired world-wide fame as a masterwork of one style and one period of time. The image is still called “Baekje Avalokiteśvara,” indicating that it came originally from Baekje. Even if there is a possibility that the image is not Baekje’s, it is still generally agreed that it fully follows the Baekje style. It is needless to say that among the Buddha or bodhisattva statues of this style, found not just in Hōryūji Temple but also in Asuka and Nara areas, many should be called in the same way as is Baekje Avalokiteśvara.

However, since we don’t have enough space to explain this in details, let us just pretend ignorance and turn to the area of Buddhist scholarship.

Speaking again of Hōryūji Temple, as its full name “Hōryū Gakumonji” (Prosperous Dharma Temple of Learning) shows, the temple was, so to speak, something of a research center of Buddhism of that time. There was a huge lecture hall, along with the so-called Dream Hall (Yumedono), which served as Prince Umayado’s private hall. It is believed the prince studied or wrote in his private hall. In this Dream Hall, he also composed expository commentaries on the *Lotus Sūtra*,

the *Vimalakīrti-sūtra*, and the *Śrīmālā-sūtra*,<sup>98</sup> the commentaries that have been regarded as outstanding in the cultural history of Japan. Of course, this occurred after the introduction of Buddhism. However, looking at Prince Umayado's academic genealogy, he learned Buddhism from the Goguryeo monk Hyeja (d. 622) and the Baekje monk Hyechong (fl. late sixth to early seventh centuries), Confucianism from a Korean scholar named Gakga (fl. late sixth to early seventh centuries), and astronomy, divination, and numerology from the Baekje monk Gwalleuk (fl. early seventh century). Hence, it is obvious that the prince's knowledge and craft were acquired from Koreans. We can guess who planned and who helped Umayado's writings and projects: for example, the famous Seventeen-Article Consitution, the inscriptions on the back of gilt bronze Bhaiṣajyaguru and Śākyamuni in Golden Hall which were regarded as the oldest Chinese writings in Japan, the official government letter to the Chinese Sui court which initiated the equal relationship between Japan and the continent, and the compilation of various types of historical records, including emperor records (*tennō ki*) and state records (*koku ki*). It can be guessed that the prince composed the commentaries on the three scriptures, based on the theories of Hyeja and Hyechong. One of the prince's biographies seems to imply this fact, recording that whenever he was stuck on a certain word or phrase, not being able to proceed, in composing commentaries, the prince went to Dream Hall and received the foreign gold men's teachings.<sup>99</sup>

The culture of the Suiko period was, in brief, the culture of Korean immigrants. The foundation of the immigrants' culture was the culture of Buddhism. Prince Umayado's project was an experiment of Buddhist politics that Korean Buddhists had led, taking the prince as its performer. Through this, we can guess how great Korean immigrants' status or their religion's power was and, in particular, how remarkable Buddhists' activities were during this period. In the fourth month of the thirty-second year (624) of Empress Suiko, there was a monk who committed ethical violations. The empress gathered all monks. After interrogation, she was about

to impose severe punishments [on all the monks]. Hearing of this, the Baekje monk Gwalleuk submitted a memorial to the empress that said, “Please, punish the culprit alone and pardon the rest!” The empress granted his petition. As a result of this event, the court established bureaucracy to oversee the behavior of monks. Gwalleuk was appointed as saṃgha prefect (*sōjō*), the highest post of the Buddhist bureaucracy, and a Goguryeo monk named Deokjeok (fl. early seventh century) was made saṃgha administrator (*sōzu*), the second highest post. In this way, Korean immigrant Buddhists officially and unofficially participated in the court politics during Prince Umayado’s regency in the Suiko period. If we try to give a detailed explanation for the relationship between Buddhism and Korean immigrants on the one hand and Prince Umayado and the culture of the ancient Japanese society on the other, we have to write down the whole history of the Asuka period. However, here I would like to avoid such a hassle.

## Chapter 8

### Japanese Buddhism and Korea

Korean contribution to Japanese Buddhism was not limited to the Asuka period. The subsequent Nara period witnessed that the sovereignty of Japanese Buddhism was still in the hands of Korean immigrants. For example, most of the founders of the Six Buddhist schools of Nara were Koreans. Furthermore, there were not a few Korean monks who received great fame and respect for a generation in Japan. The Buddhist schools that came to Japan before the Nara period were the Sanron shū (Three Treatise School) which originated from Nāgārjuna and the Jōjitsu shū (School of Establishing Reality) which Harivarman (ca. 250–ca. 350)<sup>100</sup> founded. One of the two schools belonged to Great Vehicle while the other, to Lesser Vehicle. The two schools were the same in that both emphasized emptiness. The first patriarch of the Japanese Sanron shū was the Goguryeo monk Hyegwan (fl. 625–682) who was a disciple of the great master Jiaxiang Jizang (549–623).<sup>101</sup> Hyegwan came to Japan during the Suiko period and preached the Sanron teachings in Hōkōji Temple. The Jōjitsu shū was greatly promoted by the Baekje monk Dojang (ca. 640) who visited Japan during the Tenmu (r. 673–686) period.

Following the Sanron shū, the two schools, Hossō shū (Dharma Characteristic School) and Gusha shū (Abhidharmakośa School), arose. The former was Great Vehicle while the latter was Lesser Vehicle. The two schools were identical in that both highlighted existences. The relationship between the two was similar with that of Sanron and Jōjitsu. Among several lineages of the Hossō shū, the most significant one originated from Jibong (Jp. Chihō, fl. seventh century) of Gangōji Temple, who travelled to the Tang China under the command of the Silla Emperor Munmu (r. 661–681) and returned [to Silla] after

receiving Zhizhou's (668–723)<sup>102</sup> dharma. Jibong was a Silla monk. He had many students who served the Japanese Buddhist community. One example is Gyōgi (Kor. Haengi, 668–749) who was famous in the history of Nara Buddhism. He popularized Buddhism with chanting and social services, strove for the unity between Buddhism and deity worship, and established temples in local provinces of Japan (Kokubunji). His dharma descendent Gomyō (fl. eighth century) also went to the Silla kingdom to study Hossō teachings and returned to Japan and preached at Gangōji Temple. The Hossō shū that has been transmitted along the lineage from these monks is the oldest surviving Buddhist school in Japan. Even these days, the school still has a significant influence with Hōryūji Temple as its head temple.

The Kegon shū (Flower Garland School) began with Sinshō (Kor. Simsang, fl. eighth century) who was Xianshou's<sup>103</sup> disciple. Sinshō preached the *Sūtra of a Lion Roaring the Flower Garland of Great Vehicle* (*Dasheng Huayan shizhou jing*) in Konshōji Temple, Kasuga, under the imperial edict during the Shōmu (r. 724–749) period. He was also a Silla monk. He was followed by Rōben (689–774), the founder of Tōdaiji Temple, which is famous for a huge buddha image. The Kegon shū thrived with these monks and has survived until now with Tōdaiji Temple as its head temple.

Risshū (Vinaya School) was founded by the Tang Chinese monk Jianzhen (688–763) during the reign of Empress Kōken (r. 749–758). However, before this, shortly after the introduction of Buddhism to Japan, the three Buddhist nuns Zenshin (b. 574), Zenzō (fl. ca. sixth century),<sup>104</sup> and Ezen (fl. ca. sixth century) traveled to Baekje to study the vinaya. Thus, the embryo of the Japanese Risshū was conceived again in Korea.

Broadly speaking, the Nara period was the culmination of Japanese Buddhism. The reigning period of the emperors Shōmu and Kōken was the culmination of the Nara Buddhism. The facts that Korean Buddhists founded the six schools of Buddhism, which can be regarded as the entire Japanese Buddhism, and were involved in their developments tell us what the foundation and original seed of

Japanese Buddhism for the subsequent thousand years were.

In this way, Japan took Korea as its mother country in terms of Buddhism. There were not a few scholar monks who went to the peninsula to study Buddhism. The aforementioned cases of Zenshin's study in Baekje, Gomyō's study in Silla, and Gyōzen's (fl. seventh century) study in Goguryeo during the reign of Emperor Saimei (r. 655–661) are some of those examples. In particular after Silla's doctrinal studies flourished, there was a continuous flow of Japanese monk students into the Silla capital Gyeongju. Kanjō and Unkan during the reign of Emperor Tenmu; Chiryū, Myōsō, Kanchi, Bentsū, and Shinei during the reign of Emperor Jitō (r. 686–697), and Jitei, Jōdatsu, Gihō, Giki, and Sōshū during the reign of Emperor Genmei (r. 707–715) are just some examples recorded in historical texts. After coming back to Japan, finishing their study, these monks served as leaders of the Buddhist community or became governmental officials, changing their careers. Even in the latter's case, the experience of studying in Silla rendered a great help in achieving fame and prestige. Yamada Mikata (fl. eighth century) was one such example. After studying in Silla during the reign of Emperor Jitō, he returned and served as a teacher for monk students. Later, he returned to secular life and rose to a considerably high rank in the court. During the reign of Emperor Genshō (r. 715–724), he was about to be sacked on the charge of taking a bribe. However, he was pardoned because he was regarded as a person of merit thanks to his study in Silla. Then, he was promoted to a head position in education (Daigaku no kami). His case serves a source for looking at how those who studied in Silla were treated in Japan. (Japanese monks some times went to the Korean Peninsula to study Buddhism during the Goryeo dynasty as well.)

On the other hand, since Prince Umayado opened relations with the Sui court, Japanese monk students had increasingly travelled to Tang China. However, Japan at that time had a puerile level of sea navigation and shipbuilding technologies. Therefore, envoys and students of the time relied heavily on Silla ships to travel to China.

Even after reaching China, mostly, they had to wait for Silla people's help in translating Chinese, contacting governmental offices, and familiarizing areas. In 838, Fujiwara Tsunetsugu (796–840), the de facto last Japanese envoy to the Tang court, and the great master Jikaku Ennin (794–864), who was the second patriarch of the Japanese Tendai shū and third abbot of Enryakuji Temple, took a Silla ship together and achieved their mission in China with the help of Silla people. The ship-owner at that time was Jang Bogo (787–ca. 846) who was a great entrepreneur. He opened the sea routes that connected the four areas centering around Silla Cheonghaejin (Blue Sea Headquarter, what is now Wando in the south end of the peninsula), along with the Shandong Peninsula, the estuary of the Yangzi River in China, and Hakata in Japan, and developed a flourishing sea trade with a Buddhist backdrop. Beophwawon Temple he founded in Chishan, the Shandong Peninsula, was a center of an international Buddhist network among countries in the East.

With Buddhism, other cultures such as Korean Sindo (Way of gods)<sup>105</sup> and folk religions as well as Chinese Xiandao (Way of immortality)<sup>106</sup> and Yinyangdao (Way of yin and yang)<sup>107</sup> were also introduced to the Japanese Islands through Korean and Japanese monks who had studied in Korea. To name a few, there were: (1) Sekisan myōzin which originated from Jang Bogo's Beophwawon; (2) Siragi zenshin (Shinra myōzin), which have long been revered after being enshrined in 858 by the Great Master Chishō Enchin (814–891), the fifth abbot of Enryakuji Temple, as a guardian deity for Onjōji Temple (Miidera); (3) Kudara gongen or Kōrai gongen, which was enshrined in Mountain Hakone in the late eighth century by a renowned monk named Mangan (ca. 720–ca. 816) who strove to reconcile Buddhism with Sindo and Xiandao. Several legends were later fabricated regarding the origins of these deities. However, the truth is that these deities were worshipped by Korean immigrants in Japan and were later simply integrated into Buddhism. (Furthermore, Sonokarakami or Karakami, which became a guardian deity for the Japanese imperial house from the Asuka and Nara periods and had been constantly

revered in the court even after the capital moved to Heian, draws our attention as a symbol for the relationship between the Japanese court and its ancient history and Korean immigrants.)

Not only in Asuka, but also in Nara period, Korean immigrants' relationship with Japanese Buddhism was deeper and more intimate than we thought. They contributed to the development of Japanese Buddhism by providing various opportune stimulations. The Tendai shū (Heavenly Terrace School) and Mikkyō (Tantric Buddhism) which became a center of Buddhist faith in the subsequent Heian period (794–1185) also received guidance from the Korean Peninsula. Buddhist schools in the Kamakura period (1185–1333) such as Jōdo shū (Pure Land School) and Zen shū (Meditation School) which Buddhist historians consider as pure Japanese Buddhism had in fact unexpected connections to the Korean Peninsula. Those who are interested in Buddhism can notice that Shinran's (1173–1262) religion, Jōdo shinshū (True School of Pure Land), which has recently attracted many people's attention, was subtly related not only to his predecessors such as Gyōki, Kūya (903–972), Eshin (942–1017), and Hōnen (1133–1212), but also to Wonhyo.

Various types of spiritual techniques and Xiandao were also introduced to Japan along with Buddhism. Through the synthetic process between Buddhism and these religious practices, there appeared Shugendō (Way of Cultivating Supernatural Power).<sup>108</sup> Ryōbu Shintō (Dual Shintō)<sup>109</sup> and *shinbutsu shūgō* (syncretism of *kami* and buddhas) developed as a broader ideological movement. It cannot be hidden that Koreans gave help and provided materials for all these phenomena.

There are ample examples in the history of Buddhism that one country transmitted Buddhism to another. However, there are few cases like Korea and Japan in which the former offered a thorough and persistent guidance to the latter for such a lengthy period of time. When the Baekje king Seong transmitted Buddha-dharma to Japan, he expressed his purpose, saying, "From India to the Three Kingdoms of Korea, all received these teachings and there

is none who does not revere and honor them [in these countries]. Accordingly, I transmit it to Japan. Make efforts to diffuse it throughout the provinces, thereby fulfilling what the Buddha himself foretold, 'My dharma will spread to the East.'"<sup>110</sup> Korea indeed represents the utmost devotion, sincerity, and persistent work in the tradition of Buddhism.

## Chapter 9

### Eastern Culture and Korean Buddhism

Although Buddhism is not the light of hope for Eastern culture, it surely has served as a great force of nurturing many new cultures. Just as chlorophylls perform anabolic reactions by absorbing sunlight, the seed of Eastern culture, which had hibernated deep down, being covered, has sprouted out and flowered by receiving the light of Buddhism as well as its background culture of India and Western Regions.

For example, although China was a civilized country with its own letters, people there had failed to figure out how to set up phonological rules. After Buddhism was introduced, it compared Sanskrit and Chinese pronunciations and discovered several explanatory rules such as *fanqie* (lit. reverse cut),<sup>111</sup> four tones (*sisheng*), thirty-six consonants and vowels, and 206 rhymes. Eventually around the ninth century, the Tang monk Shengong (fl. early eighth century) consummated the principle of the so-called “equal rhymes” (*dengyun*). With the connection to Buddhism and the help of Buddhist monks’ designs, Korea and Japan also invented their own alphabets.

Hunmin jeongeum (Correct Sounds for Instructing the People) or Eonmun (Vernacular Writing), the Korean alphabet that we now use, was created approximately five centuries ago. It was the latest invented and most perfect phonogram in the world. There are several theories about its origin. However, it cannot be hidden that many of its character shapes came from Sanskrit and its arrangement is similar to that of Siddham or Devanagari in India. Its origin can be traced back to *ido*,<sup>112</sup> the invention of Seol Chong (b. 658) who was Wonhyo’s son as well as the best scholar of Silla in Chinese literature. This *ido*, in brief, originated from Korean monks’ practice

of transcribing Korean, using Chinese characters. At first, they just borrowed pronunciation. However, because of inconvenience and insufficiency, they also came to use Chinese characters for their meaning as well. When they borrowed these characters, they at first wrote them in a full form and then gradually in a more simplified or abbreviated form. This practice of simplifying characters began from Tang Chinese monks who intentionally omitted some strokes of characters for speedwriting when they wrote their notes during their master's lecture. For about 1,000 years, Korean people recorded Korean this way, using Chinese characters. However, as it was greatly inconvenient, their own independent alphabet was finally invented. Because of this origin, the Korean alphabet was deeply connected to Sanskrit in terms of character-type and phonetic rules.

As for the Japanese alphabet Kana, it is believed that its standard font was invented by a Confucian official named Kibi no Makibi (693–775), while its cursive font, by the monk Kūkai (774–835). However, this theory is baseless. The fact that both of these inventors used to study in the Tang China may imply that the Japanese alphabet originated from foreign countries. At that time, Japanese scholars often travelled to the Korean Peninsula. For their travel to China as well, Japanese people relied on Silla ships and sea routes. Therefore, it is reasonable to say that the technique of borrowing Chinese characters which had been already practiced in Korea was introduced to Japan in this process. Just like the *ido* in Silla, in the development of the Japanese alphabet, Chinese characters were used first in a full form and then gradually in a simplified form.

Japanese alphabetical letters are called “Karina” or “Kana” in abbreviation. It is said that this name derived from the Sanskrit word “karana” which means letters. The arrangement of the standard font of the Japanese alphabet came from the chart of vowels and consonants in the Siddham language. The cursive font is arranged in accord with a measure of a famous scriptural verse.

Phonology and Phonogram, which triggered an important transformation in the ideological life of Eastern people, developed

from Buddhism and the Sanskrit language and texts that it brought.

To take a step further and speak of literature, Chinese literature increased its philosophical and religious depth and profoundness thanks to Buddhism. The formation of Daoism and the emergence of Chan also developed many new fields. Despite all these contributions, however, Buddhism was a mere stimulus for or assistant to Chinese literature.

However, it is not an exaggeration to say that the introduction of Buddhism signaled the beginning of philosophy and literature in Korea and Japan and that the spread of Buddhism triggered the development of these fields. Korean people originally enjoyed singing songs. However, with the introduction of Buddhism, this tendency greatly increased. Many songs were created with Buddhism as their background. Most of the renowned authors came from Buddhist clergy. They further developed a habit of designating the most elegant and popular song as a song of Tuṣita Heaven (“*Dosol ga*”). Indian *Jātaka*<sup>113</sup> and *Itivṛttaka*<sup>114</sup> literature were also introduced and read popularly. Most of the novels and short stories that have circulated in Korea until now originated from Buddhism or Indian literature.

Japanese literature was initially developed by Korean people. For a lengthy period of time, literary posts in the court were occupied by Korean immigrants. After Buddhism came and spread, Japanese people began to take over these posts. For example, although Chinese literature was already transmitted, Japanese people paid little attention to Chinese classics. As Buddhism was introduced, they finally began to study Chinese literature in order to read Buddhist scriptures. Therefore, Japanese literature developed with Buddhism. Japanese literature which had been thus far a simple expression of emotions became equipped with ideological contents thanks to Buddhism. Furthermore, the topics for its composition, as well as the format of its expressions, came to depend on Buddhist elements.

Not just *gobungaku* (old literature) and *gabungaku* (elegant literature), but also later *zoku bungaku* (folk literature) arose under the shade of Buddhism. This can be guessed from the following. First,

Japanese vernacular literature was born, imitating the “recorded-sayings” (Ch. *yulu*) genre of Chan Buddhism which was popular in Song China, where Japanese Zen monks during the Kamakura period frequently travelled. Then, the poor and limited expressions of ideology were finally liberated from pure Chinese literature and, at the same time, oral literature which minority and women could easily understand emerged. Second, as Heian literature which was lewd, extravagant, voluptuous, and materialistic gradually came to a standstill, Japanese literature consecutively produced works of military tales such as the *Record of the Rise and Fall of the Minamoto and Taira* (*Genpei seisuiki*) and the *Tale of the Heike* (*Heike monogatari*), as well as hymns (*wasan*) and folk songs (*yōkyoku*), discovering the great ideological sources of liberating from this world and seeking for Pure Land. The role of Korean Buddhism in the process of the development of Japanese literature can be seen in numerous references related to Korea in texts such as the *Miraculous Tales of Japan* (*Nihon ryōiki*), the *Abbreviated Record of Japan* (*Fusō ryakuki*), the *Tales of Uji* (*Uji shūi monogatari*), the *Tales from the Past* (*Konjaku monogatari*), and the *Collection of Sand and Stone* (*Shaseki shū*), texts that can be regarded as sources of Japanese literature of the time.

The cultural exchange between Korea and Japan, in particular, through Buddhism, had a long history. It lasted until the Heian period in the history of Japan. It can be an extremely tedious and cumbersome task to explore the exchange of Buddhist culture not just in these two countries, but also in China and Western Regions, in terms of all aspects of mind and matter. Therefore, let us limit our attention only to the facts about art and look at where Korean Buddhism stands in the cultural history of the East.

As for ancient art of the East, everyone thinks of Hōryūji Temple and Shōsōin<sup>115</sup> in Nara. This is because there are no such places as these two that have systematically and perfectly preserved historical relics which are older than a thousand years, aside from gold and stone ones. However, from the academic point of view, there are many uncomfortable points regarding the origin and history of

Hōryūji and Shōsōin. It can be even said that they are nothing but a storehouse of treasures with mysterious origins. To speak of Hōryūji Temple alone, there are records that the temple was built by Korean people. It also shows the construction style of the Six Dynasties period, mingling with some of Persian, Indian, and even distant Western Regions' elements. Although several different theories of its origin exist, they are just nothing but speculations. It has previously been believed that explaining its clear origin and history from the historical perspective was impossible.

To speak of some of the details of the temple building, there are brackets on the pillar heads, cloud-shaped bracket arms, modified-swastika-shaped banisters, and Chinese character “*ren*” (Jp. *nin*)-shaped struts. These are the features that can be found only in Hōryūji Temple in the history of Japanese architecture. Their origins are obscure. Since 1912, many Goguryeo tombs, presumably built around the fifth or sixth century, have been uncovered in several sites on both sides of the Amnokgang River and Daedonggang River where one of the Goguryeo capitals were located. The style of the stonework of these temples resembles that of Hōryūji Temple, which shows the close relationship between these structures. In China which can be called the “mother country” of Korean art, the transmission path of this style is clearly traceable through all the caves from Yungang, Shanxi Province, which is close to the Goguryeo land, to Mountain Tianlong in Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, to Longmen in Luoyang, Henan Province, and to Dunhuang in Shazhou, Gansu Province along the width direction. There are many traces left that can reveal its origin back from the Six Dynasties, Wei (220–265), and Han periods. With all these evidences, the position of Hōryūji Temple in the history of Asian architecture becomes clear. The same design and decoration found in those Goguryeo tombs and Hōryūji Temple certainly demonstrate the connection between these two.

There were wall paintings inside these Goguryeo tombs, reflecting the Goguryeo custom and art that developed together. Paintings in the Zhou (ca. 1046–256 BCE) and Han periods already showed the

significant level of development. In the period of Six Dynasties, the paintings of Gu Kaizhi (ca. 348–ca. 409) in Eastern Jin (317–420) and Xie He (fl. fifth century) in Southern Qi (479–502) reflected rapid development. The *Admonitions of the Court Instructress* (*Nushi zhentu*)<sup>116</sup> and the *Nymph of the Luo River* (*Luoshen tu*),<sup>117</sup> secretly housed in the British Museum, have been praised as two of the oldest hand-drawn Oriental paintings. Both paintings are in fact imitations that were made in the Tang or Song dynasty. Even though there are some materials inside the stone caves of Datong and Longmen that can ascertain the level of paintings of the time, those materials are not paintings in the true sense.

Some wall paintings from the period of Six Dynasties remain in Qianfodong (Thousand Buddha Caves), Dunhuang. However, they are placed so distant from the center that they are inconvenient to watch. The technique applied to those paintings is not sophisticated at all. Ssangyeongchong (Tomb of the Twin Pillars), Yonggang<sup>118</sup> and the large and mid-sized ones of the three tombs in Uhyeon-ri, Gangseo,<sup>119</sup> have wall paintings describing four divine animals, heavenly beings, and customs in the fifth or sixth century. Their dynamic strokes and vigorous spirit make people admire and wonder at the striking development in the art of that time. These are unprecedented in China and Japan. They are valuable materials of the artistic style before the Northern Wei period (386–533) that cannot be found in any other places. These wall paintings are also the oldest known paintings in the East except India. Among those paintings, however, there are some with the pure Northern Wei style or some from the style of the pre-Northern Wei period. There are also some that were influenced by Buddhist art or some that were not. There are some paintings which might disclose a sort of secret in the history of Eastern art if their origins are thoroughly investigated.

Compared to the wall painting of Hōryūji Temple, these tomb paintings were more than a century or even a few centuries older. Still, the bold style of description and free movement of the brush in those tomb paintings are much superior to those of the

Hōryūji Temple painting. The composition, design, and coloring are almost same in the paintings of both places. With the simple shape and elegant mood, the tomb paintings also seem to have close connections to the embroidered drapes in the litharge painting (Jp. *mitsuda-e*)<sup>120</sup> of the Tamamushi Shrine (Tamamushi no zushi)<sup>121</sup> and the *Maṇḍala of the land of Amitāyus* (*Muryōju koku mandara*), archetypes of the Japanese paintings of the Asuka period. The portrayal of the heavenly beings on the ceiling of the large tomb in Uhyeon-li is similar with that of the Tamamushi Shrine. The identical honeysuckle pattern in the pure Greek style put between figures in both paintings also draws people's attention. All these make one think yet again that there is a reason to believe that the wall-painting of Hōryūji Temple, according to Japanese ancient texts, is a work of Damjing who first introduced the techniques of coloring and paper and ink making to Japan, and that the *Maṇḍala of the land of Amitāyus* was initiated by the Goguryeo immigrant Gaseoil (Jp. Kasei, d. 756).

The litharge painting is a type of oil painting that uses pigments with a lead oxide additive as an oil desiccant. This technique was used in the East earlier than in the West. It was applied to decorating lacquerware until later. It seems that the technique originated from the Persian area which is far away. It is also said that the name *mitsudasō* (lead oxide) is in fact a transcription of a Persian word.

When Goguryeo collapsed, its tombs were robbed by the Tang army. There were few works of art left. Some lacquer pieces with a pattern drawn in litharge painting, regarded as wooden coffin fragments with lacquer coating, were uncovered from the large temple of Uhyeon-ri, having survived such robbery. These relics suggest the possible origin of the litharge painting in the Tamamushi Shrine. It is also interesting that the paintings of Goguryeo and Japan of the time were connected to the Sasanian art in terms of painting style. For example, on old mirrors from the period of Three Kingdoms of Korea, there is a painting of a heavenly horse with wings, which is similar to the Greek Pegasus. Hōryūji Temple in Japan houses the so-called "the Banner of the Four Heavenly King

Pattern,” a silk pattern in pure Assyrian design that portrays the four warriors with central Asian appearance riding on horses with wings and hunting a lion. Similar lion-hunt paintings in Assyrian style were often found throughout Manchuria. These facts, of course, had significant implications for the cultural exchanges between the East and the West.

No extant records remain regarding the ancient art of Korea. Recently, the discovery of Goguryeo wall paintings, therefore, surprises people since it shows the early and yet huge development of Korean art. Texts of both East and West clearly testify the development of Korean art in ancient times. In 463, the seventh year of Japanese Emperor Yūryaku (r. 456–479), the Baekje painter Insaraa (fl. fifth century) was served and treated with generosity in Japan. This was about ninety years after the Buddha-dharma was transmitted to Goguryeo and about ninety years before it was introduced to Japan. After Buddhism was transmitted to Japan, in 588, the first year of Emperor Sushun, the court invited the painter Baekga (fl. late sixth century), along with other craftsmen from Baekje. In 604, the twelfth year of Empress Suiko, Prince Umayado established a hereditary painter position in several places and let them take charge of adorning buddha images in temples. Most of the painters who occupied the positions were Korean immigrants. From this time, Japanese painting began to form a fixed style. In 610, the eighteenth year of the same empress, as mentioned earlier, the Goguryeo monk Damjing who is believed to be the author of the Hōryūji Temple wall painting, was invited. The fact that many of the later painters who have left their names in the history of Japan came from Goguryeo deserves our attention.

On the other hand, in China, influenced by the Western Regions’ painting style, painting techniques developed dramatically from the period of Six Dynasties on. In the late Southern and Northern Dynasties period, the so-called “convexity and concavity” (Ch. *tuao*) technique was introduced to China. This was an Indian (Ajanta) style which applied thick pigments to strongly express light

and shade. This technique marveled people of the time with figures, flowers, birds, and other objects which were made to stick out from the surface of the paintings. The wall painting of Hōryūji Temple also used this Indian wall-painting technique a lot. Yuchibazhina (ca. early seventh century) and his son Yuchiyiseng (fl. ca. early seventh century) were virtuosos of this Indian style of painting with convexity and concavity. They came from Tokhara<sup>122</sup> (or Khotan) to Chang'an sometime between the late Sui and early Tang period. Tokhara was a small Gokturk kingdom located in a strategic point among India and several kingdoms in Western Regions (more so in the case of Khotan). These two painters witnessed the splendor of various works of art and already became masters of paintings of that time. Thanks to their influence, the Indian style wall painting grew popular after the Tang period. In the meanwhile, a connection between Goguryeo and Gokturk was made from early. Emperor Yang (r. 604–618) of the Sui dynasty carried out a great military campaign against Goguryeo, staking the national fate, partly because he was worried about the possibility of the union between Goguryeo and Gokturk. At that time, the Goguryeo general Eulji Mundeok (fl. 612) easily defied the Sui emperor's huge army. His surname "Eulji" was probably related to one of the Gokturk's renowned families (especially, the royal family of the Khotan kingdom). There were also Korean people who studied under Yuchiyiseng from Tokhara. His style came down even to the Goryeo period. These are all recorded in the Yuan art historian Tang Hou's (ca. 1291–1328) work *Examination of Painting (Huajian)*. Putting together all these facts, the artistic origin of Hōryūji Temple become clear and, at the same time, more implications to the status of Goguryeo art in the cultural history of the East can be revealed.

Baekje had more intimate and deeper relationship to the ancient art of Japan than Goguryeo. However, unlike Goguryeo, there are not many extant Baekje relics. The royal tombs of Baekje near its ancient capital Buyeo, just like those of Goguryeo, were robbed by the Tang army when the kingdom collapsed. Therefore, there are not many relics left worth seeing. Some gilt bronze openwork

implements, along with several eight-petal flower shaped gold objects, were uncovered from these Baekje tombs. They have the identical curved line of the rims and flower pattern of the openwork with those in the Asuka period materials as if they came out of the same frame. This fact alone can demonstrate that the Japanese art in the Asuka period copied the Baekje art.

Recently, in the Oita and Saga Prefectures, Kyūshū, Japan, many rock-cut buddha images<sup>123</sup> were found, which have attracted much scholarly attention. Some even praise these buddha images as expressing the ultimate beauty of the continental art in creating buddha images. The sculptors of these images have long been believed to be Baekje monks Illa (fl. sixth century) and Yeonseong (fl. sixth century). There are some debates on the issue of Illa's nationality and activities. However, considering the fact that the stone art of the early Japan was a field where Korean immigrants were active, it is not meaningless that the rock-cut images in the Kyūshū area have been believed to be Baekje people's works. If Baekje works of art are uncovered by any chance in the future, they would connect continental and Japanese arts through the Korean Peninsula more intimately.

Western Regions' significant influence not just on architectural sculptures, but also on music, song, and dance through Buddhism can be seen in the fact that the surviving Eastern music until these days mostly consists of that of Western Regions. In China, from the Southern and Northern Dynasties period downward, court ceremonial music (*yayue*)<sup>124</sup> existed just in name. Instead, music of Western Regions, in particular, Kuchā music, dominated the music world. Even most of the Chinese musicians at that time came from Kuchā. Especially outstanding among those Kuchā musicians were Su Zhipo (fl. sixth century) in Northern Zhou (557–581), Bai Mingda (fl. ca. early seventh century) in Sui, and Bai Xiaode (d.u.) in Tang. The kingdom Kuchā was located at the neck bone along the path from Western Regions to China. It is not difficult to see that the so-called "Kuchā music," in fact, could collectively refer to various musics of

### Western Regions.

From “Record of Music” (Eumak ji) of the *Historical Record of the Three Kingdoms* (*Samguk sagi*),<sup>125</sup> we can ascertain that since the direct and indirect exchanges between Korean and Western Regions began around the introduction of Buddhism, musical instruments, dance songs, and mask plays of India and several West Regions’ kingdoms had been imported to the Korean Peninsula. Western Regions’ influence can be also felt in the fact that the Korean singing style thus far imitated the Buddhist hymn that came from *fanbai*<sup>126</sup> and Indian Vedic mantra. Textual records show that this Korean music was transmitted by Baekje’s Mimaji (fl. seventh century) to Japan in 612, the twentieth year of Empress Suiko. This music became a music which was played at a Buddhist assembly and eventually developed into the today’s music for singing and dancing.

Korean masked drama (*sandae*) and Japanese masked drama-dance (*gigaku*) are in fact ancient form of Western Regions’ music which is still played in many countries in the East. The ancient masks in Hōryūji Temple, which were selected as a Japanese national treasure, are valuable materials that prove the East-West exchange through a play with dancing and singing.

Beside art, there are other fields: astronomy and calendrical science of Jumiluo (d.u.) and Qutan (fl. eighth century); the medical technique of Naluoer posuomei (d.u.) and Lugayiduo (d.u.); countless numbers of divination techniques that originated from the *Sūtra on Constellations and Luminaries* (*Xiuyao jing*) and incantations that came from esoteric Buddhist practices; and, most importantly, geomancy that developed into a form of indigenous Korean folk beliefs. There is no need to enumerate all these abundant cultural influences of Buddhism and Western Regions that have penetrated into each and every aspect of ordinary human life [in East Asia]. It is also unnecessary to repeat that, from early, Buddhists were engaged in what is now called “social work”; for examples, the cultivation of mountain land, the construction of road, bridge, and public inn, as well as the foundation of poorhouse, nursing home, and public

hospital. Buddhism also stimulated the development of printing type and pottery that have become a source of pride in the cultural history of Korea. There are other interesting questions, including: (1) what kinds of interesting developments and transformations Buddhist faith and art forms have shown in response to different national characteristics along the way they came to Korea; (2) which paths Buddhism and Western cultural products followed on their way to Korea; (3) what relationships Korean Buddhism has had with Tibetan or Japanese Buddhism. I would like to leave all these questions for readers' own researches and pretend ignorance here. To sum up this article in a word, Buddhism is the sun of the Eastern culture, giving life and galvanizing its development.

Human culture was about to display the cosmopolitan and universal feature in the East. Absorbing all cultures that have flown from the West, Korea at the end of the Eastern land has shone in the world history as a carrier of both Eastern and Western cultures. Korean Buddhism most clearly reflected this distinctive cultural feature of the country. Therefore, Korean Buddhism demands not only a special status in the history of Buddhism, but also the recognition of its important value in general cultural history, in particular, the history of the cultural exchanges between the East and the West. Korea which has the longest history in the East and is located at the point of the most unique cultural intersection will become one of the most interesting subjects in the international academia in the future. The impact [of Korean studies] cannot be compared to the excavation project in the Central Asia and Mongolia.

Korea is more than itself. Korea is the Korea of the entire East and, further, the entire world. Recognizing this fact from the perspective of Buddhist history is a very important point in breaking the secret of the East. There are terms such as "Southern Buddhism" and "Northern Buddhism." Recently, some people coined the term "Eastern Buddhism." Which Buddhism truly deserves the name, "Eastern Buddhism," other than Korean Buddhism which was the

first to consummate the comprehensive expression of Buddhism in terms of Buddhist art and doctrine? The lamp of Buddhism was lit in India. As it came to China, oil was added continuously. In Korea, it has finally become a torch of sacred wisdom that shines the three realms. This is the historical fact that we cannot but believe and accept. How could this light of the East that human beings have long waited show a return path to the lost sheep on the high castle of the world? It can never be said that the duty of Korean Buddhism in saving human beings is light.

This draft was written for a pamphlet distributed in the Pan-Pacific Buddhist Conference (Beom Taepyeongyang Bulgyo daehoe) in Hawaii, July, 1930. Since it was intended for foreigners, its writing style and terminologies had to be different. (The manuscript was finished at Illamgak Hermitage on July 4.)

