

TRACTS
ON THE MODERN REFORMATION
OF KOREAN BUDDHISM

Tracts on the Modern Reformation of Korean Buddhism

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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 Saṅgha 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

TRACTS
ON THE MODERN REFORMATION
OF KOREAN BUDDHISM

by Gwon Sangro, Yi Yeongjae and Han Yongun

Translation and Introduction by Pori Park

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 Pagodas, 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*, *Hwaōm* (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 正海 (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 temporally 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 jeonseo* 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 “Nyāyapravesa,”* 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 五敎九山) and the “Five Doctrinal [schools] and Two [Meditative] Traditions” (Ogyo Yangjong 五敎兩宗). 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 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. Park Hyeran, 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. Kim Young-Joo 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

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Acknowledgments

This translation volume contains major Buddhist reform proposals written in the early twentieth century in Korea. These treatises show the changes in reform ideas that occurred during the colonial period, which will enhance our understanding of the interactions among Buddhism, modernity, nationalism, and politics. In addition, this volume enables an understanding of these reform ideas in terms of their counterparts in other Buddhist nations in East Asia and Southeast Asia.

I would like to thank the Jogye Order and the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism of Korea for this opportunity to translate these important texts. After the publication of my book, *Trial and Error in Modernist Reforms: Korean Buddhism under Colonial Rule*, I conceived the idea of translating these important reform proposals, and this opportunity finally made the plan materialized. I also thank the editorial board members, Professors Kim JongWook and Kim Yongtae at Dongguk University, for their excellent leadership in supervising the project and Park Hyeran and Kim Jeonghui for helping me to finish the work through their diligent attention to all the details of this project. I am very grateful for the careful reading of the manuscript by the readers of the press, Drs. Mark Nathan and Kim Seong-uk. Their comments and copyediting have greatly enhanced the quality of this volume. Any remaining errors are my full responsibility.

This volume is the first attempt, with the exception of Han Yongun's *Joseon Bulgyo yusinnon*, to translate major modern reform treatises produced during the colonial period in one collective volume. I consulted the following Korean translations: Yi Wonseop (Seoul: Unjusa, 1992) for Han Yongun's *Joseon Bulgyo yusinnon*; Kim

Doojae (*Dabo* [Spring 1993]: 199–222) for Gwon Sangro’s “*Joseon Bulgyo gaehyeongnon*”; and Yi Cheolgyo (*Dabo* 4 [Winter 1992]: 255–274) for Yi Yeongjae’s “*Joseon Bulgyo hyeoksinnon*.” For English translations, I referred to Vladimir Tikhonov and Owen Miller, *Selected Writings of Han Yong'un: From Social Darwinism to Socialism with a Buddhist Face* (Kent, Folkestone: Global Oriental, 2008). While consulting these translations, I tried to be faithful as possible to the original texts. In addition, I used the term *monastics* for monks and nuns, as did the earlier reform proposals, such as Han’s *Joseon Bulgyo yusinnon* and Gwon’s “*Joseon Bulgyo gaehyeongnon*.” Further, in keeping with proposals such as Yi’s “*Joseon Bulgyo hyeoksinnon*” and Han Yongun’s “*Joseon Bulgyo ui gaehyeogan*,” which were published during the 1920s and 1930s, when clerical marriage became widespread, I used the term *clerics*.

Finally, this translation was completed when my mother was in the hospital. I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation for all the administrative and financial support from the School of Historical, Philosophical, and Religious Studies at Arizona State University. If I accrue any merit for this work, I would like to attribute it to my mother, who has endured many medical trials.

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: Taishō Isssikyō Kankōkai, 1924–1935.

X: *Xuzang jing* 繢藏經 (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, 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.

TRACTS
ON THE MODERN REFORMATION
OF KOREAN BUDDHISM

Introduction

This volume of translations involves major Buddhist tracts written during the colonial period (1910–1945). At that time, Korean Buddhists first had to overcome the ill-effects of the anti-Buddhist policies of the Confucian Joseon dynasty (1392–1910) and then to effect changes to their religion that were compatible with the newly opened society at the turn of the twentieth century. Korean Buddhism's long period of stagnation and the deterioration of its religious status, due to the oppression of Buddhism in the Joseon dynasty, had produced dauntingly negative effects. Most Buddhists regarded the outset of the opening of the Korean Peninsula to foreign nations as an opportunity for change and progress. They accepted meliorism and shared the views of the majority of contemporary Korean intellectuals, who were greatly inclined toward Spencerian social Darwinism.

Under these circumstances, a number of Korean Buddhist monastics were eager to offer their own reform proposals. They proposed reforms of Buddhist institutions. The main areas of the reforms, which were designed to make the *saṅgha* (the monastic community) accessible to the public, affected monastic education and methods of proselytizing. The curriculum included secular subjects designed to make Buddhist monastics conversant with society. Buddhist institutions also tried to co-opt the social activities of Christian missionaries and develop a sense of connection among monastics, the laity, and society. As such, these early reform proposals were not politically oriented; rather, their main goal was the survival of the *saṅgha* and the protection of the institution's interests.

After the March First Movement of 1919, which proclaimed

Korean independence from Japan in 1919 but resulted in an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the colonial regime, however, Korean Buddhists began working toward reforms that were politically inclined. At the same time, they joined the nationalist march for the restoration of sovereignty. Buddhist youth launched a movement that claimed the separation of religion from politics and the abolition of the Temple Ordinance, by which they thought the Japanese government had stripped the saṅgha of its independence. They criticized bureaucratic Buddhism (*gwanje Bulgyo*), which was subservient to the Japanese regime, and, instead, promoted Buddhism for the populace (*minjung Bulgyo*) as a means to sever the ties of saṅgha from the powerful Japanese state and to serve the general public.

The translations in this volume include the following major tracts on Buddhist reforms: Gwon Sangro’s “Treatise on the Reformation of Korean Buddhism” (*Joseon Bulgyo gaehyeongnon*), Han Yongun’s *Treatise on the Restoration of Korean Buddhism* (*Joseon Bulgyo yusinnon*); Han Yongun’s “Reform Proposals for Korean Buddhism” (*Joseon Bulgyo ui gaehyeogan*), and Yi Yeongjae’s “Treatise on the Renovation of Korean Buddhism” (*Joseon Bulgyo hyeoksinnon*).

Among these tracts, Gwon Sangro’s “Treatise on the Reformation of Korean Buddhism” and Han Yongun’s *Treatise on the Restoration of Korean Buddhism* typify the trend, prior to the March First Movement of 1919, toward apolitical saṅgha reforms. Han Yongun’s “Reform Proposals for Korean Buddhism” and Yi Yeongjae’s “Treatise on the Renovation of Korean Buddhism” show different ideas on reformation than earlier apolitical reform treatises. They criticize the Japanese state and the role of the Temple Ordinance in politically confining Buddhism.¹

Gwon Sangro and “Treatise on the Reformation of Korean Buddhism”

Gwon Sangro (1879–1965) published his “Treatise on the Reformation of Korean Buddhism” in the journal *Korean Buddhist Monthly* (*Joseon*

Bulgyo wolbo) from volume 3 (April 1912) to volume 8 (September 1912) and from volume 13 (February 1913) to volume 18 (July 1913). The tract, organized into four main parts, consists of a total of 15 chapters and is written in a Sino-Korean style (mixed letters of Chinese and Korean). The series abruptly ended with the publication of *Korean Buddhist Monthly*'s last edition, volume 19 (August 1913).

Gwon Sangro was a noted Buddhist scholar and prolific writer. He was born into the Andong Gwon family at Mun'gyeong in Gyeongsangbuk-do in 1879,² where, for over ten years, he studied the Confucian classics at a local Confucian school. He lost his father in 1894 and his mother in 1895, and he entered a Buddhist monastery at Gimryongsa in 1897 at the age of eighteen. He received his first dharma name, Mongchan, and later changed it to Sangro (sobriquet Toegyeong). Before he took full ordination in 1912 at Wonheungsa Temple in Seoul, he had excelled in learning Buddhist scriptures and served as a scripture master at various monastery schools.

He became the head of the editorial department of the Wonjong sect³ in 1910. He received full ordination with Yi Hoegwang, who was the supreme patriarch (*jongjeong*) of the Wonjong sect, as his vocation master (*eunsa*). Yi Hoegwang secretly signed a contract to merge the Wonjong with the Japanese Sōtō sect in 1910.⁴ This attempt brought fierce opposition from Korean Buddhist monastics, who, in turn, established the Imjejong sect. The colonial regime announced the Temple Ordinance in 1911 soon after the annexation of Korea and subsumed the Korean sangha under its administrative control. It did not then approve of either the Wonjong or the Imjejong; instead it designated the Korean sangha as Seon-Gyo Yangjong (Unified Seon and Gyo Teachings).

Gwon's association with this notorious pro-Japanese Yi Hoegwang seemed to presage his later collaborative actions with the colonial government, which incurred much disgrace and indignation in later generations.

Under the Temple Ordinance, each of the thirty main temples

emerged as an independent administration system. The abbots of the thirty temples formed the Conference Office of the Abbots of the Thirty Main Temples in November 1911, five months after the ordinance was enacted, and changed the name to the Cooperative Office of the Thirty Main Temples of Seon-Gyo Teachings in 1915. The Conference Office of the Abbots issued *Korean Buddhist Monthly* (*Joseon Bulgyo wolbo*) from February 1912 to August 1913, with nineteen issues in total. Gwon served as the editor-in-chief, and during this time, his “Treatise on the Reformation of Korean Buddhism” was published in the journal. Later, he was appointed as the chief editor for *Buddhism* (*Bulgyo*) in 1924 and served through the eighty-third issue in May 1931.⁵ In 1931 he began teaching at the Jungang Buddhist Junior College (1930–1940), Korea’s highest-level Buddhist school. The saṅgha promoted the college as the Hyehwa Junior College (1940–1944) in 1940 and advanced it to Dongguk College in 1946. Gwon continued to hold the professorship and became the dean of the college in 1950 and the first president of Dongguk University in 1952 when the college became a university. He passed away in 1965.

His major publications include: *An Abridged History of Korean Buddhism* (*Joseon Bulgyo yaksa*), *Complete Works on Korean Buddhist Temples* (*Han'guk sachal jeonseo*), *An Abridged History of Korean Seon Buddhism* (*Han'guk Seonjong yaksa*), *Extract of Buddhism from the Veritable Records of the Joseon Dynasty* (*Ijo sillok Bulgyo chojon*), 20 vols, and *A Korean Geographical Dictionary* (*Han'guk jimyeong yeonhyeok sajeon*). Despite all his impressive intellectual achievements, his pro-Japanese involvements left a serious blot on his life. As the Japanese imperial state involved in a series of wars, the Manchurian Incident in 1931, the Sino-Japanese War in 1937, and the Pacific War in 1941, Gwon’s collaboration with imperial Japan became too evident.⁶ He gave lectures in support of the Japanese war policy, urged Korean Buddhist clerics to volunteer for the Japanese imperial army, and wrote many articles explicitly defending and glorifying imperial policies.

Given the complexity and turn his life, it is not odd that later generations have not accorded Gwon's scholarly achievements proper recognition, and his "Treatise on the Reformation of Korean Buddhism" is no exception. In his early years as a Buddhist writer and thinker, he had shared with fellow Buddhist monastics enthusiasm for reversing Korean Buddhism's decline. He wrote his reform tract to encourage the sangha to awaken to the new era and modernize the religion so that it would survive the volatile times.

"Treatise on the Reformation of Korean Buddhism" consists of four main parts: (1) an introduction, (2) how to carry out Buddhist reformation, (3) previous examples of Buddhist reformation, and (4) urgent reformation tasks. Gwon argued for the imperative nature of Buddhist reforms and offered an ideological foundation for the reformation.

In the introduction, Gwon first lamented the grave situation of the Korean sangha, which hid itself deep in the mountains and barely retained even its name; and he then pointed to how urgently Buddhist reformation was needed to ensure survival in the changing times of religious rivalry. In chapter 1, he argued that *yusin* (restoration) was the most urgent task; for him *yusin* meant revitalization and reformation in which every defect was completely removed and positive aspects were further enhanced. He stated that *yusin* should be carried out by reformation. To carry out reformation, he stressed the active work of humans (*inwi*) as opposed to the work of nature (*cheonwi*). Instead of depending on nature (heaven), he insisted on human effort and urged that the Buddhist monastics themselves initiate reformation.

Gwon reiterated the benefits of reformation: reformation was the only way to revive Buddhism. It would awaken Buddhist monastics from a pitch-dark dream, remove their ignorance and stubborn thought, revive monastic education, expand the institution, and have monastics enjoy their liberty. He longed for finding Buddhist reformers yet found that the majority of monastics were lazy, avaricious, or obsequious to the powerful. He appealed to his fellow

monastics to forgo personal interests and take on the crucial tasks of reformation.

In the eight sections of chapter 1, however, he expressed his optimism for the reformation. He was certain that the present was the right and rare time for reformation because Korean Buddhism had hit its bottom and the weakness of Korean monastics had reached its nadir. There was left only the chance to move ahead in this extreme time. At the same time, he revealed his pro-Japanese attitude toward the Japanese occupation by adding that Japanese colonial rule would benefit Korean Buddhism's reform and revival.

He concluded chapter 1 by highlighting the importance of reformation; in order to acquire group power and establish self-government, Buddhism needed reformation, which would strengthen the religion and preserve the old community of saṅgha.

In chapter 2, Gwon sought to persuade those who were skeptical of reformation. He provided the two best examples of reformers in Buddhism—the Śākyamuni Buddha and Bodhidharma. The Śākyamuni Buddha reformed Brahmanism and its caste system and established the religion of equality and enlightenment. Through Bodhidharma, he showed that Buddhism had been flexible and viable in changing times. He argued that Buddhism had been transmitted to the present because of Buddhist patriarchs who had reformed the teachings from generation to generation; Bodhidharma was the progenitor of reformation because he rescued Chinese Buddhism, which had been mired in words and letters during its time.

In chapter 3, Gwon discussed the imperative tasks of reformation. Before reforming affairs, he wrote, monastics should reform their minds, with a strong faith in Buddhism and unifying their minds. He then talked about the reformation of the organization. Korean Buddhism had an organization in terms of appearance and power, but the organization did not hold the minds of its members. He urged that monastics should change their minds and stand together as one; and the future of Buddhism would be bright.

He then turned his attention to more practical matters, the establishment of foundations and education reformation. He argued that the saṅgha should reform financial affairs by forming a foundation; it should seek to increase wealth and utilize temple properties to launch cooperative enterprises for the religion. He proposed that Buddhism should have financial power and a foundation that could manage its finances.

Most of all, he first asked the monastics to be awake to the changing times. He stated that monks and nuns lived in deep mountains and that they had thus no knowledge about current changes in society and lacked motivation for reformation and of an awareness of the world. For him, it was imperative that monastics awaken to the changing world.

As a doctrinal master himself, he also emphasized doctrinal learning prior to meditation and propagation. To promote doctrinal learning, he noted that the saṅgha should reform its educational institutions. He believed that their reformation entailed changing teachers, books, systems, and location. He charged that most doctrinal teachers were unqualified to teach; they were concerned only with fame and name and failed to produce good students. He did not mention the other three changes because the tract was brought to an abrupt halt in the volume published in August 1913. The reason for this abrupt discontinuation, according to Kim Doojae at Dongguk University, would be the publication of a comprehensive reform treatise, *Treatise on the Restoration of Korean Buddhism* by Han Yongun in May 1913.⁷

Overall, in his reformation tract Gwon sought to persuade and educate his fellow monastics about the need for reformation and tried to explicate its meaning and urgency. Even though the tract was incomplete, his suggestion for unification of the group, self-government, and establishment of a foundation is noteworthy.

Han Yongun and *Treatise on the Restoration of Korean Buddhism* and “Reform Proposals for Korean Buddhism”⁸

Han Yongun (1879–1944), better known by his Buddhist pen name of Manhae, is remembered much differently than Gwon Sangro; while Gwon received a mixed evaluation because of his notorious pro-Japanese activities, Manhae has been celebrated as a leading figure not only in religion but also in literary and social arenas. He is regarded as the great poet who wrote the *Silence of the Beloved* and a national leader of the March First Movement.

Manhae was born in Hongseong in Chungcheongnam-do. He had received a Confucian education, mastering, in his teens, Confucian classics such as the *Analects*, *Mencius*, *Great Learning*, *Doctrine of the Mean*, *Book of Songs*, *Book of Documents*, and others. He left his village after the court army killed both his father and brother, while they were involved in one of the “righteous army” movements, which occurred frequently after the Donghak Peasant Movement in 1894. He entered the monastery in 1897. He became a postulant at Oseam Hermitage near the Baekdamsa Monastery and took full ordination in 1905.

His writings include *Great Canon of Buddhism* (*Bulgyo daejeon*), a digest of Buddhist scriptures in the Korean vernacular; the *Annotated Ten Abstruse Discussions* (*Siphyeondam juhae*), an annotation of a Tang text, the *Shixuantan*;⁹ the *Silence of the Beloved* (*Nim ui chimmuk*), a collection of his poems.¹⁰ He also wrote 163 Chinese poems and five novels.¹¹

Manhae served as a propagator (*pogyosa*) around 1916 at the Central Propagation Office of Korean Seon Buddhism, which was built in 1912 as one of the central propagation temples in Seoul. He published his own magazine *Mind Only* (*Yusim*), but only for a short period of time, from September to December of 1918, due to a lack of funds.¹² He served as an editor-in-chief of *Buddhism* (*Bulgyo*) from 1931 to 1933; and contributed articles to *Buddhism: New Edition* (*Sin Bulgyo*) from 1937 to 1940 and *Seon Collection* (*Seonwon Seon*) from

1931 to 1935.¹³ He presented his reform ideas and Buddhist thought in those magazines.

Manhae published the *Treatise on the Restoration of Korean Buddhism* in 1913, three years after he had finished the first draft. He proposed reforms to promote Buddhism's viability in modern society and, as a consequence, to enhance the social standing of the religion. The treatise consists of sixteen chapters that cover various aspects of saṅgha reforms. This is the first and most comprehensive systematic writing on Buddhist reformation to appear during its time. Throughout his life, Manhae maintained the ideas proposed in this treatise and expanded them a little further in his 1931 article "Reform Proposals for Korean Buddhism."

Manhae was exposed to Western philosophers such as René Descartes, Francis Bacon, and Immanuel Kant through the writings of Liang Qichao (1873–1929). He learned about Western civilization from The *Collected Writings from the Ice-drinker's Studio* (*Yinbingshi heji*), Liang Qichao's encyclopedic book on Western knowledge of political thought, history, and philosophy.¹⁴ The early Japanese Buddhist experiments with Western ideas must also have provided a frame of reference. In 1908 Manhae had an opportunity to go to Japan, which he believed to have emerged as a new center of modern civilization. He was assisted by monks of the Sōtō sect during his stay at Sōtōshū (now Komazawa) University from May through August 1908. He also toured Tokyo, Kyoto, Shimonoseki, and Nikkō, returning to Korea after eight months in Japan.¹⁵

Treatise on the Restoration of Korean Buddhism

Manhae proposed reforms that would prepare the saṅgha to open up to the laity and public. Changes included monastic education, propagating, rituals, and other policies. Manhae's reform ideas can be divided into four major groups: (1) unification of the doctrinal orientation of the saṅgha, (2) simplification of practices, (3) centralization of the saṅgha administration, and (4) reformation of the saṅgha policies and customs.

He called for changes in monastery education by adopting the education system used by the general public. He advocated that monastery schools introduce a general education curriculum for monastics, to be completed before undertaking Buddhist studies, including courses in the humanities and social and natural sciences. He also encouraged monastics to study abroad in India, China, Europe, and America.

The modernization of monastic education could help in Buddhist proselytizing. Manhae pointed out that without disseminating Buddhist teachings Buddhism would decline. Christianity spread rapidly because of its active and varied propagation activities. In contrast, the only method of Buddhist propagation was monks' monastery lectures, and even then the content was not intellectually stimulating. He proposed the training of Buddhist propagators and the development of propagation methods, including lectures, publications, translations, and social charity. To be competent propagators, Buddhist monastics should have passion, perseverance, and compassion. He also noted that the traditional locations of most monasteries in remote mountain areas presented a major obstacle to Buddhist proselytizing. The isolation kept Buddhist monastics mired in the past due to lack of stimulation and interaction with society. Having no knowledge of the outside world, monastics lacked an adventurous or competitive spirit. They eventually became pessimistic, far apart from their duty to save the world. Manhae suggested that most Buddhist monasteries should be relocated to where people live so that they could make connections with people's lives.

Similarly, Manhae attempted to simplify Buddhist worship practice in order to enhance Buddhism's appeal. He proposed changes in frequent and complex Buddhist ceremonies, advocating a single daily ceremony, in the morning, accompanied only by prostration three times and singing a hymn for the Buddha, a practice he borrowed from Christian churches. He also wanted to simplify the mode of worship by eliminating reverence of multiple deities. He suggested the worship of only the historical Buddha

Śākyamuni, who could represent all other buddhas and bodhisattvas. He then rejected the adoration of other icons, including the arhats, pratyekabuddhas, minor Buddhist deities, and indigenous deities. Simplicity could provide a sense of order to mixed and confused practices.

Furthermore, the monk's lifestyle should also be changed to harmonize with the life of contemporary society. Manhae recommended that monastics earn their own living rather than depending on the laity. The major source of monastery income came from ritual services for the dead, alms, and lay donations. He believed that monastics should engage in productive labor to restore their social prestige. Monastics could generate income by utilizing the natural and human resources of the saṅgha. The saṅgha could use monastery forests for tea plantations or for planting mulberry, fruit, or acorn trees; it could also run factories or commercial operations using its human resources.

Manhae also noted that monastics should be allowed to choose whether they marry or not.¹⁶ He resorted to the doctrine of *upāya*, skill in means, to make his case. The Buddha freely used his skills in means according to the people's spiritual faculties, time, and place. Manhae thought that observing celibacy was no longer viable in his time, and it even posed a major threat to the propagation of Buddhism and sustenance of the religion. He argued that celibacy was antithetical to ethical norms of filial piety, harmful to the nation by contributing to the decrease of population, and obstructed proselytizing and interaction with the laity. His proposal incurred much controversy among contemporary monastics and later scholars. As Manhae predicted, however, clerical marriage became widely practiced with the government's official approval in 1926.

To implement Buddhist reforms efficiently, the saṅgha should, Manhae insisted, centralize its scattered monasteries and their lands. Each monastery had its own Buddhist regimen and administration that prevented effective and cooperative work among the saṅgha. Under a unified system, whether partially or completely, the saṅgha

could implement uniform, consistent policies on administration, financial plans, education, and rites. The saṅgha could also introduce an election system for abbot positions and carry out large projects together. With a concentrated system like this, it could wield great influence over educating monastics and expand efforts at propagating.

While the *Treatise on the Restoration of Korean Buddhism* focused exclusively on reforms of the saṅgha without mentioning state policies,¹⁷ Manhae presented his later reform ideas as a form of resistance against state intervention. In “Reform Proposals for Korean Buddhism,” he criticized the main-branch temple system established by the Temple Ordinance and urged the centralization of the saṅgha and the practice of Buddhism for the populace.

“Reform Proposals for Korean Buddhism”

Manhae shared his insights with Buddhist youth, providing them with leadership. In the 1920s young Buddhist monastics began to raise their voices against the Temple Ordinance and embarked on the Buddhist youth movement. From 1919 to 1922, Manhae was incarcerated, for his involvement with the March First Movement. After his release from prison, the Buddhist Youth Association elected him as its director in 1924, but by this time the association had become inactive. The secret Buddhist society Mandang also sought advice and inspiration from Manhae by having him as its figurehead leader. Manhae embraced the major goals of these youth associations: the separation of religion and the state with the abolition of the Temple Ordinance; centralization of the saṅgha administration; and the practice of Buddhism for the masses.

Manhae considered the Temple Ordinance a major obstacle to Korean Buddhism and insisted on the self-management of the saṅgha. The ordinance forced the administration, management of properties, and the whole system of the saṅgha under the Japanese regime’s control. He argued the saṅgha should establish a central organization, either a headquarters of the main temples (*chongbongsan*)

or an office for religious affairs (*gyomuso*). The central organ should have the power of appointing the abbots of the thirty-one main temples and unify the temple laws (*sabeop*) to ensure the abbots follow the orders of the central organization.

Manhae contended that the *saṅgha* should merge all the temples and hermitages scattered in the mountains and take control of their unused assets for the good of Buddhism. He further argued that the *saṅgha* should convert the temples' fixed assets to liquid funds, merge all the various temples' assets, have the central organization manage those assets by establishing manufacturing businesses and consumption enterprises, and thus provide the financial security of the monastics.

For the propagation of Buddhism in print, Korean Buddhism should translate the scriptures into easy pure Korean or mixed letters of pure Korean and Chinese. Before embarking on translating the whole corpus of the Buddhist canons, the first thing to do was select simple scriptures and translate them with simple words or select sacred phrases or great passages from scriptures and translate them for pamphlets or books.

Manhae then opined that everything had to be changed for the *minjung*, including the doctrine, system, and properties of the *saṅgha*. Buddhist doctrines and canons should be made easy and simple so as to be accessible to the *minjung*.¹⁸ Buddhist institutions and properties had to be open to, and used for the benefit of, the *minjung*.

Manhae further asserted that Buddhism should be involved in making secure the lives of the *minjung*. By investing Buddhist assets in running factories, the *saṅgha* could generate income to support the poor and the needy. By comparison, Manhae had previously proposed in the *Treatise on the Restoration of Korean Buddhism* the same commercial operation of the *saṅgha* but to achieve economic self-sufficiency of the *saṅgha* and thus enhance the status of Buddhist monastics. In the "Reform Proposals for Korean Buddhism," he expanded the profit to the lay people, stating that the essential

meaning of religion was to increase people's happiness.

He showed a pragmatic approach to religion. Like secular ideologies, such as socialism and capitalism, he believed that Buddhism should be functioning in the daily lives of people in addition to taking care of spiritual concerns. He stated that *minjung Bulgyo* was to practice Buddhism for *minjung*. He believed that Buddhists should attain enlightenment through defilement and achieve *nirvāṇa* in the midst of the stream of life and death. Thus, Buddhists should participate in social activities by establishing Buddhist libraries, welfare institutions for laborers and farmers, and educational facilities for the general public. Likewise, Manhae attempted to construct a socially sensitive Buddhism, letting Buddhist practices take root in a concrete place.

Last, Manhae presented a unified approach of Seon (meditation training) and Gyo (Buddhist doctrines). He offered the simultaneous practice of Seon/Gyo as the core of Buddhism: Seon and Gyo are in dialectical tension, influencing one another. He emphasized internal attention through meditation (Seon) as much as the ideas of social involvement gleaned from teachings (Gyo). He sought the absolute sense of truth, not in isolation from society, but in active involvement. Seon provides the solid basis for the ultimate deliverance from entanglements while Gyo offers specific guidance on how to live together with others. Thus, Seon and Gyo constitute a complementary whole.

To reform Seon and Gyo, he suggested that for Gyo teachings the sangha needed to compile text books and reform teaching methods; and for Seon it needed to unify teaching concepts and complete a regulatory system.