## Notes

- \* This essay was published in the *Bulgyo* 佛教 [Buddhism] 74 (August 1930).
- 1 Choe Namseon here seems to refer to William Elliot Griffis' (1843–1928) *Corea: the Hermit Nation*, published in 1882. This book, which used Japanese and Chinese sources, served as a major introductory work for Korea until the early twentieth century and popularized the term “hermit nation” as an appellation for Korea.
  - 2 Choe mixes up King Gyeongmun (景文王, r. 861–875) with King Gyeongdeok. According to a legend in the *Samguk yusa* 三國遺事 [Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms], it was King Gyeongmun, not King Gyeongdeok who had donkeys' ears in ancient Korea.
  - 3 Zhang Qian 張騫 was a Han dynasty general. He served as an envoy for Emperor Wu (武帝, r. 141–87 BCE) to explore the western regions of China. He came back to the Chinese imperial court with detailed information about Central Asia for the first time. He was also the first person to open up the so-called Silk Road.
  - 4 Aśoka was the third Mauryan king, known as a great patron of Buddhism. After ascending to the throne, he waged a series of war and conquered the most of the Indian subcontinent. According to a Buddhist legend, seeing the ravages of the wars, the king repented his deeds and converted to Buddhism. He greatly promoted Buddhism, sending missionaries to many other countries, as Choe Namseon points out above.
  - 5 Magadhā was the largest of the sixteen states in ancient India that thrived from the sixth and third centuries BCE in the northeastern part of the Indian subcontinent.
  - 6 *Lotus Sūtra* (*Fahua jing* 法華經 or *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經, Skt. *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra*). It is one of the most popular scriptures in the East Asian Buddhist tradition, especially for its stories and parables. The scripture emphasizes such notions as “expedient means,” according to which the Buddha helps sentient beings with different mental capacities, and “the one-buddha vehicle,” according to which those various expedient means ultimately serve to guide all sentient beings, without exception, to the ultimate goal. The *Lotus Sūtra* also became a scriptural basis of the

- foundation of several Buddhist schools in East Asia, for example, Tiantai zong in China, Cheontae jong in Korea, and Tendai shū and Nichiren shū in Japan.
- 7 Kaniṣka was the third king of the Kushan dynasty in the northwest of India. According to a Buddhist legend, he was a great patron of Buddhism, rivaled only by King Aśoka. Most notably, he convened the fourth Buddhist council, which led to the compilation of the *Abhidharma mahāvibhāṣa* [Great Exegesis of Abhidharma]. It has been traditionally known that, thanks to King Kaniṣka, the Kushan Empire was a major conduit for the introduction of Buddhist materials to China through the Silk Road.
  - 8 The Western Regions (Ch. Xiyu [Kor. Seoyeok] 西域) usually refers to India and Central Asia.
  - 9 Yumenguan 玉門關 (Jade Gate Pass) was the name of the first gate post through which the Silk Road passed, connecting Central Asia to China. Located northwest of Dunhuang, it was built by Emperor Wu of Han dynasty. It was named so probably because Khotanese jade was introduced to China via Dunhuang at that time.
  - 10 The wheel turning sage king (*jeollyun seongwang* [Ch. *zhuanlun shengwang*] 轉輪聖王, Skt. *cakravartin*) is the perfect king who rules the entire world by righteousness, not by force. He is said to have thirty-two distinguishing marks.
  - 11 *Saiwai* 塞外 (lit. beyond the border) refers to the regions beyond the Great Wall.
  - 12 This first transmission of Buddhism to China was recorded in the *Houhan shu* 後漢書 [The Book of the Later Han], compiled by Fan Ye 范曄 (398–445). “Tiannzhu guo” 天竺國, “Xiyu chuan” 西域傳, *Hou hanshu* 88.
  - 13 Kāśyapa Mātāṅga (Jiashe Moteng 迦葉摩騰) was one of the Central Asian monks who came to China, along with Dharmaratna (Zhu Falan 竺法蘭). These two monks allegedly translated the *Sishier zhang jing* 四十二章經 [Sūtra in Forty-Two Sections], the first Buddhist scripture to be translated into Chinese.
  - 14 Mobei 漠北 refers to the area in the north of the Gobi Desert which is the present-day Outer Mongolia.
  - 15 Fu Jian 苻堅 was the third king of the Former Qin (前秦, 351–394), not Qin 秦 (221–206 BCE).
  - 16 This was the period of the Three Kingdoms when the three ancient Korean kingdoms of Goguryeo 高句麗, Baekje 百濟, and Silla 新羅 were competing for dominance over the Korean Peninsula. Silla eventually unified the

- kingdoms in 676 with the military aid of Tang China.
- 17 *Ālaya* consciousness (Skt. *ālayavijñāna*) is a key concept of the Yogācāra school in Buddhism which refers to the eighth of the eight types of consciousness. This consciousness, meaning storehouse consciousness, is called so because it is believed to store the seeds of the past deeds. For this reason, ignorant beings mistake *ālaya* consciousness as their subject. This consciousness has become one of the controversial topics in Buddhism, which led several different scholar-monks in India, China, and Korea to present different theories of it.
  - 18 Nāgārjuna, known as Longshu (Kor. Yongsu) 龍樹 in East Asia, is traditionally regarded as the founder of the Madhyamaka school, the school known for the doctrine of emptiness. His philosophy greatly influenced the development of Mahāyāna Buddhism. In particular, he was admired as or equal to, the founding patriarch of several Mahāyāna schools in India and East Asia, including Sanlun zong and Tiantai zong. The *Madhyamaka-śāstra* [Middle Treatise] and the *Dvādaśanikāya-śāstra* [Twelve Gate Treatise] are among his more than 100 writings.
  - 19 Dunhuang is a city on the edge of the Taklamakan Desert in Central Asia, northwestern Gansu Province of China. It was an important stop on the ancient Silk Road. The city is particularly known for the nearby complex of about five hundred Buddhist caves, where a huge number of ancient manuscripts, paintings, and artworks, dating from the fifth to roughly the eleventh centuries, are placed. The Dunhuang caves were listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987.
  - 20 The *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳 [Biographies of Eminent Monks] was compiled by a monk named Huijiao (497–554). It includes the biographies of almost five hundred monks who were active from 67 to 519.
  - 21 Asaṅga, known as Wuzhao (Kor. Muchak) 無著 in East Asia, was regarded as a founder of the Yogācāra Buddhism, along with his brother Vasubandhu. According to a legend, Asaṅga had a vision that he visited the Buddha Maitreya's abode in the Tuṣita Heaven where the Buddha taught him Mahāyāna, in particular, Yogācāra doctrines. He is traditionally regarded as the author of the *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra* [Discourse on the Stages of Yogic Practice] and the *Mahāyānasamgraha* [The Adornment of Mahāyāna Sūtras].
  - 22 Vasubandhu, known as Shiqin (Kor. Sechin) 世親 in East Asia, was one of the most important thinkers in the main stream Buddhist schools in general and Mahāyāna in particular. He was converted by his brother Asaṅga to Yogācāra Buddhism. Some of his most important works include

- the *Abhidharmakośakārikā* [Verses on the Treasury of the Abhidharma] and the *Vimsatikāvijñaptimātratāsiddhi* [Twenty Verses on Representation Only].
- 23 The *Trīṃśikā* [Thirty Verses], known as the *Weishi sanshi song* (Kor. *Yusik samsip song*) 唯識三十頌 in East Asia, was composed in the fourth century and became one of the most important texts in Yogācāra Buddhism. It was translated by Xuanzang in 648.
- 24 Kuiji 窺基 was one of the prominent disciples of Xuanzang. The Faxiang school regarded him as its first patriarch. His commentary on the *Cheng weishi lun* 成唯識論 [Discourse on the Perfection of Consciousness-Only] became the foundational text for the Faxiang school. Since he died in the Daci'en Temple (大慈恩寺), he has also been known as Ci'en Dashi 慈恩大師 (Great Master Ci'en).
- 25 Woncheuk 圓測 was a Korean Buddhist monk who was active mostly in China. He was famous for his knowledge of Yogācāra doctrines which made him influential in both Chinese and Tibetan Buddhism.
- 26 The *Yinming zhengli men lun* 因明正理門論 [Gateway to the Buddhist Logic] (Skt. *Nyāyamukha*) was a seminal text on the Buddhist logic, composed by the Indian monk Dignāga (ca. 480–540). The text was translated by Xuanzang in 649.
- 27 Taehyeon 太賢 or Daehyeon 大賢 was a Silla monk during the reign of King Gyeongdeok 景德 (r. 742–765). He was a reputed founder of the Korean Yogācāra tradition. Although he never left Silla, his works circulated throughout East Asia. More than twenty commentaries on his *Beommang gyeong gojeok gi* 梵網經古迹記 [Record of Old Traces of the *Sūtra of Brahmā's Net*] were written in Japan.
- 28 The *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* [Flower Garland Sūtra], known as the *Huayan jing* (Kor. *Hwaeom gyeong*) 華嚴經 in East Asia, is one of the most important scriptural texts in East Asian Buddhism. It is believed to describe the insight that Śākyamuni Buddha gained the moment he attained enlightenment. The text was influential in many of East Asian Buddhist schools, in particular, Huayan (Kor. Hwaeom) and Chan (Kor. Seon) schools.
- 29 Li Tongxuan 李通玄 was an exegete of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*. Since he was outside the orthodox patriarchal lineage of the Huayan school, he initially was not recognized well. However, later in the Song dynasty, his unique interpretation of Huayan philosophy attracted several monks, in particular, Yangqi lineage masters of the Linji school. Among his writings, the *Xin Huayan jing lun* 新華嚴經論 [Treatise on the New Translation of the Flower

- Garland Sūtra] became significantly important in Korean Hwaeom and Seon.
- 30 The *Dasheng qixin lun* 大乘起信論 [Awakening of Faith] is traditionally attributed to the famous Indian monk Aśvaghoṣa. However, it is now widely accepted that the treatise was an indigenous Chinese text, written around the sixth century. Nevertheless, the treatise is one of the most influential texts in the development of East Asian Buddhism. The text details the notion of the one-mind which includes the two aspects of suchness and birth-and-death and, thus, harmonizes the two important Buddhist concepts of *tathāgatagarbha* and *ālayavijñāna*. Several prominent figures of East Asian Buddhism composed commentaries to this text, including, Huiyuan 慧遠 (523-592), Wonhyo, and Fazang.
- 31 Sumeru, known as Sumisan (Ch. Xumishan) 須彌山 in East Asia, is the axis mundi of the Buddhist cosmology. It is a huge mountain in the center of the world, surrounded by four continents and also encircled by eight mountains and eight seas. Various heavens and hells are above and below it.
- 32 Three learnings refer to the three categories of Buddhist practice: (1) śīla, learning in morality, which includes all forms of disciplines regarding word, deed, or thought; (2) samādhi, learning in meditative concentration, which encompasses all forms of meditative practices to obtain the state of higher concentration; (3) prajñā, learning in wisdom, which encompasses all forms of study and training to acquire the insight toward the true nature of the world.
- 33 The *Geumgang sammae gyeong* 金剛三昧經 [Diamond Absorption Sūtra], usually known as its reconstructed title *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra*, was an apocryphal text, composed in Korea around the late sixth century. The text became one of the most important scriptural texts in the development of the early Chan movement. It provides a reconciliation of Chan-Seon and Huayan-Hwaeom doctrines.
- 34 Mañjuśrī (Munsu [Ch. Wenshu] 文殊) is the bodhisattva of wisdom and regarded as the personification of the Buddha's wisdom. The image of the bodhisattva is usually placed on the Buddha's left.
- 35 Pūrṇa Maitrāyaniputra (Buruna [Ch. Fulouna] 富樓那) was one of the ten major disciples of Śākyamuni Buddha and famous for his eloquence in preaching the dharma.
- 36 "Wonhyo bulgi" 元曉不羈, *Samguk yusa*: "桑樞壅牖獲猴之輩 皆識佛陀之號 咸作南無之稱."
- 37 Huiyuan 慧遠 here refers to Lushan Huiyuan. He studied Confucianism

- and Daoism as a youth, but converted to Buddhism after meeting Dao'an 道安 (ca. 312–385). Huiyuan was an early advocate of Pure Land practice.
- 38 A period of dispute (*tujaeng gyeon'go* 鬭諍堅固) was the final 500 years of the five 500-year periods after the death of the Buddha. In this period, it is believed that the true dharma disappears because Buddhist clerics endlessly quarrel among each other.
- 39 Amitābha is the Buddha of the Western Pure Land of Sukhāvātī (Ultimate Bliss) where all sentient beings who recite his name will be born. He is the primary buddha of the Pure Land schools that have developed in China, Korean, and Japan.
- 40 The Goryeo king Sukjong 肅宗 (r. 1095–1105) granted an honorary title “State Preceptor Hwajaeng” (和諍國師) to Wonhyo and “State Precpetor Won'gyo (perfect teaching)” (圓教國師) to Uisang 義湘 (625–702).
- 41 Chang'an 長安 was located in the present-day Xi'an 西安 in Shanxi 山西 Province.
- 42 The text here refers to the *Kitab al-Masalik wa I-mamalik* [Book of Routes and Realms], published in 885.
- 43 Avalokiteśvara (Gwaneum [Ch. Guanin]) is the bodhisattva of compassion. He is one of the most widely worshipped bodhisattvas in East Asia. According to a legend, the bodhisattva was born from a beam that radiated from the forehead of Amitabha Buddha who was deep in meditation. The bodhisattva appears in numerous forms. The eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara (Sibil myeon Gwaneum [Ch. Shiyi mian Guanyin] 十一面觀音) is one of them.
- 44 Brahma (Beomcheon [Ch. Fantian] 梵天) is an Indian god who was integrated into the Buddhist pantheon as a protector of the Buddhist teachings. He is famous for his role in persuading Śākyamuni Buddha to preach the dharma to sentient beings.
- 45 Samantabhadra (Bohyeon [Ch. Puxian] 普賢) is the bodhisattva of practice. He represents all myriad good works and spiritual practices.
- 46 Indra (Jeseok [Ch. Dishi] 帝釋) is a dharma-protecting god who has a Hindu origin. He dwells above Mountain Sumeru.
- 47 Vimalakīrti (Yuma [Ch. Weimo] 維摩) was a layman who was famous for his wisdom. According to the *Vimalakīrti-sūtra*, when he was ill and received the visitation of a group of the Buddha's disciples and bodhisattvas, Vimalakīrti revealed to them a profound understanding of Mahāyāna by being silent.
- 48 Kṣitigarbha (Jijang [Ch. Dizang] 地藏) is the bodhisattva who vowed to save all sentient beings. He is believed to even enter hell to save the wicked.

- 49 The four heavenly kings (*sacheonwang* [Ch. *sitianwang*] 四天王) are guardian deities who protect the Universe. Their images are usually seen in the entrance of a temple.
- 50 Humane kings (*inwang* [Ch. *renwang*] 仁王) are deities who protect and preserve the Buddhist teachings.
- 51 Prabhūtaratna (Abundant Treasure) is an ancient buddha who, according to the *Lotus Sūtra*, appears to see Śākyamuni Buddha preach the sūtra.
- 52 Vairocana Buddha is the main buddha of the *Flower Garland Sūtra*. He is regarded as the embodiment of the truth itself.
- 53 The *Diamond Sūtra* (*Jingang jing* 金剛經 or *Jingang bore boluomi jing* 金剛般若波羅密經, Skt. *Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*). It is one of the most popular Mahāyāna scriptures, translated several times into Chinese. Though elusive, this sūtra focuses on explaining the doctrine of emptiness.
- 54 Xiantong 咸通 refers to the era name of Emperor Yizong 懿宗 (r. 860–874) of the Tang dynasty.
- 55 Kaibao 開寶 is the last of the three eras of Emperor Taizu 太祖 of the Song dynasty. It was from 968 to 977.
- 56 The *Kaiyuan Shijiao mulu* 開元釋教目錄 [Catalogue of Śākyamuni's Teachings Compiled during the Kaiyuan Period] was compiled by the monk Zhisheng in 730. It began as Zhisheng's personal catalogue of Buddhist texts, but was soon adopted by the Tang court as the official catalogue of the Chinese Buddhist canon. It also includes titles of the 406 texts classified as apocrypha.
- 57 The *Goryeosa* 高麗史 [History of Goryeo] was compiled by a group of Joseon Confucian scholars from 1392 to 1451. It chronicles major events of each reign and records biographies of important figures.
- 58 The *Samguk yusa* 三國遺事 [Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms] was compiled by a monk named Iryeon 一然 (1206–1289) during the Goryeo dynasty. This is a collection of the legends of historical people and places, short stories, poetry, and songs that were not included in the *Samguk sagi* 三國史記 [Historical Record of the Three Kingdoms], the earliest extant historical chronicle of Korea, written by the Goryeo scholar Gim Busik 金富軾 (1075–1151).
- 59 According to “Jeonhu sojang sari” 前後所將舍利, *Samguk yusa*, the last word of Boyo's 普曜 name is recorded as “yo” 耀, which is replaceable with “yo” 曜 that Choe Namseon uses here.
- 60 The *Goryeopan daejanggyeong* 高麗板大藏經 [Goryeo Edition of the Buddhist Canon] is commonly called the *Tripitaka Koreana* in English. Because of the number of the woodblocks used in its carving, it is better known in

- Korea as the *Palman daejanggyeong* 八萬大藏經 [The Scriptures of the Great Repository in Eighty Thousand (Xylographs)].
- 61 Dogam 都監 (Supervisory Office) refers to Daejang dogam 大藏都監 (Supervisory Office of the Buddhist Canon) which was established in 1232 to supervise the whole process of the production of the second edition of the Goryeo canon.
- 62 Kanei 寬永 was the era name of Japanese empress Meishō 明正 (r. 1629–1643), who was the 109th imperial ruler of Japan.
- 63 Keian 慶安 was the era name of the 100th Japanese emperor Go-Kōmyō 後光明 (r. 1643–1654).
- 64 Edo 江戸 is the former name of Tokyo. It was the capital of the Tokugawa shogunate which ruled Japan from 1603 to 1868.
- 65 Ōbakusan 黃蘗山 is the name of Manpukuji Temple (萬福寺), built in Uji, Kyoto by Ingen 隱元 (1592–1673), who founded the Ōbaku shū 黃檗宗 of Zen in 1654.
- 66 Bunsei 文政 was one of the era names of the 120th Japanese Emperor Ninkō 仁孝 (r. 1817–1846), which spanned from 1818 to 1830.
- 67 Tenpō 天保 was one of the era names of the 120th Japanese Emperor Ninkō 仁孝, which spanned from 1830 to 1844.
- 68 Uicheon 義天 was a renowned scholar monk during the Goryeo period. He was the fourth son of King Munjong 文宗 (r. 1047–1082). He founded the Cheontae school in Korea to reconcile the tension between Seon meditation and Gyo doctrinal teachings. He collected a number of Buddhist works from across East Asia and had them carved on woodblocks and be titled “*Goryeo sokjanggyeong*” 高麗續藏經 [Goryeo Supplement to the Canon].
- 69 King Sejong 世宗 was the fourth king of Joseon Korea. The king, often called “King Sejong the Great” (Sejong daewang) is respected as the greatest king of Korea with his accomplishments in various fields, including science, culture, and economy. In particular, the king invented the Korean alphabet called “Hunmin jeongeum.”
- 70 Ashikaga 足利 was a shogunate, also known as the Muromachi shogunate (室町幕府), which ruled Japan from 1336 to 1573.
- 71 *Imjin* 壬辰 invasion, popularly known as Imjin Japanese Invasion (Imjin waeran 壬辰倭亂) in Korea, refers to the Japanese invasion to Korea from 1592 to 1598, which had significant impacts not only on Korea, but also on the entire East Asia socially, politically, and culturally. It is called “Bunroku no eki” 文祿の役 (War in the Bunroku Era) in Japan.
- 72 *Mizunotoushi* (Kor. *gyechuk*, Ch. *guicho*) 癸丑 is the fiftieth of the Chinese

- sexagenary cycle. Here, it probably refers to the year of 1613.
- 73 *Hinotomi* (Kor. *jeongsa*, Ch. *dingsi*) 丁巳 is the fifty-fourth of the Chinese sexagenary cycle. Here, it probably refers to the year of 1617.
- 74 “大日本國癸丑(乃至丁巳)歲大藏都監奉勅雕造。”
- 75 Keichō 慶長 was an era name for the Japanese emperors Go-Yōzei 後陽成 (r. 1586–1611) and the Go-Mizunoo 後水尾 (r. 1611–1629), which spanned from 1596 to 1615.
- 76 Daejang dogam 大藏都監 here refers to Dogam.
- 77 There was no official diplomatic tie between Goryeo and Song when Uicheon went to Song where he met several important masters of various Chinese Buddhist schools, including the renowned Huayan master Jinshui Jingyuan 晋水淨源 (1011–1088).
- 78 Uicheon's *Supplement to the Buddhist Canon* is technically not a supplement to the canon. It is in fact a collection of doctrinal commentaries, written in East Asia, rather than sūtras, treatises, and vinaya texts.
- 79 The *Sagyoui* 四教儀 or *Cheontae sagyoui* 天台四教儀 [Principle of the Fourfold Teachings of the Cheontae School] was an important primer of the Tiantai-Cheontae doctrine, composed by the Korean monk Jegwan 諱觀. This text is best known for its summary of the Tiantai doctrinal classification, which is commonly called the “five periods and eight teachings.”
- 80 This seems a typing error in the original text. It was 1328, not 1228.
- 81 The *Tuoluoni ji jing* 陀羅尼集經 (Skt. *Dhāraṇīsamuccaya-sūtra*) [Dhāraṇī Collection Sūtra] was a Tantric Buddhist scripture which was translated into Chinese in 654.
- 82 A mantra (*jineon* [Ch. *zhenyan*] 真言) is a syllable or a series of syllable which is believed to have spiritual powers.
- 83 This story of Gyeomik can be found only in “Mireuk Bulgwangsa sajeok” 彌勒佛光寺事蹟 [Activities in Mireuk Bulgwangsa Temple] of Yi Neunghwa's 李能和 (1869–1943) *Joseon Bulgyo tongsa* 朝鮮佛教通史 [Complete History of Korean Buddhism].
- 84 Abhidharmapiṭaka is one of the three baskets of the Buddhist canon, which consists of philosophical treatises, usually attributed to earlier renowned Buddhist scholars.
- 85 Five versions of vinaya are as follows: (1) the *Dharmagupta Vinaya* [Four Part Vinaya]; (2) the *Sarvāstivādin Vinaya* [Ten Recitations Vinaya]; (3) the *Mahīśāsaka Vinaya* [Five Part Vinaya]; (4) the *Prātimokṣa-sūtra* of the Kāśyāpiyas; (5) the *Vātsīputriya Vinaya* (not extant).
- 86 Anhong 安弘, better known as Anham 安含 in the *Haedong Goseung jeon*

- 海東高僧傳 [Biographies of Korean Eminent Monks], was a pilgrim monk during the Silla period.
- 87 It was 1328, not 1228.
- 88 Tinabaotuo 提納薄陀, better known as Zhikong (Kor. Jigong) 指空, was an Indian monk who came to China and later moved to Korea in the late Goryeo, influencing many Korean monks of the time, including Naong Hyegeun 懶翁慧勤 (1320–1376).
- 89 The four ways by which living beings are born in the world of transmigration: (1) oviparous (born from eggs); (2) viviparous (born from the womb); (3) born from moisture (regarded as born from causes and conditions or born as the result of the combination of heat and cold); (4) metamorphic (born through transformation or born spontaneously).
- 90 It was the *Nihon shoki* 日本書紀 [Chronicles of Japan] that records the introduction of Buddhism to Japan.
- 91 Choe briefly summarizes the record in “Kinmei 13” of the *Nihon shoki*.
- 92 Three jewels (*sambo* [Ch. *sanbao*, Jp. *sanbō*] 三寶) refer to the Buddha, the dharma, and the saṃgha.
- 93 It is recorded in “Bidatsu” 敏達 6 of the *Nihon shoki*.
- 94 “Sushun” 崇峻 1, *Nihon shoki*.
- 95 Damjing 曇徵 was a Goguryeo monk and painter. He went to Japan in 610 where he taught Confucian classics and Buddhist scriptures. He is traditionally regarded as the author of the wall-painting in the Golden Hall of Hōryūji Temple.
- 96 Tori 止利 was a famous Japanese sculptor in early Japan. He was patronized by high ranking aristocrats or imperial family members such as Soga no Umako 蘇我馬子 (ca. 551–626) and Prince Shōtoku.
- 97 Nara 奈良 was the capital city of Japan from 710 to 794. There were six schools active during this period: Hossō shū, Jōjitsu shū, Kegon shū, Kusha shū, Rishshū, and Sanron shū.
- 98 The *Śrīmālā-sūtra* (*Shengman jing* [Kor. *Seungman gyeong*, Jp. *Shōman gyō*] 勝鬘經) or *Śrīmālādevīsīmhanāda-sūtra* is one of the popular Mahāyāna texts. It particularly emphasizes the notion of tathāgataragha.
- 99 The *Shōtoku Taishi denryaku* 聖德太子傳曆 [Biography of Shōtoku Taishi] includes the episode.
- 100 Harivarman 訶梨跋摩 was an Indian Buddhist exegete. He is the author of the *Chengshi lun* 成實論 (Skt. *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra*) [Treatise of Establishing Reality], which was translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva (344–413).
- 101 Jiexiang Jizang 嘉祥吉藏 was a Sanlun master who greatly promoted the Sanlun tradition. He composed many commentaries on the three treatises,

- including the *Sanlun xuanyi* 三論玄義 [Essentials of the Three Treatises] in one fascicle, a summary of the Sanlun doctrines.
- 102 Zhizhou 智周 was the third patriarch of the Chinese Faxiang zong 法相宗. He composed the *Cheng weishi lun yanmi* 成唯識論演秘 [Elaboration of the Esoteric in *Cheng weishi lun*], one of the most important commentaries on the *Cheng weishi lun*.
- 103 Xianshou 賢首, better known as Fazang 法藏, is traditionally regarded as the third patriarch of the Huayan school. He was often invited to the imperial court by Empress Wu (624–705) to preach on the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*. Fazang produced a number of writings, including the “*Dasheng qixin lun*” *yiji* 大乘起信論義記 [Commentary on the *Awakening of Faith*], which is one of the most important commentaries on the *Dasheng qixin lun*.
- 104 Choe gives “慧藏,” instead of “禪藏.” However, Zenzō 禪藏 was one of the three nuns who travelled to Baekje.
- 105 What Choe here refers to with the term Sindo 神道 is ancient Korean religious practices, in particular, heaven-worship, performed in ancient chiefdoms or kingdoms such as Baekje 百濟, Dongye 東濊, and Buyeo 夫餘.
- 106 Xiandao 仙道 (Way of immortality) refers to various spiritual and physical cultivations to become immortal. It is included in what we now call Daoism.
- 107 Yin and yang are complementary opposites, referring to wetness-dryness, femininity-masculinity, passivity-actitity, etc. Yinyangdao 陰陽道 indicates ancient practices to decipher the movement of yin and yang of natural and human phenomena and use it for spiritual or physical benefits. It was popular during the Han 漢 period (206 BCE–220 CE) and became a part of what is now called Daoism.
- 108 Shugendō 修驗道 is a Japanese esoteric tradition that focuses on a series of intense ascetic practices in the mountains. En no Ozuno 役小角 (b. 634) is regarded as its founder.
- 109 Ryōbu Shintō 兩部神道, also called Shingon Shintō 真言神道, is a uniquely synthetic form of Shintō that combined Shintō and Shingon Buddhism. It developed in the late Heian and Kamakura periods and thrived during the Edo period.
- 110 The translation is consulted with Richard Bowring, *The Religious Traditions of Japan 500–1600* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 15.
- 111 *Fanqie* 反切 is a traditional method to express the sound of a character by using the initial and the final sound of two different characters.
- 112 *Ido* 吏道 or *idu* 吏讀 refers to a system which employed some Chinese characters for their meanings and others for their sounds. The system

- basically aimed at clarifying government documents written in Chinese for Korean readers. The oldest known *idu* text dates from 754; it lasted until the nineteenth century.
- 113 Jātaka is one of the nine or twelve categories of Buddhist scripture. It refers to narrative accounts of the Buddha's previous lives.
  - 114 Itivṛttaka is one of the nine or twelve categories of Buddhist scripture that describes, in particular, the past lives of the Buddha's disciples.
  - 115 Shōsōin 正倉院 is a treasure house of Tōdaiji 東大寺 Temple in Nara. It was built around the late eighth century.
  - 116 The *Nushi zhentu* 女史箴圖 [Admonitions of the Court Instructress] was attributed to Gu Kaizhi. However, it is now generally accepted that the painting was a Tang dynasty (618–907) copy of the original.
  - 117 The *Luoshen tu* 洛神圖 [Nymph of the Luo River] is traditionally attributed to Gu Kaizhi.
  - 118 Ssangeongchong 雙楹塚 is located in Yonggang 龍岡, Pyeongannam-do, North Korea. It is a sand tomb which was built, following the Yungang 雲岡 Stone Caves in China.
  - 119 The three tombs in Uhyeon-ri 遇賢里, Gangseo 江西, Pyeongannam-do is a tomb, built in the Goguryeo period.
  - 120 *Mitsuda-e* 蜜陀繪 is a modern term for a type of ancient oil painting that uses lead oxide, or *mitsudasō* 密陀僧, as a desiccant. The medium consists of powdered pigments added to a base of perilla oil and a small amount of lead oxide that has been heated with the oil. The technique, which may have originated in Persia, was used in China at least from the Han dynasty. Transmitted from China to Japan in the seventh century, *mitsuda-e* was used on wood and leather. Its use was prevalent in the Nara period.
  - 121 Tamamushi Shrine (Tamamushi no zushi 玉虫厨子) is a miniature shrine in Hōryūji Temple. It is believed to have been built in the mid-seventh century.
  - 122 Tokhara (Ch. Tuhuoluo 吐火羅) or Tukhara, also called Tokharistan, is a region and a kingdom (or several kingdoms in succession) located in the area between the Pamir and Afghanistan regions. The region was called Bactria (Daxia 大夏) during the Han period.
  - 123 Rock-cut buddha images (*maaeul* [Ch. *moyafo*, Jp. *magai butsu*] 磨崖佛) are popular forms of buddha images that can be found throughout Asia.
  - 124 Court ceremonial music (*yayue* [Kor. *aak*] 雅樂, lit. elegant music) was transmitted from early times but, from the eighth century, it was combined with foreign music to form a new style of feast music.
  - 125 The *Samguk sagi* 三國史記 [Historical Record of the Three Kingdoms] is

the earliest extant historical chronicle of Korea, written by the Goryeo literocrat Gim Busik 金富軾 (1075–1151). In contrast to the *Samguk yusa*, it contains little information on Buddhism.

- 126 *Fanbai* (Kor. *beompaе*, Jp. *bonbai*) 梵唄 is a Buddhist ritual chanting. It was transmitted to China around the time of the introduction of Buddhism. *Fanbai* was introduced to Korea as early as the seventh century.

## Glossary

### Korean

*al* 嶺

Amnokgang 鴨綠江

Baekdusan 白頭山

Baekga 白加 (fl. late sixth century)

*bal* 鉢

Beom Taepyeongyang Bulgyo daehoe

汎太平洋佛教大會

Beophwawon 法華院

*beopsang* 法相

*beopseong* 法城

Bongdeoksa 奉德寺

Buinsa 符仁寺

Bulguksa 佛國寺

Bulham 不咸

Bunhwang jong 芬皇宗

Bunhwangsa 芬皇寺

Buyeo 扶餘

Chang, King (昌王, r. 1388–1389),

Goryeo

*chehyeon* 體現

*cheonggyeongsa* 請經使

Cheonghaejin 淸海鎮

Chungsuk, King (忠肅王, r. 1313–1330  
and 1332–1339), Goryeo

Dabotap 多寶塔

Dadohae 多島海

Daedonggang 大同江

Daegak 大覺

Daegang dogam 大藏都監

*daejangbu* 大丈夫

Deokjeok 德積 (fl. early seventh century)

Dogam 都監

Dojang 道藏 (ca. 640)

Dosol ga 兜率歌

Eonmun 諺文

Eulji Mundeok 乙支文德 (fl. 612)

Eumak ji 音樂志

Gakga 覺哥 (fl. late sixth to early seventh  
centuries)

Gan'gyeong dogam 刊經都監

Gaseoil (Jp. Kasei) 加西溢 (d. 756)

Gojong, King (高宗, r. 1213–1259),  
Goryeo

Gwalleuk 觀勒 (fl. early seventh century)

Gwanghaegun, King (光海君, r.  
1608–1623), Joseon

*gwon* 權

Gyeomik 謙益 (fl. sixth century)

Gyeongdeok, King (景德王, r. 742–765)

- Gyeongju 慶州  
 Gyojangsa 教藏司  
 Haedong jong 海東宗  
 Haeinsa 海印寺  
 Hapcheon-gun 陝川郡  
 Heonjong, King (憲宗, r. 1834–1849),  
 Joseon  
 Heungwangsa 興王寺  
*hoeryesa* 回禮使  
 Honggyeong 洪慶 (fl. tenth century)  
 Hunmin jeongeum 訓民正音  
*Hwaeom gyeong so* 華嚴經疏  
 Hwajaeng (Hwajeong) guksa  
 和諍(和靜)國師  
 Hwajangsa 華藏寺  
 Hyechong 慧聰 (fl. late sixth to early  
 seventh centuries)  
 Hye-gwan 慧觀 or 慧灌 (fl. 625–682)  
 Hyeja 慧慈 (d. 622)  
 Hyeonjong, King (顯宗, r. 1009–1031),  
 Goryeo  
 Illa 日羅 (fl. sixth century)  
 Illamgak 一覽閣  
*Ilseung beopgyedo* 一乘法界圖  
 Injo, King (仁祖, r. 1623–1649), Joseon  
 Insaraa 因斯羅我 (fl. fifth century)  
*Jae sokdaejang* 再續大藏  
 Jaegakjang 再刻藏  
 Jang Bogo 張保皋 (787–ca. 846)  
 Jangdansa 長湍寺  
 Jegwan 諦觀 (d. 970)  
*jeon Bulgyo* 全佛教  
 Jibong (Jp. Chihō) 智鳳 (fl. seventh  
 century)  
*jigwi* 旨歸  
*jonghap Bulgyo* 綜合佛教  
*jongyo* 宗要  
 Jungjong, King (中宗, r. 1506–1544),  
 Joseon  
*Milgyo daejanggyeong* 密教大藏經  
 Mimaji 味摩之 (fl. seventh century)  
 Munjong, King (文宗, r. 1046–1083),  
 Goryeo  
 Munjong, King (文宗, r. 1047–1082),  
 Goryeo  
 Munmu, King (文武王, r. 661–681), Silla  
*musang* 無相  
 Norisachigye 怒喇斯致契 (fl. sixth century)  
*pasa hyeonjeong* 破邪顯正  
*sageongwon* 寫經員  
*sambak* 三學  
*sandae* 山臺  
*sang* 相  
 Sejo, King (世祖, r. 1455–1468), Joseon  
 Sejong, King (世宗, r. 1418–1450),  
 Joseon  
*Seogwon sarim* 釋苑詞林  
 Seokgatap 釋迦塔  
 Seokguram 石窟庵  
 Seol Chong 薛聰 (b. 658)  
 Seongjong, King (成宗, r. 981–997),  
 Goryeo  
 Seongmyeong, King (聖明王, r. 523–554),  
 Baekje  
*seongsang* 性相  
 Seungnang 僧朗 (fl. ca. 476–512)  
*igin* 識認  
*sil* 實  
*Simmun hwajaengnon* 十門和諍論  
*Sinpyeon jejong gyoyang chongnok*  
 新編諸宗教藏總錄  
*Sokjang* 續藏  
 Songgwangsa 松廣寺  
 Sukjong, King (肅宗, r. 1674–1720),  
 Joseon  
 Sungyeong 順璟 (fl. seventh century)  
 Sunjo, King (純祖, r. 1800–1834), Joseon  
 Taehyeon 太賢 (fl. ca. mid-eighteenth

century)  
 Taejo, King (太祖, r. 918–943), Goryeo  
 Tohamsan 吐含山  
*tong Bulgyo* 通佛教  
*tongil Bulgyo* 統一佛教  
 Uicheon *Sokjang* 義天續藏  
 Uisang 義湘 (625–702)  
 Wando 莞島  
*wondon* 圓頓  
 Wonhyo 元曉 (617–686)  
*Wonjong mullyu* 圓宗文類  
 Yeonsangun, King (燕山君, r. 1494–1506), Joseon  
 Yeonseong 蓮城 (fl. sixth century)  
*yogan* 料簡  
 “Yusim allakdo” 遊心安樂道

### Chinese

Bai Mingda 白明達 (fl. ca. early seventh century)  
 Bai Xiaode 白孝德 (d.u.)  
 Beidaduo 倍達多 (fl. sixth century)  
 Chan 禪  
 Chang'an 長安  
 Changgana dalusi 常伽那大律寺  
*Cheng weishi lun liaoyi deng* 成唯識論了義燈  
*Cheng weishi lun* 成唯識論  
 Chengdu 成都  
 Chishan 赤山  
 Daosheng 道生 (355–434)  
*Dasheng Huayan shizhou jing*  
 大乘華嚴獅子吼經  
 Datong 大同  
 Daxia 大夏  
 Dayuezhi 大月氏  
*dengyun* 等韻  
 Dunhuang 敦煌  
 Dushun 杜順 (557–640)  
 Eastern Jin 東晉 (317–420)

Falang 法朗 (507–581)  
 Faxiang zong 法相宗  
 Fotuosengga 佛陀僧伽 (fl. seventh century)  
 Gansu 甘肅  
*Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳  
 Gu Kaizhi 顧愷之 (ca. 348–c. 409)  
 Han 漢 (206 BCE–220 CE)  
 Heilong River 黑龍江  
 Henan 河南  
*Houhan shu* 後漢書  
*Huajian* 畫鑿  
 Huilin 慧琳 (737–820)  
 Huizhao 慧沼 (648–714)  
 Jianzhen 鑑真 (688–763)  
*Jiemotan jing* 羯摩壇經  
 Jizang 吉藏 (549–623)  
 Kaibao 開寶  
*Kaiyuan Shijiao mulu* 開元釋教目錄  
*liutong fen* 流通分  
 Longmen, Mountain (龍門山)  
 Lugayiduo 盧伽逸多  
 Luoyang 洛陽  
 Minfu 閩府  
 Mobei 漠北  
 Mohe 靺鞨  
 Naluoe posuomei 那羅邈婆娑寐 (d.u.)  
 Niepan 涅槃  
 Nongjiatuo 農迦陀 (fl. seventh century)  
 Northern Zhou 北周 (557–581)  
 Pinqie 頻伽  
 Qianfodong 千佛洞  
 Qutan 瞿曇 (fl. eighth century)  
 Sanlun zong 三論宗  
 Sengquan 僧詮 (fl. sixth century)  
 Shandong 山東  
 Shanxi 山西  
 Shazhou 沙州  
 Shelun 攝論

Shengong 神珙 (fl. early eighth century)

Shuben dazangjing 蜀本大藏經

Sichuan 四川

*sisheng* 四聲

Sixi 思溪

Southern Qi 南齊 (479–502)

Su Zhipo 蘇祇婆 (fl. sixth century)

Taiyuan 太原

Tang Hou 湯屋 (ca. 1291–1328)

Tanji 曇濟 (411–475)

Tianlong, Mountain (天龍山)

Tiantai 天台

*tuao* 凸凹

Wanli 萬曆

Wei 魏 (220–265)

Weishi zong 唯識宗

*Wenshushili wushengjie jing*

文殊師利無生戒經

Xianshou Fazang 賢首法藏 (643–712)

Xie He 謝赫 (fl. fifth century)

Ximing Temple 西明寺

*Xiuyao jing* 宿曜經

Xuantong, Emperor (宣統, r.