Manhae's reform ideas first centered on the sangha reformation for the survival of the religion in a modern context. His later reform ideas were presented as a form of resistance against state intervention. He tried to sever the sangha's dependence on the powerful and attempted to establish direct contact between the religion and the people.

Overall, the reform ideas proposed in the *Treatise on the Restoration of Korean Buddhism* provided the main frame of reference for the subsequent saṅgha reformation. The saṅgha adapted Manhae's ideas on education and proselytizing in particular. As he suggested, the saṅgha became interested in providing monastics with a general education and in establishing a teacher's college. Young monastics were sent to foreign countries, mostly to Japan, to study. Branch temples (*pogyoso*) were built in villages and towns to increase contact with the people. The Conference Office of the Abbots of the Thirty Main Temples decided to convert monastery chanting halls to meditation halls. The saṅgha, however, faced many difficulties in implementing its reform ideas with financial limits and state control presenting major obstacles.

Yi Yeongjae and “Treatise on the Renovation of Korean Buddhism”

The last piece for translation is Yi Yeongjae's “Treatise on the Renovation of Korean Buddhism.” Yi (1900–1927) was born in Cheongju in Chungcheongbuk-do. He graduated from Cheongju Agricultural High School and worked as a civil official at the provincial office of Chungcheongbuk-do before entering the monastery.¹⁹ He became interested in Christianity during his teens but developed skepticism about its doctrines and missionary activities in Korea. Influenced by Baek Chowol, a monk involved in anti-Japanese activities, Yi became a Buddhist instead.

Yi took the tonsure at Beopjusa Temple in Chungcheongbuk-do around 1918. He studied Buddhist scriptures with Gim Bogwang, a renowned doctrinal master and left for Japan for further studies in 1920. He graduated from the Department of Religion at Nippon University in 1923 and entered the Department of Indian Philosophy at Tokyo Imperial University.

He wrote “Treatise on the Renovation of Korean Buddhism” in 1924 when he was a junior at Nippon University. He was a founding member of the Buddhist Youth Association of the Korean Clerics

in Japan, and this group published the progressive magazine, *Vajra* (*Geumgangjeo*) as its official publication. Yi served as an editor of *Vajra* from its first issue, published in May 1924, to its sixth in July 1925. *Vajra* published twenty-six issues until January 1943, experimenting with new Western ideas and advocating up-to-date reforms.

To receive a modern education, young clerics, including Yi, went to colleges in foreign countries, mostly in Japan. The magazine *Buddhist Journal of Korea* reported that there were thirteen students in Japan in 1913.²⁰ In 1924, about thirty students studied in Japan and six at universities in Beijing.²¹ In 1928, twenty-two graduated from Japanese colleges.²² Until liberation in 1945, Buddhist clerics continued to study mostly in Japan. These educated monks emerged as the leaders of the youth movement and later assumed central positions in the saṅgha.

After studying at Tokyo Imperial University, Yi decided to embark on a pilgrimage to India in November 1925. He planned to study the Sanskrit and Pali languages in Sri Lanka for two years before going to India; and in India he wanted to study Indian philosophy, archeology, and Indian national movements while visiting the Buddhist sacred sites. But, tragically, he fell ill in early 1927 because of overwork and possibly the different climate and environment, and he met an untimely death in Sri Lanka in October 1927. Even during his short stay in Sri Lanka, he contributed articles on Sri Lanka and its Buddhism to the magazine, *Buddhism* (*Bulgyo*). They included “Journey to Sri Lanka” (*Doseokgi*), “The Buddhism of Sri Lanka” (*Songnan ui Bulgyo*), and “Record on Sri Lanka” (*Namgukgi*).²³

Yi’s “Treatise on the Renovation of Korean Buddhism” represents the spirit of the Buddhist youth movement of the 1920s. After the March First Movement of 1919, Korean Buddhists transformed the reforms into a politically inclined movement and joined the nationalist march for the restoration of sovereignty. Buddhist youth launched the youth movement, calling for the separation of religion from politics and the abolition of the Temple Ordinance, by which,

they thought, the Japanese government had stripped the saṅgha of its independence.²⁴ Along with Manhae, young Buddhist clerics adopted Buddhism for the populace (*minjung Bulgyo*) as a means to sever the ties of saṅgha from the powerful Japanese state and to serve the general public. In this sense, *minjung Bulgyo* was not only a way of reaching out to people socially but also a way of resisting state intervention.

In 1920, young Buddhist clerics formed the Buddhist Youth Association and throughout the decade set up branch associations in local temples. As advocates of the Buddhist Youth Association, in December 1921, they also established the Buddhist Reformation Association. The major goals of these youth associations were the separation of religion and the state, the abolition of the Temple Ordinance, centralization of the saṅgha administration, and the practice of *minjung Bulgyo*.

“Treatise on the Renovation of Korean Buddhism” was serialized in 27 installments from November 24, 1922 to December 30, 1922 in *Joseon Daily* (*Joseon ilbo*), but the initial seven installments have been lost. Only twenty remain. The treatise consists of three main parts: (1) the reformation of Buddhism, (2) the establishment of a dharma nation, and (3) urgent tasks.

The gist of Yi’s treatise was his repudiation of the abuses of the Temple Ordinance and its product, the main-branch temple system. In chapter 1, Yi criticized the main-branch temple system for causing the division of the saṅgha, the discord among saṅgha members, and the despotism of the abbots of the main temples. He listed the faults of the main temple abbots—neglecting the education of clerics, propagation of Buddhism, and protection of the assets of the saṅgha. He criticized the abbots for opposing reforms, coveting personal gains and power, and monopolizing abbotships by forming cliques. In sustaining the irrational main-branch system they sought to show servility to the government.

To reform Buddhism, he argued that stopping the abuse of the main temple abbots and the Temple Ordinance that stood behind

the main-branch system required that Korean Buddhism first overthrow the main-branch system. He urged Buddhists to launch a campaign against the Temple Ordinance to make the government revise the ordinance and all temple regulations. To carry out such a difficult mission, he insisted that Buddhist clerics recapture the right faith so that they could risk their lives for Buddhism with the sense of full responsibility. For reformation, he argued, all Buddhists should come together and all branch temple abbots collaborate; and the saṅgha should collect ideas from all clerics and lay people and decide everything based on public opinion.

In chapter 2, Yi proposed that, instead of being ruled by secular regulations, a kingdom of Buddhist truth should be established; and for the administration of the Buddhist kingdom, he suggested that Buddhists adopt the most developed system, the nation-state. First, like a nation-state, the kingdom of Buddhist truth should also ratify a constitution to establish its ecclesiastical authority, the duties and rights of clerics, and regulations for administration, legislation, and jurisprudence.

Second, as a nation-state has its own sovereignty and functions like a government, the kingdom of Buddhist truth also needs to establish principal icons of worship, principal sūtras, and rituals to establish its religious identity. To integrate icons, each temple should keep only one statue of the Śākyamuni Buddha in the main hall and get rid of all other statues of buddhas, bodhisattvas, and deities. For the integration of doctrines, Buddhists should make the scriptures of Mahāyāna Buddhism the principal canon for the saṅgha.

Third, Yi urged Buddhists to unify the saṅgha with a central organization and subordinate all the temples under its rule. The central organ should be transformed into a corporation to consolidate all Buddhist assets scattered across the nation. For administrative convenience and to establish local supervisory organs, the saṅgha should divide the nation into five parishes.

Fourth, like the nation-state, he proposed, the saṅgha should separate administration and legislative powers. The saṅgha should

establish an independent legislative body like the parliament of a nation and create an administrative organ that runs like a parliamentary cabinet system to assist the supreme leader (Supreme Patriarch) and administer saṅgha affairs decided by the Saṅgha Assembly.

He then offered a three-level system of central organization located at the capital, a local headquarters placed at each local parish of the five parishes, and temples/churches as the unit group. The central organizations are composed of the Supreme Patriarch (Daebjeoptong); Elders Assembly (Nodeogwon)—an elders assembly and an advisory body for the Supreme Patriarch; the Administrative Headquarters (Chongseobwon), which, like a cabinet, is the central organization of administration; and the Saṅgha Assembly (Seonguiwon), which functions like the parliament of a nation. Provincial organizations consist of the Provincial Administrative Headquarters (Seomniwon) at each parish—the local administrative headquarters that supervises temples and mission branches (churches) under its parish—and the Local Saṅgha Assembly (Uisahoe) at each parish—a legislative organ.

As for temples and churches, the unit organization, all the temples are under a parish headquarters. Each temple should be self-governing and establish legislative and administrative organs. Churches are missionary stations, and they should belong to the provincial headquarters. They should also be governing by their lay members and establish legislative and administrative organs. With such a comprehensive blueprint for the saṅgha organization, he advocated the centralization and unification of the saṅgha, the independence of a legislative body, and a responsible cabinet.

In chapter 3, Yi talked about urgent tasks: proselytizing, education, translation of the canon, social charity, and establishment of the saṅgha financial organization. For proselytizing, the saṅgha should move all the temples located in remote mountain valleys to cities except for those temples that are in out-of-the-way areas for special reasons or have historical importance. It also should reform

the system of churches to be governed by lay people and expand the organization by having one head and placing two departments of religion and society under the head.

Yi believed that churches should improve regional cultures and the lives of the masses while both spreading doctrines and operating religious faith-based social service businesses. In addition, churches should be organized consistently and everywhere, and the saṅgha should produce propagators from among its clerics and lay people by establishing educational facilities for them and sending missionaries to foreign countries where Buddhism has not been propagated.

To facilitate proselytizing, he insisted, the saṅgha should provide an organized education through a unified education system with consistent principles. He also proposed to build schools for the general public in order to wield a positive influence on society and develop Buddhist culture; the saṅgha should provide the general public with education at the elementary and middle/high school level and train competent clerics for the saṅgha at colleges. For the sake of the general public, churches should be open to people day and night and offer Sunday schools, boys/girls clubs, night schools for laborers, kindergartens, job training schools, and other activities for local communities.

Like other reformers, Yi also stressed translating the Buddhist canon in Korean and insisted that the saṅgha should establish a translation institution to hire Buddhist scholars to undertake the work as a collective task. Moreover, he suggested the saṅgha establish a central bank in Seoul and branches at each parish to protect saṅgha assets and help lay people spend their money. Similarly, he advocated social charity; Buddhism should engage in various social enterprises to help people in their daily lives. He suggested that the saṅgha should establish an office of social work to promote social charity, and churches should set up departments of social work to engage in local development to build the Pure Land in this world.

Yi's reform track ended with his plea to fellow clerics. He appealed to his colleagues to rise up and gain courage to embark on

reformation. He reiterated that they needed only a reformation to rectify the corrupt saṅgha and that the fate of Buddhism depended on reforming the old system. He believed that the present was the heaven-sent time for reformation, and he encouraged clerics to devote their lives for reformation.

Overall, Yi criticized the corrupt main-branch system and the Temple Ordinance and called for a reformation to institute a new system. He proposed a kingdom of Buddhist truth built by imitating the nation-state. His reform ideas included enacting a saṅgha constitution; separating administrative and legislative powers; centralizing the saṅgha; unifying doctrines, icons, and rituals; modernizing saṅgha education and proselytizing; and promoting social charity.

Yi's reform ideas typified those of young clerics in 1920s and were in turn adopted in the Buddhist youth movement. At the first nationwide conference of Buddhist clergy (*seungnyeo daehoe*), held in 1929, it adopted a saṅgha constitution (*jongheon*) and established the saṅgha assembly (*jonghoe*) as a legislative organ.²⁵ Under the Temple Ordinance, however, the saṅgha legislation could not punish or dismiss members of the saṅgha.²⁶ The Temple Ordinance and the government's intervention in the Buddhist affairs persisted until the end of Japanese rule in 1945.

Conclusion

These reformation tracts are important to understanding Buddhist ideas about modernity, nationalism, colonialism, and social involvement. At the turn of the twentieth century, Korean Buddhists felt obliged to change the fate of Buddhism through reformation. Gwon Sangro and Han Yongun in their treatises, written in the early 1910s, attempted to waken fellow Buddhist monastics to the urgent need for reformation. Their reformation proposals involve modernizing the system of education, propagating, and financial operation. They hoped to open up Buddhism to the laity with social

charity and by centralizing its administration.

After the March First Movement, Buddhist reformers focused on how colonial rule suffocated their religion, and they struggled to abolish the Temple Ordinance and the main-branch temple system. In the 1920s the Buddhist youth movement led such politically charged campaigns. Yi Yeongjae's "Treatise on the Renovation of Korean Buddhism" and Han Yongun's "Reform Proposals for Korean Buddhism" exposed such issues. They criticized the corrupt saṅgha and the Temple Ordinance and argued for an independent self-government and Buddhism for the populace.

Buddhist modern reforms, however, met an abrupt halt after the liberation from Japan in 1945. The saṅgha faced another crisis under the name of de-colonization. During the colonial period, Buddhist clerics, including Manhae, advocated clerical marriage, and the majority of them married.²⁷ This majority of clerics became a target of cleansing, accused of being remnants of the colonial past. The minority of celibate clerics, backed by the new Korean government, made clerical marriage the focal issue of de-colonization and concentrated on the restoration of monasticism. While focusing on the restoration of the saṅgha's original "purity," the celibates neglected modern reformation of the saṅgha that had begun during the colonial era. Even now the modernization of Buddhism is a relevant subject to Korean Buddhists while they still struggle to accommodate modern elements.

Notes

- 1 The Japanese colonial state enacted the seven articles of the Temple Ordinance in June of 1911 and, in the following month, announced detailed regulations for administering the Temple Ordinance. These regulations became effective in September 1911. The seven articles of the Temple Ordinance brought Korean Buddhism under the firm control of the Japanese regime.
- 2 For detailed chronology of Gwon's life, see *Toegyoengdang jeonseo* 退耕堂全書 [Complete Works of Toegyeong] (Seoul: Ihwa munhwasa, 1990), vol. 1, 2; Yang Eunyong, “Geundae Bulgyo gaehyeok undong” 近代 佛教改革運動, in *Han'guk sasangsa daegye* 韓國思想史大系 6 (Seongnam, Gyeonggi-do: Jeongsin munhwa yeon'guwon, 1993), 139–175.
- 3 In 1908, fifty-two monastery leaders nationwide convened at Wonheungsa and established the Wonjong sect and elected Yi Hoegwang as the supreme patriarch and Gim Hyeonam as a general director.
- 4 On the Wonjong and Imjejong movements, see Yi Neunghwa, *Joseon Bulgyo tongsa* 朝鮮佛教通史 (1918; reprint, Seoul: Gyeonghui chulpansa, 1968), part 3: 937–939.
- 5 During the colonial period, the Korean saṅgha published a series of official Korean Buddhist periodicals. *Korean Buddhist Monthly* (*Joseon Bulgyo wolbo* 朝鮮佛教月報) was issued from 1912 to 1913; *Buddhist Journal of Korea* (*Haedong bulbo* 海東佛報) was published from November 1913 to June 1914; *The Monthly of the Association for the Promotion of Buddhism* (*Bulgyo jinheunghoe wolbo* 佛教振興會月報) was issued from March 1915 to December 1915; *The World of Korean Buddhism* (*Joseon Bulgyoye* 朝鮮佛教界) from April 1916 to June of 1917; *The Journal of the Collection of Korean Buddhism* (*Joseon Bulgyo chongbo* 朝鮮佛教叢報) was published from March 1917 to January of 1921; and then *Buddhism* (*Bulgyo* 佛教) from 1924 to July 1933, and in March 1937 *Buddhism: New Edition* (*Sin Bulgyo* 新佛教) succeeded *Bulgyo* until August 1944. The frequent suspension of the publication was an indication of the saṅgha's financial difficulties and the censorship of the Japanese regime.
- 6 Im Hyebong, *Chinil Bulgyoron* 친일불교론 (Seoul: Minjoksa, 1993), 2:

509–522.

- 7 Kim Doojae translated this treatise into modern Korean with footnotes and published his translation in *Dabo* 多寶 (Spring 1992). For my translations, I made reference to this translation, which omitted some parts of the original text, while trying to be faithful to Gwon's original manuscript.
- 8 Han Yongun, *Joseon Bulgyo yusinnon* 朝鮮佛教維新論, in *Han Yongun jeonjip* 韓龍雲全集 [The Collected Works of Han Yongun] (Seoul: Sin'gu munhwasa, 1973), 2:33–125; and “*Joseon Bulgyo ui gaehyeogan*” 朝鮮佛教의 改革案, in *Han Yongun jeonjip*, 2:160–169; *Bulgyo* 88 (1931): 2–10.
- 9 It was a work of a Tang Caodong monk, and it is consisted of ten discussions that purport to express the ultimate state of the mind.
- 10 This collection earned him the title of Korea's first modern, nationalist poet.
- 11 For the writings of Manhae, see *Han Yongun jeonjip*.
- 12 For *Yusim's* 唯心 table of contents, see Minjok Bulgyo yeon'guso, ed., *Bulgyo gwangye doseo nonmun mongnok* 佛教關係 圖書論文目錄 (Seoul: Daewon jeongsa, 1986), 258–259.
- 13 For the list of Buddhist journals during the Japanese occupation and their contents, see *Bulgyo gwangye doseo nonmun mongnok*, 207–279.
- 14 Ko Un, *Han Yongun pyeongjeon* 韓龍雲評傳 (Seoul: Mineumsa, 1975), 140–141; the *Yinbingshi wenji* influenced Manhae in his writing in *Joseon Bulgyo yusinnon*. Liang Qichao, *Yinbingshi heji* 飲冰室合集 [The Collected Writings from the Ice-drinker's Studio], *wenji* 文集 [Collection of Writings] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju chuban, 1989).
- 15 Yu Beongcheon, *Han Yong-un & Yi Kwang-su* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1992), 182.
- 16 Robert Buswell discussed this proposal in detail; Robert E. Buswell, Jr., *The Zen Monastic Experience* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 26–30.
- 17 This is because the *Joseon Bulgyo yusinnon* was completed in 1910 before the Japanese developed its religious policies.
- 18 Buddhists used the concepts *minjung* (the masses) and *daejung* (the general public) interchangeably: *minjung* thus probably referred to wider range of people who are the governed in contrast to the governing. During the latter parts of 1920s, the term *minjung* was used widely by society and among Buddhists. In 1928, a monk stated that at that time no one failed to mention *minjung* (*Bulgyo* 43 [1928]: 9). The term *minjung Bulgyo* was used in Japanese. It was widely spread by the introduction of democracy during by the Taishō era (1912–1925), referring to the larger segment of the general populace: Tamamuro Taijō, ed., *Nihon Bukkyō shi* 日本佛教史 (Kyoto:

- Hōzōkan, 1967), 3:399–406.
- 19 For the life and the reform treatise of Yi Yeongjae, see Gim Gwang sik, “Yi Yeongjae ui saengae wa ‘Joseon Bulgyo hyeoksinnon’” 李英宰의 생애와 “朝鮮佛教革新論” [The Life of Yi Yeongjae and “Joseon Bulgyo hyeoksinnon”], in *Hanguk geundae Bulgysa yeon'gu* 韓國近代佛教史研究 (Seoul: Minjoksa, 1996), 149–191.
- 20 *Haedong bulbo* 4 (1914): 320.
- 21 *Bulgyo* 6 (1924): 66.
- 22 Sambo hakhoe, ed., *Hanguk geunse Bulgyo baengnyeonsa* 韓國近世佛教百年史 (Seoul: Minjoksa, 1965), 1:104–105; *Bulgyo* 43 (1928): 243; *Bulgyo* 45 (1928): 385–386. Among the Japanese colleges from which Korean clerics graduated were: Rinzaishū daigaku, Sōtōshū daigaku, Risshō, Chuo, Waseda, Nihon, Taishō, and Ryūkoku daigaku.
- 23 “Journey to Sri Lanka” was serialized in *Bulgyo* 24 (June 1926), 25 (July 1926), 26 (August 1926), and 27 (September 1926); “The Buddhism of Sri Lanka” was published in *Bulgyo* 31 (January 1927), 38 (August 1927), and 39 (September 1927); and “Record on Sri Lanka” was serialized in *Bulgyo* 32 (February 1927), 33 (March 1927), and 34 (April 1927).
- 24 The Japanese regime announced the Temple Ordinance in 1911 and placed Korean saṅgha under its direct control by making each of the thirty main temples an independent administration system.
- 25 *Bulgyo* 56 (1929): 618–642.
- 26 Gim Beomin, “Jeong-gyo bullip e daehayeo” 正教分立에 대하여 [About the Separation between Politics and Religion], *Bulgyo* 100 (1932): 733.
- 27 By the time of liberation, about 7,000 clerics were married and only 300 clerics remained celibate. Beginning in 1954, the minority celibate faction, with the strong support of the Rhee Syngman regime, initiated the so-called “purification movement.”

TREATISE ON THE REFORMATION OF KOREAN BUDDHISM

(JOSEON BULGYO GAEHYEONGNON)*

Gwon Sangro

Introduction

1. How to Carry out the Reformation
2. Previous Examples of Reformation
3. Our Urgent Reformation Tasks

Introduction

It is difficult indeed; the reformation of Buddhism—it is really a difficult task. Buddhism is the greatest religion, and reformation is the most important matter; now I propose this most significant task of reformation for the greatest religion. Because of my narrow knowledge and my dull and coarse writing, it will be difficult for me to avoid the challenge of people who are complacent about the present and the ridicule of wise people.

Birds cry when uncomfortable and move when they sense danger. Such responses are instinctual for every creature. The croaking of frogs is free from partial or impartial ideas. The shrill chirrup of a cicada does not imitate orchestral music. An insect hopping on one leg vainly sympathizes with another that has hundreds. A bird that can fly only as high as a bamboo pole perversely laughs at a phoenix that can fly across the boundless sky. All these things show that they follow the laws of nature, just as birds chirp in due time. They neither seek recognition from others nor show off their talents.

I also follow the laws of nature and instincts and try not to disclose my thoughts by keeping them in my mind; yet it is not possible. Although voicing my thoughts, I try not to have people hear me; yet this also is impossible. Even when people hear me, I attempt to keep them from going against me; yet this is even more impossible. If all these are impossible, I just entrust nature to find its own course. Whether people follow or go against me is truly not something about which I should care.

I entered the Buddhist monastery at the age of 18, and I am 34 years old now. For 16 years under the merciful light of the Buddha I have respectfully learned Buddhist teachings, worn Buddhist

robes, raised this dark [ignorant] body like a jet-black lacquered box. I received such deep Buddhist grace and benefits that is beyond imagination and description; yet I have not grasped the supreme teachings even the slightest bit. My breaking the debt of gratitude is so great and my sin is so deep.

Furthermore, with the world opening wider each day and the trend of the times changing daily, social relationships become more complex and the rivalries among religions become more serious. Despite these circumstances, Korean Buddhism flees from society, hides in the mountains, locks its doors, and falls into a deep sleep. Now even its feeble breathing has stopped, and it has become difficult to maintain even its name.

Alas! Our 6,000 Buddhist monastics are not a few, nor are our 900 temples small in numbers, yet we like to sail against a headwind. When seeing how the wind blows, who among our fellow monastics would not sigh from grief by hitting their chests and who would not cudgel their brains to rectify the situation?

I am nothing but the dregs in the wide dharma sea. In retrospect, I am incapable of leading the people. [If I were a leader,] it would be like that blind horse which follows the sound of a bell and stands or falls together with the group. Yet come to think of it, how does hair remain intact if skin is not preserved? And if a nest is broken, how are the eggs unharmed? If the dharma ocean runs dry one day, although I wish it, it would be certainly be impossible for the dregs to remain.

Now that we unfortunately face the decline of Buddhism, our efforts should be strenuous as if immediately extinguishing a fire in our hair. How can we leisurely seek comfort, avoid laborious and worrisome things, and sit by while falsely waiting for the Buddha's numinous power to be sent with blessings and heroes to be born who can reverse the fate of Buddhism?

Hold your head up and look back again. The lying Buddha at Sri Lanka kept silent, and the precious stūpa on the hills of the Ganges lost its glory; and those lamas who wear red robes in China and Tibet

fell ill just like us; we can have pity toward one another yet cannot be of help to each other.

At a certain place, there is a seven story jade pagoda made of piles of stones; at dusk the moss-draped pagoda looks terrible in the flying dust. A stone buddha at a certain temple looks grand yet has become weathered in the wind and rain, and only incense smoke is desolately rising from it. All these are due to the fault of our monastics. How does the Buddha not have numinous powers? And how does the pagoda lose its preciousness? It is just that time is working against them.

Late at night I toss and turn without falling asleep and shed rivers of tears, and my heart burns with worries; I failed to consider that I lacked talent and virtues and grabbed a pen to praise the restoration of Buddhism and called for the reformation of Buddhism.

Come! My fellow monastics! Listen! My fellow monastics! If Bodhidharma, who kept his silence for nine years,¹ could come to our country today, he would not drop the word, “*yusin*” (restoration) from his mouth. If even the Buddha, who sat for meditation for six years, were born here now, he would strive only for this task of Buddhist reformation.

Please listen, think, and make an effort. If my words do not make sense, just put aside my diffuse words. I will then ask back what kind of time the present is. The present is an era for religions to compete with one another.

1. How to Carry out Reformation

1) The Necessity of Reformation

Recently, among monastics, some have dedicated themselves to and work for Buddhism. They have striven to clean out old customs and create a refreshing environment by using various words, such as *gaeryang* (improvement), *baldal* (development), *hwakjang* (expansion), and *yusin* (restoration). Although things that were sold in cities of Persia are exotic treasures and things collected in the juniper forest are genuinely fragrant, it is necessary to inspect them carefully and assess their value. The reason is that, lacking any need for them, I will not buy them even if they are highly valuable, or alternatively I will buy them immediately if I need them despite their coarse and poor quality. Whether things become important depends on whether I need them urgently; the quality of things, good or bad, does not necessarily influence my decision to purchase them.

Having said that, is there anything that we need to drop among those previously mentioned four tasks (*gaeryang*, *baldal*, *hwakjang*, *yusin*)? There will be none we have to discard, but there will be differences among them in terms of urgency. Let's then discuss them carefully one by one.

Gaeryang means that we find defects in things and fix them gradually. *Baldal* refers to those improved aspects that are further perfected so that their qualities will be manifested in a genuine and grand manner. *Hwakjang* means that whether things are improved or not is largely irrelevant, but that we lay goods out for sale, letting the world know about our goods and showing them off, and that we finally obtain an equal footing with others displayed at the same place. *Yusin* refers to revitalization and reformation in which

every defect is completely removed and positive aspects are further enhanced.

Thus, among these four tasks, those that come before are not the same as those that follow; and those that come after are better than those that precede. The former is the cause of the latter, and the latter is the result of the former; so if we pay close attention to those that come before, then those that come after will be realized by themselves. If we wish to realize those that come later, we first need to launch those that come before without separating one from another.

Gaeryang is just a part of *yusin*, however; and *baldal* is a means to *hwakjang*. Now then, what should we adopt and apply to our religion? We should know what is urgent and what is not. Should we wield a whip on *gaeryang* and *baldal*? Should we draw a sword for *yusin* and *hwakjang*? *Baldal* is something that happens after *gaeryang*; *hwakjang* occurs when *yusin* is done. Therefore, in my narrow opinion, *yusin* should be the most urgent task.