1908–1912), Qing

Xuanzang 玄奘 (602–664)

*xufen* 序分

*xuzangjing* 續藏經

Yang, Emperor 煬帝 (r. 604–618), Sui

Yangzi River 楊子江

*Yinming zhengli men lun* 因明正理門論

*Yiqie jing yuinyi* 一切經音義

Yuchibazhina 尉遲跋質那 (ca. early seventh century)

Yuchiyseng 尉遲乙僧 (fl. ca. early seventh century)

*yulu* 語錄

Yumenguan 玉門關

Yungang 雲岡

Zhang Qian 張騫

*Zhantan xianghua xingguang miaonu jing*

旃檀香花星光妙女經

*zhengzong fen* 正宗分

Zhilimoriluo 唵哩囉日囉 (fl. tenth century)

Zhisheng 智昇 (669–740)

Zhiyan 智儼 (602–668)

Zhou 周 (ca. 1046–256 BCE)

*zhulei pin* 囑累品

*Zhuoyuan xu Kaiyuan shijiao lu*

卓元續開元釋教錄

## Japanese

*ara-bito-gami* 現人神

Asuka 飛鳥

Bentsū 辨通

Bidatsu, Emperor (敏達帝, r. 572–585), Japan

Chiryū 智隆

Chishō Enchin 智證圓珍 (814–891)

Chūgūji 中宮寺

Daigaku no kami 大學頭

Enryakuji 延曆寺

Eshin 慧心 (942–1017)

Ezen 慧善 (fl. ca. sixth century)

Fujiwara Tsunetsugu 藤原常嗣 (796–840)

*Fusō ryakuki* 扶桑略記

*gabungaku* 雅文學

Gangōji 元興寺

Gangōji 元興寺

Genmei 元明 (r. 707–715)

*Genpei seisuiki* 源平盛衰記

Genshō 元正 (r. 715–724)

*gigaku* 伎樂

Gihō 義法

Giki 義起

*gobungaku* 古文學

Gomyō 護明 (fl. eighth century)

Gusha shū 俱舍宗

- Gyōgi (Kor. Haengi) 行基 (668–749)  
 Gyōzen 行善 (fl. seventh century)  
 Hakata 博多  
 Hakone, Mountain (箱根山)  
 Heian 平安  
*Heike monogatari* 平家物語  
 Hōkiji 法起寺  
 Hōkōji 法興寺  
 Hōnen 法然 (1133–1212)  
 Hōō 法王  
 Hōryū Gakumonji 法隆學問寺  
 Hōryūji 法隆寺  
 Hossō shū 法相宗  
 Imagawa Sadayo 今川貞世 (1326–1420)  
 Ise seijōbō 伊勢聖乘坊  
 Jikaku Ennin 慈覺圓仁 (794–864)  
 Jitei 慈定  
 Jitō 持統 (r. 686–697)  
 Jōdatsu 淨達  
 Jōdo shinshū 淨土真宗  
 Jōdo shinshū 淨土真宗  
 Jōdo shū 淨土宗  
 Jōdo shū 淨土宗  
 Jōjitsu shū 成實宗  
 Kamakura 鎌倉  
 Kana カナ  
 Kanchi 觀智  
 Kanei 寬永  
 Kaneiji 寬永寺  
 Kanjō 觀常  
 Karakami 韓神  
 Karina カリナ  
 Kasuga 春日  
 Kagon shū 華嚴宗  
 Keian 慶安  
 Kenninji 建仁寺  
 Kibi no Makibi 吉備真備 (693–775)  
 Kinmei 欽明 (r. 539–571), Japan  
 Kōken 孝謙 (r. 749–758)  
*koku ki* 國紀  
 Kokubunji 國分寺  
*Konjaku monogatari* 今昔物語  
 Konshōji 金鐘寺  
 Kōrai gongen 高麗權現  
 Kudara gongen 百濟權現  
 Kudara Kannon 百濟觀音  
 Kūkai 空海 (774–835)  
 Kumagori-dera 熊凝寺  
 Kūya 空也 (903–972)  
 Kyūshū 九州  
 Kyūshū 九州  
 Mangan 滿願 (ca. 720–ca. 816)  
 Meiji 明治  
 Mikkyō 密教  
*mitsudasō* 密陀僧  
*Muryōju koku mandara* 無量壽國曼荼羅  
 Myōsō 明聰  
*Nihon ryōiki* 日本靈異記  
*nin* 人  
 Ninchō 忍激 (1645–1711)  
 Oita 大分  
 Onjōji 園城寺 (Miidera 三井寺)  
 Risshū 律宗  
 Rōben 良辨 (689–774)  
 Saga 佐賀  
 Saimei 齊明 (r. 655–661)  
 Sanron shū 三論宗  
 Sekisan myōzin 赤山明神  
*Shaseki shū* 沙石集  
 Shiba 司馬  
 “Shibutsu jōdozu” 四佛淨土圖  
*shichidō karan* 七堂伽藍  
*shinbutsu shūgō* 神佛習合  
 Shinei 神睿  
 Shinra myōzin 新羅明神  
 Shinran 親鸞 (1173–1262)  
 Shishigatani Hōnenin 獅子谷法然院  
 Shōmu 聖武 (r. 724–749)

- Shōsōin 正倉院  
 Shōtoku Taishi 聖德太子  
*Shukusatsu zōkyō* 縮刷藏經  
 Shūzon 宗存 (fl. seventeenth century)  
 Sinshō (Kor. Simsang) 審詳 (fl. eighth century)  
 Siragi zenshin 新羅善神  
 Sitennōji 四天王寺  
*sōjō* 僧正  
 Sonokarakami 園韓神  
 Sōshū 摠集  
*sōzu* 僧都  
 Suiko 推古帝 (r. 592–628), Japan  
 Sushun, Emperor (崇峻帝, r. 587–592), Japan  
*Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經  
*tandai* 探題  
 Tasuna 多須那 (fl. late sixth century)  
 Tatsuto 達止 (fl. sixth century)  
 Teishitsu Hakubutsukan 帝室博物館  
 Tendai shū 天台宗  
 Tenkai 天海  
 Tenkai 天海 (1536–1643)  
 Tenmu 天武 (r. 673–686)  
*tennō ki* 天皇記  
 Tetsugen 鐵眼 (1630–1682)  
 Tōdaiji 東大寺  
 Tokugawa Ieyasu 德川家康 (1543–1616)  
*Uji shūi monogatari* 宇治拾遺物語  
 Uji 宇治  
 Umayado 慶戶 (574–621)  
 Unkan 雲觀  
*wasan* 和讚  
 Yamada Mikata 山田御方 (fl. eighth century)  
*yōkyoku* 謠曲  
 Yumedono 夢殿  
 Yūryaku 雄略 (r. 456–479)  
 Zen shū 禪宗  
 Zenshin 善信 (b. 574)  
 Zenzō 禪藏 (fl. ca. sixth century)  
*zoku bungaku* 俗文學  
*Zokuzōkyō* 續藏經  
 Zyungei 順藝 (1785–1847)

# BUDDHISM AND THE TREND OF SOCIAL THOUGHT\*

Yu Yeop

Chapter 1 Foreword

Chapter 2 Introduction

Chapter 3 Religious Status of Buddhism

Chapter 4 Buddhism and General Social Thought

Chapter 5 Conclusion



## Chapter 1

### Foreword

I came back to the temple on November 23, approximately ten days after travelling southern cities of Korea such as Hapcheon, Jinju, Masan, and Busan.<sup>1</sup> On the next day, November 24, I received a letter from Bulgyosa Company which asked me to write an article for the New Year issue of the company's journal. However, because I did not fully recover from travel fatigue and things were not settled yet, I put the letter into a desk drawer without reading it carefully. For the next few days, I did not even think about it. Then, I found the letter when I happened to pull out the drawer. This time, I read it carefully. The letter started with a sort of greetings followed by the suggestion of three possible topics for an article. The first two topics were about the folklores and stories of sheep in the history of Buddhism because the New Year is the year of sheep [1931]. The last suggested topic was "Buddhism and the Trend of Social Thought" which I am about to write about. As for the first two, I myself admit that I do not have sufficient knowledge of history to write about them. However, it is not totally impossible to do so. I still believe I can collect cases for these topics by looking through some scriptures and texts from Āgama sūtras, Jātaka stories, and other historical texts. However, in order to avoid any hassle, I chose the last topic, "Buddhism and the Trend of Social Thought," and tried to write about it.

On the one hand, I felt obligated to write an article as a token of my gratitude because I was deeply impressed and moved by the company's virtuous staff who had sent a letter to a person like me hiding deep in the mountains. At the same time, however, when I finally chose the topic and tried to write about it, I could not but

have a question to the Bulgyosa staff who had picked that topic in the first place. Since the topic was “Buddhism and the Trend of Social Thought,” I wondered whether they asked me to write the general relationship between Buddhism and social thought or the intersection between Buddhism and modern social thought. Since the topic was too broad in scope, it was difficult to grasp their intention. I just decided that I would first discuss the relationship between Buddhism and general social thought and then move on to modern social thought, in particular, the role of Buddhism in regard to the modern social thought. With this understanding of their intention, I took up my pen. I was disappointed again because I realized that it would become too lengthy to be a manuscript for a New Year issue alone due to its extremely broad subject. I could not but have a question to the Bulgyosa staff again. In fact, for a while, I even thought of giving up writing the manuscript. However, I felt that it would not be a proper etiquette. Therefore, I decided to take the company’s staff giving me this very broad topic as their goodwill to let me write relatively freely. I finally began to write, expressing my gratitude toward the company’s virtuous staff once again.

## Chapter 2

### Introduction

When we look at the other side of the development of the human history, we can recognize that human beings constantly make efforts to improve or keep close their being (Ger. Sein) up to the level of oughtness (Ger. Sollen) regardless of their motivations. These are necessary efforts that originate from human nature. These efforts cannot ignore all the issues [in the history] and thus try to discover the ultimate true harmony of these issues and apply that harmonious unity directly to practical fields, i.e., human life. At the same time, these efforts are the free will to fully harmonize and realize principle (*i* [Ch. *li*]) and phenomena (*sa* [Ch. *shi*]), both of which have served as driving force for the development of history.

Therefore, when we read the history of human development, we can easily find out that the holistic demand of human life has evolved to the efforts to resolve the one final issue, the real issue, i.e., liberation (*haetal* [Ch. *jietuo*]), and the will and wish for this liberation has been more substantialized and intense. What else could this show other than the fact that concretely proves the following? These efforts are propelled by human nature which does not stop until we human beings reach the ultimate perfection. [At this realm of perfection], we will discover the perfect foundation of the true principle in each and every moment of our whole life and will organize a rational society on this foundation, and thereby, the true principle will be applied to that society and, in turn, the society will be harmonized by the principle.

Depending on different times, these efforts are expressed differently. In fact, depending on not only different times, but also different places, ethnicities, classes, jobs, and even personalities, each and every

individual develops his or her own distinctive feature because of those efforts. To discuss this in more detail, different times show different features in accord with a trend of thought of the time while individuals possess different features in accord with their personalities which are general states of mind shaped by ethnicity, sociality, experience, education, knowledge, and health. Therefore, different times, places, and individuals contribute to different interpretations of general issues, based on their different features, and develop distinctive characteristics of thought. Since this thought is manifested differently in terms of time and place, the specific trend of thought in a certain time period can be identified.

All these are nothing but expressions of human efforts that are unconsciously materialized in accord with different causes and conditions. As mentioned earlier, these efforts, propelled by human nature, keep close our being (Sein) up to the level of oughtness (Sollen). Therefore, based on our fundamental will and wish, we can easily understand that we do not aim at separately having all these different thoughts with the aforementioned features. Rather, we will inevitably discover the harmony of all these individual thoughts and, from that harmony, acquire the ultimate true principle that will be characterized with the universal validity. Thereafter, each and every individual will act to be united with that principle. This will be fulfilled in a religious movement that will make the supreme value judgement.

Therefore, we demand that religion itself should transcend time, region, knowledge, and experience. We demand that religion should go beyond endless everyday life and, at the same time, become comprehensive enough to embrace and unify all [times, regions, knowledge, and experiences]. At this point, then, religion will finally come to have the right to exist by possessing both theoretical and practical elements. At the same time, religion will come to have the duty that will provide a satisfactory solution to reward for the efforts of seeking for liberation, which is the last wish of the human kind.

## Chapter 3

# Religious Status of Buddhism

Based on what has been discussed thus far, I believe that readers can, though somewhat roughly, understand what inevitably causes religion to thrive and where the right and duty of religion for its existence lie as a form that human beings wish and demand most.

Following the logical flow, here, we finally reach a point where we cannot but discuss or criticize what type of religion has the supreme form that can meet the above-mentioned human demand.

If a religion is a religion, in other words, if a religion is a religion with a form that can respond to the highest human need, it should have both philosophical and ethical aspects. On the one hand, there should be a philosophical aspect that thinks and reasons the true principle, transcending numerous ordinary phenomena and exploring the other side of those phenomena. On the other hand, there should be an ethical aspect that accepts and harmonizes the reality as a whole, applying the acquired philosophical principle directly to our life. There are various forms of religions. Briefly looking at the history of the development of religion, in primeval times, human life was governed by inferior forms of religion that were confined in the level of natural religion such as nature worship or genital worship. As time went, ethical religion came to appear. Clan religion developed into national and ethical religion. This national religion evolved to universal (world) religion. As such, finally, there emerges a religion equipped with a form that can meet the highest demand of human beings. Therefore, as religion develops from particularity to universality, it comes to have its reason for existence (*raison d'être*) at its utmost form. Unless religion develops into its utmost form, equipped extensively with all the principles of thoroughness and sincerity, its

right for existence is weakened. Therefore, in order for a religion to have a form that can respond to the ultimate demand of human life, it inevitably has to take another major step forward from the level of ethical religion. In other words, there appears “super ethical religion,” i.e., ethically and spiritually ultimate religion. Such religions, in fact, have already emerged. They are Buddhism and Christianity, the religions that the entire world knows.

Beside these religions, there are Hinduism and Islam. However, these two religions, contrary to ultimate religions which are autonomous and spiritual, are heteronomous and nomistic. As such, these religions are far lower than ultimate religions in terms of position in the history of development of religion. Hinduism and Islam fall short of becoming a religion equipped with a form that can satisfy the supreme demand of human life. For this reason, I will not deal with them in this article. Instead, I will focus on Buddhism, in particular, by comparing it with Christianity.

## 1. Comparison between Buddhism and Christianity

Because Buddhism and Christianity are both great ancient religions equipped with their own fully-fledged systems, the historical and regional developments of their doctrines are significantly long and profound. Therefore, it is very difficult to draw even a broad outline, using a simple theory without any mistakes. Sufficient discussion of only one of the two religions would not be an easy task; it would be much more difficult to compare them. However, I will attempt to explain the standpoints of the two religions by comparing and contrasting some similarities and differences in their basic doctrines. Afterward, it will suffice to conclude [this article] by discussing these two religions as a trend of social thought, i.e., as a religion that has a system to respond to the ultimate demand of human beings, from the objective point of view.

## 1) Similarities between the Two Religions

Briefly examining a few simple notions of these two religions, we find significant ethical similarities. First, both religions emphasize “encouraging the good and punishing the evil” in their practices. The practices of altruism, abstinence, and pessimism in both religions are similar in appearance. Second, in terms of religious ideals, both seek to obtain happiness and remove suffering. Both religions are similar in that they start with a compulsion to reach a goal. Accordingly, although these two religions share features with other religions, the similarities between the two are so substantial that they are not easily distinguishable from each other. Because Buddhism and Christianity have similar rituals and founders’ legends, contemporary scholars of the two religions regard them as coming from the same origin, interpreting that origin to their own advantage. Scholars of Buddhism argue that Christianity is a tributary to Buddhism while those of Christianity argue that Buddhism is a tributary to Christianity.<sup>2</sup> Some are so persistent in their arguments that they fell into dogmatism. However, these scholars help demonstrate that the two religions are extremely similar to the point of advocating the homogenous origin of their doctrines. From this point of view, we cannot but express gratitude for the contribution of these scholars to the academia. We would be rather hasty and abrupt to dismiss their theories as worthless dogma.

Because there are too many differences between the two religions to enumerate, I have presented only a summary to provide the conclusion of this article. Here, it would be sufficient to understand their philosophical correspondence, in the simplest sense of the word. I look forward to discussing this idea in more detail sometime in the future since there are not a few textual materials.

## 2) The Differences between the Two Religions

The differences between the religions are too numerous to explain in one word. Let me discuss these differences from the philosophical

perspective by setting up a few items under that perspective.

### (1) Regarding the Question of “Existence”

This question is the most important because it is the basis of all philosophical and religious theories. Therefore, this is the question that all philosophers, sages, and saints have struggled to address at the beginning and the end. In pointing out the differences between Buddhism and Christianity, as mentioned thus far, the first question to deal with is the differences between the two religions in terms of the question of existence. Following this question, it would be the right order to discuss their differing views on creation, human cognition, and practice.

Let's first examine the Christian theory of existence!

In Christianity, there is only one God (Jehovah) in the universe.<sup>3</sup> This God has no beginning and no end, transcending all creatures. Because God is not an object of our cognition, we cannot perceive Him. God does not allow us to interpret Him, either. Christianity argues that only when we see the myriad types of existence in the universe through faith can we spiritually feel the existence of God who rules over the universe behind the scene. Therefore, at first glance, this religion appears to be monistic. However, there seems to be distinction between the creator and the created. Considering the doctrine that God rules all myriad things behind the scene, Christianity comes dangerously close to being pantheistic. Although it is fundamentally monistic, the religion carries a pantheistic tone of “one is many” (Ein das all) in its idea of creation. But this religion firmly defines its monistic position by establishing the commandment, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me,” in order to remove the pantheistic tone.<sup>4</sup> However, it is difficult to conceal that the commandment, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me,” has a logical fallacy that seems to implicitly admit the existence of other gods beside “me,” who is Jehovah, whether many or few.

By reading the book of Genesis, a myth of the creation of the world, one can see that there is a tone of dualism, establishing the

one and only God who possesses the absolute power on the one hand and Satan (Devil) who challenges and arises against God on the other hand. Seeing that Adam, the progenitor of the human race, ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and was banished from the Garden of Eden, it is inevitable to doubt the authority of Jehovah, the self-existent god. Therefore, as for the question of existence, we can easily understand that the Christian god is a religious notion that primitive people created out of imagination with their simple and unsophisticated mind when they still could not engage in philosophical speculation, while living in the natural world. However, Christianity is in fact nothing but derivative of Judaism, expanding and developing this national religion into a world religion. Hence, from the start, Christianity supported the monotheistic creed that had been espoused in Judaism. Judaism came to have such a monotheistic belief because Jewish people were dissatisfied with the fact that their neighboring countries-Macedonia, Persia, Egypt, and Greece-mostly followed pluralism, not breaking from the trend of natural religion, and therefore desperately maintained their belief in their own god in order to stand against those countries. This is one reason that the divine authority of the God Jehovah was gradually solidified. Besides, there are many different theories on the origin of the word "Jehovah." For example, one theory says that it comes from the word "thunder."<sup>5</sup> However, since it might deviate from the real intention [of this article] to further explain the origin of the word, I will stop here and talk about Buddhism.

As for Buddhism, Śākyamuni, the founder of the religion, never elucidated the question of existence. After him, Abhidharma teachers produced many theories such as true emptiness and wondrous existence (*jin'gong myoyu*), true suchness (*jinyeo*), mind-ground (*simji*), the dharma-realms of the one-mind (*ilsim beopgye*), or Buddha-nature (*bulseong*).<sup>6</sup> However, Śākyamuni's fundamental Buddhism never talked directly about the question of existence.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, some stereotypical religious scholars of modern times, relying on wrong religious definitions, even argue that Buddhism is not a religion

because it has no object of faith. For them, it is a natural argument. However, covertly, Buddhism has a view of reality that can be defined as both monism and pluralism. This view is represented in the phrases, “all is in one, one is all; one is in all, all is one.”<sup>8</sup> Therefore, since Buddhism regards the “liberation by self-power” (*jaryeok*) as the highest expedient means among the spiritual teachings, the religion is founded on the basis of rational theories, taking a step further than Christianity which advocates the “liberation by other-power” (*taryeok*) as the highest.<sup>9</sup>

Some may say that Buddhism is a religion of other-power or a religion that still belongs in the period of natural religion, looking at esoteric Buddhism of idol worship or Pure Land school, the Buddhist version of an other-power religion. These types of Buddhist practices are traces of previous periods in which people’s understanding of Buddhism did not yet develop to the ultimate level (*gugyeong*).<sup>10</sup> Seeing from the perspective of religious history, their level of development is a little behind. However, originally, when we look at human beings in terms of the theory of evolution, our body fully possesses the genealogical characteristics of the evolution of life without omission. Just as the mental state of us modern people fully reflects the great cultural systems of the human kind of the past, Buddhism possesses the achievements from the history of religion in the past. Therefore, in order to liberate all [sentient beings] without exception, responding to the different religious needs according to their respective spiritual capability and mental state, Buddhism has to possess all [forms of teachings and practices]. If not, it does not deserve the right of existence and would lose its value as a religion that would struggle to the last.

I happened to deviate a little from the main topic. Let us get back to the Buddhist attitude toward the question of existence. Though I will discuss this matter at the end when I deal with the epistemological issue, I will briefly explain it. [Buddhism] avoids discussing this topic and does not like to name the reality, saying that since the reality [in Buddhism] is monistic, it cannot be approached by words and thought and that, therefore, only an awakened one (buddha

or a man of the best character) can realize the reality. Instead, Buddhism certainly adopts the atheistic stance on the notion of God. People of the secular world sometimes designate Buddhism as idealism, looking at the fact that the religion advocates the dharma-realms of the one-mind.<sup>11</sup> But, seeing that the mind in Buddhism takes on a significantly different tone from that in [philosophical] idealism, the religion is not idealism. Then, is it materialism? It is not, either. For example, judging from the fact that Buddhism says about the theory of four great elements of earth, water, fire, and wind, and argues that the nature of earth penetrates dharma-realms or the nature of water pervades in dharma-realms, it appears to be materialism. But, it is not, either. Then, is it dualism of mind and materials? It is not, either. Is it then transcendent monism? It is not, either. Christianity is idealism while Buddhism is not. As for this question, I will reveal the true face of Buddhism, comparing with Christianity, when I deal with the question of cosmology. So, I will stop here on this issue.

## **(2) Regarding the Question of Creation**

Regarding the question of creation, since Christianity advocates theistic determinism (theory of God's Will), there is no fixed theoretical format of creation in this religion. It simply says that God creates, governs, and nurtures all myriads of things. According to the book of Genesis which explains the beginning of the world in Christianity, this world was created in only six days from God's words. It is also believed that the world has been since nurtured and maintained by God's Will. The Gospel of John in the New Testament says, "In the beginning was the Word (or the Way)" and "the Word was with God."<sup>12</sup> However, there is no explanation or theory of how the Way appeared in this realm of phenomena. As a matter of course, there are several theories that theologians of Christianity have proposed. However, we cannot find any theory of creation in early Christianity that came directly from the mouth of Jesus Christ or his direct disciples. To put it in a word, it seems that Christianity attributes everything to God's Will and does not try at all to add any further

explanations. Therefore, no distinctive theory of creation can be found in this religion.

Then, what position does Buddhism take in the question of creation? Speaking of Buddhism, there were already various philosophical theories of all the fields in the Indian society even from the time of early Buddhism. If Buddhism had not embraced all these existing theories and answered the questions that these theories could not answer, it could have lost the right for its own existence. Therefore, from early, Buddhism had already developed enough theories regarding this question of creation. It reconciled and integrated various theories of other teachings that focused only on a certain aspect: to name a few, Brahmanism, an official religion of Vedanta philosophy, which advocated the theory of God's will (theistic determinism); natural determinism which argued for the spontaneous or accidental arising of the world; and other non-Buddhist teachings that promoted fatalism.

Buddhism then appeared with features that all great religions are supposed to have. It refuted theistic determinism with its atheism and free-will doctrine. Buddhism also argued against natural determinism by advocating the existence of phenomena that arise based on unchanging principles. In response to fatalism, Buddhism relied on the theories of human free will and the existence of the supreme existence. According to Buddhism, there is the supreme existence that controls all principles. This existence is different from God though some may call it so. This existence does not have a name and form. It is indescribable by human words. It is the ineffable reality. If one calls it God, it will always be God and nothing else. However, it is just indescribable since this can be [described only by the phrase,] "one is all, all is one; one is in all, all is in one." Buddhism defeated fatalism with the theory that the world is created by the will of this supreme existence, along with the theory of free will, which says that all actions can be motivated and decided by human free will. Buddhism sounds like fatalism considering its argument that all phenomena of the world are created by principles. However, it is not fatalism. It sounds

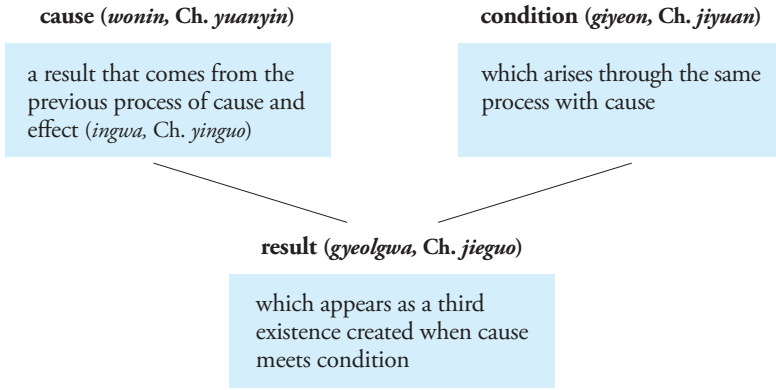
like natural determinism, considering another of its arguments that the world arises in response to the will of principles. However, it is not natural determinism. It sounds like theistic determinism, looking at the fact that it recognized the will of the supreme existence. However, it is not theistic determinism. Most of all, Buddhism affirms that human beings possess free will. Based on this affirmation, it discusses the questions of good and evil, as well as religious cultivation, which implicate the value judgment of human activities. By doing so, Buddhism allows people to develop the independent religious consciousness.

At this point, a theoretical contradiction of Christianity can be found. If everything is seen from the viewpoint of theistic determinism, every human activity is also regarded as being carried out by God's Will. From this point of view, human beings do not have free will. Thus, it is impossible that they receive punishment or reward in accord with their actions. Furthermore, how could human beings cultivate freely? Whether they commit a sin or create merit, only God is responsible for all of those acts and thus human beings are not held responsible at all for their deeds. Then, it would be God's arrogation and arbitrariness if human beings who do not have any responsibility receive punishment or reward. It would be even a blasphemy to God. Since Christianity has this contradictory doctrine, it has few rights to exist as a perfect religion, a religion with the highest form that can respond to the efforts to seek for liberation—the highest solution that meets a great desire or wish coming from human nature.

Buddhism discusses the question of creation from the perspective of the theory of cause and condition (*inyeon* [Ch. *yinyuan*]). According to the theory, everything arises in accord with this principle of cause and condition. For example, things arise in the form of "a+b=c; c+d=e." Here, "a" and "e" are neither same nor different. Considering that "e" originally comes from "a," "e" is not totally different from "a." Since "e" exists as an individual with the features of "e," "e" is not "a." It can be charted as follows:

**Chart 1**

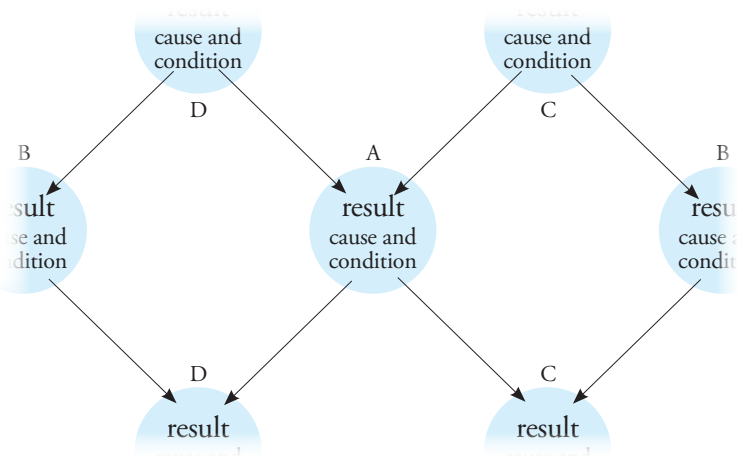
Isolating one phenomenon and looking at its individual factors,



This is a result from the viewpoint of the past while it is a cause from the viewpoint of the future. When it serves as a direct cause, it will become a cause. When it serves as an indirect cause, it will become a condition.

**Chart 2**

Taking a comprehensive view at the realm of phenomena which appear again and again without cessation,



As drawn in the above chart, since everything is interconnected, a third result arises when a cause meets a condition. In this way,

things appear again and again without cessation. In fact, the so-called “first cause” and “first condition” also appeared in such a process of cause and condition. Considering this aspect, Buddhism sounds like pluralism in terms of actual quantity. However, one as the unity or sum of all parts reflects all parts as well as itself. Therefore, one as the unity or sum that embraces all parts is indeed the supreme reality which is one as all. All parts are the value of the reality. Spreading and growing are functions of the reality. Hence, a function becomes a function because of the law of causality. When a function appears, it appears, embodying the law of causality. When a function is viewed individually, the phenomenon that the function manifests possesses its own individual existence, value, and principle that dictate how it will evolve. Therefore, in terms of principle, there appear such causal relationships as “good causes bring good effects” (*seonin seon’gwa* [Ch. *shanyin shanguo*]) and “evil causes bring evil effects” (*agin akgwa* [Ch. *eyin eguo*]). There is no value judgement that good is good and evil is evil. Good causes generating good effects and evil causes generating evil effects are just the way the law of causality originally works. Each individual acts in whatever way they like and receives its result.

The law of causality is just like this. Therefore, based on this law, people will improve or deteriorate. Since originally, human beings appear through the process of cause and condition, which is governed by the cosmic law, they sufficiently have real will, value, and behavioral law. Therefore, when one’s act is carried out, he or she already has a connection with the external world and thus will be ruled by the law of causality. However, when that act is not yet carried out, he or she can still decide with his or her will. Therefore, Buddhism argues that the freedom of cultivating religious practice is in each individual’s free will. Thus, among the ethical, spiritual, and ultimate teachings, Christianity relies on other-power while Buddhism holds an independent status.

The two religions’ forms of practice become different depending on this. Christianity simply follows the format of prayer while Buddhism takes the form of Seon meditative contemplation. The

former borrows the power from others while the latter develops the power inside oneself. Regarding this, in Buddhism, there are many theories and methods to the extent of saying that there are eighty-thousand detailed practices, including three-learnings,<sup>13</sup> six perfections,<sup>14</sup> and eight-fold path.<sup>15</sup> [However,] it is not that there is nothing similar with these Buddhist practices in Christianity. Thus far, I have just explained the basic outline and do not want to discuss more here. I will examine the question of epistemology in the next issue of the journal.

### (3) Regarding the Question of Epistemology

Regarding this question of epistemology, Christianity just emphasizes faith in God or God's Will as an object of the religion. It does not give any room to discuss on the right faith and right understanding. Therefore, very frequently, ignorant men and women are prone to falling into some superstitious forms of beliefs in Christianity. On the other hand, those who are highly capable of critical thinking tend to question the faith that the religion promotes. [In regard to Christianity,] there appeared even a criticism that said, "Religion is an anesthetic for people's minds."<sup>16</sup> As a matter of fact, it is not that religion anesthetizes people's minds. Rather, religion urges for mental alertness and thereby aims at the improvement of personal virtues. However, such a misunderstanding should not be ascribed to those who misunderstand Christianity. It is rather the fault of the religion itself which provides little ground for the proper understanding of it. Therefore, it seems that Christianity alone has been harshly attacked as a target of anti-religion campaign in modern times because it promotes faith too extremely.

However, Buddhism is not so. As a matter of course, since it is a religion, Buddhism also respects faith. However, it emphasizes views or opinions (*gyeonhae* [Ch. *jianjie*]) rather than faith. In our Buddhist order, there are some people who misunderstand this. They are blindly opposed to intellectual understanding (*jibae* [Ch. *zhijie*]), taking the following phrase literally, "If one enters the Buddhist order,

there should be no intellectual understanding” (*ipcha munnae makjon jihae*).<sup>17</sup> The eight-fold path emphasizes that the right view is the first and foremost, saying, “If there is only faith without understanding, then it just helps ignorance. If there is only understanding without faith, then it just leads to falling into erroneous views.” From this phrase, we can see how important it is to establish the right view. As a matter of course, the term “intellectual understanding” in the phrase “there should be no intellectual understanding” (*makjon jihae*) refers to erroneous intellect and erroneous understanding and, therefore, thwarts faith. It is the right intellect and right understanding that most need to establish faith, in particular, the unwavering right faith. Therefore, our Buddhism advocates that one should aim to develop his or her faith after resolving all the problems regarding the question of epistemology. Hence, Buddhism speaks of the “right principle” [or “logic”] (Skt. *nyāya*) as an epistemological object. The appearance of the text titled “*Commentary to Entryway into Logic*” (Skt. *Nyāyapraveśa*)<sup>18</sup> brought about the development of the Buddhist logic, which promoted the growth of the right faith. Buddhism also gave the teachings of doubt (Skt. *vighāta*) in establishing and expounding the subject (mind or direct cause) that is supposed to correctly understand an object. Therefore, Buddhism accepted Seon meditative contemplation as a way of cultivation.

Christianity, however, does not allow any speculative thought about God since God is unintelligible. Christianity also advocates the human ignorance to the extreme. The religion also makes the world of human wisdom which infinitely extends dark and silent by saying that human beings can never be able to know God. Our Buddhism, of course, does not raise an objection to the fact that we cannot fully realize the reality with our intellect. However, it says that since we have the subject of inherent cognitive capability, i.e., something that is not different from the cosmic mind in the fundamental level, the function of this subject objectifies the subject itself and thereby can cognize the reality within the body of the subject. In other words, as the function changes and develops moment by moment, it recognizes

limitless knowledge through the reflective judgement action within oneself. Storing and developing the recognized knowledge infinitely, the variable self which is the function itself changing moment by moment matches perfectly with the unchanging self that has existed since time immemorial. Simultaneously, the variable self recognizes the unchanging self as the supreme cognitive function and enters the status of the ultimate concentration (*samādhi*), as demonstrated by pioneers or ancient masters. This theory is also embodied in practitioners' cultivation. Many philosophers already point out that the self which appears as an object through the reflective judgment within that self is in fact an imaginary image of the self. Not only Buddhism but also Western philosophy speaks much of taking another step forward from here, i.e., cognizing the true image beyond that imaginary one. Therefore, it would be uncritical to accept what is often said as the truth. The truth is always the truth even though it is not often said. This cannot be denied. Many wise men all testify to this fact.

Therefore, the cognitive object is neither something that cognizes nor the cognition itself. The law that arises due to cognition becomes the object. What the law possesses in the body of a temporary self is cognized. This law is embodied in the practice as it directly enters the realm of the question of value. Then, it becomes a criterion for resolving all social and real problems, and makes "practice based on laws" (*uibep subaeng*) possible. Finally, all different theories about the question of value appear. Here, at this point, one will realize the true meaning of one great question that philosophy raises to religion, the question of promoting the improvement of individuals' virtues, though denying the existence of each individual. The ultimate improvement of individuals' virtues is possible through the universalization of each individual existence. In other words, each individual existence becomes the whole and, at the same time, the whole becomes each individual existence. Thereby, in terms of nature and value, they become one and the same. Since this is the goal of religion, the question about this can be easily resolved. Principle and

phenomena are in the relationship of “non-obstruction between one and many” (*ilda muae*) where one is all and all is one (*il jeuk ilche ilche jeuk il*). Therefore, Buddhism appears in the human society with the significant theoretical foundation. It can be unhesitatingly affirmed that Buddhism has developed to the ultimate level in the history of religion. Christianity can be regarded as religious sentimentalism while our Buddhism can be viewed as religious intellectualism.

Thus far, I have sufficiently discussed some major differences and similarities between Buddhism and Christianity for this article though quite generally. I would like to conclude a section of comparison and contrast between the two religions this way and examine the true characteristics of Buddhism.

## 2. Features of Buddhism

We have finally reached this point. I assume that readers already know about the features of Buddhism before I explain in details. However, I would like to sum up one last time. First, what one can easily discover about Buddhism is that Buddhism is a comprehensive religion which integrates various religions and academic fields. To give concrete examples, there are following parallels between Buddhism and the six non-Buddhist teachings of India,

1. From the position of Vedanta philosophy, an orthodox philosophy centering around the Four Vedas, the theory of transmigration can be found in Buddhism.
2. From the viewpoint of Sāṃkhya philosophers, the features of the dualism of soul (Skt. *puruṣa*) and self-nature (Skt. *prakṛti*) can be found in the theory of dependent origination, (Skt. *pratīyasamutpāda*) which discusses true-suchness and ignorance.
3. From the viewpoint of Vaiśeṣika teachers, the features of the theories of six elements and ten elements can be found in the pluralistic theory of immeasurable meanings describing the

ceaseless appearance of phenomena, which is the Buddhist theory of creation.

4. From the viewpoint of Nyāya philosophy, Buddhism develops a theoretical aspect, establishing the theory of the entryway into logic.
5. From the viewpoint of the Yoga school, the practice of contemplation can be found in Seon.
6. From the viewpoint of Jaimini's<sup>19</sup> followers, at the arousal of mind [to attain awakening], the practices of “renouncing and abandoning the world” and “cultivating asceticism and severing desires” are found.

There are also parallels between Buddhism and Western philosophy: Platon's theory of Idea can be found in Pure Land Buddhism; Parmenides' theory of true existence, in the theory of “true emptiness and wondrous existence”; Aristoteles' efforts to materialize Idea, in the practical morality of Buddhism; Cartesian doubt, in the Chan investigation of *gong'an*;<sup>20</sup> Kant's critique of reason, in the Yogācāra theory; Shopenhauer's blind will, in the theory of ignorance. Speaking such parallels with religion in general,

1. Religions of the mythic period can be found in esoteric Buddhism.
2. Religions of idol worship can be found in the teachings of characteristics (Sangjong).
3. The form of religions that rely on other-power can be found in Pure Land Buddhism.
4. The form of religions that emphasize one's own power can be found in Seon Buddhism.

Buddhism reconciles the contradictions between Buddhist doctrine and philosophy that are not mixed together just like ice and charcoal. By doing so, Buddhism rules in various time periods. Since there is no need to defend Buddhism against some laypeople who judge by looking at only one side from the secular perspective, I will not do so.

Therefore, here, I would rather not discuss on which religion is equipped with the highest form that can respond to the human desire or wish to seek for liberation as the ultimate human demand. It is right for readers themselves to judge. I will finish this article after examining the relationship between Buddhism and general social thought and then the role of Buddhism in modern days.

## Chapter 4

# Buddhism and General Social Thought

Thus far, I have argued that Buddhism is the most perfect religion, judging from the path of development it has followed and the form that it has acquired. Here, I will not discuss this point any more. Instead, I would like to explore what relationship Buddhism has or will have with social thought. In general, human beings demand religion. They do so spontaneously out of their nature. It is not that they follow religion because they are forced or influenced by something else. According to what many scholars of religion have discussed about the origin of religion, human beings demanded religion because they tried to seek the supreme authority for consolation from outside threat and to devote themselves to that authority. However, this view of religion is not based on careful observation. It simply defines religion based on a commonsensical secular perspective, only focusing on the motivational cause. Human beings need food to survive. This is a physical instinct. It is not something that suddenly arises in the face of the threat of hunger. Just like this, religion is a mental or spiritual need to improve and strengthen our life with religious convictions. It is not something that appears because of outside threat.

Human beings have the instinct for religion. As a matter of course, there is a case that religion emerges due to external stimulation. This can be compared to the fact that people demand food more intensely after starvation. It is also possible that one can develop a religious consciousness in his or her own inner life without any external stimulation. For example, Śākyamuni's religious consciousness did not arise only from his so-called "four excursions."<sup>21</sup> The religious consciousness in Christianity came to

exist not just because Hebrew people were subordinated by other countries. It would be rather appropriate to see that their religious consciousness inevitably grew from the inner demand to reach out to infinity. Looking at religion not from a discriminative and individual perspective but from a broad and universal one, there is nothing that is not a religion among all human demands for improvement. Therefore, there is nothing that is not a religious instinct or impulse among the trends of thought or the streams of all thoughts. However, thought develops different characteristics in terms of individual, place, and time-period while religion is a demand of the sum or whole that integrates all these characteristics and thus inevitably appears as something universal or comprehensive. The former is particular and temporary while the latter is universal and eternal. As a shade follows a human body, so a belief or faith follows thought. A belief is indeed a religious instinct.

When we see that thought temporarily changes in different times, we can find the principle that particularity is subsumed by universality. In light of this principle, we cannot but believe that a specific thought of the time, as well as individual and particular thought, will be inevitably subsumed by religion which is a general desire or wish of humankind. Philosophers or scholars will raise the most intense objection to this argument. Many of them, though not all, will initiatively argue that thought will not be digested by religion. However, this will be also a dogmatism of these people who also belong to a special class. Their dogmatism runs contrary to the fact that religion as a general wish of humankind has come to exist by digesting thoughts. Therefore, the more universality a religion has, the more digestive ability and existence-value it has. Here, I do not hesitate to conclude that Buddhism, equipped with the highest form of existence-value, has stronger power to digest the general social thought than special religions which have specific characteristics.

## 1. Buddhism and Modern Thought

The most important thing that we first have to understand here is the word “modern.” What does this word “modern” mean?

It is needless to say that we cannot look at the present, separating it from the past. Modern thought appears with modern features, combining the past cultural cumulations with the newly-arising present one. Therefore, on the other side of complex modern thought, there remain all the cultural traces that have been transmitted from ancient and medieval times to the present day. At the same time, as the transportation system develops in modern times, various thoughts with regional characteristics interact with each other and thereby generate the trend of thought that has more universal feature, compared to previous periods.

Many people define thought in terms of different times, saying that modern thought refers to socialist ideology; the nineteenth century thought, materialism; medieval thought, renaissance. As a matter of course, there is something correct in their view if we look at a specific part. However, if one considers thought as the stream of desire or wish of humankind, it is not always so. In comparison, as water flows on and under the surface of earth, so thought flows on and under the surface [of culture]. It seems that what intensely appears on the surface is rather powerful, at least temporarily. However, we often see the opposite. What flows under the surface makes a powerful contribution to the development of human culture. Therefore, from this vantage point, it is not appropriate to say that modern thought refers to socialist ideology. It is as if all the currents of the Yellow Sea<sup>22</sup> do not belong to the warm current. The socialist ideology that idealizes the triumph of the proletariat thrives on the surface of the modern culture. Under the surface, however, there flows the general demand for the peace and happiness of the human kind, including both the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, more fiercely. We need to recognize this fact.

How complex and intricate! This is a sort of a catchphrase

that clearly expresses and represents the current situation. The fact that this complex trend of thought is not yet settled, creating a tension, is the source of distress in the present day that people in the modern times generally feel. This distress is nothing but a reflective phenomenon of the greatest religious desire to generate the highest ideal in the future, based on the human nature that does not rest without developing the most significant and perfect form of thought by digesting all the complex thoughts of modern times. However, here, I would like to add some more words regarding the anti-religious movement in modern thought. Of course, it is not that I do not respect the passion of those who carry out this movement. Anti-religious movement is a reaction to a religion that has lost the essential meaning of religion, clinging to the previous mistaken view. Therefore, I believe that they rather make considerable contributions to the development of a proper religious movement. This is because truly religious people also should keep pace with a campaign against previous mistaken views of religion and wrong systems of religion.

## 2. The Responsibility of Buddhism in Modern Times

Buddhism in modern times is responsible for providing the most perfect standard for a religious form. Therefore, Buddhism should reflect on itself and see whether it is appropriate for the task.

First, looking at the founder's personal virtues, he is someone who fulfilled the ideal of the unification or harmony of humankind. Thus, he will have the status of the greatest person in the universe and become the standard of all ideals.

Second, looking at the situation of the time when Buddhism first appeared, it undoubtedly dominated the time when religion could not even exist without a complete form of belief. It also subsumed the entirety of various thoughts of the time. Considering this fact, we can see that Buddhism is an ideal religion that has a great magnanimity.

Third, looking at the history of the development of Buddhism, it has realized its own highest ideal, leaving regional and temporal characteristics as they were, because it has possessed the sufficient capability to embrace and harmonize [different forms in region and time]. Considering this fact, we can see that Buddhism is a new creative religion at each and every place and time period.

Therefore, Buddhism is responsible for finding an appropriate format for modern times within itself and making efforts to embody that format. The idea of saving people in accord with causes and conditions, as well as the theory of administering medications according to the phase of illness, is applied to Buddhist thought in general. However, there is something that we should not misunderstand. Even though Buddhism saves people in accord with causes and conditions, it does not mean that it gives up its own position. Rather, Buddhism can do so because it is uncompromising to one extreme and, at the same time, is tolerant to the other.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

According to what has been discussed so far, Buddhism has the most responsibility in the present day. Buddhists themselves feel so. Even educated people admit this fact. As I am about to conclude this article, I would like to revisit the trend of thought at the time when Buddhism appeared, which I have already mentioned above rather briefly. This will lead us to find out the fact that there are some similarities between that time and modern days.

First, speaking of the social system of the time, after the Aryans founded Brahman civilization, based on the Vedanta philosophy, in Panjab and Kabul regions, they first went through the period of theocracy for a while. Then, as the priest class became corrupt, the second class *kṣatriya* grew dominant and thereby feudal aristocratic politics began in India. Afterwards, people moved to the Ganges area and accumulated great wealth from fertile land, abundant products, and natural resources. This led to the emergence of the capitalist class, i.e., the third class *vaiśya*. This class became dominant in new kingdoms of Śākyamuni's time such as Magadhā<sup>23</sup> and Śrāvastī.<sup>24</sup> At this time, the Buddha advocated the equality of the four classes of India for the future. Furthermore, he promoted Upāli<sup>25</sup> who originally came from the lowest fourth class to be one of his ten principle disciples: he even placed the disciple over his own brother Nanda who was a prince of King Śuddhodana<sup>26</sup> and descendant of the Śākya, the highest of all royal families. Considering this fact, we can take a glimpse at the original intent that Śākyamuni Buddha held for the social system. Speaking from the cultural and philosophical perspectives, since Aryans founded the Vedic culture, they had produced the splendid culture. [For example,] they created the main

streams of the six schools of philosophy that subsequently evolved into the so-called “sixty-two mistaken views”<sup>27</sup> or “ninety-eight non-Buddhist teachings” which appear in Buddhist scriptures. Buddhism embraced all of these teachings that were advocated by renowned scholars of the time. From this fact, we can see the harmonious nature of Buddhism.

Therefore, we can guess a little about what Buddhism, the religion that improved the social system and embraced different thoughts in India, will be like in modern days. This feature of Buddhism may be applied to India alone. As Buddhism was transmitted to another region, it was socially demanded and understood only when the cultural level of that region reached its height. One can just naturally feel this when he or she reads history. At the individual level, by looking at only those whose thoughts become mature consciously demand and understand Buddhism, we can conclude that it is the final religion.

Chinese people generated the Confucian culture and bloomed the flower of the Lao Zhang<sup>28</sup> learning [i.e. Daoism]. Although Buddhism was introduced to China in the late Han period (206 BCE–220 CE), it did not develop until the period of the Sixteen Kingdoms (304–439) when there were various philosophical theories. In Korea, too, Buddhism developed in the period of Three Kingdoms.<sup>29</sup> During this time, in terms of the cultural level, Korea reached the Chalcolithic Age through the Stone Age. Integrating the Bronze Age culture of the continent [i.e. China], Korean culture rather overwhelmed the continent culture. In terms of the social system, Korea passed the period of the chief or shaman-god ruler and entered the period of monarchy. In terms of religious thought, Korea demanded a new form of religion, outgrowing the shaman worship and divination as well as a primitive religion of the spirit worship. Buddhist studies in the West are developing nowadays. From all these facts, we can see that Buddhism cannot gain attraction without the maturation of human mental capability. However, modern times, in particular, in which everything is complex and entangled, are preparing for a

golden opportunity of the spread of Buddhism. Therefore, finally, we Buddhists cannot but expect our social advancement. Sentient beings are the fields of bodhisattva merits.

I apologize that this article has become tedious. Since I wrote it when I was very busy, it is proper to regard this article as a draft. Let me promise [to revise] later! (Finished).

## Notes

- \* This article was published in the *Bulgyo* 佛教 [Buddhism] 79–83 (January–May 1931)
- 1 Hapcheon 陝川, Jinju 晉州, Masan 馬山, and Busan 釜山 are cities located in present-day Gyeongsangnam-do in the southeastern part of the Korean Peninsula.
  - 2 Researches on the similarities between Buddhism and Christianity were already popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Scholars such as Max Müller (1823–1900), Rudolf Seydel (1835–1892), Edward Washburn Hopkins (1857–1932), and Burnett Hillman Streeter (1874–1937) led this trend. In particular, Seydel who compared the legends of the Buddha and Jesus argued that there were several identical stories in the legends of the founders of the two religions.
  - 3 Jehovah is a name of the Hebrew god. It is a vocalization of the tetragrammaton (four letters) “YHWH.” Most scholars believe that the term “Jehovah” is a late production (ca. 1100), derived from combining the Latin letters JHVH with the vowels of the Hebrew word “adonai” (Lord).
  - 4 This is one of the Ten Commandments found in the Hebrew Bible (Exodus 20:3 and Deuteronomy 5:7).
  - 5 The Hebrew god appears to have originally been a sky god, associated with thunder, lightning, and mountains.
  - 6 From the historical perspective, Indian Abhidharma teachers did not develop such Buddhist theories as dharma-realms and Buddha-nature. Rather, these are the theories that developed in East Asian Buddhist traditions such as Hwaem (Ch. Huayan) and Seon (Ch. Chan, Jn. Zen).
  - 7 Fundamental Buddhism usually refers to the Buddhism of pre-sectarianism. This earliest form of Buddhism developed from the time of the historical Buddha to the first schism, lasting about 150 years after the death of the Buddha. Its teachings were represented by the doctrines of four noble truths. This Buddhism is also called “original Buddhism” or “early Buddhism” (*wonsi Bulgyo* 原始佛教).
  - 8 “一中一切 一卽一切, 一切中一 一切卽一.” This phrase itself hardly appears in Buddhist texts. However, a similar expression can be found in Uisang’s

(625–702) *Hwaeom ilseung beopgye do* 華嚴一乘法界圖 [Chart of the Dharma-Realms According to the One-Vehicle of Hwaeom]: “All is in one, one is in all; one is all, all is one” (一中一切多中一 一即一切多即一).

- 9 The terms “self-power” and “other-power” are often contrasted with each other in the East Asian Buddhist traditions. While the former refers to the practitioner’s reliance on the power of Amitābha Buddha, the latter is used to indicate practices demanding personal effort, such as cultivating the six perfections (pāramitās). Self-power practices were often criticized as a difficult path to enlightenment especially by Pure Land followers who advocated an easy path, emphasizing such practices as reciting Amitābha’s name. The distinction between self-power and other-power was first drawn by the eminent Chinese Pure Land thinker Tanluan 曇鸞 (476–542). Since then, this dichotomy had often been applied to the polemical rhetoric by Pure Land thinkers as well as Chan experts.
- 10 The term “*gugyeong*” is a translation of the Sanskrit “*niṣṭhā*,” which means “the end” and “completion.” Just like its Sanskrit original, the term appears in various contexts in East Asian Buddhist texts to refer to the level of enlightenment, bringing an end to practices and reaching spiritual perfection.
- 11 The “one-mind” refers to the absolute principle penetrating into all phenomena. This notion of the “one-mind” is significant in the East Asian Buddhist traditions. The *Dasheng qixin lun* 大乘起信論 [*Awakening of Faith in Mahāyāna*] has been regarded as the principal text explaining the doctrine of the one-mind in relation to the Yogācāra and tathāgatagarbha thought. In particular, the text presents the two aspects of the one-mind: the true suchness aspect and the production-and-cessation aspect. The renowned Korean Buddhist master Wonhyo 元曉 (617–686) composed a commentary to this text, in which he reconciled the Yogācāra perspective on consciousness with the notion of tathāgatagarbha. The phrase “dharma-realms of the one-mind” refers to the one-mind manifesting all phenomena of the world.
- 12 Gospel of John 1:1.
- 13 Three-learnings refer to the three categories of Buddhist practice: (1) śīla, learning in morality, which includes all forms of disciplines regarding by word, deed, or thought; (2) samādhi, learning in meditative concentration, which encompasses all forms of meditative practices to obtain the state of higher concentration; (3) prajñā, learning in wisdom, which encompasses all forms of study and training to acquire the insight toward the true nature of the world.

- 14 Six perfections (*pāramitās*) refer to the six types of practices that lead to liberation, which are charity, morality, forbearance, effort, meditation, and wisdom.
- 15 Eight-fold path is the path toward liberation, preached by Śākyamuni Buddha in his first sermon. It consists of right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.
- 16 Yu Yeop here seems to quote Karl Marx's famous words, "Religion is the opium of the people." Karl Marx used these words in his "A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," published in 1844.
- 17 "入此門內 莫存知解."
- 18 The *Nyāyapraveśa* (*Yinming ruzhengli lun* [Kor. *Inmyeong ipjeongniron*] 因明入正理論) [Commentary to Entryway into Logic] was compiled by Śaṅkarasvāmin (fl. sixth century) who was Dignāga's student. It was translated into Chinese by Xuanzang 玄奘 (602–664).
- 19 Jaimini was an ancient Indian scholar who was traditionally respected as the founder of the Mimamsa school.
- 20 *Gong'an* 公案 (public case) refers to encounter dialogues between Chan masters and their disciples, usually revolving around episodes of the Chan masters stimulating students to attain awakening with unique gestures or words.
- 21 "Four excursions" (*samun yugwan* [Ch. *simen youguan*] 四門遊觀) refer to Śākyamuni Buddha's four occasions of traveling outside his castle when he was still a prince. According to legends, he witnessed a sick person, an old person, a corpse, and a religious mendicant, experiences that catalyzed his eventual renunciation of the secular life.
- 22 The Yellow Sea (Hwanghae [Ch. Huanghai] 黃海) is a marginal sea of the Pacific Ocean located between China and the Korean Peninsula.
- 23 Magadhā was the largest of the sixteen states in ancient India that thrived from the sixth and third centuries BCE in the Northeastern part of the Indian subcontinent.
- 24 Śrāvastī was an ancient city of India.
- 25 Upālī (Upārī [Ch. Youpolī] 優婆利) was one of the ten main disciples of Śākyamuni Buddha, who was traditionally best known as the compiler of the Vinaya.
- 26 Śuddhodana (Jeongbanwang [Ch. Jingfan wang] 淨飯王) was the father of Śākyamuni Buddha. He was king of Kapilavastu in Central India.
- 27 They are explained in a few Buddhist texts such as the *Brahmajāla-sūtra* [Sūtra on the Brahmā's Net of Sixty-Two Views] and the *Vimalakīrti-sūtra*.

Although different sūtras give slightly different lists, they usually consist of four or five different categories of mistaken views, for example, regarding views on existence or non-existence.

- 28 Lao Zhang (Kor. No Jang) 老莊 refers to Laozi 老子 and Zhangzi 莊子 who are traditionally revered as the founder of Daoist philosophy.
- 29 This was the period of the Three Kingdoms when the three ancient Korean kingdoms of Goguryeo 高句麗 (37 BCE–668 CE), Baekje 百濟 (18 BCE–660 CE), and Silla 新羅 (57 BCE–668 CE) were competing for dominance of the Korean Peninsula. Silla eventually unified the kingdoms in 676 with the military aid of Tang China.

## Glossary

*agin akwa* 惡因惡果

Bulgyosa 佛教社

*bulseong* 佛性

*giyeon* 機緣

*gugyeong* 究竟

*gyeolgwa* 結果

*gyeonhae* 見解

*il jeuk ilche ilche jeug il* 一即一切 一切即一

*ilda muae* 一多無礙

*ilsim beopgye* 一心法界

*in'gwa* 因果

*inyeon* 因緣

*jaryeok* 自力

*jibae* 知解

*Jin'gong myoyu* 真空妙有

*jinyeo* 真如

Sangjong 相宗

*seonin seon'gwa* 善因善果

*simji* 心地

*taryeok* 他力

*uibeop suhaeng* 依法修行

*wonin* 原因





# OVERVIEW OF KOREAN BUDDHISM FOR THE LAST HUNDRED YEARS\*

Kang Yumun

Chapter 1 Introduction

Chapter 2 The Six Periods of Modern Korean Buddhism

Chapter 3 Conclusion





## Chapter 1 Introduction

This is the year of monkey [1932]. Exactly 100 years ago was 1832, the year of dragon and the thirty-second year of King Sunjo (r. 1800–1834) in the Joseon dynasty (1392–1910). It was 1,410 years after Buddhism had been officially transmitted to Goguryeo (37 BCE–668 CE) in the second year of King Sosurim (r. 371–384), the year of monkey; 1,448 years after the religion had been introduced to Baekje (18 BCE–660 CE) in the first year of King Chimnyu (r. 384–385), the year of monkey; 1,304 years after it had come to Silla (57 BCE–668 CE) in the fifteenth year of King Beopheung (r. 514–540), the year of monkey;<sup>1</sup> 268 years after the monk Heo'eung Bou (1509–1565)<sup>2</sup> had passed away; and 229 years after Cheongheo Hyujeong (1520–1604)<sup>3</sup> had died.

I will divide the past hundred years into the following six periods: (1) the first seventy years or so: the period of passivity and suffering; (2) for six years after the year of tiger, the sixth year of Gwangmu<sup>4</sup> (1902): the period of Management Office (Gwalliseo); (3) for three years after the year of monkey, the second year of Yunghui<sup>5</sup> (1908): the period of Board of Administrative Affairs of Won jong (Won jong jongmuwon); (4) for eleven years after the year of pig, the forty-fourth year of Meiji<sup>6</sup> (1911): the period of Joint Office (Yeonhap samuso); (5) for seven years after the year of dog, the eleventh year of Taishō<sup>7</sup> (1922): the period of Administration Bureau (Gyomuwon); (6) the period after the year of snake, the fourth year of Shōwa<sup>8</sup> (1929): the period of Saṃgha Assembly (Jonghoe). I will give an overview of each of these periods.

## Chapter 2

# The Six Periods of Modern Korean Buddhism

### 1. The Period of Passivity and Suffering

This was the period of decline in Korean Buddhism when the Yi court's anti-Buddhist policy became increasingly intensified. Korean Buddhism faced the grievous fate during this period and, at the same time, the fortune of Korea which had long been nurtured and edified by Buddhism also declined day by day.

The Goryeo court overly promoted Buddhism to the extent that people of the time felt that it was too extreme. Inevitably, there were harmful consequences. From the beginning of the Yi dynasty, the court launched anti-Buddhist campaign. For the next 400 years, the Confucian party persecuted Buddhism blindly and horribly. What strength was left in this Korean Buddhism? What light could it shine? Everywhere, there were only ruins. All you can hear about Buddhism during this time just enrages you.

The court enforced anti-Buddhist policies more severely by prohibiting Buddhist clerics from entering the capital. The human rights of clerics were infringed a lot and their spirits were totally broken. Therefore, not to mention that they could not actively respond to such anti-Buddhist policies, attacking the enemies of Buddhism, they could not even arouse the mind to conciliate the court and attract Confucian literati. They just despised themselves, spending their lives in stone caves deep in the mountain. They led poor lives, wearing only a Buddhist robe. Wicked government officials in the secular world imposed severe labor on them. Without any protest, however, these monks just felt content, making their living and even purchasing burial-grounds (*wito*)<sup>9</sup> by begging and

making barley powder and straw shoes. 400 years of persecution indeed made them passive and lose their resistance to suffering and ordeal. Korean Buddhism was just barely surviving as an unnatural existence in the mountain just like a string tied to a stone chime bell.

Korean Buddhists during this period, therefore, did not have any consciousness to actively carry out external social activities. They just comforted themselves, focusing only on internal personal cultivation. There were not many outstanding figures who were intrepid and, at the same time, skillful at ecclesiastic administration. Only a handful of lecturers (*gangsā*), preceptors (*yulsa*), and rectors (*sujuwa*, leader in Seon meditation and recitation of the Buddha's name) led the Buddhist community. This shows the situation of Korean Buddhism during this time. To name a few monks of the time, Dae'eun Nango (1780–1841) kept the precepts for his whole life, having just one meal a day; Chimmyeong Hanseong (1801–1876) taught the Buddha-dharma for thirty years, helping young students cultivate in both Seon meditation and doctrinal studies. Yongho Haeju (d. 1887), Heoju Deokjin (1806–1888), and Ibong Nakhyeon (1804–1891) were among the monks of this time as well.

Especially, flowers bloomed in the Seon grove. There was a monk named Baekpa Geungseon (1767–1852) who received from Seolpa Sangeon (1707–1791) the tenet that had come from the West. Baekpa opened dharma-assemblies for Seon teaching and became a restorer of Korean Seon Buddhism. He composed the *Hand Mirror of the Seon Words* (*Seonmun sugyeong*). Choui Uisun (1786–1866) harshly criticized this book in the *Talks on the Four Divisions of the Seon School* (*Seonmun sabyeon maneo*), saying that this work was opposed to ancient masters' intent. Subsequently, Udam Honggi (1822–1881) wrote the *Record of Correcting the Seon School* (*Seonmun jeungeong nok*) and also criticized Baekpa's work. Then, Seoldu Yuhyeong (1824–1889) refuted the *Talks on the Four Divisions of the Seon School* and the *Record of Correcting the Seon School* in the *Stream Returning to the Source of Seon* (*Seonwon soryu*), defending the *Hand Mirror of the Seon Words* on behalf of Baekpa. Then, Seo Jinha (1861–ca. 1925) criticized

Baekpa in the *Record of Re-correcting the Seon Words* (*Seonmun jaejeong nok*). According to Seo, it is simply wrong for Baekpa to assign three types of Seon to three phrases (*samgu*) and designate both “tathāgata Seon” (*yeonae* Seon) and “patriarch Seon” (*josa* Seon) as “Seon-outside-the-format” (*gyeogoe* Seon). This Seon debate involving several Korean Seon masters was an immeasurably lofty and great event during the Yi dynasty when Seon and doctrinal studies declined alike.

As we have seen thus far, during this period, there were just matters related to principle [i.e., theoretical matters]. Discussions related to phenomena [i.e., social practical matters] were ignored. This is probably because monks themselves were in a difficult situation to engage in social activities during this time. However, if they had had hearts, they would have stood together and risked their lives to break down evil customs and policies and thereby preserve the Buddha’s teachings and liberate Joseon Buddhism. However, they could not do so. They just followed the habitual routine. They went into small and narrow temples or hermits and stayed there, shutting the doors tight. They sat there day and night without saying anything about all kinds of humiliation they faced. On April<sup>10</sup> 22 in 1895, the year of sheep, Sano Zenrei (1859–1912), a deputy for the office head of the Japanese Nichiren shū, submitted a petition to Prime Minister Gim Goengjip (1842–1896)<sup>11</sup> to lift the ban against Joseon Buddhist clerics entering the capital. On the same day which was the thirtieth day of the third month in the lunar calendar, the governmental gazette reported that the petition was granted. How embarrassing to Korean Buddhists this was! Alas! What a period of the suffering for Korean Buddhists it was! Korean Buddhists in the period of passivity and suffering!

## 2. The Period of Management Office

On the first day of the first month in the year of horse (1894), Jeon Bongjun (1855–1895) raised a huge mass movement, i.e., the Eastern Learning (Donghak) Rebellion,<sup>12</sup> in Jeolla-do to remove the

oppression and save people. The Joseon court asked Japan and Qing to send army to Korea to quell this rebellion. Then, the armies of the two countries collided in Korea, which led to the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895). Japan won this war and came to have a full control over the Korean Peninsula. With this [social and political dominance of Japan in Korea], more and more Japanese Buddhist monks came to the peninsula and stimulated Korean Buddhism to show signs of life.

On April 11 in the year of dragon (1902), a royal edict was issued. It stipulated that the Temple Management Office (Sachal Gwalliseo) in Imperial Household Agency (Gungnaebu) supervise temples and clerics. In July of the same year, the temple decree was issued with thirty-six articles. Among these articles, the sixth one classified Buddhist temples in terms of great dharma mountain (*dae beopsan*) and middle dharma mountain (*jung beopsan*). Great dharma mountain refers to the head temple in the peninsula. Wonheungsa Temple, founded in the same year outside of the eastern gate of Gyeongseong [i.e., Seoul] (where there is now Changsin Public Elementary School), was selected as such. Middle dharma mountain refers to the head temple of each province. The following sixteen temples were selected as such: Bongseonsa, Bongseonsa, Yongjusa, Magoksa, Beopjusa, Songgwangsa, Geumsansa, Haeinsa, Donghwasa, Tongdosa, Woljeongsa, Yujeomsa, Seogwangsa, Gwijusa, Bohyeonsa, and Sin'gwangsa. The seventh article discusses the personnel of great dharma mountain, the head temple of Korea, and middle dharma mountain: [For the personnel of great dharma mountain,] one person for left prefect (*jwa gyojeong*), right prefect (*u gyojeong*), great Seon councilor (*dae seonui*), and senior councilor (*sang gangui*), respectively; five for general manager (*imu*); one for provincial manager (*do seomni*) and inspector (*gamwon*), respectively; two for secretary (*seogi*); one for advisor (*jibin*). At that time, Gwon Jungseok became a chief manager (*juim*) while Gim Udam and Gim Wolhae became a provincial manager one after another. For the personnel of middle dharma mountain, the head temple of a province, one for provincial prefect (*do gyojeong*), vice prefect (*bu gyojeong*), councilor, manager, inspector, secretary, and advisor, respectively.

This Management Office, however, did not last long. It was closed in the year of dragon. On June 14 in the year of horse (tenth year of Gwangmu) [1906], the police executive (*gyeongmusa*) Bak Seungjo came to Wonheungsa with the imperial edict and disbanded the Buddhist monks there who were led by the manager Gim Wolhae. The management of the temple building was entrusted to Myeongjin Academy (Myeongjin hakgyo). With the closing of the temple, the period of Management Office came to an end. Myeongin Academy here was founded with the approval of the Ministry of the Internal Affairs [of the Great Korean Empire (1897–1910)] on February 19 in the same year. The school was managed by the Society for Buddhist Research (Bulgyo yeon'guhoe), which Hong Wolcho (1858–1934) and Yi Bodam (b. 1859) organized, along with the Japanese monk Inoue Genshin (1861–1934), after the two Koreans turned to the Japanese Pure Land school Jōdo shū in the same year. At that time, some Korean monks attempted to strengthen their own power by soliciting Japanese priests' help. This organization was just one product of those monks. Their attempts culminated in Yi Hoegwang (1862–1933)<sup>13</sup> who sold the Korean Buddhist order [to Japanese priests].

In this way, during this period, Korean Buddhism at least consciously tried to do something, getting out of its dormant state.

### 3. The Period of Board of Administrative Affairs of Won jong

On March 6 in 1908, the year of monkey, fifty-two representatives of Korean monks gathered in Wonheungsa and resolved to establish the so-called “Board of Administrative Affairs of Won jong” (Won jong Jongmuwon, hereafter, Won jong Board) as the unified organization of Korean Buddhism. “Won jong” (Consummate School) was in fact a name that had little foundation. At the time of the establishment, the personnel of the organization consisted of the following: Great Saṃgha Prefect (Dae jongjeong) Yi Hoegwang, General Manager Gim

Hyeonam, Manager of Academic Affairs Jin Jineung (absent in the inaugural meeting), Manager of School Affairs Gim Boryun, Manager of General Affairs Gim Seogong, Personnel Manager Yi Hoemyeong, Audit and Inspection Manager Bak Bobong, Financial Manager Seo Hagam, and Senior Lecturer Bak Hanyeong.

This was the opportune time for the head of Won jong Board Yi Hoegwang. On October 6 in the subsequent year, the year of dog [1910], he signed a seven-item treaty in Tokyo, Japan, with the Sōtō shū representative Hirotsu Sessan (1862–1932). This was exactly forty-six days after prime minister of Korea Yi Wanyong (1858–1926) signed the annexation treaty with the Japanese Resident General Terauchi Masatake (1852–1919) on August 22. It is needless to say that Yi Hoegwang's signing was a rash act equal to selling the Korean Buddhist order. Korean Buddhism, therefore, was put into a great crisis in its existence. The following are the seven items.

First, the Won jong temples in Korea will be fully and permanently unified with the Sōtō shū to spread Buddhism.

First, the Sōtō shū Office (Sōtō shū shūmuin) will take charge in the matter of receiving the grant for the foundation of the Korean Won jong Board.

First, Korean Won jong Board will provide significant help for the Sōtō shū's propagation in the peninsula.

First, Korean Won jong Board will invite an advisor from the Sōtō shū Office.

First, Korean Won jong Board will invite a few missionary workers from the Sōtō shū Office and assign them to the task of propagating Buddhism and educating young monks in each head temple; or When the Sōtō shū Office dispatches missionaries out of necessity, Korean Won jong Board will provide accommodation in a head or branch temple that the Sōtō shū Office will select, and allow the missionaries to serve in that task.

First, the treaty can be revised or nullified when both parties disagree.

First, the aforementioned items will be enforced from the day when

the foundation of Won jong Board is granted.