How should we then execute *yusin*? Is *yusin* possible if, finding a defect, we correct it, and finding other flaws, we rectify them, as if we were piling up stones one by one for a pagoda? Or showing a great [spiritual] knack, like Chan Master Deshan [782–865] using his stick, should we beat [the problem] when it is either so or not so?² The former is too slow, and the latter is too hasty; thus both are not right.

We should put everything on open display, including good and bad, in terms of both ideal and practical aspects; and using wise eyes like a microscope and the precise skills of a machine for mineralogical analysis, we should carefully sort out those things that are useful ones to keep them and those things that not useful ones to let them loose and then tighten them. This, I think, is what should be called *yusin*.

To carry out *yusin*, the most powerful and useful means is reformation. Without reformation, *yusin* cannot be achieved; even when *yusin* is achieved, the results are immature and weak, so that the days following *yusin* we repeat the old practices, and it is then worse than before *yusin*. Dedicated farmers will diligently weed

in addition to fertilizing sufficiently; miners will intensely refine gemstones even when using machinery. Although those who are dedicated to Buddhist causes insist on *yusin*, reformation should be more urgent.

Without weeding, grains are not good; and pure gold cannot be attained without carefully refining gemstones. Similarly, *yusin* cannot be complete without reformation. To achieve *yusin*, we should work on *gaeryang* and then dedicate ourselves to the work of *baldal* and *hwakjang*. Yet why do our monastics abandon, ignore, and delay reformation? While running the great affairs of Buddhism and transmitting the great religion by honoring and teaching Buddhism, the most urgent task for all monastics should be to carry out the great reformation.

2) The Nature of Reformation

Those who engage in combat should know the weak and strong points of their enemies; those who operate a giant fleet should map out the sea routes to find which ones will be smooth or rough; and those who embark on restoration should first know the nature of reform. If a blind person threw away his cane and blundered about, he would fall nine times out of ten steps; and if a monkey from a cold northern region went to a warm southern country called Yue,³ he would feel weak or tired. Everyone must know such things, not just the wise.

Now we are about to launch a reformation, and in analyzing the nature of reformation based on whether the process will be laborious or easy or whether the final result will be a success or failure, there are two kinds of reformation, that is, *cheonwi* (the work of heaven/nature) and *inwi* (the work of humans). These two types can be further divided into four categories: active *cheonwi*, passive *cheonwi*, active *inwi*, and passive *inwi*. *Cheonwi* is mostly passive and *inwi* is mostly active.

Among the four kinds [of reformation], the first is called the

reformation of active *cheonwi*. Nature/heaven regards cherishing life as a virtue so that all sentient and insentient beings flourish and breed vigorously to fill nature. Yet suddenly one morning the wind blew hard, a frost descended, it snowed heavily, and ice covered the earth. Everything moving hid in cocoons, and plants were blown down; the only thing that filled the space between heaven and earth was an autumn chill in the air. Where did the virtue of invigorating life disappear? There was not even a speck of warmth; yet this is the time to reform.

When such a difficult time comes, we have the warm spring again. *Cheondo* (the way of heaven/nature) knows everything so that before the implementation of reformation, *cheondo* has already made its place to land in. Once the wind rises from the east, the snow thaws and ice melts. As it gets warmer and brighter each day, everything puts forth shoots.

The previous fall a single insect mother has laid countless eggs, and in the last year trees have put out limitless branches; all of these are full of life and look joyful as if welcoming the sunlight, expressing their gratitude toward heaven/nature, and celebrating the present. They must already be aware that the fall frost and winter snows are all for training and strengthening the myriad things not to wear away and destroy them.

Without being torn by the cold weather and frayed by the ice, the thick skin of sprouts, the hard skin of embryos, eggshells, and the chrysalises cannot break free from their shells or cocoons. Learning from these things, if we neglect to reform one time, it is as though we alter reproduction one time. Without the hardship of a severe winter, who can welcome the warmth of the bright spring? Without the difficulties of reformation, who can achieve the task of restoration? This is called the active *cheonwi*.

The second kind is the reformation of passive *cheonwi*. The largest substance that includes all of the animals, plants, and minerals contained within the atmosphere is called the earth. The circumference of the earth is 24,901 miles and its diameter is 7,926

miles. In the beginning the earth was a large, hot sphere like a blast furnace; having been so abraded by the air for thousands of years, it has gradually gotten cooler.

The sun is located 92.96 million miles away from the earth, yet here on earth the sunlight could fuse metals and melt stones. The sun is a giant hot plasma with a diameter of 864,374 miles, but the abrasion of the wind has gradually made it cooler, so that in a thousand million years, when the earth nears its final days, the sunlight will not reach the earth. The earth will be frozen even at the equator and will definitely have only glacial deposits.

In that world, even the most passive *cheonwi* reformation would be too distant and too vast; and in common sense it is almost false. In addition, to help understand, there is the saying, “A mulberry field becomes an ocean.”⁴ In other words, the formation, abidance, destruction, and emptiness of the world, along with the birth, maturation, changes, and death of human beings, all belong to the passive *cheonwi*.

According to the *Lotus Sūtra*, the passive *cheonwi* is like a parable in which an elder has a grand mansion, and this mansion is very old and about to collapse. The big and small structures are thus very perilous: the pillars are knocked off the plaster, the beams are tilted, the stairs are damaged, the mud walls crumble with the mud breaking loose, the straw thatching drops badly, the rafters are dislocated, and the curves of screens are all covered by dust.⁵ The *Śūraṅgama-sūtra* narrates:

The Buddha spoke to King Prasenajit,⁶ saying, “Do you think your body will be preserved forever without being destroyed like a diamond, or will it change and be destroyed?” The king replied to the Buddha, saying, “My body will eventually change and be annihilated.” The Buddha replied to the king, “Given that your body has not been extinguished, how do you know it will be annihilated?” “World-Honored One! Although my body, which is subjected to changes and destruction, has not been destroyed, things in front of my eyes

change moment by moment and become afresh momentarily. As fire produces ashes, my body has gradually decayed without a break; thus, I surely know that this body will finally be extinguished." The Buddha then said the following, "Your Majesty! You have become old now, and your face is not the same as when you were young." "Your World-Honored One! When I was a child, my skin was shiny; and as I grew up I became vigorous. But now I have become old and weak so that my appearance is haggard, my mind is not clear, hairs have turned gray, and my face is wrinkled; I may not live much longer. How can I compare this body with that of my youth!" The Buddha said, "Your Majesty! It cannot be that your face has aged suddenly." The king said, "Your World-Honored One! The changes came furtively, so that I did not truly realize the changes. As cold and hot weather alternates, I gradually became like this. Why is it? When I was twenty years old, I was young but looked older than when I was ten years old. When I was thirty years old, I was older than when I was twenty. Now I am sixty-two years old; and when looking back to the time when I was fifty, I was much more strong and robust than now. I watch things that get changed gradually and then annihilated; I talk about the changes of life that occur every ten years. But when I think them over carefully, I cannot see how the changes come only every ten or twenty years. In fact, changes should occur every year. How can the changes come only every year? Changes also come every month. How can the changes come only every month? Changes also come daily. After giving much thought, I realize that everything changes each moment and that nothing stays even for one thought-moment. Therefore, I came to know that my body would eventually become decayed and annihilated."⁷

All these are clear proof of passive *cheonwi*. Similarly, a man who is twenty or thirty years old is so young and strong that he has his whole life in front of him. People call this person a strong young man. Yet I should say that he is in the middle of passive *cheonwi*.

A charming girl of seventeen or eighteen years old putting

powder and wearing rouge on her cheeks is pretty enough to put the nation into danger. Such a girl is called a beauty, but I should say that she is also in the middle of passive *cheonwi*.

Beautiful red flower buds, which enliven the spring scenery in February and March, are called sweet flowers; they also bloom in the middle of passive *cheonwi*. The white moon that looks cold and clear like ice shining through clear light around the fourteenth and fifteenth days of each lunar month is like a mirror or candle. This is called the full moon. I should say that this moon is also in the middle of passive *cheonwi*.

In a thick forest full of young trees, thousands and tens of thousands of branches put forth shoots and grow steadily toward their glorious prime time; these are called beautiful trees. Yet I should say that they are also standing in the middle of passive *cheonwi*.

A magnificent mansion is about to complement all the grand structures today, and it is painted with dazzling colors; this is called a splendid house. Yet this should also be in the middle of passive *cheonwi*. A person proclaiming his birth by loudly crying out and without his hair yet appearing; this is called a newborn baby. Yet I should say that this [baby] also enters the passive *cheonwi*.

Emitting bright light, the red morning sun rises—this is called dawn. Yet I should say that this is also in the midst of passive *cheonwi*. Everything is thus falling into the boundary of passive *cheonwi* reformation, and each moment is marching toward the passive *cheonwi* reformation. This is what is called the passive *cheonwi* reformation.

The third kind of reformation is active *inwi*. In general, human beings live by competitive power and hope. Other animals have instinctive awareness but no perceptive awareness, so they cannot advance themselves further. Look at the nests and dens of birds and beasts; those built in ancient times or today all look the same—no improvements made among them. Human beings are different; their perceptions are so clear that they made great progress by competing with others and having aspirations for themselves.

Here are some examples. When ancient people saw mugwort rolling in the wind, they found that round shapes could roll and so made a cart. They first put a block of wood horizontally and then later invented a wheel, which gradually improved to be the roaring trains of the present day. They also watched falling leaves, perceived their floating nature, and then made a ship. They first made it the shape of a tub, later put together pieces of board, and then developed the present-day steamship.

Today's silk fabrics evolved from the grass clothes of ancient times, today's palaces and towers advanced from the nests in trees, and today's agricultural products developed from ancient food. Bullets changed into cannons, the signal fire developed into telegrams, and transmitting by courier developed into a postal service. Other examples are too many to describe.

Therefore, if our house is too small, we desire to expand it; if our clothes are filthy, we try to wash them; if our garden is full of weeds, we try to pull them out; if we are in some financial trouble, we hope to make money; if our knowledge is shallow, we want to expand it; if religion becomes lax and declines, we try to revive it by reforming everything that is old, devastated, and corrupt and making the religion complete, pure, and new. For myriad things and affairs, there are none that are not progressing gradually toward reformation and that are not preserved by reformation. This is called active *inwi* reformation.

The fourth kind of reformation is passive *inwi*. Generally speaking, for human beings, greed is stronger than morality, and unpleasant results often follow. In general, three things are the most important for human beings: food, housing, and clothing. These three things are indispensable for survival. Therefore, we focus our desire so exclusively on these three things that we compete for them, work for them, and our economy focuses on them by making them the ultimate pursuit.

One who, despite earning these things with his own hands, leads a luxurious and sumptuous life is not good. People who are extremely

lazy and do not lift any of their ten fingers, yet still enjoy extravagant lives with [an abundance of] those three things are much worse; they are parasitic monsters. They not only suffer loss for themselves and their families, but also inflict too much harm on humanity in general.

According to Hong Manju,⁸ the sons of noblemen did not allow their fingers into water or their feet into mud because of their powerful parents. Yet they enjoyed silk clothes and expensive feasts, and their minds were always at painted pavilions and wine shops enjoying dreamlike excursions. They then finally arrived at the point where all their luck ran out, and they could not avoid becoming three kinds of vermin.

The first was a pine caterpillar, the second a moth, and the last was the worst vermin. They acquired these three names because they made laziness their habit and lacked diligence or frugality. Therefore, although they had money thanks to their parents and siblings, within a few years all of their savings were exhausted; they suffered from hunger and cold. Although they wanted to make money, it was impossible; it was not possible to return to farming, either, despite their desire to do so. They became people with nothing and nowhere to turn, and having failed in everything, they inevitably sold the pine trees planted around their ancestor tombs in order to feed themselves. This is why these people are called pine caterpillars. They then tried to sell the books handed down from their parents without giving any consideration to preserving those keepsakes or articles inherited from their ancestors; this is like eating paper, which is why they are called moths.

Last, people sold their servants, and this action was no different than eating human beings. Therefore, such people are thus called the worst vermin. If they were in such a state, with nothing to eat or sell, they could inflict damage in the extreme. They had no jars to store grain, and their families had built a wall between them. If their poison were to spread to other people, every household would suffer from poverty; and if the poison were to spread to mountains

and streams, boys would have to wash themselves at the top of mountains. What could be more harmful than these people? What life could be more severely parasitic than the one these people lead?

In the beginning, they threw away thousands of pieces of gold and in the end could not even provide food for nine days out of thirty. In the beginning, their noble houses (whose doors were painted red) looked like the ocean, and in the end they could not maintain a poor man's house. This is called passive *inwi* reformation.

Therefore, in terms of its active aspects, *cheonwi* may be strong, but for making progress and change *inwi* would be better than *cheonwi*. In terms of its passive aspects, *cheonwi* is miserable, but *inwi* may be more useless than *cheonwi*.

Mencius said that heavenly help [good timing] is not as good as geographical advantage and that geographical advantage is not as good as human cooperation. This means that active *inwi* is better than *cheonwi*.

According to the *Yinfu jing*,⁹ when the sky falls into a truculent mood, stars will move their locations; when the earth falls into a truculent mood, dragons and snakes move about the land. And when humans fall into a truculent mood, the earth and sky will turn inside out. This means that passive *inwi* is stronger than *cheonwi*.

3) The Relationship of Reformation

I have already talked extensively about the nature [of reformation], but I will try once again to discuss what reformation is. One might well ask whether the past history of Korean Buddhism occurred naturally (*cheonwi*) or whether it was made by the work of people (*inwi*). Alas! I would say that the past belongs to the work of nature (*cheonwi*).

The reason is as follows. It is said that the protection of Buddhism belongs to kings and ministers, but we should make an effort at self-governing to protect ourselves. We should not concern ourselves with political protection and should not depend on that protection.

Yet for hundreds of years we were not like that; we wanted political protection as if we were waiting for clouds and rainbows after long years of drought.

According to a Western proverb, heaven helps those who help themselves. The heavenly way does not have personal feelings; after helping ourselves heavenly help could then reach out to us. But we do not care about helping ourselves even in our dreams and just hope for heavenly help day and night. We may have just such a thought of dependence filling our hearts; and we may then pray silently for devout kings and ministers to come to protect Buddhism wholeheartedly or for Buddhist statues and pagodas to show numinous powers to attract a slew of political protection. There is no one who tries to sacrifice himself for Buddhism even a little or risks making an effort.

Therefore, we entrust our own prosperity and decay to others, such that when kings and ministers protect Buddhism, we rise to *Paranirmitavaśavartin*¹⁰ heaven to enjoy the blessings, and when no such political protections are available, we fall into the *avīci* hell¹¹ and suffer from unmentionable hardships. As for the suffering from such ups and downs, what could be worse than this? And as for suffering from humiliation like puppets, what could be more severe than this?

You [Buddhist monastics] overlook your shortcomings and continue your mistakes, saying: "In the past, although we could dedicate ourselves with all our strength, how could we prevent and control the work of kings and ministers who were the models and leaders of people, who occupied the highest status, and who wielded the strongest power over people? If there were something people above [the leaders] liked, then those people below [the commoners] would like it more. The tyranny of Confucian scholars, who tie [their hair into] topknots and wear long-sleeved gentlemen's robes, was worse than crumpled grasses after violent storms pass. Look at the persecutions against Buddhism during the reigns of emperors Wu [r. 423–452] of Northern Wei, Wudi [r. 561–578] of Northern Zhou, Wuzong [r. 840–846] of Tang, and Shizong [r. 954–959] of

Later Zhou.¹² During those times, Buddhism was still flourishing, and as a result many eminent monks and people wrote letters of appeal to protest against such measures of persecution. Yet temples were finally destroyed and monks were forced to disrobe, and the disgrace reached all the way to the Buddha. All of these events were due to the rulers' misuse of power. When frost blankets the ground, chrysanthemums rot; and when intense heat descends upon the earth, glaciers melt away. Similarly, when a great misfortune hits, humans cannot escape from it; and when great luck appears, there is no way to stop it. How then can unmarried, lonely monks protest such a fate?"

Such words, however, are not also thoughtful. When Yu Bing [296–344] insisted that monks should pay respect to kings,¹³ Huiyuan [335–417] wrote the treatise [On Why Monks Do Not Bow Before Kings] to refute him.¹⁴ When Han Yu [768–824] wrote a letter, "Memorial on Bone-relics of the Buddha" (Fogubiao),¹⁵ Taidian¹⁶ disputed it, arguing item-by-item. Huiyuan [523–592]¹⁷ and Zhixuan¹⁸ wrote letters of appeal to Emperor Wu of Northern Zhou [who abolished Buddhism and promoted Daoism]. Monks Falin, Huisheng, and Minggai submitted their opinions [against the anti-Buddhist policies] to Emperor Wu of Northern Wei. Zhixuan argued against the policies of Emperor Wuzong of Tang, and finally Yongdao remonstrated with Huizong [r. 1100–1126]¹⁹ of the Northern Song dynasty.

When protesting against these kings or ministers, some were successful in their endeavors and some were not. If these monks had kept silent and let nature take its course, the seed of Buddhism would have been demolished and discontinued permanently after those Buddhist persecutions. We should know that we can achieve what is not easy to achieve only after protecting, helping, and governing ourselves with all our strength. Although facing a difficult situation that we find ourselves unable to resolve, we should not keep silent. If we make no effort and let fate take its course, whether [it ends] in success or failure, this would be even worse. For the great dharma [Buddhism] should not be reduced or damaged even though

it once faced predicaments. But for us, what should our duty in such a situation be?

Mouzi's *Lihuolun*,²⁰ Zhang Shangying's [1043–1122] *Treatises on Protecting the Dharma* (*Hufalun*),²¹ and Ichadon's [501–527]²² pledge were the work of lay people; how shameful then for those who wear monks' robes! Let's skip the history of early ancient Korea and talk about medieval history. During the Goryeo dynasty, noble sons usually entered monasteries as did many princes, and kings and ministers had great faith in Buddhism so that Buddhism flourished with strong political support. But unfortunately, Shin Don (1322–1371)²³ misused his power, and as a result Buddhism met a headwind and experienced indiscriminate destruction and persecution during the Joseon dynasty.

Yet, no one stood up to protest or dispute. For 500 years no one dared to try to overturn fate, enduring, obeying, and letting nature have power over the high and low or fast and slow currents. It is as though a ship had been set afloat on the raging waves or blown down by a whirlwind. Given that not even a single attempt at controlling fate was made, this situation should be called the work of nature (*cheonwi*) [as opposed to the work of humans]?

In general, when we fall within the bounds of the work of nature, it is natural for us to act passively; little by little we bend to ill fortune and moment by moment we fall into decay. Therefore, we do not know when we will smash onto the rocks or fall into a pit. We now face loneliness like single duck feather and face imminent danger like an egg under a rock. We cannot help having a grudge against those who have gone before us.

Alas! If our predecessors had launched an *inwi* reformation 300 years ago, we could have taken a great mission over the six continents; and if they had begun the reformation even 30 years ago, we could have stood in comparison to all religions; and if we had carried out the reformation just three years ago, we could have heard the sound of Buddhism fill the peninsula. We have reached such a miserable state as the present, however, by doing nothing earlier.

Figuratively speaking, two people stayed at an inn, and one person got up and left early; the other person got up late and tried to catch up. With one far and one close, how do they feel with one walking leisurely and the other laboriously?

But if you lose something in a corner of the east, you may find it even on the west side; thus press on harder and reflect upon yourself even if it would have been better to have started much earlier. Even now is not late if we could push ourselves to go on. Alas! Alas! Dharma colleagues! Dharma colleagues! By putting our minds and energy together, let's work for self-government.

Ouyang Yongshu [1007–1072]²⁴ stated in the postscript of his epitaph, called “The Record of the Miraculous Traits,” that for Chan Master Wanhuai:

People say that the followers of Daoism resent and curse Laozi, saying that the Buddha makes people terrified by making supernatural miracles, doing harm, or giving blessings, so that people are forced to have faith in the Buddha. This is why monks and nuns came to enjoy an opulent life. Yet our Laozi talks elegantly on purity only, so that he made his followers desolate.

Unfortunately, in the present, these words spring from the mouths of our Buddhists, who say that the power of Christianity enveloped the whole world, so that Christians numbered hundreds of millions, and churches were western style buildings with abundant wealth. Yet our Buddhists are scant, and our temples are located in remote places; our finances are so poor that we cannot engage in any public or private work, and there are no places to go for both monastics and lay people.

What do these words mean? Has Christianity become so strong because of the ability of its founder or the passion of its followers? Although Jesus Christ is all powerful, if Christians lacked passion and allowed nature to take its course without any effort, how would it be possible for them to have the present results?

Therefore, all the world's affairs, whether small or big, are made entirely by humans, not by the heavens [or nature]. I should beg our colleagues one more time; instead of envying others for abundant clothes and food, it would be better to work hard in your own field. Instead of complaining about cold and hot weather, it would be better to wear leather or hemp clothes depending on the weather. We should drop our old relationship with nature [our dependence on nature] and build a new relationship with our own effort; our first task to embark on should be a reformation initiated by us, not by the heavens.

4) The Advantages and Disadvantages of Reformation

Madame Roland [1754–1793]²⁵ wrote in her biography, “Oh Liberty! What crimes are committed in your name!” Alas! Freedom is something that all the world's people welcome, yet if it is misunderstood, it is worse than living without freedom. Similarly, reformation is important for almost every affair in the world, yet if it is misused, its harm is more severe than no reformation. Reformation is neither easy to mention nor to implement.

Alas! Although gold powder is precious, it causes pain if it is dropped into an eye; *odu* is poisonous, yet it can cure a body afflicted with a cold.²⁶ Reformation is like money; if superior men use money, they may be successful in life; yet when inferior men use it, they may kill themselves. Reformation is also like water; if bodhisattvas drink it, it becomes milk; but if hungry ghosts drink it, it becomes a ball of flames. A gust of wind on the riverbank is a headwind for boats that cross the river over to this shore but a fore wind for those boats that cross over to the other shore. Reformation is like these examples.

The bright moon in midair gives joy to those who are wandering yet can make thieves resentful. Reformation is like that. If it is raining during a drought, famers welcome it, yet travelers on the road are worried. Reformation is like that. How is it possible that the

wind, moon, or rain can favor one over another? It is only because the circumstances each faces are not the same.

The medicine that prevents hands from chapping is another example. The medicine means one thing for the person who has become a feudal lord, but others cannot escape having to bleach cotton. It is how the medicine was used that was different. Reformation is the same: if it is used well, the results are brilliant; but if it is not carried out well, it will be the path to ruin. Its advantages and disadvantages make a world of difference. If you use it unknowingly, it is like selling hats in Yue.²⁷ And it is like prescribing ginseng to cure typhoid fever.²⁸

We take food to maintain our health, but if we do not chew it well, we will get sick. We take medicine to cure sickness, but if the diagnosis is not right, we may get sicker. Although water and fire are used to benefit people, they bring disasters if we are not careful with them. In general, things are neither beneficial nor harmful in their nature; benefits and harm occur depending on how we use them.

When they see the word “reformation,” conservative Buddhists are afraid, as if they were seeing fierce tigers, but the progressive camp is excited, as if they were drinking snake wine. Alas! How did I get interested in advocating reformation that is as risky and daring as I have described? I do not know the reason. It is not as though *Xixiangji*²⁹ was inspired by watching entrapped ants and bees at windows; it is not like writing *Water Margin* (*Shuihuzhuan*)³⁰ amused by dim lamplight and bright moonlight; nor is it as though [Sima Qian] wrote “Youxiazhuan” and “Huoshizhan”³¹ because he was imprisoned and received the harsh punishment of castration.³²

Is it then that you shoot an arrow because it was already drawn? No, that is not the reason. Is it as though a silverfish accidentally spoke words while gnawing a tree? No, it is not that. Or is it to seek honor by taking on a fight? No, it is not that either.

What we drink is dharma milk; what we wear are dharma robes; what we sit on is the dharma earth; what we read are dharma words; the people we associate with are dharma colleagues; the one with

whom I take refuge is the dharma king [the Buddha]; the place where we enjoy swimming is the dharma ocean; the place where we reside is the dharma world; and what we use for entrance and exit are the dharma gates.

What makes us feel refreshed is the dharma cloud; what nourishes and enriches us is the dharma rain; and what illuminates and guides us is the dharma torch. We become the people of the dharma king, obey the dharma, and live in the household of the dharma king.

For birds flying freely in the air and fish swimming in the water, their hope is nothing but the clean air and pure water of nature. Similarly, we have to make the air of the dharma world clear and the water of the dharma ocean clean because we now realize how cloudy and foggy the air of the dharma world has become and how the water of the dharma ocean is filled with debris and dust. Our dharma colleagues can thus hold hands like a flock of birds or fishes, encourage one another, and go forward spiritedly to the central stage that is filled with hope.

Moreover, we hope that all sentient and insentient beings can enjoy living in this pure land of the human world, the heavenly kingdom of the earth. What other wish could we have? Therefore, after thinking it over with all my might, while twisting and turning in my sleep or awake, I have come to propose reformation.

But as mentioned before, reformation involves both beneficial and harmful aspects. Although today I uttered the word reformation without my knowing, what should I do about the dual aspect of the gains and losses of reformation? If we hesitated in its execution by considering the dual aspects too carefully, it would be like talking about food with a starving person [without giving them any food]. And if we advanced reformation by making rapid strides without considering its dual aspects, it would be like catching a tiger with our bare hands and crossing over the Yellow River with our bare feet.

As I suddenly mention such problems and mull over the pros and cons of reformation, it would have been better to keep my

mouth shut from the beginning. Even the words, “people propose but heaven disposes,” are not something we should utter. It should be said that people are the ones who both propose and dispose. How can we then not make any effort and instead just weigh the pros and cons?

Disasters and blessings are something that people themselves bring about; likewise, gains and losses are something people can control. Therefore, with an inquisitive mind, we should examine the pros and cons carefully and then either adopt or reject them. We could then do well with the selection.

Cheonwi (natural reformation) has had almost no effect, so that it is not [the approach] we should take. *Inwi* (man-made reformation) involves renovation, so we should not reject it. *Inwi* has two types, active and passive—do we need to take both? No. The passive type is followed by intolerable misfortunes, but an active reformation brings perfect happiness. If there is a grain of sand mixed in one spoonful rice, we spit out the whole rice; and if even a tiny needle pricks the body of a seven-foot tall person, the body will respond. So, who does not avoid harmfulness and who does not chase fortunes?

If we initiate an active *inwi* reformation that can bring perfect future happiness, the whole nation will respond by joining us and setting forth on the new road of our Buddhism. This is called dharma alms giving.

5) The Beneficial Function of Reformation

Alas! What is it that could make the 900 small and large Buddhist monastery bells ring? It is only reformation. Alas! What could make our 6,000 old and young Buddhist monastics awake suddenly from a pitch-dark dream? It is only reformation. What could make our monks and nuns sing the praises of liberty? It is only reformation. What could rid our monastics’ minds of the stubborn thoughts indelibly imprinted on them? It is only reformation. What could

make our monastics forget their selves and pour out their passion every moment for the dharma? It is only reformation.

What could give Buddhist monastics the willpower to dedicate their lives and each moment of their thoughts to the dharma? It is only reformation. What could make our monastics imbued from head to toe with the milk of the dharma to be actively engaged? It is only reformation. What could cause the mountains, streams, and all things to flourish joyfully and prosperously with the dharma rain? It is only reformation.