October 6, the forty-third year of Meiji  
Yi Hoegwang, Representative of Korean Won jong  
Hirotzu Sessan, Representative of Sōtō shū Office

In response, Bak Hanyeong, Jin Jineung, and Gim Jongrae raised the objection to the treaty, criticizing in published articles and newspapers that this treaty was a rash act which was the same as selling the order and betraying the ancestors. On October 5 in the same year by the lunar calendar, they even attempted to hold a campaign against this merge in the Jingsimsa Temple<sup>14</sup> in Gwangju. However, because there were not many attendees, the meeting was cancelled. On January 15 in the following year in 1911, the year of pig, monks from Jirisan Mountain and Jeollanam-do areas gathered in Songgwangsa in Suncheon and founded the Imje jong (School of Imje). They also resolved to establish the Imje School Office (Imje jong jongmuso) in the temple. The foundation of this Imje school shows that Korean Buddhism originated from Taego Bou (1301–1382)<sup>15</sup> who received the legitimate lineage of the Chinese Linji school. At that time, since Gim Gyeongun (1852–1936) who was appointed as a temporary office-head (*gwanjang*) did not attend because of old age, Han Yongun (1879–1944)<sup>16</sup> became a temporary acting office-head.

On May 5 in the following year, the year of mouse [1912], the second assembly was held in SSanggyesa Temple in Hadong. There, the attendees resolved to expand the Imje school. Afterwards, Han Yongun, Gim Haksan, Jang Girim (1869–1915), Gim Jongrae, and Im Manseong were sent to Beomeosa Temple in order to urge for entering this newly-founded school. Imje School Office was then moved to Beomeosa. On May 28 in the same year, the assembly of the abbots of the thirty head temples was held in Wonheungsa. This assembly signaled the beginning of a huge debate on the issue of the name of the Korean Buddhist school between the Southern Imje jong with the abbot of Beomeosa, O Seongwol (1865–1943), as its leader on the one hand and the Northern Won jong with Yi

Hoegwang as its head on the other hand. In this way, the old and weak Korean Buddhism re-rose from the bottom. With this, there began the movement that raised an alarm for the dormant Korean Buddhism in modern times. Han Yongun sent a petition to Privy Council (Jungchuwon) in March in the year of dog [1910] and to Residence-General's Office (Tonggambu) in September in the same year to grant the freedom of marriage to the Buddhist clerics. By doing so, Han showed a great insight into the situation of the time. As the Temple Ordinance (Sachallyeong) was issued in June in the year of pig [1911], the period of Won jong Board which had brought both agony and joy finally ended.

#### 4. The Period of Joint Office

On June 3 in 1911, the year of pig, the Temple Ordinance with seven articles was announced as the seventh legislation. The following are the seven articles:

- First, when a temple was moved, merged, or closed, permission should be obtained from the Government-General's Office (Chongdokbu). When the base or foundation of a temple is moved or the name of a temple is changed, the regulation is the same as above.
- Second, without permission from the provincial governor, temple buildings cannot be used except for dharma-teaching, missionary activities, temple-services, or clerics' residence.
- Third, all head temples should receive the approval from the governor-general for the head-branch relationship of temples, monastic regulations, Buddhist rituals, and other necessary temple-rules that they make.
- Fourth, a temple should have an abbot. The abbot manages all the properties of the temple and takes charge in supervising temple administration and services. The abbot represents the temple.
- Fifth, without permission from the governor-general, temple

properties such as land, forest, building, buddha statues, stone works, ancient texts and paintings, and other valuables, cannot be sold arbitrarily.

Sixth, one who violates any one of the above-mentioned articles is subject to imprisonment of no more than two years or fine of no more than 500 won.

Seventh, beside the articles in this ordinance, the governor-general defines other necessary items related to temple affairs.

#### Supplementary Provisions

The governor-general sets the enforcement date of this ordinance.

On July 8 in the same year, the enforcement-regulations (*sihaeng gyuchik*) for the Temple Ordinance were issued with eight articles. The second article of the regulations names thirty head temples as follows:

Bongeunsa, Bongseonsa, Yongjusa, Jeondeungsa, Donghwasu, Eunhaesa, Gounsa, Gimnyongsa, Girimsa, Haeinsa, Tongdosa, Beomeosa, Beopjusa, Magoksa, Wibongsa, Boseoksa, Daeheungsa, Baegyangsa, Songgwangsa, Seonamsa, Paeyeopsa, Seongbulsu, Yeongmyeongsa, Beopheungsa, Bohyeonsa, Seogwangsa, and Gwijusa (Later, in the year of mouse [1924], Hwaeomsa was promoted to a head temple, which resulted in thirty-one head temples in total.)

Because of the ordinance and its enforcement-regulations, from November in the same year, the first abbot of each of thirty head-temples was appointed in turn. As the Chamber of the Abbots of the Thirty Head Temples (*Samsip bonsa juji hoe'uiso*) was set up in Wonheungsa, the third assembly of the abbots of the head temples was held there on January 13, 1914, the year of tiger. On February 25 of the following year, the year of rabbit, Joint Regulations of the Thirty Head Temples (*Samsip bonsa yeonhap jegyu*) was made. The Joint Office of the Thirty Head Temples (*Samsip bonsa yeonhap*

samuso) was opened in Gakhwangsa Temple with Kang Daeryeon (1875–1942) as the first office head.

This period was the so-called “period of the tyranny of abbots.” In each temple, the abbot ignored and suppressed the other monks’ opinions. As temple affairs were controlled by the abbots alone, the resentment and sigh against the abbots grew day by day. There arose the tension between the abbots and ordinary monks, in particular, the abbots and young monks. Finally, the tension led to a great dispute between them. Largely, the abbots’ arbitrary use of power was based on temple laws (*sabeop*) because temple laws themselves were made favorable to the abbots. The abbots exploited temple laws for themselves, arbitrarily accepting and expelling monks who did not side with them. The appointment and dismissal of an abbot, which were supposed to follow the majority opinion, were decided by a piece of government document. Korean Buddhism which had just escaped from the yoke of Yi court’s anti-Buddhist campaign was bridled again by these temple laws which were significantly imperfect. These laws made a great snag on the path along which Korean Buddhism would otherwise develop freely. Furthermore, the officials in the Joint Office did not truly try to develop Buddhism. They were busy, toadying government officials and punishing [Buddhist clerics who did not obey them].

As a result, the Association for the Revitalization of Korean Buddhism (Joseon Bulgyo yusinhoe, hereafter, Revitalization Association) was established, demanding reformation with the four creeds, including abolishing temple laws and spreading Buddhism. This was the winter in 1921, the year of rooster, three years after the March First Movement (1919). During this period, Korean youths went through an ordeal. Likewise, the Revitalization Association, which consisted of young Buddhist clerics, had a huge difficulty in their attempts to directly cope with the chronic diseases [of the Korean Buddhist community] since the Revitalization Association was slandered by its opponents and unfortunately interfered by police authorities.

As time went, the situation became worse. The hostility between

young clerics and abbots and the officials of the Joint Office grew more intense. Eventually, in the spring of the following year, the year of dog [1922], an indignation meeting against the abbots was held in Gakhwangsa in Gyeongseong [i.e., Seoul]. Some young monks caught Kang Daeryeon, one of several abbots who had most seriously abused the power, and publicly humiliated Kang, carrying out “drum-beating” (*myeonggo*).<sup>17</sup> With this incident, such young monks as Kang Sinchang, Yang Muhong, Jeong Maengil, Gim Sangho (1889–1965), and Gim Jijun were arrested.

On November 5 in 1915, the year of rabbit, the Buddhist Central Seminary (Bulgyo Jungang Hangnim) was established. On March 15 of the same year, the first issue of the *Korean Buddhism Monthly* (*Joseon Bulgyo wolbo*) was published. Five years later, on June 26, 1920, the year of monkey, the Association of Young Korean Buddhists (*Joseon Bulgyo cheongnyeonhae*) was created. During this period, there arose two rather opposing organizations: the General Bureau (Chongmuwon) which was based on young monks and the Administration Bureau (Gyomuwon) which was built around dictatorial abbots. As these organizations grew at odds with each other, this period came to an end. It is regretful that these two could not get along well. However, the presence of a competing organization made each carry out its own project more vigorously. For example, the General Bureau founded the Buddhist Academy (Bulgyo hagwon) and took over Boseong High Common School (Boseong godeung botong hakgyo) while the Administration Bureau superintended Donggwang School (Donggwang hakgyo) and pushed for the establishment of the Incorporated Foundation Central Administration Bureau of Korean Buddhism (*Joseon Bulgyo jungang gyomuwon*).

## 5. The Period of the Administration Bureau

The current Administration Bureau (Gyomuwon) was founded in the following way. On October 15 in the year of dog [1922],

(eleventh year of Taishō), twenty-six persons, including the abbot of Gimnyongsa Gim Hye'ong, donated 156,384 won 80 jeon to the Incorporated Foundation Central Administration Bureau of Korean Buddhism, which at that time confronted the General Bureau of Korean Buddhism (Joseon Bulgyo chongmuwon) consisting of such temples as Tongdosa, Beomeosa, and Seogwangsa. Relying on the government, the Administration Bureau made every effort to persuade the temples, affiliated with the young monks-led General Bureau, to join the foundation. This catalyzed the situation to change drastically. As a result, the two organizations were finally united and formed the joint organization of all thirty-one head temples, "Incorporated Foundation Central Administration Bureau of Korean Buddhism," with 601,425 won 7 jeon. The foundation then held its first general assembly of backbenchers in Gakhwangsa on April 17 of the following year, the year of pig [1923]. In the assembly, executive members were elected as follows: Director of General Affairs Gwak Beopgyeong (b. 1877); Director of School Affairs Gim Irun; Director of Academic Affairs Ji Seokdam; Financial Director Bak Bobong; Social Director Gim Jeonghae; inspectors Choe Seunghyeon, Gim Myeongo, and Gim Jineung. The Incorporated Foundation Central Administration Bureau of Korean Buddhism now runs the Central Buddhist Seminary (Jungang Bulgyo jeonmun hakgyo) and Boseong High Common School.

## 6. The Period of Saṃgha Assembly

Even though it seems that Incorporated Foundation Central Administration Bureau of Korean Buddhism is the central organization of Korean Buddhism, it did not have appropriate functions for that status. At the same time, many felt eager to truly unify all thirty head temples and their thousand branch temples and hermitages. Finally, on March 17, 1928, the year of dragon, the Association of Young Korean Buddhists was re-established.

Such young monks as Baek Seonguk (1897–1981), Gim Beoprin (1899–1964), and Do Jinho launched the campaign for the unity of Korean Buddhism.

As a result, on January 3 of the following year, the year of snake [1929], in Gakhwangsa, the Conference of Buddhist Clerics of the Seon and Gyo Traditions of Korean Buddhism (Joseon Bulgyo Seon-Gyo yangjong seungnyeo daehoe) was held to enact the Saṃgha Constitution (Jongheon), Regulations for the Administration Bureau (Gyomuwon chik), Rules for the Saṃgha Prefect Board (Gyojeonghoe beop), Rules for the Saṃgha Assembly (Jonghoe beop), Regulations for the Committee of Rules (Beopgyu wiwonhoe beop), and Regulations for Clerics (Seungni beopgyu). For the positions of saṃgha prefect (*gyojeong*) that would make important administrative decisions for the Seon and Gyo Traditions of Korean Buddhism, Gim Hwaneung, Seo Hae'un, Bang Hanam, Gim Gyeongun, Bak Hanyeong, Yi Yongheo, and Gim Dongseon were elected. In addition, three managers were elected to take a direct charge in the administrative duties for the Central Administration Bureau of the Seon and Gyo Traditions of Korean Buddhism, the unitary organization of the thirty-one head temples, to manage all projects of the Seon and Gyo Traditions of Korean Buddhism, including academic affairs: Yi Honseong as manager of general affairs, Song Jongheon as manager of academic affairs, and Hwang Gyeongun as financial manager. It was also resolved that the annual Saṃgha Assembly would be held in March or when necessary to decide various affairs of the Korean Buddhist community. This signaled the beginning of the period of the Saṃgha Assembly.

The Saṃgha Constitution of the Seon and Gyo Traditions of Korean Buddhism consists of twelve chapters and thirty-one articles. With this constitution, Korean Buddhism came to have a concrete name and unified organization. However, since the history of the constitution is not long, the general populace does not yet have a sufficient understanding of it. Nonetheless, I believe that its contents are the most complete among all the systems that have been created

thus far. May a bright future await the Saṃgha Assembly of which the fourth assembly was held on March 26 of this year!

On October 17 of the year before last year, the year of horse [1930], a special assembly of the Association of Young Korean Buddhists was held in the Central Administration Bureau to discuss on the issue of rejuvenating the youth movement in Korean Buddhist community. It was resolved that the Korean Buddhist Youth Union (Joseon Bulgyo cheongnyeon chongdongmaeng) would be organized. Yi Yongjo, Bak Dongil, Do Jinho, Jo Hakyu (1894–1933), Gim Sangho, Bak Yunjin, and Kang Yumun were appointed as committee members to organize the alliance of young Korean Buddhists and prepare a meeting. Last year, the year of sheep [1931], on March 22 in Gyeongseong, a general meeting for young Korean Buddhists was held. There, under the creeds of experiencing the Buddha's spirit, establishing a rational religion, and substantializing a popular Buddhism, the Korean Buddhist Youth Union was formed. Along with the enactment of the constitution and the establishment of the saṃgha assembly, this action showed a basic progress of Korean Buddhism. The alliance sent Do Jinho as a delegate to Pan-Pacific Congress of the Young Buddhists' Association in Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S. on July 21 of the year before last year, the year of monkey.<sup>18</sup> This was the first step for Korean Buddhism showing interest in advancing itself to the world and then putting that into action. Last year, on February 24, twenty-four graduates of the first class of the Central Buddhist Seminary organized the Society of Association of Two-Nine-Five-Eight (Iguopalhoe) with a vow to realize the ideal governing of Korean Buddhism and increase mutual friendship and unity. This was also a meaningful development.

All these facts reflect the progress made in these days. Korean Buddhists should raise the mind of great vigor with the power of great faith and seize this golden opportunity that has come after thousands of years.

## Chapter 3

### Conclusion

Thus far, I have overviewed the history of Korean Buddhism in the recent hundred years. In summary, Korean Buddhism has gradually woken up from lethargy and moved forward from stagnation. Recently, there was a reaction to this movement due to ignorance and misunderstanding which arose from the lack of education and knowledge. Now that it is mentioned, Korean Buddhism does not seem eager for education which it in fact has to pay the most attention to. This is a phenomenon that needs to be advised and corrected. Look! Even in the period of suffering, there were cases that learned monks despised arrogant Confucian students. These days, knowledgeable and virtuous abbots challenge the lowly government officials who behave badly to the abbots of local temples under the pretext of supervising temples. I resent the fact that the Government-General's Office has interfered blatantly in the internal affairs of Korean Buddhism. Nonetheless, I first would like to raise the need of education so as for Korean Buddhists to wake up.

Since the Buddhist Seminary (Bulgyo jeonsu hakgyo), which is the present-day Central Buddhist Seminary, was opened on April 30 in 1928 in the year of dragon, Buddhist education has been improved. However, compared to the situation a few years ago, there are few students who go abroad to study in advanced countries. Even though it is mainly caused by financial difficulty, it is still worrisome. The propagation of Korean Buddhism which is vitally tied to education is in a deep slump despite its twenty years of history. The monks who are in charge of the Buddhist administrative affairs should reflect on themselves.

Now we are in the period of the Samgha Assembly. Passing the

period of passivity and suffering in which Korean Buddhism was asleep, we have gone through the periods of Management Office, Won jong Board, Joint Office, and Administration Bureau in which we have gradually woken up. The previous [social] classes that wielded unnatural power have collapsed. Young monks who carry public justice on their back have come to completely seize the ecclesiastical power. Can Korean Buddhism turn the wheel of development in this situation? Korean Buddhists will gather under the banner of the Korean Buddhist constitution with their all fervor and strength without being content with sitting inside the small castle of the thirty-one head temples. Korean Buddhists of these days should follow the path leading upward [to enlightenment], blaming their own weak spirits and lack of steady sincerity, not financial difficulty.

(Finished)

#### Reference:

*Complete History of Korean Buddhism (Joseon Bulgyo tongsa)*,<sup>19</sup> *Buddhism of the Yi Dynasty (Richō Bukkyō)*,<sup>20</sup> *History of Seon and Gyo in Korea (Chōsen Zenkyōshi)*,<sup>21</sup> *One Light (Ilgwang)* vol. 3, *Minutes for the Inaugural Meeting of Korean Buddhist Youth Union (Joseon Bulgyo cheongnyeon chongmaeng changnip daehoerok)*, *Minutes for the Conference of Buddhist Clerics of the Seon and Gyo Traditions of Korean Buddhism (Joseon Bulgyo Seon-Gyo yangjong seungnyeo daehoe hoerok)*, etc.

I chose the topic, “the History of Korean Buddhism for the Last Hundred Years,” because I was eager to investigate this topic, rather than simply celebrating the hundredth issue of the journal. I rushed to write a draft during my busy journey. I do not feel satisfied with the draft; much less will readers be. I lay down my pen, thanking Heo Yeongho and Gim Ingseok who lent reference books.

On August 29, Hyeхва-dong within Dongsomun Gate, Gyeongseong.

## Notes

- \* This article was published in the *Bulgyo* 佛教 [Buddhism] 100 (October 1932).
- 1 Buddhism was introduced to Goguryeo 高句麗, Baekje 百濟, and Silla 新羅 in 372, 384, and 527, respectively. Therefore, the year of 1832 was 1,460 years after Buddhism had been transmitted to Goguryeo and 1,305 years after the religion had reached Silla.
  - 2 Heo'eung Bou 虛應普雨 was a monk during the mid-Joseon. He revived Korean Buddhism during Queen Dowager Munjeong's 文定 (1501–1565) regency (1545–1553).
  - 3 Cheongheo Hyujeong 清虛休靜 was a Seon monk during the mid-Joseon. He produced a number of important texts, including the *Seon'ga gwigam* 禪家龜鑑 [Mirror of Seon School], which emphasizes the harmony between Seon meditation and Gyo doctrinal studies. He was also famous for his military contribution to the Joseon court during the Japanese invasion (1592–1598), forming a monks' militia.
  - 4 Gwangmu 光武 was an era name that King Gojong 高宗 (r. 1863–1907) used for the Great Korean Empire (Daehan jeguk 大韓帝國, 1897–1910), which lasted from 1897 to 1907. It was the first era name for the empire.
  - 5 Yunghui 隆熙 was the era name for Emperor Sunjong 純宗 (r. 1907–1910), the second and last emperor of the Great Korean Empire.
  - 6 Meiji 明治 was a Japanese era for Emperor Meiji (r. 1867–1912) that lasted from 1868 to 1912.
  - 7 Taishō 大正 was the era name for Emperor Taishō (r. 1912–1926) that coincided with the emperor's reigning period.
  - 8 Shōwa 昭和 was the era name for Emperor Shōwa (r. 1926–1989) that coincided with the emperor's reigning period.
  - 9 Burial-grounds (*wito* 位土) are land purchased to pay expenses for funerals or memorial services.
  - 10 In the original manuscript, Kang Yumun apparently mistypes April as the fourth year.
  - 11 Gim Goengjip 金宏集 was Gim Hongjip's 金弘集 original name. He served as prime minister during the Gabo 甲午 Reform (1894–1896), the first modern

- reform of the Korean government. After the reform failed miserably, he was killed by angry public.
- 12 Eastern Learning (Donghak) Rebellion was the largest uprising in Korean history, triggered by local and central government officials' oppression. It was associated with the Donghak religious movement. In the earlier stage, the rebellion was successful, taking most of the Jeolla area. However, it was eventually quelled by the Japan-Korea Joint force. When the government asked Qing China for military aid, Japan responded by dispatching its own troops, thereby starting the Sino-Japanese War.
  - 13 Yi Hoegwang 李晦光 was a Korean monk during the colonial period (1910–1945). He was the head of Won jong 圓宗 which he later attempted to merge with the Japanese Sôtō shū.
  - 14 Jingsimsa 澄心寺, better known as Jeungsimsa 證心寺, is located in Mudeungsan 無等山 Mountain, Gwangju, Jeollanam-do.
  - 15 Taego Bou 太古普愚 was a Seon master during the Goryeo dynasty. He received the dharma lineage from the Chinese Linji master Shiwu Qinggong 石屋清珙 (1272–1352). The Korean Jogye Order traces its lineage back to Taego Bou.
  - 16 Han Yongun 韓龍雲 was a Korean monk during the colonial period. He actively called for the reformation of Korean Buddhism, writing an important treatise titled *Joseon Bulgyo yusinon* 朝鮮佛教維新論 [Treatise on the Reformation of Korean Buddhism]. After Japanese annexation of Korea, he devoted himself to fighting for the independence of Korea. He was also known for his nationalistic poems.
  - 17 Drum-beating (*myeonggo* 鳴鼓) was a practice during the Joseon dynasty. When a student of Seonggyun'gwan 成均館 (National Confucian Academy) committed a serious wrongdoing, other students pasted his name on a dream and walked around the academy, beating that drum and letting people know the person's wrongdoing.
  - 18 It was the year of horse (1930), not the year of monkey (1920).
  - 19 The *Joseon Bulgyo tongsa* 朝鮮佛教通史 [Complete History of Korean Buddhism] was compiled by Yi Neunghwa 李能和 (1869–1943) and published in 1918.
  - 20 The *Richō Bukkyō* 李朝佛教 [Buddhism of the Yi Dynasty] was composed by Takahashi Tōru 高橋享 (1878–1967) and published in 1929.
  - 21 The *Chōsen Zenkyōshi* 朝鮮禪教史 [History of Seon and Gyo in Korea] was composed by Nukariya Kaiten 忽滑谷快天 (1867–1934) and published in 1930.

## Glossary

## Korean

Baegyangsa 白羊寺  
 Baek Seonguk 白性郁 (1897–1981)  
 Baekpa Geungseon 白坡亘璇  
 (1767–1852)  
 Bak Bobong 朴普峰  
 Bak Dongil 朴東一  
 Bak Hanyeong 朴漢永 (1870–1948)  
 Bak Seungjo 朴承祚  
 Bak Yunjin 朴允進  
 Bang Hanam 方寒岩  
 Beopgyu wiwonhoebeop 法規委員會法  
 Beopheungsa 法興寺  
 Beopjusa 法住寺  
 Bohyeonsa 普賢寺  
 Bongseonsa 奉恩寺  
 Bongseonsa 奉先寺  
 Boseoksa 寶石寺  
 Boseong godeung botong hakgyo  
 普成高等普通學校  
*bu gyojeong* 副教正  
 Bulgyo hagwon 佛教學院  
 Bulgyo jeonsu hakgyo 佛教專修學校  
 Bulgyo Jungang Hangnim 佛教中央學林  
 Bulgyo yeonguhoe 佛教研究會  
 Changsin 昌信  
 Chimmyeong Hanseong 枕溟翰醒  
 (1801–1876)  
 Chimnyu, King (枕流王, r. 384–385)  
 Choe Seunghyeon 崔承鉉  
 Chongdokbu 總督府  
 Chongmuwon 總務院 (Joseon Bulgyo  
 chongmuwon 朝鮮佛教總務院)  
 Choui Uisun 草衣意恂 (1786–1866)  
*dae beopsan* 大法山  
*dae jongjeong* 大宗正

*dae seonui* 大禪議  
 Dae'eun Nango 大隱朗昨 (1780–1841)  
 Daeheungsa 大興寺  
*do gyojeong* 道教正  
 Do Jinho 都鎮鎬  
*do seomni* 都攝理  
 Donggwang hakgyo 東光學校  
 Donghak 東學  
 Donghwaso 桐華寺  
 Dongsomun 東小門  
 Eunhaesa 銀海寺  
 Gakhwangsa 覺皇寺  
*gamwon* 監院  
*gangsaj* 講師  
 Geumsansa 金山寺  
 Gim Beoprin 金法麟 (1899–1964)  
 Gim Boryun 金寶輪  
 Gim Dongseon 金東宣  
 Gim Gyeongun 金擎雲 (1852–1936)  
 Gim Haksan 金鶴傘  
 Gim Hwaneung 金幻應  
 Gim Hyeonam 金玄庵  
 Gim Ingeok 金仍石  
 Gim Irun 金一雲  
 Gim Jeonghae 金晶海  
 Gim Jijun 金智俊  
 Gim Jineung 金振應  
 Gim Jongrae 金鐘來  
 Gim Myeongjo 金明昨  
 Gim Sangho 金尙昊 (1889–1965)  
 Gim Seogong 金石翁  
 Gim Udam 金優曇  
 Gim Wolhae 金越海  
 Gimnyongsa 金龍寺  
 Gimsa 祇林寺  
 Gounsa 孤雲寺

- Gungnaebu 宮內府  
 Gwak Beopgyeong 郭法鏡 (b. 1877)  
 Gwalliseo 管理署  
*gwanjang* 管長  
 Gwijusa 歸州寺  
 Gwon Jungseok 權重奭  
*gyeongmusa* 警務使  
*gyeooe* Seon 格外禪  
 gyojeong 教正  
 Gyojeonghoe beop 教正會法  
 Gyomuwon chik 教務院則  
 Gyomuwon 教務院 (Joseon  
   Bulgyo jungang gyomuwon  
   朝鮮佛教中央教務院)  
 Hadong 河東  
 Haeinsa 海印寺  
 Heo Yeongho 許永鎬  
 Heoju Deokjin 虛舟德眞 (1806–1888)  
 Hong Wolcho 洪月初 (1858–1934)  
 Hwaeomsa 華嚴寺  
 Hwang Gyeongun 黃耕雲  
 Hye-hwa-dong 惠化洞  
 Ibong Nakhyeon 離峰樂珪 (1804–1891)  
 Iguopalhoe 二九五八會  
*llgwang* 一光  
 Im Manseong 任晚聖  
 Imje jong jongmuso 臨濟宗宗務所  
 Imje jong 臨濟宗  
*imu* 理務  
 Jang Girim 張基林 (1869–1915)  
 Jeon Bongjun 全琿準 (1855–1895)  
 Jeondeungsa 傳燈寺  
 Jeong Maengil 鄭孟逸  
 Ji Seokdam 池石潭  
*jibin* 知賓  
 Jin Jineung 陳震應 (1873–1942)  
 Jingsimsa 澄心寺  
 Jirisan 智異山  
 Jo Hagyu 曹學乳 (1894–1933)  
 Jongheon 宗憲  
 Jonghoe beop 宗會法  
 Jonghoe 宗會  
*josa* Seon 祖師禪  
*Joseon Bulgyo cheongnyeon*  
*chongmaeng changnip daehoerok*  
 朝鮮佛教青年總盟創立大會錄  
 Joseon Bulgyo cheongnyeon dongmaeng  
 朝鮮佛教青年總盟  
 Joseon Bulgyo cheongnyeonhoe  
 朝鮮佛教青年會  
*Joseon Bulgyo Seon-Gyo yangjong*  
*seungnyeo daehoe hoerok*  
 朝鮮佛教禪教兩宗僧侶大會會錄  
 Joseon Bulgyo Seon-Gyo  
 yangjong seungnyeo daehoe  
 朝鮮佛教禪教兩宗僧侶大會  
*Joseon Bulgyo wolbo* 朝鮮佛教月報  
 Joseon Bulgyo yusinhoe 朝鮮佛教維新會  
*juim* 主任  
*jung beopsan* 中法山  
 Jungang Bulgyo jeonmun hakgyo  
 中央佛教專門學校  
 Jungchuwon 中樞院  
*jwa gyojeong* 左教正  
 Kang Daeryeon 姜大蓮 (1875–1942)  
 Kang Sinchang 姜信昌  
 Magoksa 麻谷寺  
 Myeongjin hakgyo 明進學校  
 O Seongwol 吳惺月 (1865–1943)  
 Paeyeopsa 貝葉寺  
*sabeop* 寺法  
 Sachal gwalliseo 寺刹管理署  
 Sachallyeong sihaeng gyuchik  
 寺刹令施行規則  
 Sachallyeong 寺刹令  
*samgu* 三句  
 Samsip bonsa juji hoe'uiso  
 三十本寺住持會議所

Samsip bonsa yeonhap jegyu

三十本寺聯合制規

Samsip bonsa yeonhap samuso

三十本寺聯合事務所

*sang gangui* 上講議

Seo Hae'un 徐海晏

Seo Hagam 徐鶴庵

Seo Jinha 徐震河 (1861–ca. 1925)

*seogi* 書記

Seogwangsa 釋王寺

Seoldu Yuhyeong 雪竇有炯 (1824–1889)

Seolpa Sangeon 雪坡尙彥 (1707–1791)

Seonamsa 仙岩寺

Seongbulsa 成佛寺

*Seonmun jaejeong nok* 禪文再正錄

*Seonmun jeungeong nok* 禪門證正錄

*Seonmun sabyeon maneo* 禪門四辨漫語

*Seonmun sugyeong* 禪文手鏡

*Seonwon soryu* 禪源溯流

Seungni beopgyu 僧尼法規

Sin'gwangsa 神光寺

Song Jongheon 宋宗憲

Songgwangsa 松廣寺

SSanggyesa 雙磎寺

*sujuwa* 首座

Suncheon 順天

Tongdosa 通度寺

Tonggambu 統監府

*u gyojeong* 右教正

Udam Honggi 優曇洪基 (1822–1881)

Wibongsa 威鳳寺

Woljeongsa 月精寺

Won jong jongmuwon 圓宗宗務院

Wonheungsa 元興寺

Yang Muhong 梁武弘

Yeongmyeongsa 永明寺

Yeonhap samuso 聯合事務所

*yeonae* Seon 如來禪

Yi Bodam 李寶潭 (b. 1859)

Yi Hoemyeong 李晦明

Yi Honseong 李混惺

Yi Wanyong 李完用 (1858–1926)

Yi Yongheo 李龍虛

Yi Yongjo 李龍祚

Yongho Haeju 龍湖海珠 (d. 1887)

Yongjusa 龍珠寺

Yujeomsa 楡岾寺

*yulsa* 律師

## Japanese

Hirotsu Sessan 弘津說三 (1862–1932)

Inoue Genshin 井上玄真 (1861–1934)

Nichiren shū 日蓮宗

Sano Zenrei 佐野前勵 (1859–1912)

Sōtō shū shūmuin 曹洞宗宗務院

Terauchi Masatake 寺內正毅 (1852–1919)

# ON THE SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND POLITICS\*

Gim Beoprin

Chapter 1 Introduction

Chapter 2 Overview of the Relationship between Religion and Politics

Chapter 3 Temple Ordinance and Korean Buddhism

Chapter 4 Conclusion



## Chapter 1

### Introduction

The most urgent task in the current situation of Korean Buddhism is the issue of the unity of ecclesiastical administration. We have long been crying for this unity. These days, at least, anyone who is concerned with the current situation and future of the order feels the need for it. The whole Korean Buddhist community agrees with this unity. Despite this cry, feeling, and concerted opinion for this unity, why is it that the issue has not been resolved yet?

Generally speaking, there are two reasons for the lack of the control system of a certain group. First, from the internal point of view, its constituents lack the sense of control. Second, from the external point of view, there is an external condition that blocks the natural expression of the constituents' sense of control or normal fulfillment of their will of control. The first reason has not caused the lack of the control system in Korean Buddhism of today. As mentioned above, what Korean Buddhists now cry, feel, and ask for is the unity of ecclesiastical administration. We can even say that our sense of control is in fact mature. Nonetheless, it is a truly undeniable fact that the control system which is supposed to be the normal result of that sense has not been built yet due to the second reason.

What is this second reason then? It is the political intervention of the government towards Korean Buddhism. I will later discuss how the ecclesiastical system, regulated by the Temple Ordinance (Sachallyeong)<sup>1</sup> and its enforcement-regulations, serves in disrupting the movement for the unity of ecclesiastical administration. As long as there is this political intervention, we cannot hope for the unity of ecclesiastical administration. Here, the fundamental problem of the

separation of religion and politics lies in front of Korean Buddhism of today. This problem is not new at all. Previous scholars already brought up this issue. Ordinary people are also aware of it. However, since this problem is important, it is necessary to discuss and recognize it.

## Chapter 2

# Overview of the Relationship between Religion and Politics

Religion and politics have special realms in the cultural life of human kind. Politics maintains the external social order while religion improves the internal life. The development of culture can be expected only when these two fully play their own roles independently. It is the confusion of the separation and the derailment of the functions that politics intervenes with religion or religion dictates politics. The errors that this confusion and derailment cause make politics and religion not themselves. History proves this fact. The relationship between religion and politics has appeared in history in several different forms. However, in general, there are four types: religion-state (*gyoguk juui*), state-religion (*gukgyo juui*), officially-recognized religion (*gongingyo juui*), and separation of religion and politics (*jeonggyo bulli juui*).

### 1. Religion-State

Religion-state refers to the theocracy in ancient times and the papal autocracy in medieval times. This is a system in which religion interferes with politics. In this system, God is the supreme sovereign and church is the political authority of the secular rule. The state is nothing but a subordinate to religion. The monarch of the state is only a follower of the head of church. Pope, the head of church, is the so-called king of the kings as well as the earthly representative of God who rules the whole world. The enthronement of kings and emperors is confirmed by the pope's baptism and crowning. This coronation is the oath of obedience. If kings and emperors violate the

pope's order, they are punished with excommunication. Therefore, the force of the church commandments is stronger than that of the state. People have the duty to obey to the state. However, if the state's order contradicts that of the church, people should follow the latter.

How did this ecclesiastical supremacy arise? In the period of theocracy, all parts of the social system were not yet formed and, therefore, the political system could not grow out of the circle of primitive beliefs. Since the state and religion were unified, the relationship between religion and politics in ancient times was a prototypical religion-state that can be seen in the ancient history of any societies of the East and the West. However, the Roman papal autocracy late in medieval times in Europe was a representative form of religion-state. This papal autocracy had gradually developed as the church obtained excessive privileges and powers based on the religion-state from the time of East Roman Empire (330–1453). Pope Gregory VII (r. 1073–1085) excommunicated King Henry IV (r. 1056–1106) of the Saxon dynasty on the issue of the investiture process and humiliated the king outside the castle of Canossa. Here, we don't have enough space to discuss more on the conflict between the state and church powers, along with the growth and fall of the papal power. I simply would like to point out what harmful effects this religion-state had on both religion and politics. First, religion was secularized, routinized, and corrupted due to its excessive intervention in politics. Eventually, it met Luther's (1483–1546) Reformation. Roman papal Catholicism destroyed primitive Christianity. Since politics was subordinate to this secularized church, kings were devoted to the struggle against the church to escape from its fetters and ended up with neglecting the political ideal of promoting national interests and the welfare of people.

## 2. State-Religion

State-religion is a system completely opposite to religion-state, a

system in which politics interferes with religion. The feature of this system is that the state recognizes religion as an object of its direct administrative control and sets up a special institution or organization to supervise, govern, and interfere with religion. Therefore, on the one hand, since the will of the sovereign of the state, i.e., kings and emperors, is indeed the law of the church, the inner affairs of the church cannot be carried out without their approval. On the other hand, the state patronizes the religion that it accepts as the state-religion and forces people to follow that religion.

This system of state-religion arises when autocracy makes use of religion in its ruling policy. The East Roman Empire in late ancient period and the Frankish Empire (481–843) in early medieval period are two examples of this system. Ever since Emperor Constantinus (r. 306–337), the East Roman Empire had granted numerous privileges to the Christian church, and at the same time, meddled with the ecclesiastical affairs, taking away the independence and freedom of church and trying to take advantage of religion for the policy to unify the empire. As for the Frankish Empire, when Emperor Clovis (r. 481–511) founded a new empire, he believed that imposing the sole religion on its people would be the best way to win their minds. The Christian church, the state-religion of the aforementioned two empires, pandered to the imperial religious policy to expand its congregation. However, this system of state-religion had inflicted harmful influences on both religion and politics more than the system of religion-state. The state deprives its people of the freedom of the choice of their own religions by forcing the state-religion on them. It purges heathens from public posts and punishes them. This is the state's tyranny that arises from this state-religion system. On the other hand, religion receives humiliating interference from the state, being deceived by the privileges given by the state. Therefore, religion cannot fulfill its original mission as religion, just ending up with being a servant of the state authority.

### 3. Officially-Recognized Religion

The system of the officially-recognized religion represents the relationship between religion and politics that appears in the transition from the period of state-religion to that of the separation between religion and politics. The state grants its people the freedom of the choice of their own religions. It officially recognizes only one religion or one denomination of the religion that has a certain historical relationship and treats that religion or denomination differently from others. This system is not different from that of state-religion in that the state supervises the recognized religion and grants privileges. The ruler of the state is mostly the head of the officially approved religion. The state appoints ecclesiastics and pays their salaries from the state's coffers. The ecclesiastical affairs of the recognized religion are regarded as part of the state affairs. However, the state in this system, unlike the case of the state-religion or the religion-state system, does not suppress other religions by branding them as heresy; neither does it persecute the followers of those religions. In this regard, the system of the officially recognized religion is close to that of the separation between religion and politics, which is based on the principle of the freedom of the choice of religion.