Alas! What could make all humanity, including white, black, yellow, and red races, run to our world of the Buddha dharma? It is only reformation. What could make all the four forms of birth³³ enjoy life in the dharma ocean? It is only by reformation.

Alas! If not for reformation, how could a crazy son who had abandoned his father and was fleeing far away be summoned? If not for reformation, how could amnesty for a robber who had invaded homes with deadly weapons be proclaimed? Alas! The lamp of wisdom is about to fail; if not for the oil of reformation, what will keep it burning? The wind is about to cease blowing; if not for the fan of reformation, what will make the wind gust again?

Alas! By reformation, we can do so much. Reformation is very powerful and free from impediments. Without reformation, neither small nor big businesses can be successful. Both public and private affairs remain incomplete without reformation. Indeed, reformation is so important and so great a matter!

Cicadas humming in early autumn have reformed [grown] from larvae; Chinese orioles warbling in spring have reformed [evolved] from the *guyok* bird.³⁴ The Bungsae bird³⁵ flying from the vast Arctic regions has reformed [evolved] from the great Goneo fish.³⁶ A lightning bug flying on a plain in the evening has been reformed from a stinking manure heap.

Passing through three gateways is the reformation of a fish; hiding for seven days is the reformation of a leopard. The sun is setting and the moon is rising; this is called the reformation of a day.

In spring, everything becomes alive, and in autumn everything falls; this is called the reformation of a year.

The state of Qi is changed into Lu,³⁷ and when Lu is changed once again, it achieves the Way (Dao). This is called the reformation of Confucianism. Cutting hair once in three thousand years and washing bones once in three thousand years—this is the reformation of Daoism. All things, including the big and small, throughout all times and places came into being because of reformation. Thus, the future of our Buddhism depends on reformation.

We are in a situation that urgently requires reformation. Our thoughts have become corrupt; only reformation can regenerate them. Our knowledge has become outdated; only reformation can develop it. The size of our institution has shrunk; only reformation can expand it. We are in disorder; only reformation can restore the sangha. We have forgotten our duties, and such neglect has become our habit. Our education has been cut off, and we have become ignorant in leading people. For all these things, we have to depend on reformation to attain beneficial results.

Reformation is like salt in food and licorice root in medicine; without it we cannot digest or detoxify. Without it, all these things—leading, nourishing, flavoring, and achieving effective results—would be impossible.

6) Leaders of Reformation

If we were to carry out *cheonwi* reformation, it would be fitting to bypass people who can assert, take on, and execute reformation. But since we have decided to carry out *inwi* reformation, we need people who can lead us toward reformation. It is not that I have just now come to expect leaders. It is not that I have waited for such leaders for only one or two years. Since the time of the Office of Temple and Shrines,³⁸ the Administrative Headquarters (Jongmuwon) of Wonjong sect,³⁹ and then the current Conference Office of the Abbots of the

Thirty Main Temples (Juji hoe'uiso),⁴⁰ for over ten years I have not forgotten about the leaders even for a day or an hour. The leaders haunt me and swim in my head, and so I feel as if they are almost near me. Like a fool who parts from his lover, I cannot forget the leaders despite my best efforts to do so. Like a starving person who eats an excellent meal, I cannot help thinking [of the leaders], even though I try hard not to think of them.

Even when I give up a night's sleep, how can I stop thinking about the leaders for one second? Even when I skip three meals a day, how can I forget the leaders even for a brief moment?

How distressful! How really distressful! When those who after a long drought have been waiting so long for rain see a cloud floating by, they murmur, touch their foreheads, and ask “Will that cloud bring us rain?” And they look to willow branches waving in the breeze to predict whether this wind will bring rain or not. They hope for rain when they see fog dancing at the mouth of the valley, and when they see the red evening glow on the top of hills they predict what time the rain will come.

When they see that the moon has a ring around it, they ask, “Will it rain?” When they see waves rise, they ask, “Is it going to rain?” And when an old dog drinks water and a big snake is lying in the grass, they ask, “Are these omens of rain?” Earthworms are spawning, and ants and crickets are crawling in a tail; they ask, “Are these signs of rain?” When they perceive a murmuring brook close to their ears during the night quiet of *samgyeong* [between 11 pm and 1 am], they suspect it will rain. When a morning wind blows plantain leaves tapping against the window, they mistake the sound for rain. Likewise, I, too, wait for the undertakers of reformation to appear.

How distressful! Indeed, how distressful! A person who seeks to be healed from sickness rises respectfully whenever he sees a Daoist priest who carries a light cane and wears a short ramie cloth thinking the person is Hua Tuo [145–208].⁴¹ This person also respects a Buddhist monk, who wears monk's robes and carries a big staff, as does the Medicine King Bodhisattva.⁴² When this person acquires

Chinese folk medicine, he believes that they are Qibaizhenren's⁴³ supernatural medicine, and when he drinks water from a crack in the stones, he takes joy in thinking that the water is the sweet dew of the Bodhisattva of Compassion. He also thinks it would be effective were he using charms and incantations, beating a drum and chanting a sūtra. In addition, he thinks it would be meritorious if he were to pray to the mountains, to perform a rite for the city's guardian deity, and to worship spirits and exorcise demons. Like this person, I wait and yearn for someone who will implement the Buddhist reformation.

It is painful, indeed! It is painful, indeed! The man who is engaged with a beautiful woman listens attentively even if sleeping birds fly off frightened by the moon light shone on a bamboo fence. He opens the door to see why his sleeping dog barks when the wind blows through his cottage. He wonders if it is the sound of [his fiancée's] girdle ornaments when he hears the tinkling of a wind chime hanging under the eaves, and he vainly feels joy thinking it the sound of [his fiancée's] dragging shoes when leaves fall in the garden. Like this man, I have anxiously anticipated the person who will start the Buddhist reformation.

How distressful! Indeed, how distressful! My yearning is like these feelings, and my aspiration, and my longing. Ten years have passed so, yet it has been lonesome and desolate. I have not seen or heard of the person [who would do the reformation]. Alas! Where are such people? Do they live in mountains or at the seashore?

If I look for them in a remote corner of the country, there are only Buddhist monastics who are obsessed with money and spend the days leisurely talking about their old days. It is thus impossible to see such people there. If I look for such people in the capital, there are only monastics who seek small profits by flattering the powerful. It is thus impossible to find such people. There are no such people at the quiet meditation halls or at the Buddhist seminaries. Is it that heaven has not produced such people yet or that we do not recognize such people? Now is the time for such people to appear, and this is

the time for such people to succeed.

In this world of no-buddhas, such people [reformers] could comfort sentient beings by receiving great respect. Yet it is so desolate and lonely. Is it because I lack good eyesight? Or is it because I lack good hearing? Our cravings [for such people] get worse and our longings for [such people] too extreme. My wait has been too long, yet I have not found them. And so I will search throughout the country.

Such reformers do not have three heads and six arms like Yejeok Geumgang;⁴⁴ they do not have three eyes and two pupils like Mahēśvara.⁴⁵ They are not like Shennong⁴⁶ whose human body has a bull's head, and they do not have a dragon face with a bulging left forehead like Emperor Taizu [247–195 BCE]⁴⁷ of the Han dynasty. They do not have the beautiful whiskers and eyes of the Chinese phoenix like Guan Yunzhang [162–219],⁴⁸ and they do not have the power to uproot a mountain and conquer the world like King Chuba [232–202 BCE].⁴⁹

They have two ears and two eyes like other ordinary people; they also have two hands and two feet like others; like others, they cannot see the back of their heads with their eyes; and like other ordinary people, their arms are not strong enough to lift the heavy caldron. Yet, why is it then that I long to love, praise, and respect such people?

It is because such people receive Buddhism with both hands and carry Buddhism with their shoulders. How is it then possible for me not to respect them? Such reformers regard the Buddha mind as their own mind and the dharma nature as their own nature. How is it then possible for me not to praise them? They think of Buddhist affairs as their own work and regard saving beings as their own life task. How is it then possible for me not to love them? They can see through reformation with their eyes and execute reformation with their legs. How is it possible for me not to long for them?

Alas! Although they are ordinary people wrapped with defilements, I must respect them as great sages. Even when they are children, I should respect and treat them as mature adults. Oh, my colleagues! When Camillo Benso [1810–1861],⁵⁰ the Count of

Cavour, was a farmer for ten years, who could have known that one day he would become the Italian prime minister of reformation? When Lenin [1870–1924]⁵¹ was travelling the six continents, who could have guessed that someday he would become the king of Russia's revolution? Wugu dafu⁵² lived hidden among cattlemen; Sima Xiangru⁵³ [179–117 BCE] came from tavern workers.

Among our six thousand monastics, each of them has his or her own duties and reasons for living. I urge them to forget their physical selves and work for the dharma body (Skt. *dharmakāya*); they thus should reform Buddhism as quickly as possible and as urgently as possible. I will wait for the reformers by holding my hands together on my knees.

7) Time for Reformation

In general, the right moment is hard to attain and easy to lose. If we let it slip even for a flash, we will regret it for myriad eons. This neglect has occurred even for heroes throughout history. If we seize the time, we can be successful beyond imagination; if we miss the chance, there is no hope for success. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that we find the right moment to implement any task.

For our Buddhism, now is the moment that comes only once in a thousand years. This time is a good time, a rare time. Why is that? With regard to the decline of Buddhism, no other time is worse than this time. The weakness of our monastics has never been worse. Our hope for being liberated from the 500-year shackles of the anti-Buddhist policies of the Joseon dynasty has never been more desperate than now. Those who suffer from the cold do not care if the clothes are light or warm; a starving person cares not whether the food is sweet or savory. Those who carry heavy loads on their shoulders over long distances are not too selective in choosing places to rest. Such tendencies are common in human nature.

In this desperate time for Buddhist reformation, if a reformer

were to reveal only the tip of his head, everyone would pay attention to him. Even just the appearance of his shadow would lead others to treat him with great respect; with only the sound of his cough everyone would run to him from a far distance and vie to step on the saliva when he spits. Mencius said: "We do only half of the work ancient people do, yet the effect is double of what they achieved." These words seem to refer to the present situation.

Moreover, an easterly wind [from Japan] under the morning sun blows far enough to involve the Korean Peninsula in the territory of the Japanese empire. Twenty million Koreans are now under the wing of the Japanese emperor, so that every blade of grass and every plant face the sun, and all common people are content in their place. Although we are recklessly clinging to the past and creating worries, is there such a thing [to cling to and worry about]? The saintly [Japanese] emperor reforms barbarians [foreign people] so that today we have a greater chance than before to work for the betterment of Buddhism and have a broader opportunity than before to propagate Buddhism.⁵⁴

Our own Koreans have excluded Buddhism without reserve, labeling it as the religion of nihilism and quietism whenever they heard the words of Buddhism even though they do not know what kind of effect, characteristics, and relationship Buddhism has. However, they have gradually begun to pay attention to Buddhism. Therefore, if we can exert our effort a little, we can, like wielding a whip to a swift horse, accelerate the speed of the development of Buddhism. We can progress as though we were sailing with the wind at our backs; and we can succeed easily like a blowing wind kindles a flame. Therefore, our Korean Buddhism needs an urgent reformation.

Mencius said that a person who should be a king is born once in 500 years. An ancient said that the Yellow River becomes clear only once in 1,000 years and that this is the time when a sage will be born. The Buddha said that an enlightened one would appear when the *udumbana*⁵⁵ tree blooms flowers once in 3,000 years. It has been

3,000 years since the birth of the Buddha, and it has been 500 years since Buddhism received the persecution from the Joseon dynasty. If the sages did not lie, the Yellow River will become clear, and the *udumbara* will bloom. It is time for the person who has received the mandate of heaven to be born.

Even the Buddha, however, said that it would be impossible to save those who do not have karmic connections. And heaven helps those who help themselves. If we do not perform our duties and do not abide by our laws, even heaven can do little for us. And even sages have no way to help us.

According to Kuaiche [d.u.],⁵⁶ if one does not take the chance when the right moment has arrived, he will bring about disaster; and if one does not take the opportunity when heaven gives it, he will face a calamity. You will soon experience this prophesy, and then you will not achieve a thing, neither preserving old ways, nor renovating, nor reforming.

Alas! Alas! Fellow monastics! Fellow monastics! Once we miss the season for planting, we cannot expect a plentiful harvest; and if we do not exercise vigilance while walking on the hoar-frost, we are sure to slip on the ice. A pendulum clock hanging on the wall tells time for 24 hours every day, and for myriad years, time flows incessantly. But if we lose time, that time will never come back. Time! Time! It will not return.

Heroes can create opportunities; much more so now, the opportunity came to us by itself. How could we then lose this opportunity sitting idly by, not fulfilling our task, and decomposing like vegetation? Time does not stand still and flashes by like lightning. Dharma friends! Please decide quickly, so that we can embark on our task at this great time and leave good results to posterity.

8) Working for Organization and Self-Government after Reformation

According to the *Sūtra of Complete Enlightenment*, emptiness emerges from the middle of great enlightenment like bubbles from the ocean. The *Śūramgama-sūtra* states that if even one person is spiritually awakened to the truth and returns to the origin, then the entirety of space in the ten directions will be dissipated.⁵⁷ In other words, heaven and earth, which are the greatest among those with shape, and space, which is the greatest among those without shape, are all from the Way. Without the Way, even heaven and earth have no place on which to depend, and they are originally birth-less.

On the other hand, “the origin of the Way is Heaven”—this phrase came from the arbitrary thought of Dong Zhongshu⁵⁸ [176–104 BCE] of Han China, a Confucian scholar who was behind the times. Yet scholars of later generations blindly followed Dong to a pit not knowing that the phrase was wrong. Shao Kangjie’s⁵⁹ [1011–1077] phrase, “the Dao, heaven, and earth have no shape” is very different from the expressions of Han Confucians. Yet ordinary people were drawn to shallow and easy words, and so they turned over the great Dao to the fate of heaven. Therefore, for the Asian literati the mind of Dao became weak, and this was because of Dong Zhongshu— there are no expressions that could be used to avoid calling him the chief of sinners.

I will simply polish Dong Zhongshu’s words—I should add the following: “the great heaven and earth also come from the Dao, and thus the Dao is immortal while heaven comes to perish.” But these are not the right words. Why? The great Dao comes before heaven and earth, yet it does not have a beginning. It also comes after heaven and earth, yet it does not have an end. How is it possible to decide such dead words as “immortal Dao” and “mortal Heaven”?

Therefore, the Dao is the mother of the heaven and the earth, and it cherishes myriad beings. If the Dao, which leaves behind all images, should entrust its declining, perishing, thriving, and

flourishing to heaven, this is like parents, who are outstanding, brave, and intellectual, but entrust their confused son to deal with all the family's affairs. Such a thing should not be done, and much less with this Dao! The one who can guide all sentient beings by using the Dao and turn them into practicing the Dao is our great enlightened one [the Buddha]. He is thus called the dharma king and the enlightened emperor, as well.

We are the sons of the Buddha, who are continuing this task of the Buddha, and we are the messengers of the Buddha. Carrying on the Buddha's work is magnificent, and our mission is so great. If we do not overcome the wrangling of Dong Zhongshu—and thus cannot restore the great Dao of unsurpassed Buddhism—and create strangers among us by entrusting Buddhism to the public, it would be like a distinguished family, unable able to raise their own children and to govern themselves, that entrusts their children to stupid servants or passing travelers.

The gods Indra and Brahman had wishes, and kings and their ministers reverently carried out those wishes. All of them tried to praise our Buddhism and so the light for Buddhism glowed even more brightly. Yet, not striving to be faithful we have arrived at such an extreme state today. Alas! Fellow monastics! Try to think carefully. The compassionate father of four births [the Buddha] regards us as his children, and the dharma king of the three worlds [the Buddha] considers us his messengers. Our missions are thus so important.

The eight classes of supernatural beings⁶⁰ will always protect us, and the ten kinds of sentient beings will seek enlightenment from us. Our hopes are great. We thus should act as if rescuing a person whose head is on fire or walking on the thin ice. We should thus not spare ourselves but sacrifice for the dharma. Yet what we hope from heaven is more than the ten beings hope from us; we thus cautiously turn this hope into our second nature.

Upon this, we are different in our intention, and our affairs are not well regulated. Therefore, although people may gather from the ten directions and form what looks like from the outside a plausible

society, from the inside it appears to be a sand castle. Although every day we lecture on the formal rules so that Buddhism appears on its surface to be a corporate body, the regulations are only decorative. How can the so-called organization and self-government be established? Although we hum for reformation every day and pray for development daily, we just follow others and lose our originality. Those old-fashioned people withdraw from and the determined strike at the heart of reformation; there thus arise symptoms of division among us as though we were splitting a stream to drink and sitting on different seats.

Alas! When more than three people gather, a society is formed; if they do not form an organization, the society cannot endure. If the organization is not self-governed, it will not be well and stable. Yet an organization can suffer serious division, and when self-governing it is difficult to obey regulations. How should we then strengthen and prolong our three-thousand-year-old religion and this ancient community? The answer is to achieve group power and establish a solid self-government. How do we then solidify group power and establish self-government? The answer is reformation.

Group power refers to the goal that everyone should concentrate on in one place, and self-government means individual action that does not violate laws. Recently, a frivolous person might misunderstand the [idea of] self-government and freedom, saying that “I have my own freedom and my own self-government” and [claiming] that “the rules of society and the collective government have nothing to do with me.” This person then gives up [social relationships] and acts as he likes—this person changes sweet dew into poison. Isn’t it pitiful! Isn’t it fearful! This is so because we do not implement reformation while being reluctant to be progressive. It is like controlling a frenzied foal with a plastered rope and putting a fire out with a glass of water. Thus, I will say point-blank that group power will be realized and self-government established only after reformation has been accomplished.

2. Previous Examples of Reformation

1) Śākyamuni Buddha's Reformation

Suppose someone said the following to me:

I have already heard and understood the logic of the reformation that you are discussing, but after giving the reformation some thought, I cannot agree with you. In general, there is nothing that is more risky than reformation, and there is nothing that is more distressful than reformation. Among all those heroes and great people throughout all ages and countries, nine out of ten failed in their efforts at reformation, with only one of them possibly enjoying success. It is the great crime of reformers to push the masses into the pit. The example of Martin Luther's [1483–1546]⁶¹ religious reform shows the damage of reformation. In addition, if reformation is so necessary and urgent, as you claim, why is it that the Buddha and patriarchs did not all engage in reformation? I thus cannot support you on reformation.

I would answer as follows:

Although your words may sound plausible, they are the expressions of extreme conservatives, lacking an understanding of the ideas of the reformation party. Reformation would be risky and hard, yet all the heroes of the past were born and attained their goals through reformation. Clean your eyes and read the histories of the great people of the world. Then, which things were not born during reformation, which affairs were not established during reformation, and which person did not become famous during reformation?

First of all, I should mention examples of Buddhist reformation to remove our doubts. The Śākyamuni Buddha is the greatest reformer among reformers in the world. I will show what kind of things the Buddha reformed by briefly describing history before his birth. About 500 years before his birth (1500 BCE, about 3,400 years ago), the Indian people established a religion, called Brahmanism. I do not understand the religion very well, but in the beginning Brahmanism included prayer, worship, astronomy, technology, and art. And later it established a hierarchical society based on the Code of Manu⁶² that divided people according to their birth.

According to this system, all the myriad things are created by Brahma [the creator God], and all the four castes came into being from the body of Brahma. The highest caste, the brahmins (they are like the literati), were born from the mouth of Brahma, the next kṣatriyas (nobility) were born from the hands of Brahma, the next vaiśyas (commoners) from the legs, and the lowest śūdras (slaves) from the heels.

Once this caste system was established, it made a world of difference among the people. Brahmins regarded themselves as heavenly beings and monopolized all privileges; and vaiśyas and śūdras fell into a hellish state and became the slaves of brahmins, treated no differently than dogs and horses. Such a miserable state had reached its extreme.

The way of heaven was fortunately restored, so our Śākyamuni Buddha, the only great teacher and great compassionate father, came down to this world from the Tuṣita Heaven⁶³ and attained enlightenment after cultivation. He uttered his first words of equality: “All beings have the seed of wisdom, no different from that of the Buddha.” When he was about to enter nirvāṇa, he said the last words, “Both sentient and insentient beings will attain Buddhahood.” I am sure that there is nothing that would surpass these words of Buddha in terms of advocating equality.

Let me briefly enumerate several of the Buddha’s legacies. A non-Buddhist, brahmacārī⁶⁴ came to the Buddha and attained

enlightenment; so this means that saints and devils are equal. In front of the Daja stūpa, the Buddha shared his half seat [with Mahākāśyapa];⁶⁵ so this means that teachers and disciples are equal. Everything below the four *dhyāna* heavens⁶⁶ would be destroyed by the three calamities;⁶⁷ and so this means that heaven and humans are equal.

People from the ten directions came to hear the Buddha and sat together at one place, and so nobles and commoners are equal. A person died and became a sheep, and a sheep died and became a human; and so humans and animals are equal. Originally there was no birth and no death; and thus birth and death are equal. For one who forgot both plastering and cutting off, enemies and friends are equal. For one who took turns in becoming the chief and attendant, his own-self and others are equal. One pure mind penetrates into the five wheels,⁶⁸ and so the resultant person and the dependent condition or environment [i.e., country, family, possessions, etc.] are equal.⁶⁹ One dropped a butcher knife, rectified himself, and became a buddha; this means good and evil are equal.⁷⁰

There are many more examples similar to the aforementioned cases, but there would be no leisure in quoting them all. “Non-duality”⁷¹ in the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra*, “complete combination”⁷² in the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, “immediate” in the *Sūtra of Complete Enlightenment*, and “final (or utmost)”⁷³ in the *Lotus Sūtra*—all these epitomize the perfect cases of equality and reformation.

According to the *Awakening of Faith* (*Qixin lun*), “all beings became deluded, lost their original enlightenment, and went with the stream of the three refined conceptions⁷⁴ and the six cruder concepts⁷⁵ falling into transmigration; but if by relying on sudden awakening, they first cut the six cruder concepts and then the three refined conceptions and go with the stream to nirvāṇa, the two kinds of wisdom, high faculty and low faculty, are not different.” These words typify formless equality and formless reformation.

In summary, from his birth to death, including his inculcating with skillful means and giving dharma talks with his best effort,

the life of the Buddha exemplified equality and overthrowing the hierarchical system of Brahmanism. He clearly showed the ways to the human happiness of freedom and equality. Who could be then greater than the Buddha among all the reformers of the world? It is thus said that the Buddha came to this world to carry out reform.

According to the *Lotus Sūtra*, “the Buddha came to this world only for one great task,” and “he had only one task, nothing else.” This great task refers to reformation, nothing else. Why is that? Without reforming the rank system of Brahmanism, how could the Buddha have shown his wisdom in leading sentient beings to awakening? Each person’s personality and worth can be determined according to the extent that he carries out reformation. All the sages and heroes are the product of their own self-reformation. Therefore, I would say that there is nothing that is more comfortable than reformation and nothing that is more joyous than reformation.

2) Bodhidharma Coming to the East to Carry out a Great Reformation

Someone told me that:

The Śākyamuni Buddha reformed Brahmanism and established a new religious culture of equality, so he could lead all beings to stop suffering and attain enlightenment. Therefore, the teachings of the dharma king [the Buddha] are perfect and have become a refuge for all generations. Later descendants, including all the patriarchs and all the great masters, competed to preserve the teachings respectfully without violating them. Likewise, Buddhists maintained integrity for three-thousand years. I have not heard about any attempt to violate or change the teaching of the dharma king. Today, however, you have been born in the final dharma period and have proposed the reformation of Buddhism, which has been respectfully practiced for three-thousand years. This kind of attempt at reformation has never

happened, been executed, or been uttered by our ancient ancestors.

I should say that this is not so. If Buddhism had not had flexibility to adjust or change, it would have remained fixed, unable to spread, and thus disappeared long ago. Thus, the *Diamond Sūtra* said that “the dharma that is not settled is called unexcelled complete enlightenment (*anuttarasamyaksambodhi*).”⁷⁶ If there exists a dharma, and it is called *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*, it should be crystal-clear that people in the future cannot attain it even if they strive to find it. If they try to penetrate it, they cannot. It is as if piercing an iron wall. This means that only the buddhas, throughout time and space, are the ones who have the Buddha nature, such meritorious virtues, and such teachings.

Other beings cannot attain the dharma, and so the heaven remains heaven permanently, and the hells remain hells forever. The Buddha field will not be increased, and the realm of sentient beings will not be reduced. Then, how can the Buddha’s following words be true: “all beings are endowed with the Buddha-nature,” and “I will have all beings enter *nirvāṇa* without remains and transcend birth and death?” The Buddha’s dharma is handed down only from patriarchs to patriarchs who reform the dharma from generation to generation and transmitted it to the present.

In the Eastern Han dynasty, Emperor Ming (r. 57–75) saw a person made of gold in his dreams and sent off an envoy to bring a golden statue from the Western regions. The envoy returned to Han China with loads of Buddhist scriptures carried on the horse back. Kāśyapa Mātaṅga and Dharmarakṣa accompanied the envoy back to China and translated the *Sūtra of Forty-Two Sections*.⁷⁷

Since then, Chinese Buddhism had plunged into utter confusion and given letters the supreme status, so that Chinese Buddhists had not heard about any principle beyond letters or any special meaning beyond words. At that time, Bodhidharma came to China on a reed and uttered one word, “directly pointing the mind without setting up letters,” which was like a bolt of lightning out of the blue.

Chinese masters became dizzy and wide-eyed; and they thoroughly split open the shackles of letters and mastered the only gate of sudden enlightenment without impediment. A flower sent forth a sweet fragrance, and the five leaves grew thick one after another and then spread to the east of the Pamir Plateau. Many people rushed to learn the dharma. They then had Bodhidharma as the first patriarch [of Chan Buddhism].

If Bodhidharma had just kept the same groove and inculcated *tathatā* (thusness) by relying on words and letters, Buddhism would have become merely exegetical, and the *tripitaka* of the *sūtras*, *vinaya* and *abhidharma*⁷⁸ would have been like *Erya*.⁷⁹ Our monks and nuns today also would have had only about two volumes of books or several lines of words, so that we could not have heard the supreme teachings.

Therefore, only Bodhidharma, who at that time stopped the crazy waves of the dharma ocean of China, could prevent us even now from falling into the wild currents. I thus think of Bodhidharma as the progenitor of the reformation of Buddhism.

3. Our Urgent Reformation Tasks

At first, I intended to quote the words and phrases of great masters throughout history to prove the reasons for reformation, and then to point out the current situation. I tried to include anyone who did something helpful for reformation even if they were not pioneers of reformation. But there were limits in the space of this article; reformation is so urgent, and it looks late already for embarking on reformation. With the previous two chapters I have abruptly stopped quoting the reformers and will discuss the reformation tasks that we are facing.

1) Reformation of the Mind before the Reformation of Affairs

Alas! Among those who speak well, it is hard to find honorable knights; among those who write well, it is hard to find any heroes. People who are boisterous from morning to night with constant speech and writing tend to observe the past and present as if watching fruits on palms and talk about the West and East as if being accustomed to thunder. They thus overwhelmed Zhang Yi [d. 309 BCE] and Su Qin [d. 317 BCE] and have not fallen behind Sima Qian [ca. 145 or 135–86 BCE] in their writings.⁸⁰ Yet, when they initiate a task, cope with a task, or make a decision on a task, they return to their old habits and are not as capable as even the chief of a small village that consists of three households.

Their mouths and pens alone become the slaves of the ancient people; therefore, although they try to scrape out the corrupted parts, it is impossible. Even though they try to abandon the old, tainted

thoughts, it remains impossible. They just learn and recite books that are incomplete and broken into pieces; and they just remember things about Asia and the West. Therefore, there is nothing noticeable about their actions. Alas! Should I avoid speaking words?

According to an ancient saying, “It is easy to catch a tiger in the mountains, but it is difficult to persuade people with words.” The Buddha’s teachings are earnest and kind; all the patriarchs’ exemplary behaviors are quite visible; state support of Buddhism is nothing but sincere; and the lay people’s faith is nothing but hopeful.

But the snoring from a midday nap in the meditation halls sounds like thunder; the chattering sound at night under the light at the Buddhist seminaries is like sleep talking. Buddhist monastics thus abandon their precious life and the rare chance for achieving the great enlightenment at those mountain sites and have never thought about [their religion] even in their dreams.

Many times I tried to keep these monastics awake in my private meetings with them. Moreover, the central organ, the Conference Office of the Abbots of the Thirty Main Temples, was established quite some time ago, and its periodical [*Joseon Bulgyo wolbo*] has been advising Buddhist monastics for more than a year.⁸¹ More seriously, the whole society has criticized the monastics almost every day.

With such a reminder, however, the monastics fell all the more into a delirium; with such an advice, they became much more stubborn. In comparison, it is like fueling a burning fire by pouring oil on it and deepening water by dredging soil from it when building a bank. All of Korean Buddhism has been badly corrupted. Among all the difficult tasks of the world, what then could be more difficult than persuading people? Alas! Should I say any word at all?

According to a legend, “opening a mouth is like a bow, and uttering words is like an arrow; thus, once they have entered into someone’s ear, even though he is very strong, it is difficult to pull them out.” I agree with this saying. In general, people who cause disputes with words are often offensive to the ear.

Why is this? To make a person rich, we should first point out

and criticize his laziness in farming. To make a person honorable, we should first rebuke his idleness in reading books. To make a person adventurous, we should first reprove his easy life; and to make a person civilized, we should first scold his wild and foolish character. To make a person earn public support, we should first criticize his arrogance; to make a person a public figure, we should first remind him of his close group of friends. To put him at ease, we should first tell him dangerous things; and to make him a saint, we should first scold him for his ordinary feelings. All these are naturally expected.

Even though we do not expect this to occur, everything becomes as it should be by itself. Yet those whom we talk to do not know such a way and thus do not respond at all to our pleas and criticisms. The whole world becomes deaf when it comes to the public good. But with our intense and sincere advice, Buddhist monastics get angry with glaring eyes and raise their fists as if they were about to hit us even when they find a small mistake or slight overstatement. And they say, “How could you become like that by saying such words?” Alas! Should I say any words?

Yet when a precious basin is leaning and about to fall, no one will just yell while standing idly by or just reach out with hands without moving a step. Even though I may be blamed or expelled, I cannot keep silent all the way. This is not because Buddhism is like the precious basin, nor it is because Buddhism is about to collapse. I am not the one who just plays with words, and I have valid reasons for not keeping silent.

I say to myself, “Su Qin said that ‘if I have this three-inch-long tongue left, this should be my capital.’ Likewise, if I had a writing brush left, I should make it the capital for my argument. Although people knit their brows from a headache and keep me away by waving their hand, I will not back down and will raise my voice much stronger. I will reproach them by grabbing their ears. I may bring about rejection from all the good people of the present, but I look forward to having that chance [of reproaching them] soon if there is no auspicious prospect⁸² in the future.”

On the warm southern side of the eastern hill of the Ganges, there is a giant tree; it is rooted in this secular world, and its leaves cover Mount Sumeru [or Meru].⁸³ We do not know how many eons ago this tree was planted or for how many eons it will continue living. But its name has been transmitted orally to the people, and its branches were widely implanted in East Asia.

The tree has offered flowers and fruit to the world, and its fragrance has filled every land and ocean for more than 3,000 years. Its leaves and branches have withered or fallen, and flowers and fruit have been flayed or fallen. The tree has met lonely and desolate autumn seasons and flourished under warm spring sunlight. But it has been deeply and firmly rooted, its circumference is huge, and its shade is so wide that no one ever thought the tree would come to ruin.

One branch [of the tree] was implanted in Asia; however, it withered and stopped branching out. After investigating the tree carefully, woodpeckers came to live on it and pecked holes in it; so many birds built nests in the holes. And insects are gnawing the leaves, and ants are sucking the sap of the tree. The tree has thus not been supplied enough nutrients and has aged. Because it is old, it will wither and then rot.

“What should then be done about this?” I should say, “We have to restore it.” “What should be done to restore it?” “Should we lop off branches or pile earth around the roots?” I should say, “Do not prune, but devote all your energy to piling earth around the root.”

As for not pruning the tree, it means that the tree still has bark and will be budding many times even though the branches are old; it will be regrettable if we end up cutting all of the branches because they are old and diseased.

As for piling earth around the root, it means that the tree is losing the strength to suck up nutrient water and drying out day by day because the branches have become old and the bark is peeling. Instead of sitting idly and waiting for the tree to rot and fall, we need to give the root fertilizer and water for the root to send nutrients to

the bark. Nothing can be done for those diseased and rotten ones, but some withered branches may become moisture-laden and revive, and some rotten ones may push out new shoots. New leaves may shoot out on every branch and dance happily under the bright sun. Wouldn't it be a beautiful sight?

The king of the Bo-tree [the *pippala* tree]⁸⁴ is also like the case just mentioned. One branch of the tree planted in Korea was seriously destroyed. Why is that? This king tree was planted in our mind and became the root of our faith, the fertilizer of *upāya* [skillful means], the stems and leaves of all actions, the fruit of compassion and morality, and the medium for propagating.

Recently, we abandoned the tree and did not take care of it; so, the root was exposed, stems dried up, and leaves and flowers dried and died. Is this tree going to fall down? It is not. It should not be! Benefiting from this tree, our 6,000 monastics have formed the thirty main temples now. All the Buddhist monastics said that they could not let the tree succumb to disease and fall. They thus make every effort, talk loudly, and focus on branches and leaves by treating them with acupuncture. But this is like scratching the bottom of a foot without taking off the shoe.

Alas! Dear 6,000 fellow monastics! Do not work hard in vain. Instead, plentifully fertilize the root of faith. If the tree revives, it will not be too bad even though one branch may dry out and fall off. If while trying to protect a branch you do not care for the tree's trunk, you cannot preserve even the branch.

Alas! All monastics are different in preference, and they handle affairs differently according to public or personal interests or for righteousness or personal profit. If I ask them [why they do what they do], they all respond that they do things for Buddhism. But when I watch them carefully, they are no different from those who do not favor Buddhism.

Why is that? Although the last 500 years [Buddhism during the Joseon dynasty] were still the history of Buddhists [despite the anti-Buddhist policies], it was really a nightmare. Yet Buddhist monastics

took the time for absolute truth and would not dare leave Buddhism behind. Although distinguishing oneself [in ascetic practice] is not regarded as a non-Buddhist practice, the practice is done by living in seclusion. Yet they took the practice as a form of supreme cultivation and were about to lose even the root of Buddhism.

In some other cases, our monastics negotiated a rule that was neither new nor old; they tried to establish a new sect that was neither trustful nor pure. They spread a new teaching that was neither meditation (Seon) nor doctrinal teachings (Gyo); or they worshiped a new tenet that was neither Buddhism nor Christianity. Each of them thus made these ways as their own odd means. There were also plenty of monastics who did not know that they were dreaming while dreaming or who did not know that they were drunken while getting drunk.

Alas! While they said that they worked for the restoration of Buddhism, yet what they did was entirely different. It was because their minds were not the same. The reason that they were not in agreement in their minds was they did not have strong faith. I wish that all of the monastics would unify their minds and return to the root of faith; and they should first reform their minds and then reform their affairs.

2) Reformation of Organization

At present, if I ask Buddhist monastics whether they have their own organization, they say they already have one. But if I ask them whether the current situation and the system of the organization are good or not, I am sure that they will say nothing. If we discuss whether an organization is good or bad, there are three kinds of organization: one with only appearance, one with only power, and one made by [members'] minds.

One with only appearance means that the organization is nominal and without function; one with only power means that the

organization is functional but has no appearance. One made by the minds means that the organization does not seem to have appearance yet has appearance; it does not seem to have power yet has power; and it does not seem to have function yet has function. Therefore, we should distinguish these three kinds as well.

If we grasp sand with our hands and throw it into the water, numerous grains of sand result. Yet when we plaster a wall with sand, it will not stick to the wall; if we build a wall with sand, it will not stand even for a short time. This is called a group with only appearance.

If one tries to break a bundle of birch into two, it is not easy to do that even though he is very strong. It is because the bundle gets strong with many branches combined. But if the bundle is loosened and scattered, it no longer forms a body. This is called an organization made by power.

But the organization made by the minds is not like that. Whether it is the epidendrum or the Chinese evergreen oak, they all put forth shoots and grow by themselves with a spring breeze. It is because their goal is to bear fruit. With timely rain, all rivers, streams, and brooks flow in hurry. It is because they aim to reach the ocean. Even a giant rock cannot push down the fresh sprouts, and even a long bank cannot prevent the flowing of the water. It is because the goals of the sprouts and the water are the same.

In society, there is a group that has its appearance yet does not have power; and there is a group that has power yet does not have the minds of its members. The group that has an appearance yet does not have power consists of market place merchants. The other one that has power yet does not have the minds is the group of manual laborers.

Now, is the unity of our monastics better than that of the market merchants or that of the manual laborers? At temples and hermitages, hundreds or dozens of our monastics live, eat, sleep as a group, worship the Buddha, and practice the same religion. Thus, in light of the unity of appearance, what could be better than us? But in reality,

the situation is different. The power and minds of the monastics are usually united only for useless cases; therefore, if someone attempts to initiate a task or to utter an opinion, the majority of monastics does not dare examine the whole aspect of the task or the opinion and readily jumps into criticizing or slandering the person.

Although one person wants to embark on an enterprise with a good purpose, how could he deal with the outcry of the crowd? Moreover, our religion is different now than the past peaceful time. If we persist in keeping only the past, we cannot possess even the habit of the past. It is thus inevitable that we must wipe our eyes and clench our fists to change things. Yet our monastics are not united even for ordinary events. It is thus obvious that they would not listen even though one suddenly speaks right words to them.

They not only would not listen but would also slander and chide the person. They gather people and form an opposing organization. This is why Buddhism today is not much different from the past, why it has not shown much improvement even though not a few people have dedicated themselves to Buddhism for decades and worked for the reformation of Buddhism. Isn't it something that makes us draw a long sigh?

Don't you see the following living things? Anchovies, even though they are very small fishes, they move in schools and can carry a load of even a giant fleet on them. Ants are small insects, yet they form a colony and can pull around a cicada larva that is several times larger than them. Given these small creatures live in such ways, how about us human beings?

When several thieves appeared with weapons at a market place, people there were frightened and fled. When lofty subjects defend a castle, even a great number of troops cannot seize the castle. While worldly affairs are like these, should it not be much more so with religious affairs?

Luer⁸⁵ was a fast horse, but without a skillful trainer it became old and worn-out. Gold is precious, but if it falls in one's eyes, one gets sick. Similarly, religion is good, but if it is not reformed, it will

decline; although an organization is firm, it will bring forth disaster if its members' minds are not united.

My fellow monastics! Think carefully. No other religions are better than our religion. Yet why does bearing such a great duty [of being the best religion] divide us instead of entrusting individuals with the same duty?

My fellow monastics! In terms of appearance and power, we have an organization. Why is it then that you stand on the opposition side? If you change your mind and stand together as one, the future of our religion will be like sailing with the wind at our backs. Who could then block our speed!

3) Reformation of the Financial Foundation⁸⁶

The reason one can take a great leap in the six continents and make a fast decision in all affairs is because of the power of money. Money is the ultimate god and most strange; it can bring either blessings or disasters. It is why a superior man can gain people by money and an inferior man loses people by money; in addition, a superior man can achieve success in life with money, and an inferior man can harm himself with money.

Therefore, throughout the history of the world, when having money one time, everyone, including me, would certainly hide the money in the bag or conceal the money in the box or a pit. He would then fear that other people may know about the money because he is afraid that disasters could follow him.

If he lost money one time, it is certain that his ten fingers would be tired out, he looks ash-colored, and his heart would fail. It is as if a person, facing disaster, mourns that his fate is too harsh. If he knows someone has money, he must make a hundred plans to pry the money away, search out bags, and open trunks. He also could injure others and harm things because he is covetous of their wealth. Hence, for Su Qin's sister-in-law, she changes, being respectful or

rude before and after.⁸⁷ For Maichen's [d. 115 BCE] wife, abandoning or following is different in the past and in the present.⁸⁸

Alas! Today, we think our religion is superior [to other religions] but do not consider establishing a foundation. Is it the right thing to do? I should say not. Throwing away money is really good, but if we abandoned money without caring, how will we utilize the money for the religion? If it is really the case that Confucius did not have the wealth of Zigong [520–456 BCE],⁸⁹ it would have been impossible for him to leave his tracks throughout China.

We have Buddhist temples, spread out here and there like stars, that number almost one thousand and several hundred, and Buddhism has long been here, for about one thousand and a few hundred years. Thus, Korean Buddhism came to amass a great deal of wealth, such as forests, land, buildings, antiques, artifacts, treasures, etc. Among the religions of Korea, Buddhism's wealth could be at the top. But the properties of Buddhism are scattered all over; an organization made by the minds of the monastics has not been formed yet. Each township and each borough keeps its own wealth, so that the size of wealth is limited.

In addition, the discipline of monastics has been lax, and monastics have given rise to the concepts of me and the other; thus, even for a cooperative enterprise that should boast a great relationship among its members, monastics begrudge the membership money and do not think about the public interest. It is as though fathers, sons, and brothers when dividing family wealth hold onto their own share, protect, and hide it; they love and envy their own wealth; and they are unwilling to reduce their wealth even a bit. They avoid cooperative relationships among themselves and crush each other; sons push their fathers; fathers regress to their sons; the elder brother distrusts his younger brother; the younger wants the older brother [to do the work]. In the end, they all become bystanders and earn the disrepute of being of “great wealth but not great.”

Even worse, the mother-in-law hides money in the room; the daughter-in-law hides it in the kitchen. Therefore, the household

becomes disorderly, and the flow of money stops. The family of great wealth becomes desolate like that of Baekgyeol [fl. fifth century].⁹⁰ It is like having a bystander seize the wealth and scheme; therefore, one can predict that soon the rich family will weep until voiceless.

Long ago, Fan Li [536–448 BCE] gave his money away to his friends; yet within three years he made a fortune.⁹¹ Jin Zhong was stingy and envious toward even his relatives; and he died of hunger. Thus, we must promote the public good and not seek private interests; we should uphold righteousness, not profits. We should seek the circulation of wealth, not its stagnation; and we should seek its growth, not reduction.

It is then that the public good should extend to private interests so that we can serve the two ends. Yet, today the utilization of our temples' properties is the opposite. They have stagnated and decreased, and the monastics think of private interests above the public good. Change this way of conducting affairs, and our temples will benefit for infinite eons.

Former sages associated money with dirt or dust and compared it to snakes; and they encouraged people to abandon or give it away and warned them not to covet it. Times have changed, however, and engaging in social work is inevitable. It is thus practical to operate an organization. In my opinion, it would then be better not to waste even a little money than to take a chance of waiting in vain for a lot of money. It would be better to save a box of goods than hoping for one hundred boxes from lay donors; and it would be better to keep a dollar today than managing thousands of dollars in the future.

Holding onto money without spending it is not a way of keeping it; being stingy without giving it away is not a way of saving expenses. Spend money for the public good, and restrain personal interests; seek profit on things except maintaining the organization, and attempt to earn benefits within the boundary of duty. Not being stingy or not being consumptive would then be meaningful.

But I should mention that today people who are in charge of temple finances have their brains in the Dark Ages. They are willing

to cling to money rather than spending, and they are willing to hide rather than reveal. On the other hand, those who promote the social engagement of religion today all have reformist perspectives, so they try to circulate money rather than stopping the flow of money, and they try to progress rather than pull back.

Therefore, the opinions of these two camps clash. In addition, many of the things to be implemented are multiplied daily and monthly, propagating, education, publications, and other such things. The stubborn ones are further shocked each day, and those who are reformers wish that their hands were quicker [for all the activities].

Alas! Today even the shocked brain is something we need, and quick hands are something we have to have. I think that our monastics can live harmoniously together only after implementing reformation. What does this mean? Reformers first put their hands on the foundation to activate its reproduction, and those stubborn monastics change the brain and rectify their ways of keeping, not spending. Then, these two groups become one and help one another.

Our monastics could thus have duties and abilities; it is like a bird has two wings. Our religion could thus earn financial power and the medium with which it can utilize the finances; it is like a cart with two wheels. Although the prince of evil can corrupt the world and create every sort of obstacle, what can he do to our religion?

4) Reforming the Organization after Having Senses/ Awareness

As mentioned before, there are three kinds of organizations—one with only appearance, one with only power, and one made by members' minds. That which is good for the future, everybody agrees, is the organization made by the minds. But even establishing the organization with only appearance is not easy.

Alas! Why is it that there is so much discrepancy between words

and reality? It is because people lack an awareness. No matter what kinds of enterprise, one should be aware of the importance of the enterprise first. Motivation to work for the goal follows. A black dragon is extremely fierce; so, if one tries to obtain a pearl, one has to stab the dragon on his chin. Tigers and leopards are violent animals; yet people carry a rifle and chase them after. They have no regrets even though they might get killed. This is because they have come to be aware that the pearl and tiger skins are real treasures. They then have the desire for treasures and risk their lives.

Here a robber is about to attack, and people all bear arms, yell loudly, and risk their lives by fighting against him. This is because they sense that the robber is going to harm them and steal their money. Our 6,000 fellow monastics are like people in the market place and like a pile of sand. They do not have an organization because they do not perceive an organization to be important.

In general, sensation means that one feels the touch when coming into contact with things and has a thought about touch. Without sensing the outer touch, it is natural to be unaware of the inside. If one has not climbed a cliff, he does not feel a dull pain in his ankle. If one does not think of green plums, his mouth does not water. One senses heat after touching the fire, and one feels coldness only after drinking icy water.

Our monastics live deep in the mountains and enter into deep meditative concentration; as a result they know little of the changes in the world and the current trends of society. They rest their heads on a wooden pillow and have been passing hundreds of years in the lands of dreams. It is surely that they lack an awareness of the world. They don't have the awareness, indeed.

Our monastics have eyes but have no pupils; they are thus like the blind. They have ears but no clear hearing; they are thus like the deaf. How can they then work for people's salvation? I would reply that some pioneers have not spared their lives in leading and warning the monastics.

The darkness of the earth will disappear without lighting a lamp;

the fog that filled the space will be removed by itself without fanning. Recently, pioneers have tried to inculcate Buddhist monastics earnestly and diligently in writings and lectures. The monastics, however, wave their hand and turn their head away. They will not listen or follow, and they are wary of hearing those words and vow to the death not to follow the words of pioneers. They are like a blind person leading many other blind people and falling into a fire pit.

The Buddha thus said that he could provide compassion without karmic relationship but that he could not save people who did not have karmic relationships. But the mind changes depending on various circumstances. Even with a mystical mind like a clear mirror, how could they not sense, even once, those changes? But the monastics bind themselves without knowing how to free themselves from [self-inflicted] bondage? *Yusin* (restoration/reformation) is not a special affair. It is merely to adjust the religion properly to changing times.

Eyes, which are located horizontally, and the nose, which is made vertical, are not special; eating when feeling hunger and drinking when feeling thirst are not unusual. When it comes to *yusin*, however, monastics say that they cannot carry out the reformation. Isn't it odd?

Springtime is about to end, yet they cannot throw away the ruined cotton-wool; the sun reaches the middle of the sky, yet they just cannot toss the torch. They then say that it is impossible to protect themselves from cold weather without cotton-wool or to eliminate darkness without the torch. Who would not utter such words if they live in winter and sit in darkness?

But I am afraid that those former times are not same as the present time. I ask them to look again; what kind of time were the former times? If they predict the order of time in advance and compare them with others, they could have one kind of sensation.

5) Reformation of Education

Our monastics today study Buddhist scriptures and practice Seon meditation for their inner cultivation; and then they proselytize to promote Buddhism. Other than those, there is nothing they can do. But if they do not know Buddhist doctrines, their meditation practice will be deluded and idiotic, and they will propagate with incoherent or malignant talk.

They should thus learn doctrines first. To promote doctrinal learning, we need to educate monastics; and to educate them, we should reform our education institutions. Educational institutions depend on teachers, books, systems, and location. To improve them, I will first discuss the defects of these four elements.

Being a teacher is really difficult. An ancient master said, “One of the great faults of people is to like to be a teacher of someone else,” and “It is frequently done to make role models of those who are not exemplary.” At present, are those who work to teach and propagate Buddhism all sufficiently qualified? If they are fully qualified, I will retract my opinion. If they are not fully qualified, I will draw out a pen to write my opinion.

Students are like a baby, and teachers are like a nanny, so that students emulate all the actions of teachers. If teachers are not righteous and faulty, they mislead the bright and excellent students, so that students cannot develop their character. In general, ordinary people are quickly affected by worldly desires; therefore, doing good is difficult like climbing a mountain, but doing evil is easy like slipping down one.

Although a teacher is exemplary while following custom in his every behavior and being correct whether he speaks or is silent, his students are not necessarily wise. A disciple of Confucius ran into the room of Confucius threatening him with a deadly weapon; and a disciple of Jesus Christ betrayed him by receiving a bribe.⁹² Worse, in the present era people become dull in their spiritual faculties and are easily influenced by worldly desire.

That is not to say that all the doctrinal teachers of Korean Buddhism are disqualified. But if we try to find completely competent ones, finding them is almost as impossible as finding phoenix feathers or the unicorn's horn. For some elders, if they have mastered several phrases and letters, they recklessly sit on high and regard themselves as erudite scholars. Yet when it comes to explaining the profound meaning of sophisticated scriptures, they act as if a falcon swallowed a whole date.⁹³ How can such teachers produce good students? Clean milk has thus become water; a fragrant forest slowly changes into weeds, so that there is no need to keep the forest. In the past dozen years, those doctrinal masters have become a part of Korean Buddhism's current situation.

Please give this careful thought. Regarding our great doctrinal teachers, how have we respected and honored them? We gave special treatment to them as experts when they merely finished learning some of the Fourfold Collection Course (Sajipgwa); and we honored them as superior masters if they memorized some of the Great Teachings Course (Daegyogwa).⁹⁴ We then indulged them as if they were the second advent of the Buddha.

In response, some shameless teachers have sought a name and profits by composing insignificant pieces. They were soon entrusted as masters, and then they disgracefully took the honor. Yet nobody dared to identity who they were. The doctrinal teachers have kept their privileges and hegemonic power for Korean Buddhism.

Alas! They occupy their positions and power, yet they are unable to fulfill their duties; it is as though they eat the bread of idleness. How could they then repay the respect the monastics paid them? They should have realized the truth and led people well, yet they have received respect from people without knowing why they were respected. They do not know how to produce good students and save miserable people. They just try to fish for fame and receive a name; yet they do not perform real work.

They are concerned only with the scale of affairs. Therefore, although many temples tried to establish schools for many years,

few schools were completed. In addition, it is hard to see that they selected any gifted students to educate. Given all these problems, it is certain that the future of our Buddhism is very bleak.

Alas! Who could lead us if there are no pioneers? For our future, teachers should pay more attention to educating students so that they can complete their character. Only then, can we expect a bright future for our religion.

— Incomplete —

(The author abruptly stops writing here, making the treatise incomplete.)

Notes

* This treatise was serialized in the *Joseon Bulgyo wolbo*, spanning twelve issues from volume 3 (April 1912) to volume 8 (September 1912) and from volume 13 (February 1913) to volume 18 (July 1913). The text is organized into four main parts, consists of a total of 15 chapters, and is written in a Sino-Korean style. The series was discontinued after the publications of the last volume, 19 (August 1913), which makes the manuscript incomplete. This abrupt discontinuation was likely caused by the publication of Han Yongun's *Joseon Bulgyo yusinnon* in May 1913.

1 Bodhidharma is a legendary founder of Chan Buddhism from the early fifth century CE. He is said to have come to China from South India and is well known for his wall meditation (Ch. *piguan*) during which he kept silent for nine years.

2 Chan Master Deshan is famous for hitting his interlocutors (disciples) no matter whether they answered rightly or wrongly. This is an example of Chan's sudden approach to awakening the mind, showing the futility of relative concepts and cognitive thinking. But here the author states that it is not wise to deal with things without thinking by hitting whatever shows up.

3 Yue was a state during the Spring and the Autumn and the Warring States periods of China's Zhou dynasty during the first millennium BCE in the modern provinces of Zhejiang and Jiangsu.

4 Worldly things change thusly; this shows the convulsions of nature.

5 See the *Lotus Sūtra* on “parable of the burning house.” *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經 (*Lotus Sūtra*), T 262.9.12b.

6 Prasenajit was the king of Śrāvastī, a contemporary of the Buddha, and father of Virūḍhaka, who supplanted him.

7 *Śūraṅgama-sūtra* (*Dafoding rulaimiyin xiuzhengliaoyi zhupusawanxing shoulenqyan jing* 大佛頂如來密因修證了義諸菩薩萬行首楞嚴經, hereafter *Lengyan jing* 楞嚴經) 2, T 945.19.110a–b.

8 Hong Manju was a son-in-law of King Jeongjo (r. 1776–1800).

9 The full title is the *Huangdi Yinfu jing* 黃帝陰符經 [Yellow Emperor's Hidden Talisman Classic]. It is a Daoist scripture associated with Chinese astrology,

produced around the eighth century CE. There are two existing versions, a shorter text of 332 Chinese characters in one section and a longer one of 445 in three sections. Both versions explain cosmological correspondences, the Dao of Heaven and yin and yang.