This system of the recognition of a religion arose when there appeared the ideas of liberalism and religious tolerance that criticized the unity between religion and politics, seen in the religion-state and state-religion systems, for its harmful effects. However, the system of the recognized religion was in fact an anomaly that shed just a half of the old shell. Many countries of the early modern Europe adopted this system due to the force of tradition before they separated religion and politics. One representative example of this system is the British monarch's recognition of the Church of England. However, history did not allow such an in-between for long. As long as the principle of the freedom of the choice of religion was established, discerning between the recognized religion and other religions would contradict

and even deny this principle. The harmful effects that both religion and politics had to face as a result of the privileged and controlled status of the recognized religion could not be alleviated by such an incomplete approval of the freedom of the choice of religion. Therefore, as the recognized-religion system revealed the self-contradiction, the historical movement in regard to the relationship between religion and politics advanced toward the system of the complete separation of the two.

#### 4. Separation of Religion and Politics

The system of the separation between religion and politics aims at thoroughly carrying out the principle of the freedom of religious belief. This is the system that many advanced countries of modern times have adopted. In this system, the state treats all religions equally in its sovereignty and absolutely avoids interfering with the internal affairs of religions, allowing them to independently govern themselves. The equal opportunity [in mission] and the independence of the churches [from the politics] are the features of this system. The choice of religion is the freedom related to original human rights. It is not something to be granted by the state's approval. Therefore, the state cannot judge what is right and wrong regarding religions.

It is just natural that the state abolishes any discrimination among religions. It is also natural that as long as there is this freedom of religious faith, a church, i.e., an ecclesiastical institution established in a certain religion, governs its own organization and administrative affairs independently. As a matter of course, the independence of the church is constrained under the state's supervision over religion. However, the state's supervision is nothing but a general administrative action by the state toward any organizations, private and corporate, in its sovereign land, to preserve the public welfare and social order, as well as to guarantee the universal observance of the state law. This supervision, therefore, is not something that can

be confused with the interference of the state with the ecclesiastical affairs in the system of the state-religion or recognized religion. Since all parts of the society have organic relationships with each other, it is natural that there are some interactions between religion and politics. However, normal interaction is possible in this system with the state's supervision that is defined above. The state's supervision here should never violate the independence of the church.

This system of the separation between religion and politics is stipulated in the constitutions of many countries of the world, starting with the U.S. The system cleans up all harmful effects of the interference between religion and politics that human civilization has experienced as it went through the three stages of religion-state, state-religion, and recognized religion. We will not discuss the situation of this separation in all countries. I simply would like to point out the fact that the separation between religion and politics has been established as a general trend of modern times in the relationship between these two fields.

## Chapter 3

### Temple Ordinance and Korean Buddhism

Thus far, we have overviewed some different forms of the interaction between religion and politics that have occurred in the history of human kind. As a result of this overview, we can see how anachronistic the relationship between Korean Buddhism and politics, i.e, Temple Ordinance and Korean Buddhism is. The Temple Ordinance and its enforcement-regulations interfere with all the ecclesiastical affairs of Korean Buddhism and thus totally deny its independence. All internal affairs of Korean Buddhism, including the enforcement of the Korean temples' rules and regulations, the appointment and dismissal of abbots, the management of temple properties, and the organization of temples, are in the hands of political authorities. Indeed, every bit of reform movement of Korean Buddhism can be made only with the approval of the government authorities.

The relationship between religion and politics in Korea belongs to neither the system of state-religion nor the recognized religion. However, the state's interference with Korean Buddhism is not different from that of the system of state-religion or recognized religion. The details of the state's interference are exactly identical to those of state-religion system. The state's discrimination is also similar with that of the recognized-religion system in that the state interfered only with Korean Buddhism, not other religions in Korea. However, the state's interference with Korean Buddhism is very unique. Such type of interference is not found in the state-religion or recognized-religion system in that Korean Buddhism is discriminated without receiving any privileged treatment from the state.

As Korean Buddhism suffers from the state interference, it

declines day by day. It is impossible to enumerate each and every case in which the harmful effects of the state's interference with religion, as we see in recent history, hinder the normal development of Korean Buddhism. I would like to point out two or three important ones.

## 1. Harmful Effects Regarding the Appointment and Dismissal of the Abbots

According to the Temple Ordinance and its enforcement-regulations, the representatives of the Korean temples are abbots (Temple Ordinance, article 4). The appointment procedure of an abbot is regulated in the temple law which is approved by the governor-general of Korea (enforcement-regulations, article 1; Temple Ordinance, article 3). An abbot is appointed and dismissed with the approval of the governor-general or local magistrate (enforcement-regulations, articles 2 and 5).<sup>2</sup> The power of the abbot, appointed by government, is restricted only by that political authority. Therefore, it is natural that the abbot dictates all ecclesiastical administrative affairs and even may ignore the agreed opinion of the community. The abbot pays his attention only to political authorities. Even if there is an abbot who dares to carry out an action that can inflict the fatal harm on the entire Korean Buddhist community, the community, under the current situation, cannot arise in unison to repel this betraying action. Even if it does so, it has no actual power to sanction this abbot. Therefore, the abbots of the Korean temples in the present times are despotic.

Since political authorities control the sacred positions of the ecclesia that take charge in protecting the temples and spreading the teachings, the positions inevitably have become secularized and involved in abbots' pursuit of various benefits. The abbots are bureaucratized while the temples become arenas of the struggle for the abbotship that is tied with various secular benefits. Human nature is originally weak. Usually, the poor and inadequate system

makes the weak human personality mean and vulgar. Those who hold or will assume these sacred ecclesiastic positions commit many ugly actions that are even unimaginable. For example, they deceive people and flatter political authorities regarding the issue of the appointment or dismissal of the abbots.

## 2. Harmful Effects on the Temple System

The current Korean temples are organized according to the head and branch temple system. Thirty temples (now, thirty-one temples), listed under the Temple Ordinance (article 2, clause 1), are the head temples while the others are branch temples, each of which is assigned to one of the head temples. The relationship of the head and branch temples is regulated in the temple laws (Temple Ordinance, article 4). However, all thirty-one head temples<sup>3</sup> are independent from one another and there is no organization, other than the supervision of political authorities, that has actual power to control them. There were Joint Office of the Thirty-Head Temples (Samsip bonsan yeonhap samuso)<sup>4</sup> and Incorporated Foundation Central Administration Bureau (Jungang gyomuwon)<sup>5</sup> that had managed a part of administrative affairs of all thirty temples. However, these two were not the unified organizations in nature that could control the systematic activities of the entire Korean Buddhist community in that the former was nothing but a liaison office of the head temples while the latter was simply a managing office of the incorporated foundation.

In order to set up a unified organization which the Korean Buddhist community had lacked, Korean monks throughout the peninsula recently held a conference and established and proclaimed Saṃgha Constitution (Jongheon), namely the constitution of the unitary ecclesiastic institute, vowing in the name of the Buddha. As a result, the Saṃgha Assembly (Jonghoe) and the Central Administration Bureau of the Seon and Gyo Schools (Seon-Gyo yangjong jungang gyomuwon) were established as a legislative and an

executive organ, respectively. However, the thorough enforcement of the constitution has been hindered by the existing institutional system of the Korean temples which are divided into thirty-one pieces and dictated by the abbots who have no restrictions except from the government. In general, the control [system of any institution] absolutely requires the firm punishment of the acts of deviation and insubordination. Since this constitution-based unitary organization is deprived of its right of punishment by political authorities, it is rather natural that the organization cannot play its controlling role.

### 3. Harmful Effects Regarding the Disposal of Temple Properties

Article 5 of the Temple Ordinance regulates that all temple properties, including land and forest, cannot be disposed of without the approval of the governor-general. This regulation about the disposal of temple properties is indeed strange. It is hard to know why the regulation is set up. Monks have collected temple properties as expenses and provisions in generations to spread the teachings of Korean Buddhism. Why should there be interference in disposing of these pure properties for spreading the teachings? Should Korean monks not be the ones who freely manage and run those properties according to the will of their ancestors who gathered and inherited the properties?

Let us now stop discussing the unknown reason of the interference and instead look at the results of that interference! First, the cumbersome and harmful condition of approval hinders the management of the properties that can be used for edifying activities in case of emergency. When emergency situations such as natural disasters demand the urgent relief activities of the organizations in charge, Korean Buddhism cannot perform such activities as a legitimate institutional organ due to the difficulty in managing its own properties that serve as a huge financial source. In recent years, Korean people faced several disasters, for example, flood, drought,

and warfares. Even though it witnessed a national scale of disasters, Korean Buddhism could not carry out the relief activities up to its capability. This was not simply because it lacked sincerity.

Second, the supervision of the government appears precise in format, but in fact is loose in contents. The government often explains that temple properties have not been much wasted thanks to article 5 of the Temple Ordinance. However, according to recent statistics, the total debt of all Korean temples amounts to more than 1,000,000 won. The government cannot be as well-versed in temple affairs as monks. If an authoritative central unitary organization of monks controlled the finance of all Korean temples and supervised their accounts, there would not be such a huge debt.

Third, in response to the due request for the management of temple properties, the government often rejects it with an irrational reason. The government attitude toward the 400,000 won capital increase of the incorporated foundation is one famous example. The increase is absolutely necessary to maintain the current conditions of the projects which have been carried out [by the Central Administration Bureau]. The Council of Samgha Assembly (Pyeonguihoe jonghoe) resolved this increase. All head temples, except a few that intentionally objected the increase or quarreled over dividend, went further to agree to pay the share. However, the government reportedly refuses to grant the permission for the use of the properties worth of this increase to the head temples that agreed on the payment. Speaking of the reasons for the refusal, the government says that it did not approve 400,000 won increase because local temples have excessive debt. If the increase has not been approved yet, it should be. If the debt of local temples is too much, the way to clear it will be sought separately. How come the ongoing project can be ceased because of the general debt [of Korean temples]? Since the *raison d'être* of temple properties is for edifying projects, the government's refusal is indeed irrational.

## Chapter 4

### Conclusion

We can see from the above explanation that the current degeneration of Korean Buddhism under the Temple Ordinance is not accidental. The Temple Ordinance secularizes the sacred positions, hinders the unity of ecclesiastical administration, and makes the management of temple properties for edifying activities difficult. Therefore, it runs contrary to the modern relationship between religion and politics in many countries in the world. Under the Temple Ordinance, the future of Korean Buddhism cannot be planned; nor can its reform be sought for. Whether or not the ordinance is abolished depends on the government. However, we cannot but cry for the need of its abolishment and make the government authorities reflect on the situation.

The separation between religion and politics! It is a crucial matter that will determine the life and death of Korean Buddhism.

## Notes

- \* This article was published in the *Bulgyo* 佛教 [Buddhism] 100 (October 1932).
- 1 Sachallyeong 寺刹令 (Temple Ordinance) was issued in 1911 with seven articles and enforcement-regulations. With the Temple Ordinance that introduced the head-branch system, the Government-General's Office of Korea came to have a full control over the Korean Buddhist community.
  - 2 The appointment and dismissal of the head temple abbots were decided by the governor-general while those of the branch-temple abbots, by the local magistrate in the region where the temple was located.
  - 3 Hwaomsa 華嚴寺 Temple was added to the original thirty head temples in 1924, making the number of the head temples thirty-one.
  - 4 Samsip bonsan yeonhap samuso 三十本山聯合事務所 (Joint Office of Thirty Head Temples) was a central Buddhist office in the early colonial period. It was established in 1915 and, in 1922, replaced by Joseon Bulgyo jungang gyomuwon 朝鮮佛教中央教務院 (Central Administration Bureau of Korean Buddhism). The first head of the office was Kang Daeryeon 姜大蓮 (1875–1942).
  - 5 Jungang gyomuwon 中央教務院 (Central Administration Bureau) or Joseon Bulgyo jungang gyomuwon was established as a central organization in 1922. It competed with the Joseon Bulgyo chongmuwon 朝鮮佛教總務院 (General Bureau of Korean Buddhism), which was led by young nationalist monks and later absorbed into the Gyomuwon.

## Glossary

*gongingyo juui* 公認教主義

*gukgyo juui* 國教主義

*gyoguk juui* 教國主義

*jeonggyo bulli juui* 政教分離主義

Pyeonguihoe jonghoe 評議會宗會






# FOUNDATIONS AND ERRORS OF ANTI-RELIGION MOVEMENT\*

Heo Yeongho

Chapter 1 Introduction

Chapter 2 Origination of Primitive People's Religion

Chapter 3 Meaning of Religion





## Chapter 1

### Introduction

The phrase “God doesn’t exist” can never provide a rationale for anti-religious arguments. The phrase “Religion is the opium [of the people]”<sup>1</sup> can never explain the necessity of anti-religious movements.

These days, even elementary school students do not believe in the existence of God. Even progressive Christians do not believe in the physical existence of God. In his theory of religion, Ludwig Feuerbach (1804–1872) used the cliché that people created God in the image of themselves as a basis of his anti-religious arguments. He was far ahead of the times. Analyzing the word “*religio*”<sup>2</sup> and concluding [human beings] as a basis for the formation of religion show [his] shallow experience and therefore cannot be a rational conclusion. There is an argument that church or temple supports and admires capitalism and spreads the poison which paralyzes the consciousness of proletariats. Such an argument simply expresses [the arguer’s] emotional hatred [toward religion]. It definitely does not come out of the theory that can regulate and guide human life. The assertion that church and temple exploit the mass for their daily goods cannot serve as an inevitable reason to deny religion. Even the degeneration of monks and the corruption of church cannot be a ground for denying religion.

Some say that Karl Marx’ (1818–1883) theory of religion targets not the ideological forms, such as the essence of religion, but the flaws and wrongdoings of its institutions and ecclesiastic systems. They might be right! Anti-religion theorists, however, agree that the current theories of anti-religion are not limited to this point at all. Since they speak of the origin of religion, dealing with topics, such as the magicality of things or the reflection of production modes,

they surely criticize the essential nature of “religion as demanded [by people],” not simply focusing on “religion as institution.” Furthermore, [critics of religion] espouse the proposition that the criticism of religion is the premise of all criticisms. Therefore, the objection to “religion as institution” faces self-contradiction. As a matter of course, the criticism of “religion as institution” logically subordinates the criticism of the essential nature of religion. From the so-called dialectical standpoint, this argument is also based on the judgment of feasibility.

If so, the criticism of “religion as institution” inevitably expects the criticism of “religion as [human] essence.” I admit that this criticism takes its object within a due limitation. However, it is needless to say that a proper understanding of its limitation does not necessarily guarantee that its research theory, along with its outcome, is proper as well. Generally speaking, in order to discuss and properly recognize a certain phenomenal appearance, as well as to understand the reality of life which is connected to that appearance, one should properly recognize or understand not only the limitation of a given phenomenal appearance but also its fragmentary nature in the whole aspect of life and the whole image of the society.

Can it be said that the theories of anti-religion that circulate now have gone through such a logical and critical process?

## Chapter 2

# Origination of Primitive People's Religion

Not to mention the French sociologist Auguste Comte's (1798–1857) words, it is undeniable that the history of human civilization went through a period of mythology or a mythological age in its earlier stage. I will not question whether this was due to the lack of [earlier] human beings' knowledge, in particular, scientific knowledge, or the immaturity of their philosophical contemplation. Nonetheless, it is inevitable to recognize the fact that the life of those people was immersed and developed in the mythological ambience regardless of [the reasons why] they wanted to create mythologies or show their ignorance. Then, why did they live such a life? Of course, [their mythological life] came from their wrong explanations and interpretations of natural phenomena or life experiences. Their knowledge was too narrow and limited. Their limited knowledge and experience were too poor to properly explain and interpret new life experiences that they faced every day. Therefore, a certain hypothesis should be regarded as valid and applied to explain life experiences and organize the society until it turned out wrong with a new phenomenon. Many scholars who are devoted to this new scholarly field have presented scores of definitions of the primitive meaning of religion. However, speaking of religion, a particular religion was a view of life and the world in a certain period of time. It was a principle and fundamental basis of life of people in that time period. Whether it was a totem, fetish, or shaman, there was nothing that did not constitute the fundamental basis of their view of life.

[The attempt] to religiously define their lives with such abstract words as animism, nature worship, sun worship, monotheism, or polytheism does not come from the proper understanding of their

lives as a whole. It is true that people in the primitive times were not as intelligent as those in modern days. However, regardless of their knowledge, they always organized their lives in a proper order consciously or unconsciously. In other words, they had their own view of life, society, and the universe. It is unnecessary to ask whether their thought was right, consistent, and thorough. People in modern times define the phenomena that came out of primitive people's practical view of life as their religion, and, more abstractly, as their religious life. However, for those in the primitive times, these phenomena were not something abstract that were alienated from their lives.

Therefore, the so-called their religion was their life principle that was induced from their life experiences. It was also their interpretation of their lives, as well as one of their expressions that were connected to their whole lives. Thus, their assumption of gods and ghosts in fact arose from the practical need of a unifier, a creator, or the absolute that was dormant deep in their inner or outer basis. Hence, to take pride in rather a little expansion of knowledge and experience and deride the religion of a certain tribe as something delusional that came from ignorance is not a right attitude for understanding their culture in the so-called scientific way. Whether it is a totem or taboo, [their religion] is not something grotesque. It was rather an inevitable phenomenon that arose from the need of their lives.

## Chapter 3

### Meaning of Religion

As a matter of course, although [their religion] is an inevitable phenomenon that arose from the need of their lives, its validity cannot be demonstrated until the magicality of things was affirmed. In other words, if the magicality of things that they believed is not scientifically confirmed, it is needless to say that the so-called their religion was a wrong knowledge and life [principle] whether it came from their ignorance, fear, or misunderstanding. Therefore, though their religion emerged from the need of their lives, it is simply not right if it was based on some wrong foundations, assuming wrong objects as right ones, whether inevitable phenomena or not. Then, in the history of human beings, there was a ceaseless process in which people overthrew and destroyed old cultures and re-created and built new cultures. The transition from primitive religions to advanced ones that is explained in the studies of religion reflects this process.

Nowadays, theorists of anti-religion examine primitive religions and connect [what they have discovered] to advanced religions. They also forcefully apply a criticism of a certain religion, which developed in a specific time period within the life experience of a specific tribe or a specific ethnic group, to a religion in a totally different time and place. They do not recognize the spatial differences of human cultures, as well as the historical process of the development of human life. Thus, they are simply wrong and do not provide any true criticism [of religion]. How can one say that those anti-religion theorists do not commit these errors? Without any reflection, they use their criticism of animism as a weapon to criticize modern religions. Without any hesitation, they also take their examination of theism as a principle to criticize modern religions. Their such attitude

cannot be regarded as proper in criticizing religion. As a matter of course, I am not saying that there is no religious phenomenon that is easy to be attacked or opposed with this weapon or principle. There are some applicable religious phenomena. However, that weapon or principle cannot be applied to religion in general. Our criticism should first have a sufficient and thorough understanding of its target. Otherwise, it often goes in vain, deviating from the focus.

The theory of the magicality of things can be applied to the affirmation of that magicality. It can never be applied to the theory that denies the negation of the magicality. The theory that speaks of [religion with] the mode of production accepts this magicality of things. However, it cannot be said that the development of religion necessarily parallels that of the mode of production. Of course, I am not saying that the relationship between economic system and religion is not important in the origins and contents of religion. However, that relationship is not the only reason or midwife. The Buddha or Jesus was not completely independent of the politics and economy of their time. Furthermore, I understand that the politics of their time had a significant influence on their religious claims. However, I cannot but accept the fact that the Buddha and Jesus had too great personality to explain them away with the politics. Of course, I am not saying this in order to persuade people to believe such a magical theory that human beings are different from each other. There is a saying that a thing which remains the same in the same circumstance or condition generates the same result. I do not want to take this saying as a foundation for my argument without any reflection. A phenomenon that produces the same result under the same condition can hardly be found in the real world except the phenomenon that human beings create in a laboratory. As mentioned earlier, I have no intention to acquiesce that a certain magical mystery inherently causes a hierarchy among human beings. I believe that there is a cause and condition that make innate and acquired differences. I do not think that even though our knowledge is simply not sufficient enough to understand [the cause and condition], there

are such differences randomly and mysteriously.

However, human beings have the physiologically-limited capability and live their lives with limited experiences while they wander around with the limitless ignorant desire. Limitless and yet ignorant desire attempts to go beyond the limit of life experiences. As long as the limit of human life experiences is fixed, human beings could control the wild eruption of their limitless desire, recognizing their limitation. However, every human being has a different limit of experiences. This causes confusion with more disconcerting theories as well as tensions with disrupted life. Such confusion and tensions indicate that human beings cannot orderly [uniformly] organize their own life. This disorder is based on different ways or modes of life rather than limitless ignorant desire. The different ways or modes of life, i.e., the limits of experiences, generate various differences in the object or ideal of life, which in turn produce diverse emotions of life. It can never be denied that the differences in life emotions, which the humankind has acquired through a long process, cause the differences in each human being's life, regardless of the scientific demonstration that relies on simulations or experiments. Some may say that a society or nature is needed to remove such differences. However, it is one of the most impossible things. Even if there is a possibility, it could not be made possible in the near future. We should always take the given situation into our consideration.

All human beings have limited experiences of life. Therefore, those who have less experiences of life need to learn the life-view of those who have more. It is needless to say more that this is one of the important aspects in the method of human education. However, it cannot be said that those who live, experience, and get educated under the same condition have the same result. If people have the similar tendency, they should live under the exactly same condition. If people live under different conditions, it is natural that they will have different emotions and ideals of life. If we don't accept that their life emotions and ideals are different, it is needless to say that their views and interpretations of life are different because those views and

interpretations are based on their lives.

The extreme form of objective observation seeks for the origin of religion from not human beings' lives themselves but from their objects. This observation discovers magical existences that are alienated from the need of life, but ignores the necessity that touches the essence of human life. Most of the criticisms of religion, focusing on the examination of the objects, make the same mistake. Religion is not something that originated simply from the human ignorance or fear of the outside world. It arose for the sake of human beings' happiness. Of course, for their own happiness, they feared dangerous existences or acknowledged the magical ability of things from their shallow experience of life. However, if one asks people, who live in the time that defeats such fear or ignorance, about whether they have religion, they will answer that it is an original form of the ideal life which develops with their view of life prioritizing their own happiness.

If so, even though the magicality of things is denied, the existence of God is denied, and one aspect of life experience is abandoned, religion will not be rejected as long as human desire for their happiness in life is not rejected. Even if the modes of religion are negated or the doctrines of religion are transformed from a scientific perspective, human beings will have religion until they thoroughly understand themselves with their own ability, i.e., until they become a buddha.

(I am sending this article as an introduction. I originally intended to write concretely. However, because of the limited time, I have only managed to write this [short piece]. I could not even mention anything regarding the title of this article. I hope you understand that I avoid the responsibility [to write a complete article] with this one, intending to do so next time.)

## Notes


- \* This article was published in the *Bulgyo* [Buddhism] 100 (October 1932).
- 1 “Religion is the opium of the people” is probably the most frequently paraphrased statement of German philosopher Karl Marx on religion. This statement originates from the introduction of his work, “A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right.” The introduction was published in 1844.
- 2 The Latin term “*religio*” is the origin of the modern English term “religion.”





# EXAMINING THE CAUSES OF KOREAN BUDDHISM FACING A CRISIS\*

Mong Jeongsaeng

- Chapter 1 Introduction
  - Chapter 2 The Causes of a Crisis
  - Chapter 3 The Outer Disruptions
  - Chapter 4 The Inner Poisons
  - Chapter 5 The Poison of Abbot
  - Chapter 6 The Poison of Taking Wife
  - Chapter 7 Conclusion
- 



## Chapter 1 Introduction

People say and write that Korean Buddhism is in a crisis. Although some launch a revival movement, it is said that Korean Buddhism is reaching a state of despair as the crisis is coming closer every second at an accelerating rate.

Looking back, however shallow my faith and knowledge are, I cannot but shed a drop of blood tear. Then, how huge regret my dharma-brothers who possess a burning spirit of martyrdom must have! Will Korean Buddhism that has a long history disappear from this land with the pitiful tears of many people who worry Korean Buddhism? The dire situation makes everyone hesitate to say “No.”

According to outside comments, the central foundation will be closed this or next year. The council, which was held last spring, reported that the foundation had 30,000 won, deducting 90,000 won of debt from 120,000 won of reserve money. The Gangneung region land, the largest among the land purchased with the first category of money, was encumbered by a bank. All temples did not pay the second category of money while managing transfer land that totaled 170,000 won. Therefore, [land documents] were just useless papers until the final measure was taken. 400,000 won of capital increase, along with approximately 30,000 won of unprocessed money, was also a source of trouble. 85,000 won of yearly transfer money was the same as the transfer land. Although the delinquent money of 70,000 won for the second category was resolved to return as yearly repayment, August, the dead line for that year, has already passed.

If this year continues this way, the debt will be 230,000 won. If the reserve cash is used up, there will be no way but to close the foundation until the central institute worth 120,000 won is

encumbered. This is the proof in number that the central foundation is in a crisis.

If the foundation is to escape this crisis, there is no way but to rely on the last resort to forcefully collect money to pay for transfer land, yearly repayment, and delinquent money for the second category. Even if this is possible, it is not difficult to guess how much money will be actually left for the foundation, excluding the temples that cannot afford to pay the unprocessed money. Even for the temples that can respond to that last resort, it is still problematic to make those local temples go bankrupt for the central foundation's work because it is questionable for us as a religious person with moral consciousness to tolerate such a [selfish] act.

As discussed thus far, nobody can deny the fact that the central foundation is in a crisis.

Then, how is the situation in local institutions? How many temples are there without debt or conflict? The fundamental cause of the crisis in the central institute originates from that of local institutes. The temples that have the worst financial contribution to the central foundation are in fact in a serious financial crisis. Such examples are Woljeongsa, Jeondeungsa, Boseoksa, Wibongsa, Haeinsa, Paeyeopsa, Yeongmyeongsa, and Yujeomsa. Although it is not certain, there is a hearsay that Yongjusa Temple also has more debt than its total property. There are some exceptional temples that have no record of contribution, showing their reactionary nature. However, largely speaking, the crises in the central and local institutes share the same root.

It is true that both the center and the local are experiencing the period of near- financial collapse.

How about the religious aspect? Regardless of material appearance, how many devout followers are there in the central and local institutes? Leaving aside lay followers, just look at the religious life of Buddhist clerics themselves! Can you not sweat out of embarrassment? What else could bring the collapse of temple economy except the degeneration of the religious life of Buddhist

clerics? The degeneration of the religious life is a bigger crisis than the collapse of the economy!

With such situations in both religious life and economy, how can anyone deny the crisis of Korean Buddhism? How can anyone guarantee that the sacred light will not disappear in the near future?

Alas! Will Korean Buddhism truly perish? Many concerned people cannot but shudder at the expectation of the collapse of Korean Buddhism in the near future. The collapse of Korean Buddhism will be nothing but six thousand clerics' suicide, as well as the destruction of twenty million fellow Koreans. Furthermore, it will be the loss of one facet of the global culture.

Facing this crisis, should we sit on our hands or just deplore? Out of regret, we should at least feel the need to think about the causes of that crisis. What reason? Did it come from the inevitable nature? Or, did it come from man-made mistakes? Will any one of the two not allow our resistance? Can we fortunately avoid [the impending collapse of Korean Buddhism] with our sincerity and passion? I will express my shallow opinion for many concerned people's reference.

## Chapter 2

### The Causes of a Crisis

There is no end in enumerating the causes. Many fellow dharma-brothers who are involved in education will come up with a few causes.

As for the superficial cause, the center and the local put the blame on each other. According to the center, the negligence of local Buddhist clerics in their duty is the fundamental cause that makes the central foundation face a crisis. Since the center is in a crisis, it cannot show its ability to control the local temples. Therefore, the local temples act their own way and consequently bring the financial meltdown to themselves. It is inevitable that the outer propagation-work is stalled due to such an inner situation. In other words, the cause of the current situation of Korean Buddhism lies only in the local clerics' failing in their duty.

The local says the followings: for what is the central foundation necessary? It is probably for promoting Korean Buddhism and controlling the local temples. Nonetheless, what have the ecclesiastic officials in the center done these days? They would have done fine only if they had to manage the two schools. However, they should have done more since their foundation represents Korean Buddhism. Local temples cannot carry excessive duty for feeding idle officials at the center since those temples suffer from financial distress and severe debt. If the foundation had true dignity and sincerity and did what it is supposed to do, it would thrive even though it tries not to. Under its control and supervision, local temples would also follow the path toward development. It would be financially rich and its propagation work would gradually come to fruits. In other words, the crisis in the central foundation is caused by the negligence and planlessness

of people at the central foundation. The cause of local temples' crisis also lies in the center's financial expenses and its lack of control and support.

The center has something to say about the local, and vice versa. However, the things that both mention are just superficial. Who are people at the center and local clerics? This is as if all spit at the same well. It is also like they criticize their own mistakes. In other words, the negligence of the local causes the crisis at the center while the center's incompetence serves as an indirect cause to create the crisis in the local. To put it the other way, both the center and the local are about to fail due to the insincerity of local clerics while both face the crisis due to the incompetence of people at the center.

It is just useless to put the blame on others. Let us seek for the true causes rather than the superficial ones! How come the center becomes incompetent and the local becomes insincere? It is difficult to enumerate all trivial causes. Largely speaking, there are three outer disruptions and three inner poisons. The three outer disruptions consist of the following: the two disruptions of economy and ideology that penetrate the world and the disruption of laws that is unique in Korean Buddhism.

The inner three poisons are the poisons of factional strife, abbot, and taking wife that seep into our bones.

## Chapter 3

### The Outer Disruptions

With these three poisons and three disruptions, Korean Buddhism is almost inevitably declining at an accelerating rate.

Let us analyze the outer causes!

The economic disruption! This refers to the economic recession that spreads in the world. Some say that the distant superficial cause of the Great Depression<sup>1</sup> began in the world war. Many people abandoned their livelihoods and went to battle fields themselves or engaged in manufacturing military supplies which were unnecessary for daily life. In the meanwhile, some profited from selling daily goods and loaned money! After the war, the money began to flow from the poor to the rich, the debtor to the creditor. Consequently, the economic balance has been broken. Others say that the true cause [of the recession] is the systematic fault in which the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. There are also others who mention the unlimited increase of population in the limited land, the rapid development of the machine civilization, or border problems. Since such a situation prevails the world, it is needless to say about the situation of the white-clad Korean people who fall behind from a technical perspective. The collapse of the Korean economy is not only relevant to temples. In fact, it is worse! This is the economic disruption that the almost entire world suffers.

The ideological disruption! This is the unprecedentedly huge disruption throughout human history. It is also the mistaken ideology that shakes the world. Communism and anarchism are great ideological streams that everyone knows. However, other than these, countless numbers of ideologies, addicted to materialism, are sweeping through the world. Influenced by the directly imported

Western culture, the Eastern culture has experienced tremendous changes. The white-clad people, who had taken pride in their country of gentlemen with courtesy and morality, even had no time to judge over right and wrong of foreign thoughts that came directly to the peninsula. [The country] was in a total chaos. Furthermore, the scientific civilization destroyed all of the conventional speculative wisdom. Heterodox religions that had never been said or heard were imported and various forms of new religions appeared. It is now a really complicating situation that is difficult to understand. Generally speaking, however, there are two conflicting trends: the larger one that denies religion and the smaller one that accepts religion. There are also a number of religions competing against each other.

Atheists' association and anti-religion movement are in the front line of the trend that denies religion. In fact, there are more people who think that religion is unnecessary while not being involved in anti-religion movement. They are science supremacists. Since thirty years ago, Korean Buddhism has kept transforming [itself] and adding [other elements] to adjust itself to each time, race, and personality. It is true that it will be difficult for this Korean Buddhism to satisfy the so-called modern masses with its original form.

This is what is called the ideological disruption that sweeps over the world and, in particular, is much more serious in Korea.

These two outer disruptions are related to the world and thus unavoidable. Then, what is the disruption of laws that only Korean Buddhism has? This refers to the Temple Ordinance (Sachallyeong),<sup>2</sup> temple laws, and other various temporary regulations that everyone [in Korea] is experiencing. Regardless of what the fundamental goal of the Temple Ordinance is, the government authority argues that the Temple Ordinance is enforced as a part of the policy to protect Korean Buddhism and that temple laws, other instructions, and various interferences are all for Korean Buddhism. Not only involved governmental offices but also Buddhist clerics confirm this argument. Some even praise the benefits of the Temple Ordinance. Furthermore, recently, intellectuals and young Buddhists say,

“Without the Temple Ordinance, Korean temples would have already been ruined.” I do not mean that they do not make sense at all. What they actually mean is this: even with the Temple Ordinance, there are many temples that have been almost ruined by their corrupt abbots who squander all temple property; if Buddhist clerics had sold temple land at their disposal without the Temple Ordinance, how would Korean temples be?

This is a possible misunderstanding! Compare Korean temples before the Temple Ordinance and now! Some may say that there are differences in time and people. What does this mean? Do you remember the social mistreatment and cruel political persecution [of Buddhism] during 500 years of the Yi dynasty? Korean Buddhism protected its dharma-citadel from such a mistreatment and persecution. Not to mention the time when there are favorable conditions such as religious freedom and administrative protection!

If the Temple Ordinance truly intended to protect and develop Korean Buddhism, it has deviated from its original intention. Not only that, it has in fact brought the opposite outcome of that intention and caused the disruption of laws today. It is hard to enumerate all such examples. However, let me give rather a simple one! The whole story is like this: the power to supervise temple economy was originally in the hands of all Buddhist clerics. With the Temple Ordinance, [however,] only one person has taken the power. Originally, even a piece of land and a small amount of money was not given until all clerics agreed. Although there were some corrupt persons, the monastic work was easily carried out through such a direct control! However, after the Temple Ordinance, even if all Buddhist clerics of a temple are upright and honest, if an abbot is corrupt, the entire temple can be destroyed. Even though an abbot commits significant wrongdoings, there is nothing the other clerics can do during his term. Although there is a rare occasion in which all Buddhist clerics of a temple petition to the government, spending tremendous amounts of money, and eventually succeed [in deterring their abbot's wrongdoings], it is still like administering medications

to a patient after his or her death. If [their petition] goes wrong, all Buddhist clerics of the temple could go bankrupt and encounter an unfair failure. The present situation eloquently demonstrates this.

There are not a few examples that though clerics with visions get together and make a good plan to conduct a new project, they can do nothing, bound by all kinds of laws. Cunningly abusing these laws, corrupt persons do not fulfill their own duty and try to avoid any interference from others. In other words, using the laws as a shield, they maintain their personal greedy life through various means and sly tricks. They feel comfortable with these laws even though all Korean Buddhist clerics hate them.

A certain head temple came up with a clever scheme that it would directly oversee the product of its land for branch temples' dividend because the dividend payments for the work of head and branch temples were not sufficient. Although the scheme showed much-improved results, it was cancelled because the government judged that it violated a temple law. It is said that it happened because one of the branch-temple abbots secretly lobbied the government. The reason was that it violated the law that an abbot should manage temple property. Being asked whether it was a violation of temple laws that an abbot neither fulfilled his duty nor received the supervision of its head temple, the government office answered why a temple recommended such a person as an abbot [to the government]! What is the disruption of laws if this is not one of its cases? Following that logic, there should be no law-violator among the government officials!

I do not know how many such examples are there throughout all Korean temples. A bigger problem is that clerics' spirit of self-autonomy has been completely lost. In other words, they always want to live relying on others. They even cannot fully develop their own personality and are busy using impersonal and disgraceful means to curry favor with government officials for gaining an advantage from the laws. With all of these, how could Korean Buddhism not perish?

The disruption of laws has made a great contribution to the crisis

of the central work. The duty of decision-making [of ordinary clerics on temple affairs] which is not included in the laws is simply regarded as a crazy word of a passerby. How come the issue of whether Korean Buddhism will perish or thrive becomes a complete indifference? Now is the time when the government authority admits the ravages of the disruption of laws to some degree.