- 10 It is the sixth of the six heavens of desire, or passion-heavens, the last of the six *devalokas*, the abode of Śiva, and of Māra.
- 11 The *avici* hell is the last of the eight hot hells, in which punishment, pain, form, birth, and death continue without intermission.
- 12 These Chinese emperors targeted Buddhism as Buddhism became too rich and powerful. The increase in the number of Buddhist temples and monks put financial pressure on the state.
- 13 Yu Bing ruled as regent for Emperor Cheng of Eastern Jin when he ascended the throne at a tender age.
- 14 Lushan Huiyuan was a patriarch of Donglin Temple at Mount Lushan in Jiangxi Province in China. He organized a group of monks and lay people into the White Lotus Society. In 404, he wrote this treatise to assert the political independence of monks from rulers.
- 15 Han Yu was a master of Chinese prose and poetry during the Tang dynasty. He attacked Daoism and Buddhism, which were then popular in the court. He presented the “Fogubiao” 佛骨表 to Emperor Xianzong, who became upset by this letter and thus demoted and exiled him to Chaozhou.
- 16 Taidian was a monk during the Tang dynasty.
- 17 This Huiyuan was a monk at Jingying Temple during the early Sui dynasty.
- 18 Zhixuan was a monk during the Sui dynasty.
- 19 He was famed for his promotion of Daoism.
- 20 Written by Mouzi, a late second century Confucian scholar-official who converted to Buddhism. *Lihuolun* 理惑論 is comprised of a preface and an imaginary dialogue of questions and answers about Buddhist practices.
- 21 Zhang Shangying was a statesman and a lay Buddhist during the Song dynasty. He joined Wang Anshi (1021–1086) in a discussion of Wang’s socioeconomic reforms.
- 22 Ichadon was a grand secretary during the reign of King Beopheung (r. 514–540). Ichadon’s martyrdom in 527 is said to have resulted in Buddhism becoming officially accepted in Silla.
- 23 Shin Don was a monk and regarded as a living Buddha. King Gongmin of the Goryeo dynasty hired him for his court to implement King Gongmin’s reform policies. Later, Shin returned to a lay life but was executed allegedly for his abuse of political power.
- 24 Ouyang was a Chinese statesman, historian, and poet of the Song dynasty.

He was one of the major players in the Qingli Reforms of the 1040s and was in charge of creating the *Xin tangshu* 新唐書 [New History of the Tang Dynasty]. He was also regarded as one of the great masters of Tang and Song era prose.

- 25 Marie-Jeanne Roland was a French writer and political figure who was influential in her husband's career during the early years of the French Revolution until she was arrested and executed for treason. Her final words were uttered before the statue of Liberty in the Place de la Revolution, where she was guillotined.
- 26 *Odu* is a herbaceous perennial, and its tuberous root is toxic but is made into medicine for rheumatism and neuralgia.
- 27 Yue people shaved their hair so that they would not need to wear hats.
- 28 Ginseng is suspected of worsening fevers.
- 29 Written by Wang Shifu (d.u.) during China's Yuan dynasty the play recounts a love story between Zhangsheng and a daughter of a late prime minister. It is regarded as one of Yuan's masterpieces.
- 30 One of the Four Great Classical Novels of Chinese literature, Shi Naian wrote *Water Margin* (*Shuihuzhuan* 水滸傳) at the end of the Yuan and early Ming dynasties. It is written in vernacular rather than classical Chinese and is set in the Song dynasty. One hundred and eight outlaws gather at Mount Liang to form a sizable army. They are tricked by the government and sent on campaigns to resist foreign invaders and suppress rebels, and eventually they all either die in battle opposing foreign invaders or are killed/chased by government forces.
- 31 Sima Qian (145–86 BCE) finished writing *Records of the Grand Historian* (*Shiji* 史記), a monumental history of ancient China, around 109 BCE. *Records of the Grand Historian* covers a 2,500-year period from the age of the legendary Yellow Emperor to Emperor Wu of Han, who reigned during the author's lifetime.
- 32 Sima Qian was an astronomer, calendar expert, and China's first great historian. He is most noted as author of the *Records of the Grand Historian*. Son of the Han court's great historian Sima Tan, he was appointed in 108 BCE to succeed his father in the post of grand historian. In 105 BCE he began to undertake the unfulfilled ambition of his father to write a definitive history of the Chinese past. But, before he completed his history, Sima Qian offended the emperor by defending a disgraced general. He was charged with "defaming the emperor," a capital crime. Castrated instead of being executed, he devoted himself to completing *Records of the Grand Historian* despite the shame.

- 33 Forms of birth (Skt. *caturyoni*): (1) viviparous (Skt. *jarāyuja*), as with mammals; (2) oviparous (Skt. *andaja*), as with birds; (3) moisture (Skt. *sainsvedaja*), or water-born, as with worms and fish; (4) metamorphic (Skt. *aupapāduka*), as with moths from the chrysalis, with devas, in shells, or the first beings in a newly evolved world.
- 34 A heron-like bird with a crest.
- 35 A legendary bird that could fly ninety thousand *lis* (22,500 miles) a day.
- 36 A great legendary fish.
- 37 Lu is the home state of Confucius. Qi (1046–221 BCE) and Lu (1046–256 BCE) were the states during the Spring and Autumn and the Warring States periods.
- 38 In 1902 the government instituted a new monastic administration system, modeled on the Japanese system. It established the Office of Temple and Shrines (Sasa gwalliso 寺社管理署) at Wonheungsa in Seoul and issued regulations for temple administration, which consist of thirty-six articles.
- 39 See note 3 of 25 page.
- 40 Under the Temple Ordinance, the thirty main temple districts became working units for Buddhist reformation. The thirty districts formed the Conference Office of the Abbots of the Thirty Main Temples (Samsip bonsa juji hoe'uiso 三十本寺住持會議所) in November 1911 and changed its name to the Cooperative Office of the Thirty Main Temples of Seon and Gyo (Seon Gyo yangjong samsip daebonsa yeonhap samuso 禪教兩宗三十三大寺聯合事務所) in 1915.
- 41 Hua Tuo was a physician and surgeon in the late Eastern Han dynasty.
- 42 Medicine King Bodhisattva (Skt. Bhaisajyārāja). He is referred to in the *Lotus Sūtra* as offering his arms as a burnt sacrifice to his Buddha.
- 43 A legendary doctor in ancient China.
- 44 The *vajra*-ruler who controls unclean places.
- 45 A deity with eight arms, three eyes, riding on a white bull.
- 46 Also known as the Emperor of the Five Grains, he was a legendary ruler of China some 5,000 years ago with the head of a bull and the body of a man. He reputedly established agricultural society in China and taught the use of herbal drugs.
- 47 Liu Bang (Emperor Taizu) founded the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE).
- 48 Guan Yu. Yunzhang is his courtesy name. He was a general serving under the warlord Liu Bei in the late Eastern Han dynasty. He played a significant role in the civil war that led to the establishment of Shu Han (221–263) in the Three Kingdoms period (220–280). He was deified as early as the Sui dynasty and is still worshiped by many Chinese.

- 49 Xiang Yu (King Chuba) was a prominent warlord in the late Qin dynasty (221–207 BCE) and the leader of the rebel forces that overthrew the Qin. He was the principal contestant for control of China with Liu Bang.
- 50 He was an Italian statesman and principal figure in the movement toward Italian unification.
- 51 He was a Russian communist revolutionary, politician, and political theorist.
- 52 Baili Xi (Wugu dafu) lived during the Spring and Autumn period. The king of Qin bought Baili Xi from Chu with five goatskins and put him in charge of the government.
- 53 Sima Xiangru was born in the area of modern Qingdu, Sichuan in the Western Han dynasty. He was a poet, musician, and author who lived a good life but also experienced periods of financial and political difficulty. He suffered disappointment in love. Forbidden to marry the daughter of a wealthy man, he eloped with his lover, and in a famous scandal, the couple supported themselves by running a small tavern.
- 54 This paragraph shows Gwon's favorable attitude toward Japanese policies, which he thinks will help Korean Buddhism reform and flourish again.
- 55 The *udumbara* tree is supposed to produce fruit without flowers. Once in 3,000 years it is said to flower; hence this is a symbol of the rare appearance of a buddha.
- 56 He was a schemer in early Han China.
- 57 *Lengyan jing* 樂嚴經 2, T 945.19.147b.
- 58 Dong Zhongshu was a scholar of the Han dynasty. He promoted Confucianism as the state ideology and the basis of official political philosophy. He merged the Confucian and Yinyang schools of thought.
- 59 He was a Confucian scholar in Northern Song China.
- 60 They are *deva*, *nāga*, *yakṣa*, *gandharva*, *asura*, *garuda*, *kimnara*, and *mahoraga*.
- 61 Luther was a German Catholic priest, professor of theology, and seminal figure of the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century. He rejected several of the teachings and practices of the Roman Catholic Church. He taught that salvation is not earned by good deeds but is received only as a free gift of God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ. He was excommunicated by Pope Leo X and condemned as an outlaw by Emperor Charles V.
- 62 An ancient Hindu collection of rules of conduct for private, social, and religious life (ca. 500 BCE) according to the system of views and doctrines of Brahmanism. This "revealed scripture" is comprised of 2,684 verses,

- divided into 12 chapters.
- 63 The Tuṣita Heaven is the fourth *devaloka* in the desire realm. Its inner department is the Pure Land of Maitreya who is reborn there before descending to earth as the next buddha.
- 64 A young brahmin in the first period of his life.
- 65 The Daja stūpa was located at Vaisali in India. When the Buddha was giving a dharma talk in front of the stūpa, Mahākāśyapa came late to attend, and the Śākyamuni Buddha let him share his seat. Mahākāśyapa was one of the ten chief disciples of the Buddha and was master of discipline.
- 66 The disciple attains one of these heavens according to the *dhyāna* he observes: (1) The first region, as large as one whole universe, comprises the three heavens; (2) The second region, equal to a small chiliocosms, comprises the three heavens; (3) The third region, equal to a middling chiliocosms, comprises the three heavens; (4) The fourth region, equal to a great chiliocosms, comprises the remaining nine heavens.
- 67 They are of two kinds of three calamities, minor and major. The minor three calamities, appearing during a decadent world-period, are sword, pestilence, and famine; the major three calamities of world-destruction are fire, water, and wind.
- 68 The five wheels, or things that turn are: (1) the five members (the knees, the elbows, and the head); (2) the five foundations of the world; (3) the esoteric sect uses the term the five elements; (4) the five fingers of a buddha; (5) the object with which the individual may be united with the five buddhas, or Vairocana.
- 69 Gwon refers here to the equality between the two forms of karma resulting from one's past.
- 70 This refers to a butcher called "Broad-Forehead" who killed an innumerable number of sheep. Yet he received the eight precepts from Śāriputra and stopped the killing. He was thus born as the son of the king of the northern heaven after his death.
- 71 Non-duality (Skt. *advaya*). It refers to the one and undivided, the unity of all things, the one reality, and the universal Buddha-nature.
- 72 Complete combination refers to the identity of apparent contradictions and perfect harmony among all differences.
- 73 Final (or utmost) refers to the "final teaching," the final metaphysical concepts of Mahāyāna Buddhism.
- 74 The three refined or subtle conceptions are in contrast with the six cruder concepts. The three are ignorance (or the unenlightened condition), ability to perceive phenomena (or perceptive faculties), and the object perceived (or

- the empirical world).
- 75 The six cruder stages arise from the three finer stages which in turn are produced by original condition of ignorance. They are states of (1) knowledge of like and dislike arising from mental conditions; (2) consciousness of pain and pleasure resulting from the first, causing continuous responsive memory; (3) attachment or clinging, arising from the last; (4) assigning names according to the seeming and unreal; (5) consequent activity with all the variety of deeds; and (6) suffering resulting from being tied to deeds and their karma consequences.
- 76 Unexcelled complete enlightenment is an attribute of every buddha.
- 77 It is said that they were wrongly attributed as translators.
- 78 The “three baskets” composed of collections of sūtras, vinaya, and abhidharma. The Pāli Canon is the only complete early canon still extant. This term is also applied to later comprehensive collections of Buddhist texts, such as the Tibetan, Chinese, and Korean tripitakas. The sūtra pitaka is the collection of discourses included in the early canons; the vinaya pitaka is the collection of texts containing rules for monastic discipline included in the early canons; the abhidharma pitaka is the collection of the seven works of the Theravāda school that categorize the teachings in the sūtra pitaka.
- 79 The *Erya* 爾雅 is an ancient Chinese dictionary that explains words and things.
- 80 Zhang Yi and Su Qin were disciples of Guiguzi (ca. fourth century BCE), the founder of the school of Diplomacy. They were political strategists during the Warring States period. Su Qin persuaded the leaders of the six states of Qi, Chu, Yan, Zhao, Han, and Wei to unite against the Qin state through the use of his splendid rhetoric. Zhang Yi was born in Wei, and he helped Qin to dissolve the unity of the other states and paved the way for Qin’s unification of China.
- 81 The Conference Office of the Abbots of the Thirty Main Temples published *Joseon Bulgyo wolbo* 朝鮮佛教月報 [Korean Buddhist Monthly] from February 1912 to August 1913, with nineteen issues in total. This periodical was the official organ of Korean Buddhism, and Gwon Sangro was the editor-in-chief.
- 82 It looks that the word *jaun* 子雲 seems a misprint of *jaun* 紫雲 or *jaun* 慈雲.
- 83 The Ganges (the Ganga in Hindi) is a trans-boundary river that flows through the plains of northern India and Bangladesh. It has been the sacred river of Hinduism. In Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist cosmology Mount Sumeru is a sacred mountain with five peaks that is considered to be the center of all the physical, metaphysical, and spiritual universes.

- 84 It is Bodhidruma in Sanskrit, the wisdom tree. Under this tree, the Śākyamuni Buddha attained his enlightenment. It is described as an evergreen.
- 85 One of King Mu of Zhou's steeds.
- 86 The author is calling for a renewed attention to Korean Buddhism's existing and potential wealth via a fiscal reformation of spirit [mind] and the foundation that manages the religion's financial affairs.
- 87 Su Qin's sister-in-law was rude to him when he was poor, but she displayed respect for him when he became successful. For Su Qin, see note 80.
- 88 She had left Zhu Maichen, who lived in Han China, when he was poor but committed suicide when she saw Zhu had become rich.
- 89 Duanmu Ci (Zigong is his courtesy name) was a native of Wei and became a major disciple of Confucius. He was a wealthy merchant, and his financial support for Confucius was substantial. He became a skillful speaker and accomplished statesman.
- 90 Baekgyeol was a Korean harp player in Silla. No information is available about him, but Baekgyeol means patched up 100 times. It was through his extreme poverty that he earned the name.
- 91 Fan Li was a political advisor in the state of Yue in the Spring and Autumn period. He was taken to the state of Wu as hostage with King Goujian (r. 496–464 BCE) of Yue. He later helped the king to defeat Wu. He became a legendary businessman in his later years and became one of the prototypes of the later Chinese money god Caishen.
- 92 Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples of Jesus, betrayed him for thirty pieces of silver.
- 93 The falcon keeps chewing the whole date, unable to swallow it, i.e., being hesitant he is unable to answer the question.
- 94 Sajip contains the “letters” of Dahui Zonggao (1089–1163), Gaofeng Yuanmiao's (1238–1295) *Essentials of Chan* (*Gaofeng heshang Chanyao* 高峰和尚禪要), Guifeng Zongmi's (780–841) *Chan Preface* (*Chanyuan zhuquanji duxu* 禪源諸詮集都序), and Bojo Jinul's (1158–1210) *Excerpts from the Dharma Collection and Special Practice Record with Personal Notes* (*Beopjip byeolhaeng-nok jeoryo byeongip sagi* 法集別行錄節要并入私記). Daegyo includes the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* and Chenguan's (738–839) commentary to the sūtra.

TREATISE ON THE RESTORATION OF KOREAN BUDDHISM (JOSEON BULGYO YUSINNON)

Han Yongun

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Foreword

I have long thought about Buddhist reformation and had a little hope in succeeding. Circumstances, however, were not what I had expected, so it was impossible to carry out my ideas. With this attempt at portraying a new imaginary Buddhist world in my petty scribbling, I just hope to console my loneliness

Slaking thirst by watching a plum tree¹ could be a regimen for one's health. This treatise is just a shadow of a plum tree. The flames of thirst are causing my death; it is thus inevitable to have this shadow of a plum tree substituting for a cool spring of ten thousand *gok*.² Recently, our Buddhism has suffered excessive drought. Yet I do not know whether our Buddhist monastics also feel the thirst. If they do, I hope that this writing will serve them like the shadow of a plum tree.

I have heard that giving (Skt. *dāna*) is the best among the six *pāramitās*.³ With this good deed of offering the shadow of a plum tree, can I be saved in the future from the suffering of hells?

The author
Evening, December 8, 1910

1. Introduction

How is it possible that success or failure in the world can occur on its own? Success or failure can only be determined by the actions of humans. All the myriad affairs become either successes or failures only after complying with humans. If affairs do not have their own independent power and depend only on humans, their success or failure will all be due to human responsibilities.

Ancient people said, “Humans propose and Heaven disposes.” This phrase might mean that although humans have expended enough effort to succeed, Heaven may yet cause the affair to fail; or that, although humans do not put in the effort to succeed, Heaven may still make the affair successful. Alas! If this is so, what could be worse than this saying, which will take the joy out of life and depress their spirits?

If Heaven eventually can control the success or failure of human affairs, this means that humans will be deprived of their freedom. But I have never seen or heard about such a case that could rob people of their freedom.

Does the so-called Heaven refer to the [physical] form of Heaven or Heaven without a form? If it means Heaven with a form, then isn't the sky high above reflected as blue in our eyes? If it has a form, then Heaven is also one of phenomena [in this world]. It should then be subjected to the rules of freedom so that it does not force its way onto other things. It is no different than any other phenomenon at all, I dare say.

Sentient beings are so numerous that the number is immeasurable. How is it then possible that the success or failure of all these beings are ruled by a single, trifling phenomenon [Heaven]?

If so-called Heaven refers to the formless Heaven, it is then the principle of Heaven. The principle of Heaven is truth. If one has a reason to be successful, he will succeed; if he has a reason for failure, then he will fail. This should be the truth. Therefore, success becomes success for itself; and failure becomes failure by itself. How could it be possible again that Heaven completes all the affairs?

As such, both Heaven with a form and a formless Heaven are irrelevant. Yet those who mention that Heaven disposes all know only the existence of Heaven but do not know the existence of humans. As soon as they utter such a statement, their names are added to the list of slaves. How terrible is it for them not to love themselves? If a civilized person aroused such people from the tomb of a thousand years and blamed them for giving up their freedom, the accused would have no way to defend even if they desired to do so.

Heaven thus has nothing to do with the success or failure of things; therefore, discerning such a fact should be sufficient even though things are so numerous. It should be said, "I am the one who not only proposes but also disposes affairs." One who understands this principle would chide himself, not others, and have faith in himself rather than in things. All who would like to discuss the ways of things should make this principle their main tenet.

Today's world is neither the world of the past nor of the future. It is the world of the present. Yet why are there people who investigate things of the last ten million years or explore things in the future up to ten million years from now? There is thus nothing that they do not research, including physical and metaphysical matters between Heaven and earth. And there is also nothing that they do not reform; thus, there are people who try to reform academics, politics, and religion. And also in all the other fields people are raising their voices for reformation; some of them have already reformed, some are currently reforming, and some are planning to reform.

I have heard nothing, however, about the reformation of Korean Buddhism. I do not know why that is, or what the current situation

foretells. Is it that there is nothing for Korean Buddhists to reform? Or is it that Korean Buddhism is not worth reforming? Even after thinking it over, I still do not know the reason. Alas! But this too can be known, since I am certainly the one who is responsible.

There are people who do want to reform Korean Buddhism, yet why is that no one mentions reform? It is certainly because they first entrust Heaven and secondly blame other people. It was only after I began doubting the phrase “Heaven disposes” that I came to realize the responsibility for reforming Korean Buddhism resides not in Heaven nor with others. It surely rests squarely on me.

I then suddenly realized that I could not avoid the responsibility, and I have thought about reasons for the reformation. I thus write this treatise to warn myself and introduce the ideas to my fellow monastics. This writing would be useless to the eyes of people from civilized countries, but it could offer something useful to the future of Korean Buddhism. Real reformation usually appears after a fake reformation, so if this writing does serve as a fake reformation later, I will, indeed, feel honored.

2. The Characteristics of Buddhism

Those who attempt to discuss the reformation of Buddhism today should first observe its characteristics and examine them in light of the present situation and possible future state of Buddhism. Why is this? From this point on, it looks like the world will not stop developing until it reaches the perfect state of civilization. If Buddhism is not well suited to a future civilization, then Buddhists will fail even if, having learned the skill of reviving the dead, they brought back to life Martin Luther and Cromwell and had them reform Buddhism. Therefore, I have pondered Buddhism's excellence as a religion and its fitness with a future civilization, and I have concluded that Buddhism is not only a positive force for human civilization, but also has excellent characteristics.

I will talk about two characteristics of Buddhism. The first is the religious characteristic of Buddhism. In general, why do people have religious faith? The reason is that our highest hopes reside in religion. Hope is the lifeblood of survival and progress. Without hope, people will certainly become lazy and content spending their days in leisure; thus, who would want to work exhausting their body and mind? If there were no hope, every living thing in this world, both human and non-human, would cease to exist. Even if they survived, they would fall into devastation or lechery beyond recovery, as if they were living in hell and acting like barbarians. Sensing the utmost misery and horror, even the so-called civilized people would hide in remote places and lose their desire for living.

This is why all religions, except for Buddhism, express concern that such hope is not strong enough for people; they thus falsely make sweet promises about the immaterial world to strengthen

people's faith and hope. The Christian heaven, Jewish Jehovah, and Muslim eternal life, for example, were all formed out of deep concerns about the world.

These promises, however, are full of deceiving words; they maintain superstitious beliefs without knowing or investigating whether Heaven is real or not, Jehovah exists or not, or the eternal life is true or not. They lead people into ignorance, and many philosophers have repeatedly criticized them for restricting the wisdom of people. About this, I need mention no more.

There are some people, however, who try to defend superstitions with lame words, such as the following: "Although they are superstitions, they have united people's minds. Have you not seen the amazing accomplishments in the West since the eleventh century? More than half of them owe their strength to the superstitious religions; thus, how can we deny the great contributions of superstitions to the world?"

That may be so. However, among those politicians who have become famous throughout history and who have provided impressive stories, and still do today, most of them shed the blood of innumerable people or claimed the achievements for themselves. If they had not brainwashed people with superstitions, they could never have eliminated people's fear of death and forced them to face their own death, offering superstition as bait to lure people so they can use them like arrows and stones to defeat the enemy.

Through the ages, tens of millions of people have been deceived by superstitions at least once or twice, and many lost their lives, which could not be regained—how is it possible to count those numbers? The fact that people have to have some faint hope in superstition is surely the saddest thing. Superstition may look beneficial to humanity, yet its harm is too great to bear.

Buddhism is not like that. Out of the fear that sentient beings would be mired in superstition, Buddhist scriptures state that "enlightenment should be your rule," or "the teaching is to help sentient beings enter the ocean of the Buddha's wisdom." The perfect,

and all-encompassing enlightenment of the Buddha also indicates a similar concern. Śākyamuni Buddha was perfect in this regard; from his birth, six years of living ascetically, forty-nine years of expounding the dharma, to his death (showing his feet from his casket),⁴ every movement, every word, and even his silence occurred in a way to move beings from their delusions to awakening.

Buddhist teachings also encompass ideas like heavens, hells, and “no birth and no death,” but these ideas are different from those found in other religions. Buddhist scriptures state that both hells and heavens become the Pure Land and that the mind of sentient beings is the Pure Land of bodhisattvas. This means that Buddhist heavens are not ordinary heavens but those built inside our minds; Buddhist hells are also those within our minds.

All the incalculable myriad worlds and all nature are to be found in the mind of sentient beings, and apart from our minds, all of Buddha’s eighty-four thousand dharma talks are useless. The Buddha’s teachings are far removed from the heavens and gods that have nothing to do with us. “No birth and no death” is also different from the concept of eternity in other religions; it refers to the protagonist who lives in the ocean of perfect enlightenment, a unique idea that epitomizes Buddhist teachings. Claiming to bring all dead souls to life is something that only fools would say.

A vertical axis contains the three worlds of past, present, and future, and yet it is not considered to be that long from the standpoint of “true suchness” (Skt. *bhūtatathatā*).⁵ The horizontal axis revolves around the ten directions,⁶ and yet it is not considered that large by “true suchness.” Therefore, “true suchness” is so named because while it transcends all the sense organs and sense objects; it is calm and always illuminating. “True suchness” is unchanging, so how could “true suchness” be subject to birth and death?

All sentient beings have such a precious jewel in their minds yet are unaware of it because of delusion. Our Buddha thus began teaching out of his great mercy and compassion for them. Yet sentient beings are all different in their faculties, in their abilities to

learn his teachings, and the Buddha hence had to develop hundreds of thousands of expedient means (Skt. *upāya*)⁷ to develop them. The ultimate goal should be, however, to lead the beings to be awaken to the “true suchness” that resides within their minds. After catching the fish, the fish trap is no longer needed; and after seeing the moon, we can forget the finger pointing at the moon. Yet, how is it that we don’t call the fish trap and fingers superstitions? It is because they are just expedient means. Recognizing “true suchness,” sentient beings begin to realize that living for several decades in this world is meaningless and so seek “no birth and no death” in the permanent “true I.” Whether you think such aspirations for “true I” have any limit or not, why should we say that we have hope only after believing in superstitions? Buddhism is a religion of wisdom and faith, not a superstitious religion.

Next, I will discuss the philosophical characteristic of Buddhism. Philosophers and religious practitioners often come into conflict and disapprove of one another because superstitions and truth are incompatible, much like water and fire. If religious practitioners cannot free themselves from superstitious beliefs, philosophers will concentrate their power on making certain that superstitious beliefs disappear from the earth within a century. Buddhism should not share the same fate with such superstitious beliefs.

How is it possible for Buddhism to share the fate of the superstitious religions? The Buddhist scriptures talk about the “perfect realization of virtue and wisdom” and the “omniscience” (Skt. *sarvajña*)⁸ of those who achieved a great awakening of their minds, thus becoming “all-knowing” with a thorough and unobstructed understanding of everything. Exploring every universal principle to reach the point of knowing everything—isn’t this the ultimate goal of the philosophers? Although it would be difficult for philosophers to accomplish, how can it be difficult for the Buddha? If one wishes to know great philosophers, there is none greater than the Buddha. If you do not believe my words, I will briefly examine what Buddhism and the philosophies of East and West have in common. Liang

Qichao⁹ of China said:

Both Buddhism and Christianity entered China as foreign religions. Yet Buddhism became prosperous while Christianity did not succeed. Why is this? It is because Christianity is based on superstitions and its philosophical doctrines are too shallow to satisfy the minds of Chinese intellectuals. Buddhist teachings contain both religious and philosophical aspects, and the ultimate goal of Buddhist practice is to attain enlightenment. Entering the Way of Buddhism lies in wisdom, and attaining mental power from Buddhist practice lies in one's own efforts. Thus, Buddhism should not be regarded as the same as other ordinary religions. Chinese philosophy matured and then attained distinctive features only after the entry of Buddhism into China.¹⁰

From Liang's statement, we can see that the development of Chinese philosophy owes much to Buddhism. Alas! Fifteen hundred years have passed since Buddhism entered Korea. How would those Koreans who lived in Korea during the last 1,500 years reply when asked: "What are the distinctive features of Korean Buddhism?" With the ointment that prevents hands from chapping, one person used it favorably to become a general while another could not escape having to bleach cotton.¹¹ The difference lies in how the medicine was used. There is thus no use blaming the medicine. The German philosopher Kant said:

The actions we take throughout our lives are all but the outer expressions of our moral character. So, if we wish to know whether human nature is based on freedom, we should not discuss it on the basis of external phenomena but examine it from the standpoint of innate morality. For the moral character, there is nothing that is not free. The moral character is neither produced nor extinguished, and it is thus not restricted by either space or time. It has neither past nor future, and it exists only in the present. People thus have to create their own moral character by relying on the sphere of freedom

that transcends time and space. Accordingly, I cannot see my “true I” [noumenon] with my naked eyes, but if I view it from the moral principle, I can perceive my “true I” being certainly far beyond the phenomenon. This “true I” is always lively and free, and so it is definitely different from my physical body that is bound by the laws of necessity. What then is this lively freedom? Whether I will become a good or bad person is dependent on my own decision. After the decision is made, the physical body follows the orders and makes me either a good or bad person. It is thus clear that both freedom and non-freedom coexist in our bodies.¹²

Liang Qichao explains this theory by saying the following:

“True suchness” in the Buddhist teaching is equivalent to Kant’s “true I,” which is endowed with freedom. And the Buddhist concept of ignorance (Skt. *avidyā*)¹³ is similar to Kant’s “phenomenal I,” which is subject to the law of necessity and thus lacks freedom. According to the Buddha, since time immemorial we have been endowed with two seeds, “true suchness” and ignorance, which are stored in the sea of our Buddha nature and the womb of our consciousness,¹⁴ influencing and diffusing one another.¹⁵ For ordinary people, ignorance overrides true suchness; thus, they impair wisdom (Skt. *prajñā*), mistaking it for ordinary consciousness. For those who cultivate the Way, “true suchness” influences ignorance; thus, they transform consciousness into wisdom. Using this model, Song Confucian scholars systemized Chinese philosophy. Zhu Xi [1130–1200] divided original nature from physical nature and wrote his commentary on the *Great Learning*.¹⁶ He commented that: “luminous virtue” (Ch. *mingde*) is what people receive from Heaven. It is thus empty, numinous, and unobscured. Possessing all the principles, it responds to all myriad affairs. But it sometimes becomes muddled by being restrained by our physical constitution and concealed by human desires.¹⁷

Buddhist “true suchness” refers to the common, universal nature that all sentient beings possess; it does not refer to that which each

person is separately endowed with. But Kant said that each person has the “true I.” This is the difference between the two. Therefore, the Buddha once said that if there were even one sentient being who had not been awakened, he could not attain the Buddhahood, either. This position is based on the belief that all beings share the same original nature, and it is relatively broader, deeper, and more illuminating in terms of salvation for all beings. Kant mentioned that anyone who wants to be good person can become a good person. This is because he believed that the original nature of people is freedom. From the standpoint of self-cultivation, this view would be relatively more earnest and easier to carry out.

On the other hand, Zhu Xi’s “luminous virtue” failed to point out that all beings have the same original nature, which is why Zhu Xi is inferior to the Buddha. In addition, Zhu Xi said that “luminous virtue” is restrained by our physical constitution and concealed by human desires. This position failed to distinguish the free “true I” from the constrained “I” of the phenomenal world. This is why Zhu’s theories are not as good as Kant’s. According to Kant, the “true I” would be neither restrained nor concealed by anything, and if it is either restrained or concealed, then it loses its freedom.¹⁸

What Mr. Liang said about the differences between the Buddha and Kant is not entirely correct. Why is that? The Buddha said, “I am the only one to be revered in the heavenly realm and under the heavens.” This phrase makes clear that everyone has the free, “true I.” The Buddha spoke fully about both the “true I” that everyone has in common and the “true I” that each one of us has separately. But Kant mentioned only the separate “true I,” not the “true I” that all people have in common. Based on this, it is certain that Buddhist philosophy is much deeper.

The Buddha had already attained Buddhahood yet did not attain Buddhahood because of sentient beings. Similarly, it is clear that sentient beings cannot remain ignorant beings because of the Buddha. Why is this? The mind, the Buddha, and sentient beings are

different, yet there is no real difference among them. Who will then become the Buddha, and who will become sentient beings? This is the so-called “mutual penetration and mutual separation”: the one is everything and the myriad things are one.¹⁹ Distinguishing between the Buddha and sentient beings would be as illusory as “flowers in the sky” or “a second moon.”²⁰ The Englishman Francis Bacon said:

The human intellect is like a distorting mirror. When it reflects outside objects, it sometimes projects them protruded, but sometimes projects them sunken. Thus, even the same object might be projected differently. Our [sensory] observations are unavoidably faulty, and this is the first reason for making mistakes of perception. In addition, what our five senses perceive is not the real nature but the imaginary appearance of things, and this is the second reason for making mistakes of perception. Moreover, our bodily constitutions are all different from one another, and this is the third reason for making mistakes of perception.²¹

Bacon’s theories were the product of rigorous thinking and experimentation and thus have many similarities with the teachings of the *Śūramgama-sūtra*.²² The *Śūramgama-sūtra* states: “Figuratively speaking, if a person looks at the clear sky with clear eyes, he will see the clear sky. But if somehow he stares at the sky without moving the pupils, his eyes get so tired that he begins to see illusory flowers in the sky.”²³

These clear and tired eyes are like Bacon’s distorted mirror. Because of the unevenness of the mirror, the same object can be reflected differently, in either a protruded or sunken way. This is similar to what the sūtra says about our eyes: the clear eyes see the clear sky, whereas tired eyes see illusory flowers in the sky.

The *Śūramgama-sūtra* also says, “Both body and senses are empty and false,”²⁴ which has been said because the six sense organs²⁵ and the objects of the senses are all imaginary appearances. Bacon knew that the objects of the senses are not real, but he did not know that

the six sense organs, much like the object of senses, are also not real. This is why Bacon is inferior to the Buddha. The sūtra also states:

The sun is reflected on the water. Two people together watch the sun reflected on the water and leave separately to the east and the west. But they simultaneously believe that the sun follows each of them. There is no stable point for the light.²⁶

This is similar to what Bacon says is the third reason for mistakes of perception. The French scholar Descartes stated the following:

If each person has his own truth to believe, he will stick to it and become a great master of it. If there are people who insist on different views that he cannot accept, he will refute and attack those views. They will engage in debates on their views for a long time, and then the perfect truth may appear from such interactions. The reason is that although wisdom may be higher or lower, bigger or smaller, its original nature is the same, and truth is pure and not muddled. If people seek the pure and tidy truth with the same original wisdom and do their best, shouldn't they reach the same conclusion despite different methods? Therefore, even though people have different views in the beginning, it is certain that one day they will smile at each other.²⁷

Thus Descartes' theory is in complete accord with the teachings of the *Sūtra of Complete Enlightenment* (*Yuanjue jing*)²⁸ in every paragraph. What Descartes says about each person's own truth corresponds to what the sūtra says about "opinions as obstacles."²⁹ What Descartes says about refuting and attacking one another corresponds to what the sūtra says about "eliminating illusion by producing different illusions."³⁰ What Descartes says about the perfect truth exactly corresponds to what the sūtra says about "the attainment of the ultimate state."³¹ What Descartes says about the sameness of original nature corresponds to what the sūtra says

about “the sentient beings and the world being of the same dharma nature.”³² What he says on reaching the same conclusion despite different methods corresponds to what the sūtra says on “wisdom and stupidity all becoming prajñā.”³³

How is it possible for two original natures to exist, and how is it possible for differences in the basic nature to exist? If people seek the non-differentiating principle with the non-dual nature, they will certainly meet at one place by shaking hands. That four plus four equals eight is an unchanging rule of mathematics, but children, who do not know arithmetic, could answer either seven or nine. Answering either seven or nine is an example of how opinions can become obstructive illusions. Once they gradually eradicate illusions, all children will eventually say “eight.” The truth is of the same kind as the fact that four plus four becomes eight. Descartes must have read the *Sūtra of Complete Enlightenment* multiple times in his former life.

In addition, Plato’s idea of the republic,³⁴ Rousseau’s theory on equality, and Lu Xiangshan’s and Wang Yangming’s Chan teachings all resemble the Buddhist tenets.³⁵ This is a brief outline of the commonalities between Eastern and Western philosophies and Buddhism. But I have not read a single book on Western philosophy. I have only glimpsed Western philosophy from fragmented phrases translated here and there in numerous books. I regret that I have not seen the wholeness of Western philosophy.

There is no need, however, to mention further that the golden rules of philosophy, Eastern, Western, old and new, are nothing but footnotes to Buddhist scriptures. Why is this? Those aforementioned philosophers strove to do their best and became masters in their field, and so we can guess that they are true philosophers. Since principles (*li*) do not vary according to time and place, the views of those true philosophers are not a bit different from those of other true philosophers. Since there are no differences, the views of today’s true philosophers are not different from those of ancient true philosophers. We have already seen that the views of several

philosophers correspond to the Buddha's teachings, so why should we not affirm that the views of the other philosophers also fit with the Buddha's dharma seals? It is not the case that I am trying to make false identification between different philosophical views and Buddhism.

Since everyone has the same Buddha-nature and the truth is one, all paths lead to the same goal and myriad factions belong to a single tenet. Buddhism is the great homeland for philosophy. The world of sentient beings is endless, and thus the world of religion is endless, and so too the world of philosophy. But as the level of civilization improves, both religion and philosophy also develop into higher dimensions. By that point, false philosophical views and superstitions will have disappeared. Buddhism, as both religion and philosophy, can offer great inspiration for future morality and civilization.

3. The Principles of Buddhism

Nothing can be accomplished without a principle. Without organizing principles, even people with the wisdom of a sage cannot handle matters effectively because matters get complex and uncontrollable. But once a principle is established, it is easy to know the direction of things, like watching firewood piled up in a cart. One can thus foretell good and bad luck, success and failure on the road ahead. Those who want to discuss a matter must first know its principle for then they will not be perplexed. The principle of Buddhism can be divided broadly into two: The first is the principle of equality, and the second is the principle of saving the world.

The principle of equality is the opposite of inequality. Why is it that we can find cases of inequality so often throughout time and in all places while rarely finding any examples of equality? Although they were wise men, Yan Hui died early and Zhong You was punished.³⁶ Although they were beauties, Da Ji³⁷ was wicked while Diao Chan³⁸ was loyal. Although they were heroes, Washington succeeded while Napoleon ended his life in exile. Although they are the same myriad things, some are being born, and some die, some are strong, and some are weak. Inequalities, linking up with other inequalities, produce innumerable inequalities. Whenever thinking about the reasons for inequality, I always feel worried and sad.

What is then the principle of equality? Does it mean that longevity and untimely death, good and bad, success and failure, strength and weakness become one and the same? The answer is both yes and no. Looking from the viewpoint of inequality, there is nothing that is not unequal, but from the viewpoint of equality, there is nothing that is not equal. What then is inequality? It

refers to the fact that all things and phenomena are subject to the laws of necessity. What does equality mean? It refers to the free, unconstrained truth that transcends time and space. If so, we can assume that the untimely death of Yan Hui and the punishment of Zhong You, the wickedness of Dan Ji and loyalty of Diao Chan, the success of Washington and the failure of Napoleon, [along with] the births, deaths, strengths and weaknesses of the myriad of things, are nothing but the limitations imposed upon all phenomena by the laws of necessity.

In contrast, as for the ultimate truth, being transcendent of time and space, it is never affected by untimely deaths, punishments, wickedness, loyalty, success, failure, births, deaths, strengths, or weaknesses. Su Zizhan said: “Everything, including heaven and earth, has not lasted longer than a moment, if we see it in light of the changeable world; but if we see it in light of the unchangeable world, both things and I will last indefinitely.”³⁹ This quotation clearly shows the essence of both phenomena and the truth. In short, so-called equality refers to the truth, not to phenomena.

Our Buddha felt sympathy that sentient beings were deceived by fake phenomena and unable to become enlightened; he thus taught the truth of equality to them. The sūtra states, “One should know that all bodies and minds are so equal that eventually all sentient beings are the same without differences.”⁴⁰ It also says that “both those possessing the Buddha-nature and those lacking the Buddha-nature (Skt. *icchantika*)⁴¹ will all together attain the Buddhahood.”⁴² Such words on the principle of equality are so profound and broad that there is nothing that they do not penetrate. How can the difference with inequality be so extreme?

Both the liberalism and cosmopolitanism of modern times are really the offspring of the truth of equality. Regarding freedom, it is said that “freedom is defined as not encroaching on another’s freedom.” If people safeguard their freedom and do not impinge upon another’s freedom, our freedom will be the same as the freedom of others, and this person’s freedom will be same as that person’s

freedom. Everybody's freedom will then make up a horizontal line without any difference at all. What could be more ideal in terms of equality than this?

Cosmopolitanism means that all people, whether they are from different countries, different continents, or different racial background, are regarded as one family and treated equally like brothers. There will thus be no competition and no invasion, and the whole world will be governed as if it were one family. Can this be called equality or not?

Such discussions look futile today, but in the future when civilization has developed much further and reached its peak, those discussions on equality will be prevalent everywhere in the world. If there is a cause, there must be an effect, and if there is a principle, there must be a phenomenon. It is the same as shadows following objects or echoes following sound. It is thus that people cannot reject the trend of the truth even though they may have the power of lifting a cauldron or cannons that can destroy mountains. And then, the world of the future will become the world of Buddhism. Why is that? It is because the world will be equal and free and also because the world will achieve great unity. That is why it is called the world of Buddhism. But Buddhist equality would not stop there. All of the countless lotus worlds,⁴³ and everything, every phenomenon inside them, will all be equal without exception.

Next, what is the principle of saving the world? It is the opposite of egoism. Many of those discussing Buddhism regard Buddhism as a religion that benefits only oneself, but they are lacking knowledge about Buddhism. Benefiting only oneself is totally contradictory to Buddhism. The *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* said that: "For all the beings I should take willingly all the sufferings forever in the midst of all the worlds and all the evil courses."⁴⁴ It has also been said that "I should make myself as though I were a hostage at those evil places like hell, the realm of animals, and the world of Yamarāja,⁴⁵ in order to rescue all those beings and lead them to attain enlightenment."⁴⁶ All the other Buddha's words and gāthās are never diverted from the goal of

saving sentient beings, and so how can it be said that the Buddha's teachings are only beneficial to oneself? The Buddha was surely the best in regard to saving the world. How can we ever repay his kindness?

Yao worried about not gaining the heart of Shun; Shun worried about not winning the heart of Yu; and while working to subdue the flood,⁴⁷ Yu passed by his house three times without entering its gate. Confucius met crisis on the border between the states of Chen and Cai, and Jesus was crucified in the street. All these are examples of those who worked to an extreme to save the world. Without saving the world, how can people exert the greatest influence throughout the ages? But Buddhism has no rival in making great and numerous vows [to save others] and having deep and broad compassion. If we are to criticize the crime of selfish egotism, we should blame people like Chao Fu, Xu You,⁴⁸ Chang Ju, Jie Ni, Hekui zhangren (old men carrying a basket on a stick),⁴⁹ Yang Zhu⁵⁰ and the followers of Daoism. In fact, the Buddha is the unrivaled savior of the world.

4. Buddhist Reforms Should Start from Demolition

What is reformation? It is the child of demolition. What is demolition? It is the mother of reformation. Everyone knows that there is no motherless child, but no one knows that reformation cannot take place without demolition. How is it possible that people do not know this when understanding things by analogy? But demolition does not mean destroying and eliminating everything. Only those aspects of the traditional customs that do not suit contemporary times are to be amended and given a new direction.

Therefore, although it is called demolition, it is not really demolition. Those who are better at reformation are also better at demolition. Those who are slow in reformation are also slow in demolition, and those who are quick in reformation are also quick in demolition. Those who can reform on a huge scale can do demolition greatly. The scale of reformation thus depends largely on the degree of destruction. In order to reform, therefore, one has to begin with demolition.

If a person has a big boil and seeks various doctors to cure it, he will encounter those who expect the boil to burst and heal by itself without knowing how to treat it. They are not qualified and not worth mentioning any further as doctors. Those who simply apply acupuncture and moxibustion to heal only the skin, expecting a temporary cure without treating the root of the boil, are mediocre doctors. How can such people not know that the patient will get worse because of the unremoved pus and clotted blood and fall into a critical condition just a few days after completing the treatment?

But great doctors are not like this. They will cut away the affected skin and draw off the clotted blood to remove the toxins

and eliminate the origins of the disease. They will then give medicine according to the condition of the patient so that they gradually lead the patient to a complete cure, as if never having suffered from such a disease at all. Mediocre doctors would have felt shocked, if they had seen the procedures of cutting skin and extracting pus without hesitation. But after a full recovery, anyone, the foolish or the wise, could tell who succeeded and who failed, who was superior, and who was not.

Demolition is like cutting flesh and drawing off pus; reformation begins with demolition much like a doctor performing this procedure. Those who are to embark on reformation without demolition are like those who want to go to the southern state of Yue, yet head in a northern direction. Such people are unable to achieve reformation, and so it is not difficult to see whether conservative clerics are capable of undertaking reformation or not.

Who would not wish for things to last for a long time without having negative effects? But as time passes, all kinds of evil effects appear everywhere and spread so rapidly that it is difficult to recover the features of earlier days. It has been 1,500 years since Buddhism entered Korea, and during such a long period of time pernicious effects have surfaced and created further negative effects. Today, all the pernicious effects have thus reached their peak. The negative effects are something we should destroy, but it is not the right way to focus on only superficial improvement without getting rid of evil effects. Therefore, those wishing to reform Buddhism should not worry about their inability to reform, but rather about their inability to destroy.

5. The Education of Buddhist Monastics

When education expands, civilization develops, and when education shrinks, civilization declines. Without education, we sink to the level of barbarians or animals. In ancient times, schools like *xiang* and *xu* were established to educate people and prevent them from becoming barbarians and animals.⁵¹ Mencius said: “Living comfortably but not receiving education, people will become like animals.”⁵² Thus, if given a choice, people should choose to be educated.

In general, civilization begins from education. Education is thus the flower of civilization, and civilization is the fruit of education. Civilization is like the mercury in a thermometer and education is like the weather. The mercury will rise or fall depending on the state of the weather, and civilization will flourish or decline, depending on the state of education. Therefore, learning is most valued and essential.

For the life of human beings, there must be a purpose for living besides food, clothing, sleeping, and waking up. What then should this purpose be? A sense of duty is the purpose, and in order to realize this purpose, we naturally look for a means, which should be without obstructions. It is essential that we need to learn in order to find the means. In a similar fashion, Iizumi Kikuzō⁵³ writes: “Once you have decided to achieve your goal, it is inevitable that you resort to learning.”

Are there tactics for learning, as well? Indeed, there are. You should regard wisdom as the capital of learning, freedom of thought as the law of learning, and truth as the goal of learning. A student should not lack any of these three. Those without wisdom and truth, however, would be acceptable while those without the freedom of

thought would not. Why is that? For those without wisdom and truth, if they have freedom of thought, they cannot be called scholars, but they do not lose their free personalities. They can thus be called foolish yet honest people. For those without freedom of thought, there is no need to talk about the quality of their scholarship; and in short, they engage in the scholarship of slaves.

Who then is a slave? It is difficult to define it, but to put it loosely, a slave is a living dead person. That is, although he is living, his life is not different from death. We cannot bear the sorrow for the death of those who have really died, but for those who live as if they were dead, there is no way even to express our condolences. Zhuangzi said: "In terms of sorrow, what could be greater than the death of the mind? Grief for the death of the body comes the second."⁵⁴ How can the words of Zhuangzi deceive us? A physical slave is a slave of money, and a scholarly slave is a slave in spirit. Slavery by purchase is temporary, but slavery in spirit is eternal. How is it possible that people readily become eternal slaves?

When reading a book, students should not be concerned with whether the writing is deep, shallow, beautiful, or ugly; instead, they should examine its content bit by bit with their own wisdom. If they find things that do not suit their mind, they should abandon them, even though they may be the theories of great sages and prominent philosophers. If they find things that are in harmony with their own thinking, they should study them intensely like a rare and precious flower, even though they may be the words of very stupid or insignificant people.

They should investigate those words in diverse ways in order to search for the truth. When they find something that coincides with the truth, they should make an irrevocable decision, oppose all the ancient views in order to be independent, and be disobedient to the views of the same generation so as not to be deluded. Therefore, freedom of thought is the life of human beings and the kernel of scholarship. Alas! How our Buddhist clerics have been misled to slavery! Those misleading them are trying to avoid their

responsibility, but they cannot succeed.

I think that freedom of thought in the academic world is not as good as it is among our monastics, while the lack of freedom of thought is also most serious among monastics. Why is that? When monastics enter school, they are assigned to different classes according to their academic levels and receive appropriate education. In daily instruction, students first work on daily lessons for themselves to figure out their meaning; second, after individual study, classmates gather to debate, argue, refute, or clarify the meaning among themselves; and finally they will ask the instructor to resolve points unsettled among themselves. This instruction method is the unique feature of Buddhist monastic education. If we compare ourselves to other education systems where students do not study for themselves but only following teachers' instructions, we monastics certainly have much more freedom of thought.

However, as the Buddhist system has existed for a long time, it has naturally produced various ill effects. There are gaps between actual practice and rules. What students study and discuss is simply the interpretation of the meaning of phrases or short commentaries; and what they argue and debate just serves to suppress others' opinions and foster their own personal views. As for great morality and profound meanings, they have neither heard nor asked. Seventy to eighty percent of the students are those who study all day but do not know what they study or those who discuss all day but do not know the meaning of their discussions, and they achieve no real results. If there is a person who has his own opinion and refutes the views of senior students, his opinion is denounced as personal and heterodox, so that he will not dare say even a word. As seen previously, the original education system permits an abundance of freedom, but in reality, there is no freedom at all.

How can freedom of thought be confined to exegetical work on the canonical phrases and personal views of us and others? It is because freedom of thought in the scholarly world is not as good as it is in the monastic world, and the lack of the freedom is also

most severe among monastics. Likewise, if the monastics hold onto the learning of slaves, they cannot even call themselves monastics. When there is no freedom of ideas, even wisdom and broad learning can serve to make a person only a better slave. Wisdom and broad learning, together with a lack of freedom of thought, are the reasons for the retreat of monastic education today. Shouldn't students feel some remorse about this?

There are three urgent things in monastic education. The first is general education. General education is comparable to food and clothing; East or West, whether white or yellow skinned, everybody has to be fed and clothed to survive. Anyone who is not clothed and fed will surely be dead in a matter of days. It is the same with general knowledge. If somebody does not have it, they will face obstacles in all their actions and daily affairs and so cannot survive in this competitive world. In civilized countries, everyone having four limbs and six sense organs who can speak understands general knowledge. General knowledge is also the basis for professional knowledge, so people studying religion should reflect upon this again and again.

Monastic students, whether highly educated or not, all engage in professional Buddhist studies and disparage general knowledge like enemies. They not only do not study general knowledge but also slander it, and this clearly reveals their ignorance. In addition, Buddhist textbooks and curricula are not proper, and so even if they double their efforts, students produce only half of the expected results. Their scholarship in decline, broken, and fragmented, their views become old fashioned and their minds become corrupted. They astonish society with their very odd, strange, and absurd words, so that the public treats them like trash, and they have thus become unable to mix with people in society.

It is sad enough that monastics harm themselves by their own actions, but is it not even more serious that they damage Buddhism as a whole? If this is the case, we should revise or edit anew Buddhist textbooks and reorder curricular materials. We should include things that are easy to learn in general education. When students graduate

after learning general knowledge and obtaining common sense of their own, they will then move to professional Buddhist studies. This will render their learning efficient and easy, and this is why we cannot ignore general education.

The second urgent thing is pedagogy. If the molds and models are inadequate, the vessels made with them will be dented and lean to one side. But if the molds and models are adequately square or round, long or short, high or low, good and upright, it is no doubt that they will make excellent vessels. Teaching people is the same; if the teaching methods are well established, learning will be guaranteed.

There are two kinds of teachers. First, there are natural teachers; the natural material world will be perceived by our sense organs and consciousness. Second, there are human teachers who teach and train us to correct our faults. Throughout the ages, there are none who have not resorted to these two kinds of teachers.

Fu Xi learned the eight trigrams from the *Yellow River Map*,⁵⁵ and Emperor Yu learned the Great Plan with the Nine Divisions from the patterns on the back of a turtle.⁵⁶ Columbus learned the earth's from the floating grass, and Newton learned the science of gravitation from an apple. Watt learned the science of steam engines from boiling water, while Darwin learned the science of evolution from the stones in the shallows. All of them learned from nature. On the other hand, the educational officers (*jiaoguan*)⁵⁷ from the first part of the *Book of Documents*, the teaching officials from the *Record of Rites*, the prenatal educational techniques of Tairen and Taisi,⁵⁸ and the three changes of residence by the mother of Mencius⁵⁹ are all examples of human teachers.

Among the philosophers, gentlemen, heroes, and the scholars of the Nine Schools who left their names to the posterity with their great achievements, all of them became successful after having a wise teacher. If a way of teaching is not established, it will be futile even if the sounds of reading books fill every street.

Today's teachers were yesterday's students. If we know whether

teachers are good or not, it should be sufficient to weigh the gains and losses of yesterday's education. Along with previous discussions of the education of monastics, it will not be difficult to know the qualification of today's teachers. These people received teaching positions by luck; they cannot distinguish between the six continents and do not know the five grains. When they hear about the survival of fittest they do not understand. It is as if they were deaf persons listening to music; or when they see a world map, they are struck blind and appear as if they were blind persons looking at a picture. We do not know how many of these kinds of teachers we have.

Alas! Heaven and earth are vast, and the world of learning is wide, but why is it that our young monastics have to endure those ignorant and shameless teachers and become the next generation of mulberry insects.⁶⁰ If such practices were to continue, there would be no end to the harm done to later generations. This is because we do not establish proper pedagogy. To rectify the situation, we first need to establish schools for teachers. We should select the more gifted monastics from the age group ranging from fifteen through forty and teach them according to a mixed curriculum, combining general education, pedagogy, and Buddhist studies. Within four or five years, we will then have enough teachers for primary schools and also improve our Buddhist images so that no one will feel nauseous toward us. We should continuously reform and advance without withdrawing; we will then, in the future, shine a light over the world. While emphasizing education, if we ignore pedagogy, it is like Yegong's love for a dragon.⁶¹ This means that we do not genuinely feel the necessity of education.

The third urgent thing is sending monastics abroad for study. It is necessary to send them to India to follow the genuine traces of the Buddha and the patriarchs and to find the scriptures and treatises that were not transmitted to Korea, translating and disseminating them to the world. We should also send monastics to China to collect all the Buddhist texts on Chinese Buddhist history, the miraculous deeds of the patriarchs, and other relevant materials to

use them as reference materials.

In addition, is it not good to send monastics to the civilized countries in Europe and America to learn about their history and the current situation of their religions and other matters and to select good things from them to improve upon our defects? Likewise, through studying abroad we exchange knowledge and scholarship; this will be an ever-lasting tactic for and a way of clarifying the Way. If we establish proper ways for sending monastics abroad, this will bring incredible benefits to us. Thus, we should give serious thought to this.

Thus, our education today has reached an extreme end, where we cannot delay the reform. Those old fashioned, corrupt, stubborn, and lowly people, however, prevent the reform with all their power and only defend old customs without moving forward. They thus make young monastics waste their precious time doing nothing. For them, it looks as though it was not enough to destroy themselves and their religion. What kind of animosity do they have towards young monastics that they rob them of the chance of learning and force them to fall into the same disastrous path? How can the evilness of mind reach such an extreme?