The three disruptions of the outer cause can be summarized as discussed thus far. All these are the fundamental reasons that push Korean Buddhism into a crisis. Are the three disruptions invincible? Do they belong to the law of causality that we can do nothing with our sincere efforts? Unless Buddhist clerics who worry the crisis of Korean Buddhism earnestly examine the three outer disruptions and come up with countermeasures, it will be difficult to escape from this crisis.

## Chapter 4

### The Inner Poisons

The three outer disruptions are as stated above. To what extent have the three inner poisons made Korean Buddhism fall into a crisis which is difficult to get back up again?

Let us examine the poison of factional strife! The five-thousand years of Korean history began and ended with factional strife. Since interracial or international strife occurs not only to Korea but also to any other races or countries in the world, it is not necessary to talk about it. However, there is no race or country in which there are more internal strifes than Korea. There is also no nation which receives more poisonous effects from those strifes than the Korean people. Not to mention the distant past, the factional strife in the five hundred years of the Yi dynasty cut right to the bone so that everyone cannot forget, though wishing to do so. Did the religious strife between Buddhism and Confucianism not destroy the lofty culture of the East [that inherited from the time] of the Three Kingdoms? Did the political strife of Southerners (Namin) and Northerners (Bugin), along with the Old Doctrine faction (Noron) and the Young Doctrine faction (Sorun),<sup>3</sup> not give away what the Korean people possessed to others? Is each and every one of more than twenty-million white-clad Korean people not experiencing the retribution of this factional strife?

The retribution of the factional strife! Although we are convulsed just at the thought of it, our life after subjugation begins and ends with factional strife probably because we inherently have such an inherited element. Whatever an organization was, it perished because of this poison of factional strife. Look at the current situation in which there is no organization that can represent the Korean

people! How much does it eloquently show the poison of factional strife? Since there is nothing that even causes a big factional strife these days, family discords make the third page [i.e. society page] of newspapers every day.

How deplorable it is that the poison of factional strife demonstrates the law of heredity even in the Buddhist community which adopts no-self and compassion as its tenet!

Look! First, the factional strife in local regions! Second, the factional strife between head and branch temples! Third, the factional strife among the clerics in a temple! Fourth, the factional strife regarding abbotship in a temple community! Indeed, the Buddhist community as a whole turns into a total mess due to the poison of factional strife. The factional strife in local regions destroy the unification of the whole; the factional strife between head and branch temples makes not only the work in local regions impossible, but also the temples in the same parish hostile to each other; the factional strife in a temple community not only destroys the temple where the community belongs, but also makes the losing part expelled from the cleric register and the temple. What is worse is that fellow Buddhist clerics from the same temple community criticize each other without cause by slandering, peaching, and plotting against each other to become an abbot. This is really sickening and laughable! The strife between the old and the young [factions] has already become an antique.

Who are the third parties that gain benefits from some twenty years of this factional strife? Most of 1,000,000 won of debt is the product of the poison of factional strife. The winners of the strife face this while the losers are in a situation too miserable to look at. The debt alone is 1,000,000 won without a single monk who lives comfortably. Who will receive or has received the retribution of the poison of factional strife? It is needless to say about the ravages of this poison since everyone has been experiencing it.

Until the antidote for the poison of this factional strife is invented, the crisis of Korean Buddhism is inevitable. Although

many people who worry Korean Buddhism roar in anger and rush here and there, their efforts become completely useless like an act of running around to remove the smoke without extinguishing the source of fire.

## Chapter 5

### The Poison of Abbot

The poison of abbot has been cried out several times to satiety. Anyway, when abbotship was established, Korean Buddhism took a step toward a crisis. Abbotship has created the fundamental cause of factional strife. The factional strife surrounding abbotship has turned the sacred Buddhist order into a total mayhem. Any clerics who have experienced the monastic life would shudder at the bitter memory of the past. Abbots are creators of factional strife. If this abbotship is not reformed, however hard you cry for self-awareness movement, factional strife will not be eradicated. Why do [Buddhist clerics] forget their duty as clerics and strive for abbotship that incurs resentment? It is unnecessary to say that this is because of its despotic power. This despotic power is really what those who seek for fame and profit yearn for. An abbot would be the monarch of a temple. The entire temple property is his private possession and all clerics are his servants. He can dispose the entire property as he pleases. When he is displeased with someone in the temple, he can expel that person from the temple or even the Korean Buddhist order. There is neither a head lecturer nor a Seon or senior master before him. People probably even make an elaborate plan to obtain such despotic power. Once they are elected, they do whatever it takes to maintain their abbotship. If they think it necessary, they could spend a huge sum of temple property as a bribe. If the situation is unfavorable, they are willing to play servant for related government officials. There are even not a few cases that these abbots dared to falsely accuse their opponents to eliminate them. How could Korean Buddhism not perish? Abbotship is really a source of all evils.

It is a cancer of Korean Buddhism. Speaking of the unity of

Korean Buddhism without taking any action to the despotic power of abbots is like a house made of paper on top of an active volcano. Abbots take an instruction of a manager at the central office much more lightly than a passing remark of a staff at a branch office. Government officials are the only ones who can deal with abbots. This is because these abbots should absolutely obey their superiors' instructions by rule.

It would be fortunate if the poison of abbot just stopped here. However, there is more despicable poison. This is the poison of secularization. Find out how many monks are there who still maintain their virtues after serving as an abbot two or three times! This is like falling into hell alive! However lofty virtues they possess before they take abbotship, once they arise to the position of an abbot, they become a target of the anger of the clerics in the temple. When those abbots step down, they cannot even recognize where they stand. Since the temple in which they grow up, building relations, change into an enemy camp, they cannot but leave the temple as if fleeing from it. Where are they headed? Returning to laity! Or there is no place to go but a private shrine. Those who had a significant respect from the temple community became an abbot. [Renowned monks] were appointed as an abbot one by one according to their virtue, starting from the most outstanding one who excelled in both wisdom and virtue. As they were made to commit various evil actions, they were finally expelled. The abbotship should be called the system of making clerics swindlers. Compare before and after the great masters who constantly worked as a representative for Korean Buddhism become an abbot! How many cases are there which make you shed tears of pity? If the abbotship continues to exist this way, there will be no cleric who acts like a cleric and all will become secularized in about ten years. What else is abbotship nothing other than the machine that turns clerics into swindlers?

To put this in a word, abbots destroy first their temple and next themselves. Nonetheless, as people eagerly desire to obtain an abbotship like butterflies rushing toward a lamp in the fall, Korean

Buddhism is pushed toward the brink of destruction from moment to moment.

Most of abbots' evil actions come from the irrationality of the system. When ordinary monks who are not an exceptionally virtuous master take the position of an abbot, they naturally fall into the path of corruption as if they are fooled by an evil spirit. Abbotship is a vicious plague. Once catching this plague, a head lecturer gets secularized and a Seon master becomes an ordinary person. All dharma colleagues know the actual cases of this. This is extremely deplorable! Planning a campaign to reestablish Korean Buddhism before the poison of abbot is removed is just like applying an ointment to a cancerous tumor.

## Chapter 6

### The Poison of Taking Wife

The poison of taking wife demands the closest investigation among the three inner poisons.

The poisons of factional strife and abbot have been investigated several times. However, this is the first discussion on paper regarding the poison of taking wife. There are probably not a small number of Buddhist clerics who are troubled by the poison of taking wife. There are also many clerics who think about what influences the practice of taking wife have on the Buddhist order.

Leaving aside a question of whether clerical marriage is possible regarding Buddhist precepts, let us first examine its causal relationship with the current crisis of Korean Buddhism!

Whether old or young, many Buddhist clerics begin taking wife. This is probably called the nature from the human instinct! Having no time to discuss whether taking wife is proper, celibate monks all of a sudden start having a wife. Young monks do so out of youthful passion while old monks, for having someone who sincerely serves them! Since Buddhism was introduced to Korea, this type of violation of Buddhist precepts has never been witnessed. Clerical marriage inevitably requires money. Those who were satisfied with a bowl and a garment before cannot live without private property in addition to several bowls and garments.

Since they are originally descendants of ancient masters who regarded seeking fame and profit as something like a morning dew drop, there is no reason that they accumulate abundant private property. When they had just a bowl and a garment in the state of perfect interfusion, any building of about nine hundred temples in Korea could become their comfortable residence. However, with

their wife, they inevitably need their own residence. They now need at least four or five times more living expenses than when they were celibate. It is demonstrated as an unmistakable fact that the crisis of temple economy began with this clerical marriage.

Temples all of a sudden should feed four or five times more temple members than before. How can they handle these increased families with fixed income? Temples also have a huge amount of outside expenditures for students who go abroad, social service, and missionary work that they have never had before. These are inevitably excessive burdens for temple economy. Korean clerics did not have to care about their livelihood before. However, from the day when they took a wife, they could not but become a slave of family life. While they are in the temple, they should play a monk; when they return home, they should do their duty in the secular life. Because of various contradictions from such a double life, they eventually can serve neither as a true monk in the temple nor the sincere family head in their families. They lead an anomalous life as an in-between, being neither monk nor layman. Since they did not learn skills that make money, they cannot earn even a penny outside the temple. Since they also lose lay followers who regard clerical marriage as corrupt monks' act, they cannot expect offerings from almsgivers. They cannot wander around begging for food because they want to keep up their dignity as a monk. Therefore, those married monks have no choice but to steal something from the temple for daily supplies for their pitiful family members. This situation inevitably leads to strives over abbotship or [other] monastic positions. Losing precious conscience, they do anything to feed their families. Since clerical marriage, the sacred Buddhist community has turned into a devil of mess. The factional strife is here! The despotic abbotship is here! Corruptions are here! The future hell is not an issue for a living now. [Korean Buddhism] is in a predicament in which clerics do not care about the rise and fall of their temples, prioritizing their families or themselves if there is a means or chance. It is a natural human feeling to wish to feed wife and child with good food and dress them

in beautiful clothes. How can one resist such a feeling?

The inevitability of the collapse of temple economy can be easily found in this poison of taking wife. Planning to reestablish temple economy without solving this problem is like a house built on the sand.

The poison of taking wife affects not just the financial collapse of the temples where married monks belong. It is obvious that it also causes the decrease of the number of the clerics. Not to mention the loss of lay followers, the lethargy of reform movement, and the disappearance of eminent and virtuous masters! The harmful effects of the poison of taking wife are now overturning the ecclesiastical order from its foundation.

Some present Japanese monks as an example for denying the poison of taking wife. However, that is nothing other than the lack of awareness. They should know that there is as huge a difference between clerical marriages of Korean and Japanese monks as heaven and earth. For Japanese monks, their temples are their homes. Even just on this point, [clerical marriages of Korean and Japanese monks] are fundamentally different. In Japanese temples, almsgivers are chief financial supporters. Whether monks receive respect from those almsgivers is a matter of life and death for the monks. Therefore, Japanese monks behave prudently in everything. They protect their temples just as Korean monks protect their private residences. Japanese monks' children are their dharma-disciples. Their fortunes are their temples' fortunes. It is not that Japanese monks never have the poison of taking wife. Regardless of a sect, [however,] most of the eminent monks are celibate [in Japan]. My fellow dharma-colleagues! Whether clerical marriage corresponds to the Buddha's fundamental idea is an issue that is behind the times. However, the current situation demonstrates that it surely imposes significant harms on Korean Buddhism. The fundamental goal of Great Vehicle (Mahāyāna) Buddhism lies in removing the mind of attachment. The phrase, "entering the mundane world is going out of the mundane world; going out of the mundane world is entering the mundane world,"

refers to nothing other than unlimited actions (*muaehaeng*)! When Korean Buddhist monks enter the mundane world, they stay there forever! For Great Vehicle, they only talk about Seon meditation with their mouths. What they do is in fact pure Lesser Vehicle (Hinayāna)! They make an excuse for their transgressions by saying that they practice Great Vehicle. However, all they actually do is Lesser Vehicle. How can they even plan for the revival of Korean Buddhism?

From now on, let us return to celibacy in order to eliminate the poison of taking wife! Of course, this is laughable to everybody. Suppose that clerical marriage is forcefully banned! How many monks finish their marriages to carry on their dharma-lines? This could be a crazy word more than an empty talk. However, leaving aside the poison of taking wife, there is no hope for the revival of Korean Buddhism or our Buddhist ecclesia. There is also no hope to return to celibacy. If the latter is the absolute hopelessness, so is the former!

## Chapter 7

### Conclusion

We can see that Korean Buddhism is in a crisis, following an inevitable process. The three outer disruptions and the three inner poisons! Korean Buddhism keeps falling down a slope at an accelerating rate because of these disruptions and the three poisons.

People who worry Korean Buddhism! Since even just one disruption or poison is fearful, the three disruptions and the three poisons are like putting more burdens on an already weak horse. Should we only feel grief to ourselves in this situation? Should we be busy distributing remnants, leaving all things on inevitability? Should we become a prodigal son who gives himself up? Now, there returns the time when the sincerity of people who worry Korean Buddhism is tested!

Let us look back once again! Korean Buddhism is the source of Korean culture and the birth mother of the white-clad people. Korean Buddhism has maintained its light of wisdom despite the horrible persecution for the 500 years of the Yi dynasty. Should we bury it with our own hands today when religious freedom and equal human right are officially recognized? Unless we burn with righteous indignation of martyrdom at least once here, we will be unspeakable betrayers. We may not necessarily succeed even with righteous indignation. However, leaving aside the question of whether we succeed or not, we at least should be roused to action for the last time. We need righteous indignation more than anything else. We cannot just sit back and watch this phenomenon. The center and the local need to make one final decision together. There is a saying that when there's a will, things will be achieved. Now is the time when the Buddhists who have been nurtured with the Buddha's vast wisdom

shout out once. Being downhearted and depressed by the economic recession is something that materialists do. That is not something that we who have grown spiritually as the Buddha's descendants care about!

First, have righteous indignation and then get together under the banner of revival movement! Then, search for how to remove the three disruptions and the three poisons! If there is a gathering out of righteous indignation, it will not be very difficult to confront these disruptions and poisons.

The settling medicine against the three disruptions! The antidote against the three poisons! What on earth is this? To put it briefly, that is "seeing things as they are" (*yeosigwan*). This is the settling medicine and antidote. See the three disruptions as the three disruptions! See the three poisons as the three poisons! If we see this way, the problem will be solved. Although it is relatively easy to see the three disruptions as the three disruptions, it is really difficult to see the three poisons as the three poisons. If we see through this fact, the way toward the revival of Korean Buddhism will open naturally.

When we can completely see the disruption of economy as the disruption of economy, we will have the power of husbanding for ourselves. We will not at least launch a preposterous reconstruction project or fraudulent business. In fact, the economic disruption swipes through not only Korean Buddhism but also the entire world. Therefore, if Korean Buddhism collapses because of that disruption, the world should also collapse. Furthermore, since Korean Buddhism has a huge source of revenue, if it manages that source well, this economic disruption can be a blessing in disguise.

Just see the disruption of ideology as it is! Since Buddhism has more theoretical foundation than any other religions, it can be the only religion that can conquer the streams of modern thoughts. Although the other religions that are incomplete yet may worry about these streams, Korean Buddhism is not afraid of them. In terms of historical origin or theoretical foundation, there is nothing but Buddhism in putting together the representative thoughts of the

Korean people of the present day.

Just see the disruption of laws as it is! Firmly recognize the fact that it pushes Korean Buddhism on the brink of collapse! This recognition will surely bring an opportunity to escape the disruption of laws. It will be able to sufficiently dismiss the disruptions that other religions do not suffer. To put it another word, self-awareness it is! If seven thousand monks get together and rise up, it is not that difficult! This is why the practice of “seeing things as they are” resolves the three disruptions.

We can properly deal with the three poisons through this practice.

See the fact that the poison of abbot is a main culprit that has led Korean Buddhism to this crisis as it is! Then, naturally, the arbitrary use of power will not be exercised any more.

This can be applied better to the poison of factional strife! Just be firmly aware that this poison has destroyed the white-clad people and Buddhism! Then, the narrow or jealous mind will be removed!

The poison of taking wife is also like this! Observe the fact that if clerical marriage continues as it did, it will become an object more dangerous than a bomb that will overthrow Korean Buddhism from its foundation! Where they firmly recognize this fact, practitioners of Lesser Vehicle will return to celibacy. Even if they cannot do so, they will at least try to cultivate Great Vehicle practice. Until the ecclesiastical form of Korean Buddhism changes, those who aspire to become a great master will hesitate about clerical marriage which does not have any foundation in [clerical] life. If they cannot do anything, they will return to laity, removing their certificate of monk. In any case, just recognize that [taking wife] is one of the three poisons! Then, naturally, the mind of attachment will decrease. [If they can do so, married monks] will not embezzle temple property to maintain their marriages.

Now, you can understand why this practice of “seeing things as they are” can serve as antidote against the three poisons. Just discovering the settling medicine and antidote against the three

disruptions and the three poisons is not the path toward the revival [of Korean Buddhism]. No matter how much we Korean Buddhists do this practice of “seeing things as they are,” it is useless unless we actually carry out our work [for the revival]. For this reason, we need righteous indignation. Only the practice of “seeing things as they are” that comes from righteous indignation can truly function as a settling medicine or an antidote. My fellow Korean monks! First, arouse righteous indignation! Then, see the three disruptions and the three poisons as they are! By doing so, let us rescue our dharmacitadel that is facing a crisis! (The end.)

## Notes

- \* This article was published in the *Bulgyo* 佛教 [Buddhism] 100–101.102 (October 1932).
- 1 The Great Depression was a severe global economic recession that happened during the 1930s. The depression, which originated in the U.S. in September, 1929, had a world-wide impact, which some argue propelled Germany and Japan to wage the world war.
  - 2 Sachallyeong 寺刹令 [Temple Ordinance] was issued in 1911 with seven articles and enforcement-regulations. With Temple Ordinance that introduced the head-branch temple system, the Government-General's Office in Korea came to have a full control over the Korean Buddhist community.
  - 3 Namin 南人 (Southerners), Bugin 北人 (Northerners), Noron 老論 (Old Doctrine), and Soron 少論 (Young Doctrine) were the so-called “four factions” of the Confucian literati of the late Joseon.

## Glossary

*muaebaeng* 無礙行  
Paeyeopsa 貝葉寺  
Wibongsa 威鳳寺

*yeosigwan* 如是觀  
Yongjusa 龍珠寺



# ON THE PRINCIPAL TEACHINGS OF KOREAN BUDDHISM\*

Gim Yeongsu

- Chapter 1 The Transmission of the Lamp in Korean Buddhism
- Chapter 2 The Recovery of the Order-Name
- Chapter 3 The Principal Teachings of Jogye Seon jong
- Chapter 4 The True Meaning of “Not Establishing Words and Letters”
- Chapter 5 The Correction of the Denominational Constitution



The principal teachings of a [Buddhist] school should be complete when the school is established. The monks of the school who take refuge in and revere its principal teachings propagate and admire those teachings. They do not suddenly argue over the teachings of their school. As for our Korean Buddhism, there were seven schools, called “five doctrinal schools and two meditative traditions” (*ogyo yangjong*) from the Silla (57 BCE–935 CE) and Goryeo (918–1392) periods. Then, in the sixth year of King Sejong (r. 1418–1450) during the Joseon dynasty (1392–1910), there were only two schools of Seon (meditation) and Gyo (doctrine). Before long, the five Gyo doctrinal traditions virtually disappeared, which left only Seon school. Afterwards, Korean Buddhist monks went into the samādhi of no-thought (*munyeom sammae*), forgetting the name and principal teachings of their school. Even today, if different Japanese Buddhist schools such as Rinzai shū, Sōtō shū, Jōdo shū, and Shingon shū did not invade the Korean land and thus there were only Korean Buddhism in the peninsula, Korean monks would think it unnecessary to advocate the name and principal teachings of Korean Buddhism. When there is “you,” there appears “I.” When there are “others,” there appears “self.” If there were no “you,” the word “I” would accordingly disappear. If there were no “others,” the word “self” would accordingly disappear. We could say that because there is no “you,” the word “I” disappears and because there are no “others,” the word “self” disappears. However, this does not mean that the entities to which the words “I” and “self” refer disappear. Likewise, because the Gyo doctrinal school which served as “others” for Korean Buddhism disappeared, the name and principal teachings which indicated the existence and religious claims of Korean Buddhism, respectively, disappeared. I do not mean that Korean Buddhism as an actual entity has disappeared.

While there were no “others” for Korean Buddhism, it had no self-consciousness, forgetting its name and principal teachings. Seeing that there are other Buddhist schools which become “others” for Korean Buddhism, now is the time to advocate its name and

principal teachings. However, such claims as the two schools of Seon and Gyo or the synthetic tradition of Seon and Gyo would only draw ridicule from others.

I am not saying that we should rectify the principal teachings of Korean Buddhism or complement them. I am just saying that we should find, respect, and declare the original spirit and principal teachings that our former masters transmitted and enhanced.

However, if we are to find the original principal-teachings of our Korean Buddhism, we should first find its name. If we are to find its name, we should first explain the transmission of the lamp in Korean Buddhism. Therefore, let us explore how the lamp of Korean Buddhism was transmitted.

## Chapter 1

# The Transmission of the Lamp in Korean Buddhism

It is true that there are several different theories about the transmission of the lamp in Korean Buddhism. There is a record, “The fifth generation descendant from Boje was Buyong Yeonggwon,”<sup>1</sup> on the epitaph for the Master Samyeong (1544–1610)<sup>2</sup> at Haeinsa Temple. Judging from this record, Buyong Yeonggwon (1485–1571),<sup>3</sup> an ancestor of Korean Buddhism, was the fifth-generation descendant of Boje Naong (1320–1376)<sup>4</sup> who was a dharma-grandson of Bojo Jinul (1158–1210)<sup>5</sup> of the Sagulsan school.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, [according to the record], Korean Buddhism belongs to the Sagulsan lineage. There is also a record, “A nephew in the family lineage and heir in the dharma lineage,”<sup>7</sup> at Seungnyeonsa Temple in Namwon. Judging from this record, the Seon Master Gugok Gagun (fl. ca. fourteenth century), our ancestor, received the dharma from Joram Yeonon (d. 1358) who was a fourteenth-generation master in a descent line from Bojo. Just like these records, there are different theories about the lamp transmission. Some even argue that Korean Buddhism originally belonged to Bojo’s lineage, but after Junggwon Haeon (b. 1567), who was an outstanding disciple of the Master Cheongheo (1520–1604)<sup>8</sup> [i.e. Hyujeong], unnecessarily raised a different theory and committed the act of “changing the father and the ancestral lineage” (*hwanbu yeokjo*), it became Taego’s (1301–1382)<sup>9</sup> lineage. However, since we are Junggwon’s dharma-descendants, it is disrespectful to brand his theory as the act of “changing the father and the ancestral lineage” and dismiss his argument that Taego was the founder of Korean Buddhism as a forgery. There is a distinction between a master from whom a disciple receives an ordination (*deukdosa*, hereafter, ordination-master) and a master from whom a disciple receives the dharma (*subeopsa*, hereafter, dharma-master) regarding the master-

monk, one of the major elements in the transmission of the lamp in Korean Buddhism. Renowned monks usually had more than two dharma-masters. For example, as for the Master Samyeong, the *Original Lineage of the Buddha-Patriarchs* (*Buljo wolllyu*) and the *Clerical Lineage of Samyeongdang* (*Samyeongdang seungbo*) record the two different lineages. In the *Original Lineage of the Buddha-Patriarchs*, the Master Cheongheo was the first generation while the Master Samyeong was a second generation. This dharma-genealogy was compiled based on the Master Samyeong's dharma-master. In the *Clerical Lineage of Samyeongdang*, the Elder Sinmuk (fl. sixteenth century) was the first generation while the Master Samyeong was a second generation. This genealogy was based on the Master Samyeong's ordination-master. Junggwon Haeon in question became the Master Cheongheo's disciple in terms of dharma-master while certainly becoming the Master Noemuk's<sup>10</sup> dharma heir in terms of ordination-master.

Who tries to demonstrate that the Master Gugok, our ancestor, was the Master Joram's heir in terms of ordination-master while being not the Seon Master Hwanam's (1320–1392) dharma-disciple in terms of dharma-master? It is not that the Seon Master Hwanam did not belong to Sagulsan Bojo's lineage in terms of ordination-master. However, Hwanam was certainly the Mater Taego's disciple in terms of dharma-master. For this reason, Korean Buddhism can belong to Bojo's lineage or become Taego's dharma-companion. It can also belong to Yongming's (904–975)<sup>11</sup> lineage or become Linji's (d. 867) descendants.

Therefore, Junggwon Haeon presented a different theory from that of Heo Gyun's (1569–1618)<sup>12</sup> epitaph for the Master Samyeong and argued that the Master Buyong belonged to Taego's lineage, not Naong's. He did so because he had some reliable information that had been transmitted from ancestors. He did not argue a fictional theory.

In making a conclusion regarding all different theories, as mentioned above, we should first clarify whether a lineage is based on ordination-master or dharma-master in order to resolve the issue of

the legitimate transmission of the lamp in Korean Buddhism. From the historical perspective, it is an undeniable fact that the legitimate lineage from the Master Taego to the present was established in terms of dharma-master while that before the Master Taego was decided in terms of ordination-master. The so-called lineage tag (*jokpae*) that we six-thousand monks carry with us conventionally accepts the Master Taego as the founder of our order, based on the legitimate lineage in terms of dharma-master. It is an ironclad rule that brooks no argument. On the contrary, it is also a traditional fact of the time that the legitimate line before the Master Taego was based on ordination-master. At that time, ordination-temples were regarded as original temples (*bonsa*) and ordination-masters were called original masters (*bonsa*) (This means legitimate masters [*jeongsaseung*].)

Monk registers were placed at the head original temples (*subonsa*) that supervised all original temples where the monks shaved their heads. If an ordination-master was a monk of the Jogye Sagulsan lineage, his disciples naturally belonged to the Sagulsan lineage and were registered in Gulsansa Temple, the head original temple of the lineage. They belonged to the lineage until they transferred their monk register to another head temple. It was not easy to transfer monk register. For example, when the Royal Preceptor Gyeongji (fl. thirteenth century) who originally belonged to the Jogye Yangsan lineage transferred his register to Gulsansa in order to act as a disciple of the State Preceptor Jinmyeong (1191–1271) who was a renowned master of the Sagulsan school, he could do so through a royal edict issued by the Goryeo court. Considering this fact, it is difficult for monks to transfer their registers around that time.

Since there was such a practice in the transmission of the lamp, even though a monk had more than two renowned masters as his dharma-master, dharma-master was regarded only as an honorary description. The legitimate masters were always the ordination-masters. Therefore, although there were hundreds or thousands of Korean monks who went to China and received the dharma (i.e. *subeop*) from a Chinese master, they neither transfer their monk

registers nor sever their connections to their ordination-masters. As long as they did not do so, their lineages remained the same.

Even after the Master Taego received the dharma from Shiwu Qinggong (1272–1352) of Mountain Xiawu in China, he acted as a monk of the Jogye order. He neither cut off his connection with his ordination-master nor changed his lineage. Therefore, after the death of the Master Taego, the words, “Goryeoguk *dae* Jogye *sajo*” (patriarch who succeeded to the great Jogye of Goryeo),<sup>13</sup> were inscribed in large characters on the memorial tablet. In particular, the expression, “Jogye *sajo*” was a title like “Goryeoguk *dae* Jogye *jongsa*” (monk of the great Jogye school of Goryeo)<sup>14</sup> or “Goryoguk *dae* Hwaeom *jongsa*” (monk of the great Hwaeom school of Goryeo),<sup>15</sup> which can often be found in other places. This expression indicates the Master Taego’s lineage.

Therefore, if we establish the legitimate lineage in terms of ordination-master, following the practice of the transmission of the lamp before the Master Taego, there is no doubt that the Master Taego was a great master of the Gajisan school of the Jogye order. It is not certain which generation descendant Gwangji (fl. thirteenth century), Taego’s ordination-master, was from the State Preceptor Doui (d. 825)<sup>16</sup> of the Gajisan school. However, Gajisa Temple and Yeongwonsa Temple where Taego served as abbot belonged to the Gajisan school. The Royal Preceptor Chanyeong (1328–1390) who received an ordination from Taego arose to the second-highest position of the Gajisan school. Judging from these facts, the Master Taego certainly belonged to the lineage of the State Preceptor Doui of the Gajisan school. Therefore, Taego was the founder of Korean Buddhism and his lineage belonged to the Gajisan school among the Nine Mountain Seon Schools of the Jogye order.

## Chapter 2

### The Recovery of the Order-Name

If the lamp transmission of the Master Taego, the founder of our Korean Buddhism, belonged to the lineage of the State Preceptor Doui of the Gajisan school of the Jogye order, it is needless to say that Korean Buddhism was the Buddhism of the Jogye order. The name, “Jogye order” appeared in the world from the time of the State Preceptor Daegak Uicheon (1055–1101)<sup>17</sup> during the Goryeo dynasty. In Korea, this name indicates Bodhidharma’s Chan (Kor. Seon) school. Although Bodhidharma’s Chan school began from Bodhidharma, the school gained the great success when it reached the sixth-generation Master Huineng (638–713) of Mountain Caoxi (Kor. Jogyesan) in a descent line from Bodhidharma. Thus, Bodhidharma’s Chan-Seon school was named the Jogye order.

In China, Bodhidharma’s Chan school was divided into five branch-schools of Linji, Caodong, Yunmen, Fayan, and Weiyang. The Chan school was introduced to Korea before its division into the five branches. The Nine Mountain Seon Schools were established [in Korea], greatly enhancing Bodhidharma’s Chan: for example, Doui’s Gajisan school, Hongcheok’s (fl. 826) Silsangsan school, and Beomil’s (810–889) Sagulsan school. These Nine Mountain Seon Schools were collectively called the Nine-mountains gate (Gusanmun), Bodhidharma’s gate (Dalmamun), Seon school (Seon jong), or Seon Tranquility school (Seonjeok jong). There was no fixed name. However, as the State Preceptor Daegak founded the Cheontae (Ch. Tiantai) school during the Goryeo dynasty and the Cheontae school served as a Seon school, the name “Seon school” or “Seon Tranquility school” became confusing with the name, “Cheontae school.” The Tiantai school was founded by Huiwen (fl. sixth century) during the

Northern Qi dynasty (550–577). Since the school became complete at the time of the Master Tiantai Zhizhe (538–597),<sup>18</sup> it was named “Tiantai” (Kor. Cheontae). Likewise, since Bodhidharma Chan school flourished at the time of Caoxi Huineng, it was called “Caoxi” (Kor. Jogye). Tiantai and Chan were called “two schools” in the world. At that time, in Buddhism [in Korea], there were two schools of Seon, i.e., Jogye jong and Cheontae jong, while there were five schools of Gyo, i.e., Hwaeom jong,<sup>19</sup> Beopseong jong,<sup>20</sup> Ja’eun jong,<sup>21</sup> Siheung jong,<sup>22</sup> and Namsan jong.<sup>23</sup> They were collectively called “five doctrinal schools and two meditative traditions.”

In the sixth year of King Sejong (1424) during the Joseon period, the court merged the five doctrinal schools and the two meditative schools into the two schools of Seon and Gyo. The name “Jogye jong,” which was used for approximately three hundred years from the time of the State Preceptor Daegak, disappeared on the surface while the name “Seon jong” was used. However, the name “Seon jong” at that time referred to the three schools of Jogye jong, Cheontae jong, and Chongnam jong.<sup>24</sup> It was a homonym for the name “Seon jong” that was used to indicate only Bodhidharma’s Chan-Seon school before the State Preceptor Daegak.

As mentioned, in the sixth year of King Sejong, the name “Jogye jong” was abolished, along with other school names such as Cheontae jong, while the name “Seon jong” was still used. However, even after that time, the name “Jogye jong” was used to refer to Bodhidharma Seon school, excluding Cheontae and Chongnam.

The woodblocks for the *Commentary on the Flower Garland Sūtra* (*So Hwaeom gyeong*) in Gwijinsa Temple, Seoheung, Hwanghae-do, were carved during the reign of King Myeongjong (r. 1545–1567) approximately 120 years after the sixth year of King Sejong. At the end of the woodblocks, there were the names of people who were involved in the carving project such as “Uibyeon, the great Seon master of Jogye jong and the abbot of Hoeamsa Temple.”<sup>25</sup> When the Master Samyeong wrote the postface to the Master Cheongheo’s *Mirror of the Seon School* (*Seon’ga gwigam*) in the twelfth year of King

Seonjo (r. 1567–1608), he recorded his name as “Samyeong [who passed a monk exam for] Jogye jong.”<sup>26</sup> Judging from this fact, the name “Jogye jong” circulated even until the time of the Master Samyeong around 150 years after the sixth year of King Sejong.

Let us look at the situation in which the five doctrinal schools and the two meditative schools were merged into the two schools of Seon and Gyo. This merge did not really intend to abolish and amalgamate the entities and names of “five schools and two traditions.” It was enforced because there were huge differences in gains and losses in terms of financial policy between distributing temple property with “five schools and two traditions” intact on the one hand and distributing the property only to the two schools that would remain after the merge of the seven schools on the other hand.

To put it in more detail, when the court distributed temples to each school, since the peninsula was divided into eight provinces with each province divided into left and right, the court could not but distribute sixteen temples to each school, based on this administrative division. Therefore, it was just obvious that if the court gave temples to the seven existing schools, the number of the temples would increase while it gave temples to the two combined schools, the number would decrease. If the number of the distributed temples increased, the amount of temple property that would be distributed to those temples would also increase. If the amount of the distributed property increased, the income of the government would decrease. In other words, the more Buddhist schools were there, the more temples would be [to those schools]. The more temples were distributed, the more temple property would be distributed. The more temple property was distributed, the less would be the income of the government. Therefore, if the number of the schools was reduced as many as possible, the number of the distributed temples would decrease, along with the distribution amount of temple property, while surplus property would increase and the government would have [more] earnings. Since this was the purpose with which the court reduced the number of the Buddhist schools, if the court

had [more] earnings as a result of the merge, it would be just satisfied with those earnings.

The court did not need to force [the Buddhist monks of the time] to abolish the old names and use the new names. For this reason, even though the name “Jogye jong” disappeared on the surface in the sixth year of King Sejong, it kept circulating until the time of the Master Samyeong. By the time after the Master Cheongheo, however, such doctrinal schools as Hwaecom and Ja’eun, as well as other Buddhist schools, including Cheontae and Chongnam, all naturally perished. There remained only a branch of the Gajisan school of Jogye jong. Such an inappropriate name as “Seon jong” or “Seon Gyo *yangjong*” is now put on Korean Buddhism of today. Our Korean Buddhism accepts the Master Taego who belonged to the Gajisan school of Jogye jong as the founder. It was once called Seon jong from the time of King Sejong. However, Korean Buddhism has never had the name “Seon Gyo *yangjong*.” Judging from these historical facts, the order-name of Korean Buddhism should be either Jogye jong or Seon jong.

However, these days, there is a concern that the name “Seon jong” is confounding with the three Seon (Jp. Zen) schools, including Japanese Rinzai shū and Sōtō shū. From this vantage point, it is most suitable to re-use the name “Jogye jong” which had been used as order-name and, at the same time, is unique, only found in Korean Buddhism. This is the recovery of the order-name.

## Chapter 3

### The Principal Teachings of Jogye Seon jong

The transmission of lamp of the Master Taego, our founding father, belonged to the lineage of the State Preceptor Doui of the Gajisan school of Jogye jong and the order-name of Korean Buddhism is Jogye jong. Then, it is needless to say that the principal teachings of Korean Buddhism are none other than the tradition of Bodhidharma's Chan-Seon which advocates, "Not establishing words and letters, directly pointing to the human mind, and seeing the nature and attaining Buddhahood" (*bullip munja jikji insim gyeonseong seongbul*).<sup>27</sup> Let us look at how Bodhidharma's lineage came to promote the teachings of not establishing words and letters, and so on. [Buddhist teachings] were bifurcated into Great and Lesser Vehicles. Expedient and true teachings were established. Sudden and gradual teachings confronted with each other. Since then, [Buddhists] had come to present the essence of Buddhism differently, follow different foundational scriptures, and promote different doctrines and practices.

Not to mention the Western Regions, China showed this tendency. Tiantai adopted the *Lotus Sūtra*<sup>28</sup> as its foundational scripture and advocated the attainment of Buddhahood of five natures through disclosing, indicating, awakening [sentient beings], and [making them] enter the Buddha's insight (Ch. *wuxing chengfo kaishi wuru*). Xianshou (643–712)<sup>29</sup> took the *Flower Garland Sūtra*<sup>30</sup> as the foundational scripture of the Huayan school and claimed the perfect attainment of Buddhahood with the non-obstruction of the ten bodies, based on the notion of the non-obstruction between phenomenon and phenomena (Ch. *shishi wuai*). Xuanzang (602–664) argued the attainment of Buddhahood through three countless eons, relying on Yogācāra philosophy. The three masters<sup>31</sup> of the Kaiyuan<sup>32</sup> period (713–741)

advocated the attainment of Buddhahood through one-thought, based on dhāraṇīs for Mahāvairocana.

In this way, several renowned masters presented their own arguments in terms of the four categories of teaching, theory, practice, and fruit. Their foundational scriptures were different: the *Flower Garland Sūtra*, the *Lotus Sūtra*, Yogācāra scriptures, and various dhāraṇīs. Their theories were also different: dharma-realms, Buddha-nature, consciousness-only, or suchness. As for their practices and fruits, the Huayan school argued for the attainment of Buddhahood in three lives, compromising the two opposite standpoints of gradual and sudden teachings, i.e, the attainment of Buddhahood through three countless eons from the gradual perspective and only in one-thought from the sudden perspective. In this way, based on these four categories of teaching, theory, practice, and fruit, different Buddhist schools presented different arguments. Therefore, Bodhidharma's school declared its own cardinal teachings by establishing this catchphrase of not establishing words and letters, etc. In other words, doctrinal schools adopted their foundational teachings from written scriptures that were different in terms of expedient, true, esoteric, or exoteric. On the other hand, Bodhidharma's school maintained the Buddha's wisdom through the mind-to-mind transmission as the separate transmission outside the doctrinal teachings which were nothing but the remainders of [the teachings of] ancestors.

When doctrinal schools discussed the fundamental principle of all teachings, they presented the teachings that were sought outside [the mind] such as the dharma-realm of suchness or *ālaya* consciousness<sup>33</sup> of ignorance. On the contrary, Bodhidharma's school established the shortcut approach of pointing directly to the human mind. Doctrinal schools argued for the attainment of Buddhahood through three countless eons, three lives, devotional practices, or contemplation practices while Bodhidharma's school advocated the attainment of Buddhahood by seeing the nature. The latter clearly declared its own position in Buddhism by presenting “not

establishing words and letters, directly pointing to the human mind, and seeing the nature and attaining Buddhahood” as its principal teachings which were simple, direct, and distinctive. These are the principal teachings of Bodhidharma’s school, Jogye jong, and our Korean Buddhism.

## Chapter 4

### The True Meaning of “Not Establishing Words and Letters”

Korean Buddhism advocates the principal teachings of Jogye jong which are “not establishing words and letters” (*bullip munja*) and belong to the Gajisan school of Jogye jong. Then, how does our Korean Buddhism follow all written scriptures made of paper and ink, including the *Flower Garland Sūtra* and the *Lotus Sūtra*, as its foundational scriptures? Even though Korean Buddhism argues for pointing directly to the human mind, how can it worship a Buddha of other-power (*taryeok*), chanting the name of the Buddha to be reborn [in the Pure Land]? If you do not understand the true meaning of not establishing words and letters properly, you could raise such a question. This phrase does not originally mean that we should never admire words and letters, absolutely excluding all of them. It means that we should not admire the written scriptures.

Since the doctrinal schools [of earlier times in China] had two types of misunderstandings that obscured the true intent of the Buddha, Bodhidharma’s school presented such a catchphrase as “not establishing words and letters.” First, doctrinal schools of the time adopted the remnants of written scriptures, including the *Flower Garland Sūtra* or the *Lotus Sūtra*, as their ultimate principle, not penetrating the Buddha’s true intent which was outside of words and letters. Second, since all scriptures are the Buddha’s words, there are no such differences as deep or shallow; superior or inferior in them. Nonetheless, the doctrinal schools of the time used written scriptures as a polemical tool, arguing that the *Flower Garland Sūtra* or the *Lotus Sūtra* was supreme. These two misunderstandings were the shortcomings of the doctrinal schools of the time. However, Bodhidharma’s school stayed away from those shortcomings. Its

catchphrase, “not establishing words and letters,” meant that it did not admire written scriptures, including the *Flower Garland Sūtra*, which were nothing but the remainders of [the teachings of] ancestors, as its ultimate principle. The catchphrase also meant that the school did not worship only the *Flower Garland Sūtra* or the *Lotus Sūtra* as supreme.

Consequently, this catchphrase can be interpreted in the following ways. For those who do not realize the Way through meditation, the *Flower Garland Sūtra* is nothing but a remainder of words and letters and the *Lotus Sūtra* is a discriminating delusion that fuels the evil views of craving and anger. Therefore, Bodhidharma’s school neither admires nor worships the written scriptures. On the contrary, for those who realize the Way through meditation, the *Lotus Sūtra* and the *Flower Garland Sūtra* are the Buddha’s golden words; so are the sounds of a nightingale or a swallow. There is nothing to discuss about superior and inferior or deep and shallow. Therefore, Bodhidharma’s school does not worship only the *Flower Garland Sūtra* or the *Lotus Sūtra*. Therefore, the master Bojo said, “The master Bodhidharma came from the western land to China not because he had something to transmit separately from the *Flower Garland Sūtra* and the *Lotus Sūtra*. Since Chinese Buddhists at that time did not realize the Way through meditation, they misunderstood the true meaning of the *Flower Garland Sūtra* and the *Lotus Sūtra* and ended up turning the scriptures that the Buddha preached into the evil teachings that developed the evil views of craving and anger. Bodhidharma came to the East in order to correct this situation.”

In order to understand the truth of all scriptures, including the *Flower Garland Sūtra* and the *Lotus Sūtra*, you should see the nature and realize the Way. If you want to see the nature and realize the Way, you should practice meditation. By means of meditation, you can see the nature. By seeing the nature, you can realize the true intent of the Buddha preaching the dharma for forty-nine years. Without meditation, you can neither see the nature and thus nor the Buddha’s true intent. Since Bodhidharma’s school promoted and

encouraged meditation no matter what, it was called meditation school (Ch. Chan zong, Kor. Seon jong). The true meaning of “not establishing words and letters” is this. Therefore, our Korean Buddhism does not admire only one scripture or treatise. Believing that the *Flower Garland Sūtra*, the *Lotus Sūtra*, and the *Amitābha Sūtra* are all supreme, it admires all of them. Whether a certain scripture becomes an evil or correct teaching depends on whether there is a realization of the Way through meditation. Since a scripture comes to have a value as a scripture only after the realization of the Way through meditation, Korean Buddhism prioritizes Seon meditation, never pursuing Seon and Gyo equally. Therefore, as a preparation to realize the Way through meditation, Korean Buddhists read scriptures, recite the name of the Buddha, or chant dhāraṇīs. After realizing the Way through meditation, they also read scriptures or cultivate practices according to their levels in order to maintain that realization. Reading scriptures, reciting the name of the Buddha, or chanting spells will go in vain unless these practices serve as a preparation for meditation. The practices without realizing the Way through meditation is like steaming sand to make cooked rice. With this spirit, the State Preceptor Bojo argued that practitioners attain sudden awakening to the self-nature and gradually cultivate myriads of practices according to their level and rank [which were explained] in scriptures. This is “sudden awakening followed by gradual practices” (*dono jeomsu*).

Since such is the true meaning of “not establishing words and letters,” Korean Buddhism, which advocates “not establishing words and letters,” admires all scriptures, including the *Lotus Sūtra* and the *Flower Garland Sūtra*, recites the name of the Buddha, and chants dhāraṇīs.

## Chapter 5

### The Correction of the Denominational Constitution

As discussed thus far, the Master Taego, who was the founding father of Korean Buddhism, belonged to the lineage of the Gajisan school of Jogye jong and, therefore, the order-name of Korean Buddhism is Jogye jong and its principal teachings are “not establishing words and letters and the mind being the Buddha” (*bullip munja jeuksim jeukbul*). Korean Buddhism is not a Buddhism of the two schools of Seon and Gyo, which admires both Seon meditation and Gyo doctrines. It is a Seon-school-oriented Buddhism. If you define Korean Buddhism as a scripture-oriented Buddhism, witnessing that the *Flower Garland Sūtra* is read as a course of the monastic curriculum and the *Lotus Sūtra* is used as a missionary text, it is definitely a misunderstanding. Korean Buddhism regards not only the *Flower Garland Sūtra* and the *Lotus Sūtra*, but also the sounds of a nightingale, a swallow, or a hot bowl, as the Buddha’s words. If you call Korean Buddhism Pure Land school (Jeongto jong) or True Word<sup>34</sup> school (Jineon jong), seeing that Korean Buddhists recite the name of the Buddha and chant dhāraṇīs, it is also a misunderstanding. Korean Buddhists recite the name of the Buddha in order to realize the Pure Land in their own mind and Amitābha Buddha<sup>35</sup> in their own nature. They chant spells as a way to collect their mind and enter meditation. Whether reading scriptures, reciting the name of the Buddha, or chanting dhāraṇīs, Korean Buddhists eventually turn to realizing the Way through meditation.

I believe that it is necessary to re-establish our constitution since Korean Buddhism has its own lineage, order-name, and principal teachings as discussed above.

## **Denominational Constitution of Jogye jong**

### **Chapter One, Order Name**

Article 1. The treasury of the true dharma eye of Śākyamuni Buddha was transmitted to Kāśyapa. As the transmission reached the twenty eighth patriarch Bodhidharma, a school was established. When it reached Caoxi Huineng after six more transmissions, the school gained greatness. Therefore, it is called “Jogye jong.”

### **Chapter Two, Principal Teachings**

Article 2. The principal teachings of the school are to attain awakening through a shortcut gate of “not establishing words and letters and the mind being the Buddha” and extensively cultivate the untiring practice of Samantabhadra<sup>36</sup> that benefits and saves sentient beings.

### **Chapter Three, Foundational Scripture and Buddha**

Article 3. The school puts no restrictions on its foundational scripture, treatise, and main Buddha, relying on its principal teachings of “not establishing words and letters and the mind being the Buddha.”

### **Chapter Four, Founding Father**

Article 4. After the nine founders of the Nine Mountain Seon schools of Silla period, including the Gajisan school, transmitted Caoxi’s [i.e. Huineng] teaching, the Master Taego who was a legitimate descendant of the Gajisan school unified the nine schools, harmonized both Seon and Gyo, and greatly enhanced the school during the Goryeo dynasty. Therefore, the Master Taego is the founding father of the school.

If Korean Buddhism is designated as Jogye jong this way, some may wonder whether there is some relationship with Jogyesan Mountain in Suncheon. However, there is no need to ask about this

relationship because it is already demonstrated that the name “Jogye jong” circulated much earlier than the State Preceptor Bojo renamed Songgwangsan as Jogyesan. A few years ago, the government authority issued its official gazette that prohibited designating Korean Buddhism with other names except Seon jong or Gyo jong because, according to the gazette, “Seon-Gyo *yangjong*” was given to Korean Buddhism as its order-name when its ecclesiastical system was reformed hundreds of years ago and there had since been no big change. Based on this gazette, it seems that any other names except “Seon jong” or “Gyo jong” cannot be used.

However, I believe that “Jogye jong” can be one exception. As the gazette said, the Seon jong of “Seon Gyo-*yangjong*” at the time of the reformation of the Korean Buddhist system referred to what combined Jogye, Cheontae, and Chongnam. Since the latter two schools virtually disappeared afterwards, only Jogye jong alone has survived. Today, therefore, Seon jong is Jogye jong and Jogye jong is Seon jong. For example, when the Master Cheongheo wrote the account of conduct (*haengnok*) for his senior-monks, he designated himself as “Seon jong prefect” (*pan Seon jong sa*) Hyujeong in the *Account of Byeoksongdang’s Conduct* (*Byeoksongdang haengnok*) and “Jogye jong prefect” (*pan Jogye jong sa*) Hyujeong in the *Account of Gyeongseongdang’s Conduct* (*Gyeongseongdang haengnok*). Judging from these two records, Seon jong is Jogye jong and Jogye jong is Seon jong and, at the same time, the name “Jogye jong” still existed even after the reformation of the ecclesiastical system. Therefore, it does not violate the law to call Korean Buddhism Jogye jong. To look at the time when the government gazette was issued, since there were disputes between Won jong<sup>37</sup> and Imje jong,<sup>38</sup> confronting with each other, such a gazette had to be issued. Therefore, today, there will be no governmental interference if the thirty-one head temples agree [to use the name “Jogye jong”].

## Notes

- \* This article was published in the *Bulgyo* 佛教 [Buddhism] 105 (March 1933).
- 1 “普濟五傳 爲芙蓉靈觀。”
  - 2 Samyeong 泗溟 or Samyeong Yujeong 四溟惟政 was a Seon master in the mid-Joseon. He was one of Hyujeong’s 休靜 (1520–1604) disciples. He led monks’ militia with his master during the Japanese invasion (1592–1598). After the invasion, he also served as an envoy for King Seonjo’s 宣祖 (r. 1567–1608) court to negotiate the return of Korean captives in Japan.
  - 3 Buyong Yeonggwon 芙蓉靈觀 was a mid-Joseon monk who was Byeoksong Jieom’s 碧松智嚴 (1464–1534) disciple and Hyujeong’s master.
  - 4 Boje Naong 普濟懶翁 or Naong Hyegeun 懶翁慧勤 was a late Goryeo monk who emphasized the Ganhwa Seon practice. He brought the Linji lineage to Goryeo, after receiving the dharma from the Chinese Linji master Pingshan Chulin 平山處林 (1279–1361).
  - 5 Bojo Jinul was a late Goryeo monk who was one of the most important Korean Seon masters in the history of Korean Buddhism. He introduced the system of “*dono jeomsu*” 頓悟漸修 (sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation), which has since served as a foundational practical schema of Korean Buddhism, along with the Ganhwa Seon practice.
  - 6 The Sagulsan 闍崛山 school was one of the Nine Mountain Seon Schools in Silla which derived mostly from the Chinese Hongzhou school (洪州宗) of Tang (618–907).
  - 7 “於族爲甥 於法爲嗣。”
  - 8 Cheongheo Hyujeong 清虛休靜 was a Seon monk during the mid-Joseon. He produced a number of important texts, including the *Seon’ga gwigam* 禪家龜鑑 [Mirror of Seon School], which emphasizes the harmony between Seon meditation and Gyo doctrinal studies. He was also famous for his military contribution to the Joseon court during the Japanese invasion (1592–1598), forming a monks’ militia.
  - 9 Taego Bou 太古普愚 (1301–1382) was a Seon master during the Goryeo dynasty. He received the dharma from the Chinese Linji master Shiwu Qinggong 石屋清珙. The Korean Jogye Order traces its lineage back to Taego Bou.

- 10 Noemuk Cheoyeong 雷默處英 was a monk in the mid-Joseon period. He was a disciple of Hyujeong 休靜. Noemuk is best known for his leading role in monks' militia during the Japanese invasion.
- 11 Yongming Yanshou 永明延壽 (904–975) was a renowned Fayan lineage monk during the Song dynasty. He was best known as the author of the *Zongjing lu* 宗鏡錄 [Record of the Mirror of the Principles and Mirrors].
- 12 Heo Gyun 許筠 was a scholar-official in the mid-Joseon period. He is best known as the author of the *Hong Gildong jeong* 洪吉童傳 [Tale of Hong Gildong], written in vernacular Korean. In the epitaph for Samyeong 泗溟 (1544–1610), Heo Gyun connected Hyujeong through Hyegeun 惠勤 (1320–1376) to the Chinese Fayan master Yanshou 延壽.
- 13 “高麗國大曹溪嗣祖.”
- 14 “高麗國大曹溪宗師.”
- 15 “高麗國大華嚴宗師.”
- 16 Doui 道義 was a monk in the unified Silla period (668–935). He is traditionally regarded as the founder of the Gajisan school of Seon.
- 17 Uicheon 義天 was one of the renowned scholarly monks in Korea during the Goryeo period. He was the fourth son of King Munjong 文宗 (r. 1047–1082). He founded the Cheontae school in Korea as a way to reconcile the tension between Seon meditation and Gyo doctrinal teachings. He collected a number of Buddhist works from across East Asia, which were carved on wood blocks and titled “*Goryeo sokjanggyeong*” 高麗續藏經 [Goryeo Supplement to the Canon].
- 18 Tiantai Zhizhe 天台智者 or Zhiyi 智顛 was the de facto founder of the Tiantai school of China. He was a prolific author, writing approximately thirty works among which the *Mohe zhiguan* 摩訶止觀 [Great Calming and Contemplation], the *Fahua xuanyi* 法華玄義 [Profound Meaning of the Lotus], and the *Fahua wenju* 法華文句 [Phrases of the Lotus] are known as the Tiantai *san dabu* (three great Tiantai commentaries).
- 19 Hwaecom jong 華嚴宗 was a counterpart of the Chinese Huayan zong (Flower Garland School). It was founded by the Silla monk Uisang 義湘 (625–702) who travelled to China to study with Zhiyan 智嚴 (602–668), the second patriarch of the Chinese Huayan zong. It lasted until the early Joseon.
- 20 Beopseong jong 法性宗 was an early Buddhist school of Korea in the Silla and Goryeo period. The school was based on the idea of the universal presence of the Buddha-nature within all sentient beings. It was merged into the Gyo school in the reign of the Joseon King Sejong 世宗 (r. 1418–1450).
- 21 Ja'eun jong 慈恩宗 was an early Buddhist school in the Goryeo period, connected to Yogācāra philosophy. It was merged into the Gyo school in the

- reign of the Joseon King Sejong.
- 22 Some scholars believe that Siheung jong 始興宗 was the Korean Nirvāṇa school while scholars like Choe Namseon regarded it as associated with Chontae jong.
- 23 Namsan jong 南山宗 was the Korean Vinaya school.
- 24 Chongnam jong 攄南宗 was one of the Seon schools of Korea and merged into the Seon school in the early Joseon.
- 25 “曹溪宗大禪師檜巖寺住持義下.”
- 26 “曹溪宗選四溟”
- 27 “不立文字 直指人心 見性成佛.”
- 28 The *Lotus Sūtra* (*Fahua jing* 法華經 or *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經, Skt. *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra*). It is one of the most popular scriptures in the East Asian Buddhist tradition, especially for its stories and parables. The scripture emphasizes such notions as “expedient means,” according to which the Buddha helps sentient beings with different mental capacities and “the one-buddha vehicle,” according to which those various expedient means ultimately serves to guide all sentient beings, without exception, to the ultimate goal. The *Lotus Sūtra* also became a scriptural basis of the foundation of several Buddhist schools in East Asia, for example, Tiantai zong in China, Cheontae jong in Korea, and Tendai shū and Nichiren shū in Japan.
- 29 Xianshou 賢首, better known as Fazang 法藏, is traditionally regarded as the third patriarch of the Huayan school. He was often invited to the imperial court by Empress Wu (624–705) to preach on the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*. Fazang produced a number of writings, including the “*Dasheng qixin lun*” *yiji* 大乘起信論義記 [Commentary on the *Awakening of Faith in Mahāyāna*], which is one of the most important commentaries on the *Dasheng qixin lun*.
- 30 The *Flower Garland Sūtra* (*Huayan jing* [Kor. *Hwaeom gyeong*] 華嚴經) or the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* is one of the most important scriptural texts in East Asian Buddhism. It is traditionally believed to describe the insight that Śākyamuni Buddha gained the moment he attained enlightenment. The text was influential in many of East Asian Buddhist schools, in particular, Huayan (Kor. Hwaeom) and Chan (Kor. Seon) schools.
- 31 The three masters of the Kaiyuan period were Vajrabodhi (671–741), Śubhakarasiṃha (637–735), and Amoghavajra (705–774).
- 32 Kaiyuan 開元 was one of the era names for Tang Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712–756), which lasted from 713 to 741.
- 33 *Ālaya* consciousness (Skt. *ālayavijñāna*) is a key concept of the Yogācāra

school in Buddhism which refers to the eighth of the eight types of consciousness. This consciousness, meaning storehouse consciousness, is called so because it is believed to store the seeds of the past deeds. For this reason, ignorant beings mistake *ālaya* consciousness as their subject. This consciousness has become one of the controversial concepts in Buddhism, which led several different scholar-monks in India, China, and Korea to present different theories of it.

- 34 True word (*jineon* [Ch. *zhenyan*] 真言, Skt. *mantra*) is a syllable or a series of syllables which are believed to have spiritual powers.
- 35 Amitābha is the Buddha of the Western Pure Land of Sukhāvati (Ultimate Bliss) which all sentient beings who recite his name will be born into. He is the primary Buddha of the Pure Land schools that developed in China, Korean, and Japan.
- 36 Samantabhadra (Bohyeon [Ch. Puxian] 普賢) is the bodhisattva of practice. He embodies all myriad good works and spiritual practices.
- 37 Won jong 圓宗 (Consummate School) was founded in 1908 by Yi Hoegwang 李晦光 (1862–1933), who attempted to merge Won jong with the Japanese Sōtō shū.
- 38 Imje jong 臨濟宗 here refers to a Buddhist order that some modern reform Buddhists such as Han Yongun 韓龍雲 (1879–1944) and Bak Hanyeong 朴漢永 (1870–1948) established in 1911 in reaction to Yi Hoegwang's foundation of Won jong. It was closed in 1912.

## Glossary

### Korean

*Beoksongdang haengnok* 碧松堂行錄

Beomil 梵日 (810–889)

Boje Naong 普濟懶翁 (1320–1376)

*bonsa* 本師

*bullip munja jeuksim jeukbul* 不立文字

卽心卽佛

*bullip munja* 不立文字

Buyong Yeonggwan 芙蓉靈觀

(1485–1571)

Chanyeong 燦英 (1328–1390)

Dalmamun 達磨門

*deukdosa* 得度師

*dono jeomsu* 頓悟漸修

Gajisa 迦智寺

Gugok Gaggun 龜谷覺雲 (fl. ca.

fourteenth century)  
 Gulsansa 巖山寺  
 Gusanmun 九山門  
 Gwangji 廣智 (fl. thirteenth century)  
 Gwijinsa 歸真寺  
 Gyeongji 鏡智 (fl. thirteenth century)  
*Gyeongseongdang haengnok* 慶聖堂行錄  
*haengnok* 行錄  
 Hongcheok 洪陟 (fl. 826)  
 Hwanam 幻庵 (1320–1392)  
*hwanbu yeokjo* 換父易祖  
 Imje jong 臨濟宗  
*jeongsaseung* 正師僧  
 Jeongto jong 淨土宗  
 Jineon jong 真言宗  
 Jinmyeong 真明 (1191–1271)  
*jokpae* 族牌  
 Joram Yeonon 拙庵衍胤 (d. 1358)  
 Junggwan Haean 中觀海眼 (b. 1567)  
*munyeom sammae* 無念三昧  
 Myeongjong, King (明宗, r. 1545–1567),  
 Joseon  
 Namwon 南原  
*ogyo yangjong* 五教兩宗  
*pan Jogye jong sa* 判曹溪宗事

*pan Seon jong sa* 判禪宗事  
 Sagulsan 閣巖山  
*Samyeongdang seungbo* 四溟堂僧譜  
 Seoheung 瑞興  
 Seonjeok jong 禪寂宗  
 Seonjo, King (宣祖, r. 1567–1608),  
 Joseon  
 Seungnyeonsa 勝蓮寺  
 Sinmuk 信默 (fl. sixteenth century)  
*So Hwaeom gyeong* 疏華嚴經  
*subeopsa* 受法師  
*subonsa* 首本寺  
*taryeok* 他力  
 Won jong 圓宗  
 Yeongwonsa 瑩原寺

### Chinese

Caoxi, Mountain (曹溪山, Kor. Jogyesan)  
 Huineng 慧能 (638–713)  
*shishi wuai* 事事無礙  
 Shiwu Qinggong 石屋清珙 (1272–1352)  
*wuxing chengfo kaishi wuru* 五性成佛  
 開示悟入  
 Xiawu, Mountain (霞霧山)

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- Huayan jing* 華嚴經. T 279.
- Hwaeom ilseung beopgye do* 華嚴一乘法界圖. Composed by Uisang (625–702)
- Jingang bore boluomi jing* 金剛般若波羅密經. T 235
- Jingde chuandeng lu* 景德傳燈錄. T 2076. Compiled by Daoyuan (fl. eleventh century)
- Kaiyuan Shijiao mulu* 開元釋教目錄. T 2154. Compiled in 730.
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*Sinpyeon jejong gyojang chongnok* 新編諸宗教藏總錄. Compiled by Uicheon.  
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# Index

## A

Abhidharmapiṭaka, 258  
Administration Bureau, 18, 196, 354  
Ado, 38, 64  
Ajanta, 241  
Amitābha, 236, 238, 443  
An Jasan, 81  
Anhong, 258  
Āryadeva, 226  
Asaṅga, 227  
Aśoka, 175, 176, 220, 221  
Association for the Revitalization of  
    Korean Buddhism, 353  
Asuka Great Buddha, 265  
Avalokiteśvara, 123, 242  
*Awakening of Faith (in Mahāyāna)*, 51,  
    231

## B

Baekje, 66, 194, 223  
Baekje Avalokiteśvara, 265  
Baekje style, 265  
Baekpa Geungseon, 345  
Baek Seonguk, 15, 356  
Baek Yongseong, 8, 9  
Bak Hanyeong, 350  
Bakunin, 127  
Bak Yeongseon, 60  
*beompae*, 99  
Beophwawon, 271  
Beopseong jong, 432  
*Biographies of Eminent Monks*, 227

Bodhidharma, 432, 436, 442  
Brahma, 242  
*Buddhism*, 11  
Buddhism of the Imperial Way, 11  
Buddhist logic, 228  
Bulguksa, 241, 244  
Bulham, 218  
*bullip munja jikji insim gyeonseong  
    seongbul*, 435  
Bunhwang jong, 49, 231  
Bureau of Doctrinal Repository, 254  
Buyong Yeonggwon, 427, 428

## C

causality, 321  
cause and condition, 319  
Chang'an, 226, 241  
Chanyeong, 431  
Cheongheo, 427, 433  
Cheontae (jong/school), 42, 432  
Choe Chiwon, 47  
Choe Namseon, 12, 19  
Chongnam jong, 432, 434  
Choui Uisun, 345  
*Chronicles of Japan*, 64  
Ci'en, 47, 228  
Clerical marriage, 104  
Comte, 387

## D

Dabotap, 244  
Daejang dogam, 253

Damjing, 264, 280, 281

*Dasheng qixin lun*, 51

Deokchang, 66

Deokjeok, 267

*deukdosa*, 427

Devanagari, 43

dhāraṇī, 43

dharma-master, 427, 428, 429

Dharmapāla, 228

Dharmaratna, 222

*Diamond Sūtra*, 245

Dilun, 228

Divākara, 47

Do Jinho, 356, 357

Dojang, 51, 268

Dorim, 66

Doui, 431, 435

Dream Hall, 265

Dunhuang, 227, 241

Dushun, 230, 233

## E

Echō, 46

Emperor Ming, 222

Enchin, 271

Ennin, 271

Eulji Mundeok, 34, 282

## F

Faxiang, 50

Faxing school, 231

Fazang, 50, 51, 230, 231

five doctrinal schools and two meditative traditions, 425, 433

*Flower Garland Sūtra*, 138, 143, 440

four excursions, 328

Fu Jian, 38, 223

## G

Gajisan, 430, 431

Gandhāra, 39, 221

*gāthā*, 245

General Bureau, 18, 196, 354

*Geumgang sammae gyeong*, 234

Kim Beoprin, 22, 356

Kim Byeokong, 17

Kim Jongrae, 350

Kim Taeheup, 16

Kim Yeongsu, 26

Kim Yusin, 34

Goguryeo, 66, 194, 223, 227

Gomyō, 269

*gong'an*, 326

Goryeo, 67, 183, 239

Goryeo canon, 247, 249, 250, 252, 253

great dharma mountain, 347

Gugok, 429

Gusha shū, 268

Gwalleuk, 266, 267

Gwangji, 431

Gwon Sangro, 8, 89, 118

Gyeomik, 258

Gyeongdeok, King, 218

Gyeongji, 429

Gyeongju, 240, 270

Gyōgi, 269

## H

Haedong jong, 49, 52, 231, 232

Haainsa, 246

Hamheo, 60

Han Yongun, 7, 10, 11, 350, 351

Heo Gyun, 429

Heo Yeongho, 24, 383

Hermann Oldenberg, 68

Hirotsu Sessan, 349

Hōryūji, 262, 263, 264, 277

Hossō shū, 268  
 Huayan (school/zong), 42, 230  
 Huineng, 432, 442  
 Huiwen, 45, 431  
 Huiyuan, 47, 236  
 Huizhao, 229  
 humane kings, 242  
 Hunmin jeongeum, 274  
 Hwaeom, 238  
 Hwaeom (jong/school), 19, 42, 49, 432  
 Hwanam, 428  
 Hyecho, 54  
 Hyechong, 266  
 Hyegwan, 268  
 Hyeja, 266  
 Hyeon'gwang, 46  
 Hyepyeon, 64

## I

Ibn Khurdādhbeh, 241  
 Ichadon, 65  
 Imagawa Sadayo, 250  
 Imje jong, 22, 196, 350  
 Indra, 242  
 Inoue Genshin, 348

## J

Ja'eun jong, 433  
 Jajang, 62  
 Jang Bogo, 271  
*Japanese Supplement to the Buddhist  
 Canon*, 59  
 Jegwan, 45, 46, 256  
 Jehovah, 122  
 Jeon Bongjun, 346  
 Jeong Yakyong, 60  
 Jibong, 268  
 Jineon jong, 42, 51  
 Jin Jineung, 350

Jinmyeong, 429  
 Jinul, 51, 427  
 Jizang, 227  
 Jōdo shinshū, 3, 272  
 Jōdo shū, 4, 6, 196, 272, 348  
 Jogye jong, 435  
 Joint Office, 196, 352  
 Jōjitsu shū, 268  
 Joram Yeonon, 427, 428  
 Joseon, 194  
 Junggwan Haean, 427

## K

Kang Daeryeon, 353, 354  
 Kang Yumun, 21, 341, 357  
 Kaniṣka, 175, 221  
 Kāśyapa, 222, 442  
 Kegon shū, 269  
 Kokubunji, 269  
 Kōrai gongen, 271  
 Korean, 262  
 Kropotkin, 127  
 Kṣitigarbha, 242  
 Kudara gongen, 271  
 Kudara, 262  
 Kuiji, 47, 48, 228  
 Kūkai, 275  
 Kumārajīva, 226, 233, 236

## L

lineage tag, 429  
 Linji, 428  
 Li Tongxuan, 231  
*Lotus Sūtra*, 34, 139, 220, 260, 265, 436,  
 440  
 Ludwig Feuerbach, 385  
 Lushan Huiyuan, 149  
 Luther, 370

**M**

Mālānanda, 38  
 Mañjuśrī, 234, 242  
 Maria, 123  
 Mark Aurel Stein, 68  
 Marx, 127, 154, 164, 385  
 Mātaṅga, 222  
 Max Müller, 68  
*Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms*, 37  
 Mengrun, 46  
 middle dharma mountain, 347  
 Mikkyō, 272  
 Mind-field Development, 11, 17  
 Mong Jeongsaeng, 25, 395  
 Morye, 64  
 Myeongjin Academy, 6, 196, 348

**N**

Nāgārjuna, 226, 233, 236  
 Namsan jong, 433  
 Naong, 427, 429  
 Nichira, 66  
 Nichiren shū, 4, 346  
 Ninchō, 248  
 Nine Mountain Seon Schools, 430, 431  
*Nirvāṇa Sūtra*, 139  
 Noemuk, 207  
 Norisachigye, 261  
 not establishing words and letters, 436

**O**

one vehicle, 239  
 ordination-master, 427, 429, 430  
 O Seongwol, 350  
 other-power, 316, 438

**P**

*Palman daejanggyeong*, 20  
 Paya, 46

pessimism, 117

Po'eun, 83

*Principle of the Fourfold Teachings of the Tiantai*, 45

Pure Land, 221, 326, 441

Pure Lands of Four Buddhas, 264

Pūrṇa Maitrāyaniputra, 234

Pyeonyang, 201

Pyowon, 59

**R**

*Reconciliation of Disputes in Ten Perspectives*, 238

*Record of Ancient Matters*, 64

Rinzai shū, 435

Risshū, 269

**S**

Sagulsan school, 427

salvation-ism, 116

Samantabhadra, 242, 442

Samnon jong, 51

Samuel Beal, 68

Samyeong, 427, 428, 433

Sanlun jong, 226

Sano Zenrei, 4, 346

Sanron shū, 268

schools of Nara, 268

Sekisan myōzin, 271

self-power, 316

Seo Jinha, 345

Seokgatap, 244

Seokguram, 240

Seol Chong, 274

Seoldu Yuhyeong, 345

Seon Academy, 9

Seongsil jong, 51

Seon school, 42

Seungnang, 227

- Shelun, 228  
 Shiba no Tachitō, 64, 65  
 Shinran, 272  
 Shiwu Qinggong, 430  
 Shōtoku, 65  
*Shu-Edition Buddhist Canon*, 245  
 Shugendō, 272  
 Shūzon, 253  
 Siheung jong, 433  
 Silla, 66, 194, 223, 229  
 Sinmuk, 429  
 Sinshō, 269  
 Siragi zenshin, 271  
 Six Buddhist, 268  
 Soga no Iname, 64  
*Song Biographies of Eminent Monks*, 61  
 Song Fu, 46  
 Sōtō shū, 4, 22, 196, 349, 434  
*Śrīmālā-sūtra*, 34, 266  
 Ssangyeongchong, 279  
 State Preceptor, 432  
 Sthiramati, 228  
 style, 262  
*subeopsa*, 427  
 Sumeru, 233  
 Sun'gyeong, 48, 229  
 Supervisory Office, 247  
 Supervisory Office of the Sūtra  
 Publication, 255  
 sūtra copying officer, 247, 255  
 synthetic Buddhism, 236
- T**  
 Taego Bou, 26, 350, 435  
 Taehyeon, 48, 62, 229  
*Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*, 249  
 Takeda Hanshi, 6  
*Tale of Simcheong*, 85  
 Tamamushi Shrine, 280  
*Tantric Buddhist Canon*, 257  
 Tatsuto, 265  
 Temple Management Office, 5, 347  
 Temple Ordinance, 6, 9, 10, 18, 22, 196,  
 198, 351, 367, 375, 376, 377, 378,  
 403, 404  
 Tendai shū, 271, 272  
 Tenkai, 248  
 Tetsugen, 248  
 Three Kingdoms, 183, 194  
 Tiantai (school/zong), 42, 45, 256  
 Tiantai Zhizhe, 432  
 Toegyeong, 86  
 Tohamsan, 241  
*tong Bulgyo*, 236  
 Tori, 264  
 Toyokuni, 66  
*tujaeng gyeon'go*, 237  
 Tuṣita Heaven, 276
- U**  
 Udam Honggi, 345  
 Uicheon, 51, 54, 57, 62, 249, 254, 431  
*Uicheon's Supplement to the Buddhist  
 Canon*, 254  
 Uijeok, 62  
 Uisang, 42, 62, 230, 231  
 Umayado, 262, 263, 265, 266, 267, 281
- V**  
 Vairocana, 244  
 Vasubandhu, 227  
 Vimalakīrti, 242  
*Vimalakīrti-sūtra*, 260, 266  
 Vinaya school, 42
- W**  
 “Way of the Mind Serenely Strolling in  
 the Land of Peace and Bliss,” 235

Western Regions, 39, 44, 222, 223, 225,  
241, 258, 277, 281, 283, 435  
Woncheuk, 42, 46, 228  
Won'gwang, 51, 66  
Wonhyo, 14, 19, 49, 60, 61, 62, 207,  
231, 232, 272  
Won jong, 6, 348

**X**

Xianshou, 436  
Xuanzang, 46, 228, 435

**Y**

Yamada Mikata, 270  
Yang Renshan, 61  
Yanshou, 49  
Yi Gwangsu, 13, 79  
Yi Hoegwang, 6, 22, 348

Yi Neunghwa, 13  
Yi Yeongjae, 9, 118  
Yogācāra, 228, 326, 436  
Yogācāra school, 42, 227  
Yongming, 429  
Yuchiyiseng, 282  
Yumenguan, 222  
Yu Yeop, 20, 305

**Z**

Zanning, 58  
Zhenyan Zong, 42  
Zhipan, 58  
Zhisheng, 245  
Zhiyan, 50, 230, 233  
Zhiyi, 42, 46  
Zyungei, 249

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