The current of civilization is so great in power that those corrupt people cannot resist. It is so obvious that education will spread and make progress in the future. But today's civilization develops so fast that even a coach-and-four cannot catch up easily. Thus, we lag or hurry a little, the difference will soon be great. How can we not hurry up although we do not want to? I plea loudly to my fellow monastics that "those obstructing the progress of education will fall into hell, and those advocating education will certainly attain enlightenment."

6. The Practice of Seon

All the tens of thousands of changes in yin and yang have originated from the supreme ultimate,⁶² and all the tens of thousands of images originate in the color white. All myriad things big and small begin with our mind, so clarifying the mind is called Seon meditation. Originally, there was no Seon, but out of convenience it is called Seon.

There is nothing but the mind, so how can any independent, objective things exist without any relation to the mind? Only the mind is able to give rise to the existence of history and the myriad things in space. Nothing exists outside the mind. Those with horns are cows, those with manes are horses, those that fly are birds, those that run are beasts, those with scales are fish, and those that blossom and wither are plants and trees. With naked eyes, they all look real, not forged. But who can know that those cows, horses, birds, beasts, fish, plants, and trees are in reality not cows, horses, birds, beasts, fish, plants, and trees, but that only after the mind falsely decides them as such, they become cows, horses, birds, beasts, fish, plants, and trees?

Can you not see a phantom that appears and disappears, surfaces from midair or the underground? Such a phantom is neither existence nor non-existence, and exists neither in the air nor underground. But with the mind, people falsely create the images that appear or disappear, emerge from midair or the underground. If people's minds did not give rise to thought, the so-called existence, non-existence, existence in the air, or existence on the ground would not be formed by themselves, and the creation of phantoms would be exhausted.

China's Great Wall and Egypt's Suez Canal, Britain's London and America's New York, the coral islands of the Pacific and the Trans-Siberian Railroad, the unending tears of the colonized Vietnam and the secret talks of the Poles—are these, which are as numerous as the sands of the Ganges, not just false constructions of the mind, without any real substance? It is thus said that “everything is made by the mind.” When there is a film over the eye, phantom flowers fall messily. All the myriad things are the phantom flowers created by the mind, and the mind is the film of the myriad things. If there is no film in the mind, everything reflected in the mind will be shown in minute detail. When the mind becomes clear, everything will be resolved. This is why Seon meditation emerged.

By way of trial, if we ask the people of the world, “why are you born in this world”? It is likely that they cannot answer. We may inquire again: “Human beings consist of body and mind, and physicists and doctors found theories about the body. But what would constitute the mind? Does the mind consist of one element or more than two elements? Is there a god-like figure above us to create it, or was it made naturally?” They will not answer the questions, either. If we ask further: “Human beings are destined to die within 100 years. When they die, will both body and mind disappear? Or is there something that remains beyond death and exists independently forever?” Again, they cannot answer.

From ancient times to the present day, all philosophers of East and West and physicists appeared endlessly, but why is it that there is no definitive theory on the nature of our mind? Physicists study the principles of things using the knowledge in their brains and do experiments or make speculations. In general, the principles of the things in the cosmos are infinite, and our wisdom is limited. If we try to understand infinite principles with our limited wisdom, it will not be sufficient even though we assemble all the people who have ever lived on the earth and have them work professionally for this issue. The following words were expressed in a similar fashion: “Although wise people, like Śāriputra,⁶³ whose number could fill the world, and

numerous bodhisattvas, like the sands of the Ganges, give all their energies in their thinking, even the slightest thing cannot be known."

Our thinking and comparisons cannot grasp the most complex and subtle aspects of the principles of the cosmos, let alone the mind which stands above wisdom and controls it. How is it possible that we use wisdom, which is controlled by the mind, to explore the superior mind? As such, the mind is not what can be understood by wisdom, and there is none above the mind to explain what it is.

It is thus inevitable that we should nourish the original essence of mind in quietude and let the mind elucidate itself. We should stop all words and thinking, cut all our karmic relationships at once, direct all our effort to resolving *gongan*,⁶⁴ and become rapidly awakened to the mind; and then the entire function of the mind will be illuminated and all the fundamental issues of human psychology will also be resolved. To summarize, Seon is the essence, while philosophy is the function; Seon clarifies itself, while philosophy is to be studied; Seon is a sudden awakening, while philosophy is a gradual awakening.

In one word, the essence of Seon practice is the simultaneous manifestation of alertness and calm. The mind is not swayed because it is calm, and the mind is not inane because it is alert. If it is not swayed, it remains undisturbed; if it is not inane, it does not fall into a muddled state. When the mind is neither disturbed nor confused, its essence will certainly become transparent.

Today's Seon practitioners are strange; they try to make their abodes quiet, whereas the ancient practitioners made their minds quiet. They also tend not to move their bodies, while the ancient practitioners tried not to move their mind. If they only try to make their abodes quiet, they will become pessimists; and if they do not move their bodies, they will be blinded by self-righteousness. Given the fact that Buddhism is the religion of saving the world and liberating the sentient beings, is it not wrong for the Buddha's disciples to be pessimistic and self-righteous?

Today, most Korean temples, except for remote hermitages and

dilapidated temples, have meditation halls for Seon practice. What is the reason for the success of Seon? If we look closely, however, it is not necessary that every temple build meditation halls to promote Seon. Some try to use the meditation halls to enhance the image of the temple and some try to use the halls to gain profits.

Accordingly, despite the growing number of meditation halls, it has become so rare to meet genuine Seon practitioners; it is as if we were seeing the hairs of a phoenix or the horns of a *qilin*-unicorn.⁶⁵ This situation inevitably compelled the temples to fill the meditation halls with unqualified monastics. The ill effects have thus piled up, and only one tenth of the Seon practitioners are genuine; and two tenths come just to feed themselves, and the remaining seven tenths are stupid, lazy, and interested in filling their stomachs. The majority of Seon practitioners do not have a clue about Seon teachings, waste their time, and practice mouth-Seon⁶⁶ by playing with a few words of the patriarchs; their minds work like a monkey's mind, and they soon become friends with the devil of sleep, so that they waste their youth and face their old age between restlessness and torpor. Why are they doing this?

Korean Seon practice maintains the name only; more simply speaking, the Seon halls are places for profits, and Seon practitioners are bought for rice. I dare not include all the Seon practitioners in this category, but unfortunately eight or nine out of ten would certainly fall into such a category. Are you doubting my words? As a test, if we got rid of all food provisions from the halls at once, would the numbers of the practitioners be reduced from the previous days? Please give this a good thought. For Seon practitioners, even though they have high spiritual faculties and great wisdom, it is difficult to practice Seon successfully; could it be effective for those with such slack attitudes? I think that we should remove all the ill effects and establish proper regulations for a better future.

How should we reform Seon practice? We need to merge the Seon hall wealth of all the temples and establish one or two large Seon institutions; several eminent Seon masters will be invited

to guide the practitioners. Those wishing to join the meditation, monastics or lay people, should be accepted; when taking in those practitioners, we should have consistent ways to test them. And as for practicing Seon meditation, we should establish consistent time schedules so as not to cause distraction. Each month it should be good to invite lecturers or have discussions to examine the level of practitioners' meditation progress or exchange ideas among themselves. Those making great progress after practicing a great deal of time should write a book to share their experience with the world and guide sentient beings.

Even though it is difficult to achieve Buddhahood quickly, how can formal regulations for meditation practice not be established? Those administrative monastics who are unable to join the special Seon institutions should build a small meditation room in their temples and meditate every day for an hour or two between duties. How can we practice Seon only after building separate meditation rooms? Even drawing water and carrying firewood can display the sublime function of truth. The sound of a stream and the color of the mountains equally manifest the truth! Duo!⁶⁷

7. The Abolition of the Chanting Halls

The so-called *yeombul* (reciting the name of the Buddha) in Korea cannot be regarded as reflection on the Amitābha Buddha,⁶⁸ but it is just calling out the name of Buddha. Does Amitābha Buddha really reside in the Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss? There is a land called Ultimate Bliss, passing from here through hundreds of thousands of millions of Buddhalands to the West. How is it located so far away? Without having a telephone, it is clear that no matter how loudly we call out his name, we will not be heard there, beyond the innumerable Buddhalands. Does the Buddha's dharma body⁶⁹ fill the whole dharma world?⁷⁰ If so, then the Buddha's dharma body is everywhere; why should we need to call out his name? Is our mind the Amitābha Buddha? But, in that case, he always resides in us and will neither leave nor come upon our request; he is the protagonist who neither goes nor comes. Other people can call out his name, but he cannot invoke himself. If Amitābha calls out Amitābha, who is invoking and who is responding?

The ultimate truth is beyond words, yet how can people utter so many words? Vimalakīrti⁷¹ remained silent with Mañjuśrī,⁷² yet how can people not maintain silence? If we could achieve Buddhahood by invocation, we would not deny the value of invoking Buddhahood thousands or tens of thousands of times; but if we cannot achieve Buddhahood by invoking it, those invocations are useless.

I have heard that the ultimate goal of reciting Amitābha's name is to be born in his Pure Land. Is it really possible? How is it so? I have heard that people can be born in the Pure Land after attaining Buddhahood, but I have never heard that people can be born in the Pure Land by invoking the Buddha's name. I have also heard that

the mundane world is the Pure Land, but I have never heard that the Pure Land exists apart from the mundane world. For the land, there is no distinction between pure and defiled; but the mind can either be pure or defiled. Even for the same worldly affair, Napoleon sees it as easy, but a weak-willed person sees it as difficult. It is the same for Han Xin,⁷³ a butcher regarded him as a beggar and Xiao He⁷⁴ as a hero. It is the same for the land, those who visited Vimalakīrti who fell ill regarded it as defiled, and Vimalakīrti himself considered it the Pure Land.

Are there any other reasons besides their own karma for people to see the same things differently? Seen from the standpoint of the Buddha, there is nothing that is not the Pure Land; and seen from the standpoint of sentient beings, there is nothing that is not defiled. Although the *Sahā*-world⁷⁵ is exactly the highest level of the Pure Land, sentient beings are unable to see this. Why does the Buddha see the world as a Pure Land while sentient beings see it as a defiled land? It is because the Buddha has dharma eyes, while sentient beings only possess their physical eyes. What are dharma eyes? They are eyes not covered by a film, whereas physical eyes are covered by a film. Whether eyes are covered by a film or not depends on the clarity of the mind. To sum up, my mind is exactly the Pure Land. A sūtra says that “the mind of sentient beings is the Pure Land of bodhisattvas.” Although our mind is the Pure Land, if we seek it outside of the mind, it is as if we were searching for fish by climbing a tree and looking for hair on a turtle. How do we benefit by wasting our whole lives doing this?

Some people say that “if sentient beings invoke the Buddha’s name with utmost sincerity, the Buddha will be impressed by their sincerity, take pity on their will, and so lead them into the Land of Bliss.” But I reply that there is no way that this cannot be true, and that this person must be ignorant of the law of cause and effect. What is the law of cause and effect? Good deeds bring good results, and bad deeds cause bad effects. It is like today when evil-doers are arrested or imprisoned while those doing good receive rewards or

salaries for generations. For all the affairs in the world, there is no such thing as a result without a cause or a cause without an effect. How is it possible that people can avoid punishment or achieve their wishes overnight by a stroke of good fortune?

It is thus clear that those creating no cause to be born in the Pure Land will not be born there. But if people insist that they can enter the Pure Land merely with sincere invocations, regardless of their good or bad causal actions, this means that the Buddha is disregarding the law of cause and effect. People wishing to be born in the Pure Land by flattering the Buddha despite their evil deeds are akin to criminals trying to avoid punishment by bribing officers of the law. This is called the abuse of law, and this abuse is more serious than any common crime and subject to heavier punishment.

The Buddha does not want sentient beings to receive good results from bad actions but wants them to create good actions. A spring wind is fair and so likes to give life and hates to kill. The peaches grow where peach blossoms have bloomed, plums grow where plum blossoms have bloomed; where cucumbers are sown, cucumbers grow ripe, and where beans are sown, beans grow ripe. It will not happen that roses bear the fruits of persimmons or oranges, and it is not possible that banana leaves grow over *jeoryeong* mushroom roots.⁷⁶ This may be called the moral responsibility of the spring wind. How can the Buddha be different? If we suppose that the Buddha wished to lead those with bad actions to his Pure Land, how can he take only those invoking his name and leave the others behind unfairly?

The *Sūtra of Complete Enlightenment* says: “Once giving rise to the thought of love and hate, they cannot enter the pure ocean of enlightenment.”⁷⁷ It also says that: “In dealing with others, you do not generate the thought of ‘I’ and ‘others.’ These are the words of equal treatment and great compassion; so, how can we not know that the Buddha does not discriminate? Although we suppose that the Buddha may lead people with the thought of love and hatred, given that our mind is the Buddha, we can enter the Pure Land for ourselves when we achieve the Buddhahood.

Yet is it not pitiful that people submissively beg the Buddha from a remote and outlandish place? Why is it that they abandon things nearby and choose things that are far away? Why do they make themselves a slave and regard the other as a master? When people lose their freedom, they are no longer human; when they just depend on others, they will become useless. Isn't it really sad that those good men and good women, who have a parietal bone as round as everyone else's, a heel as square as everyone else's, four limbs and five sense organs just like everyone else's, become useless? The old Chinese saying relates, "Seeking many fortunes all depends on me."

What I say now is people have to stop the false *yeombul* and conduct a true *yeombul*. What is then a false *yeombul*? Today's *yeombul* just calls out the name of the Buddha. What is a true *yeombul*? It is when one recalls the mind of the Buddha and makes the mind one's own; recalls the learning of the Buddha and makes the learning one's own; and recalls the actions of the Buddha and makes the actions one's own. It thus becomes a true *yeombul* when one recalls the Buddha in every word, every moment of silence, every action and every moment of calm, and is able to distinguish between real and false and between expedient means and real aims.⁷⁸ My argument for abolishing the *yeombul* practice is directed only to those groups practicing a false *yeombul*. Why are people, who are seven *cheok*⁷⁹ in height and possess the Buddha-nature, calling out the name of the Buddha, without any reply, while sitting together in broad daylight or clear nights by shaking off sleepiness and beating a broken leather drum or an old piece of iron? Is this called *yeombul*? How deceptive they are!

It is not necessary to argue further, but everyone who can think will know. How can it be possible to think by making a sound? As for the true *yeombul*, people from all walks of life, scholars, farmers, artisans, or merchants, can do it. They do not need to join with others sitting around and repeating the Buddha's name like a phonograph. The abolition of *yeombul* would bring hundreds of benefits without causing any single loss. Sages and ordinary folks

coexist, and dragons and snakes mix together in this world; but Buddhism with its grand scale can embrace all of them. But if expedient means are not proper, they are not called the real Way; and if the temporary expedients are not suitable to the times, they cannot be called the real teaching. When a king liked women with slim waists, many women in the court died of hunger.⁸⁰ When people at Chang'an⁸¹ liked to wear high top-knots, there appeared people with foot-high top-knots even in faraway regions. Buddhism has many expedient means, but in the final dharma period, their ill effects have reached their peak. Alas! A doctor's household has many ill people, and the legs of the carpenter's bed are broken. I am just an ordinary person but have many concerns. But how can the Buddha be so generous about ill effects? Is it because of his great compassion?

8. Buddhist Propagation

According to a Western saying, “One thousand words of international law are not as powerful as one cannon.” Philosophically speaking, this means that truth is not as strong as force. When I heard this saying, I thought that it should not be the words of civilized people because it sounded so vulgar. After observing the severity of competition in today’s world, however, I came to realize that this saying was not only far from vulgar but was also the absolute truth about our present civilization. All affairs rise and fall and leaving miserable marks on the history of East and West. They have not been caused by the application of international laws but by cannons, not by the truth but by force. It is undeniable that this Western saying could be the golden rule of the world. Granted that the saying is about a “barbaric civilization”; however, it should not be praised by people of morality and religion. Nonetheless, Buddhist monastics, who do not have any power today, have had the need to invest in this saying.

If A surpasses B in power, ethically speaking, the sin lies with A, not with B; but in terms of international law, the sin lies with B, not with A. Why is that? Looking at it from a simple moral view, we do not need to argue that all the myriad things should not ransack or harm one another for power. But it is undeniable that the survival of the fittest and the weakest goes to the wall would be a natural law. The reasons why some become superior and some become inferior, some become strong and some become weak are not so simple. The reasons would take a long time to explain. In a word, however, all is a matter of power. To make a comparison, the power of A is like water and the power of B is like earth. When water flows on uneven ground, will it run up or down? Even a small child would know that

it will flow down.

Why does water flow down and not up? It is because water is placed higher than the ground. Without raising the ground, we cannot prevent water from flowing down. If the ground is low, it is impossible to prevent it from being flooded. It would thus be best to raise the ground to make the water recede. From this, we can infer that the power of A is not responsible for the sin but that the power of B is responsible for its own suffering. Those who do not regard B as a sinner but instead accuse A of the crime are not clear in their views. Those people like B should have the view that B is responsible for its own misery and get a grip on their situation. Now other religion's cannons are formidably rocking the earth; the force of other religions is haughtily reaching up to the sky; and the water of other religions overflows and reaches up to our foreheads. What is Korean Buddhism going to do about this?

The reason for the devastation of Korean Buddhism is its lack of power. Its lack of power is due to the fact that no missionary work for Buddhism has been developed. The teachings are the foundation for religious duty and the power of the religion to develop. Among foreign religions that have entered Korea, there is none that has not focused on propagation. It is undeniable that the duty of religion is propagation. It should be definitely true.

Yet, why is it that no one raises a question and gives a deep thought to so-called religious power besides propagation? If we convert one person, the power of one person will be added to Buddhism, and if we convert two persons, the power of two persons will be increased in Buddhism. Therefore, if propagation becomes more successful, the power of our religion will also grow; if the power is enhanced, it will be easy to convert people to Buddhism. If it gets easier to convert people, propagation will be more successful. In the beginning, the power of religion would come from propagation, but later propagation gets easier because of the expanded power of the religion. If we promote propagation for a long time, we can accumulate many favorable results. This missionary work explains

the sweeping success of Christianity in both the West and East.

Only dharma talks can be regarded as a way of propagating Korean Buddhism. But the talks are given only in Buddhist temples, and the quality and content of the talks are so poor and unsystematic that they hardly inspire or impress people. Even then, besides such talks, no other propagation activities exist. The total number of Buddhist monastics is about one three-thousandths of the whole population of Korea. That is, only one in three thousand people becomes a Buddhist monastic. Can you imagine then what kind of people these monastics are? Before becoming monastics, they mostly suffered from poverty or had been deluded by superstitious beliefs; most of them are lazy, foolish, and feeble; and thus they are unable to focus their minds and do not know the real essence of Buddhism. The Buddhist sangha consists of those most inferior people from the population; the majority of the lay people are women, and male lay people are as rare as phoenix feathers or unicorn horns.

Alas! Even a great number of deaf people could not match one musician like Shi Guang.⁸² A gathering of a great number of frowning women could not rival the singular beauty of Xi Shi.⁸³ People say that the number of Buddhist monastics is small, but I feel they are too many. The several thousand Buddhist monastics display several thousand separate minds and are unable to work together at all. The number is too many, is it not? Alas! What a pity! If Buddhists had begun propagation earlier, the monastics should have not come from the lowest pool of people, and the lay people should have not consisted of a small number of women. To understand the present, we need to know that it was caused by past actions; to understand the future, we need to know that it will be caused by current actions. Let go of things that have already passed but create good causes for the future. The fragrant spring flowers do not possess feelings, and the lotuses blooming on a river in fall really do not have a master. Once we lost time, we cannot catch up with it even with a coach-and-four. The preservation of Buddhist teachings depends on propagation—it really depends on it. We should thus know how

critical propagation is.

Those who want to work for propagation should be qualified for the work. What are the qualifications? The first is passion, the second patience, and the third compassion. Without any one of these three, no one can be a perfect propagator. Haven't you seen them in other religions? They do not mind whether it is cold or hot and visit anywhere, near or far away; they go everywhere for propagation and preach to anybody. If they failed to convert a person, they find another person to whom to preach; although they may fail in their work today, they continue to work tomorrow. The more they fail, the harder they work for propagation. Shouldn't it be called passion?

During missionary work, they endure any slander or insult. Shouldn't this be called patience? They welcome anyone, wise and foolish, arrogant and obstinate, and treat them warmly no matter how difficult they are to interact with. Should this not be called compassion? Such endeavors never betray them in spreading their religion. I know that it is not accidental that other religions flourish today. A Westerner called Madagascar converted a person after engaging in proselytizing for ten years; a missionary named Judson acquired his first convert in Burma after working for five years.⁸⁴ In addition, there is a person called Nallin⁸⁵ who converted someone after proselytizing in China for seven years. They are really great, and they are so outstanding that ordinary people cannot emulate them.

If Korean monastics were sent to foreign countries to propagate Buddhism, they would be disappointed if they did not produce a convert after several months and give up everything a few months later. How can I fail to praise and dream about those people who keep their first aspirations even after five, seven, or ten years of their work?

Even those religions whose teachings are much inferior to Buddhism are still flourishing with their perseverance, yet Buddhism having such intelligent and profound teachings got so shrunk with drooping shoulders and bent head. Who is responsible for this? Today's desolate state is due to the people of the past, and tomorrow's

restoration depends on today's people.

Power is a guardian spirit⁸⁶ protecting freedom. Once power disappears, freedom will also be gone; even though we are alive, we will feel as if we were dead. Alas! We cannot expect undamaged eggs from an overturned nest, and how can we find hair if there is no skin left? When Buddhism dies, can Buddhist monastics manage to survive? When Buddhism declines, can the monastics thrive alone? The rise and decline of Buddhism foretells the rise and decline of its monastics. Therefore, when monastics try to promote Buddhism, this indirectly helps them, indeed. Besides benefitting oneself, risking one's life is to save sentient beings. Propagation thus involves benefiting both oneself and others. There is more than one method in propagation. We can propagate through talks, newspapers, or magazines; we can spread teachings by translating the scriptures; or we can proselytize through charitable work. We should propagate in hundreds of ways and not worry that any of them is lacking. Today, however, Korean Buddhism has not attempted any of these methods at all. I wish to hear what else we can do for our religion.

9. The Location of Buddhist Temples

I have set forth my aim for the development of Buddhism but regret that the intellectual level of Buddhist monastics is below the level of other people. Although we have the same Buddha-nature and the same human bodies, Buddhist monastics are so inferior, while other people are much superior, without any foolishness. Why is it that all the monastics are like this, far behind other peoples? Everyone says that it is because of the lack of education. It makes sense at a glance. It is understandable that the uneducated are not as good as the educated. But is it not strange that the monastics are inferior in their natural thinking to other people even among the equally uneducated? I think that it is because they failed to choose proper locations. The *Analects* states: “If we choose to live in a place where the benevolent do not live, how can we gain wisdom?”⁸⁷

Where can we find examples of selecting a place? We can see examples from the locations where people live. The small universe where Buddhist monastics reside are called temples. They are located at places near beautiful mountains and clear streams far apart from the hustle and bustle of the mundane world; monks and nuns can breathe in the mist or the glow of the sunset, absorb the wind and the moonlight, and have fresh air and wholesome dreams. It can really be the so-called “the separate universe, unlike that of humans.”⁸⁸

Alas! Who would guess that these beautiful mountains and streams have changed into the hill of swords, or swords-leaf tree hell?⁸⁹ Who would know that the wind and the moonlight amidst the hazy sunset have been transformed into the world of the three poisons and the five decadences,⁹⁰ the devilish den of the black

mountains? Throughout the ages, how many masters and eminent people have entered these devil dens of the black mountains, died there incognito like the trees and the plants, and were forgotten?

For those who miss the past and feel emotional about the present, isn't this sad? If a cart going forward is overturned, this should give a warning to the cart following behind it. The German philosopher Hegel said, "The nature of water has made people open, but the nature of the mountains has people blocked; the force of water has people united, but the force of the mountains has people separated."⁹¹ Is it true or not? If it is true, although I have not learned about geomancy, I will discuss the relation between the location of temples and the good and bad in thinking and enterprises of the temples.

1. Since Buddhist temples are located in the mountains, Buddhist monastics have not had progressive thinking. Progressive means going forward without regression. It is called hope when we express our wishes for the future in advance. Because the conditions from which hope appears are complex, they are difficult to figure out. But it is the same for everyone that people hope to avoid pain and have pleasure. There are no people who do not hope to enjoy pleasure, but there are differences how much or how long they wish for pleasure. These differences lie with circumstances, not with us. Why is that? If someone is born in a world where nothing else exists, that person would be content with just not being dead and would not desire even slightly for delicious food, luxurious clothing, a spacious house or a coach-and-four. Because there is nothing that is more important than the desire to avoid death, in such a case, their hope would have to be limited to the avoidance of death. They will ask for nothing else.

If both humans and material things grow mutually and fill the world without a limit, artful wisdom will increase each day, excellent outcomes will rapidly increase, and our six senses will

contact improved things, not deteriorated ones. Human desires then grow big gradually and become boundless and infinite. Once human desires have become infinite, progressive thinking will also become endless. This is how humans and material things get interconnected and work together to progress. One such example is that big cities develop extremely faster than remote villages. Buddhist monastics are afraid of living anywhere except for the mountains, so that what they see and hear is nothing but the sounds of flowing water, the blossoming of flowers, the singing of birds, and floating clouds.

They think idly that no one will compete with them to take their place because they have already taken it; they thus are satisfied with their situation and will not move forward even a step. This is the first result of the dependence of progressive thinking on location.

2. Next is about the lack of adventurous thought. I once dreamed about sailing together with Darwin and Napoleon across the Pacific. The ocean and the skies were so vast that no land was in sight. We spoke to each other and laughed at Hebai, the god of the Yellow River for having boasted about the vastness of his river.⁹² Soon after came a violent storm and a fierce downpour, and furious waves rose high. The punting pole was broken and the rudder lost, and the ship was violently shaking, and there was nothing to lean on. The passengers became so frightened that they were unable to speak or move. Under the pillows and reed-mats, the skies and water were hitting each other, and what separated us from the fish was a thin piece of board. How could we not be scared?

At this time, Napoleon acted with composure and was not disturbed at all. Darwin composed his mind and sat calmly as if he had something to think about. I was so panicked that I did not know what to do and unable to ask a question. And then the wind finally died down, and the waves became calmer, the skies cleared, and the ocean became peaceful. I gradually restored my

vigor and asked them about the reasons for their calm behavior.

Darwin replied:

I have just returned to the sea five years after travelling the whole world by boat; in the beginning how could I not be different from you? After having barely survived violent storms several times, I was no longer frightened or fearful. After falling into the water dozens of time, I became a cross between a human and a fish, and then came to forget what the storm was. Now I no longer know what the ocean is. In addition, I no longer know what the ship is, either. Furthermore, I no longer know even what I am. The reason I no longer know either the storm, the ocean, the ship or myself is formless evolution. What I thought about during the storm was also the principle of evolution.

Napoleon said:

How novel! Because I do not have any sailing experience, I will compare it with my war experience. My first battle was on the plains of Spain, and I was in the midst of flashing swords and flying bullets. I risked my life and escaped death by a hair's breadth; how could I not be fearful? But after fighting more than a hundred wars, I became aloof from the matter of life and death. From then on, I no longer feared anything. Although the storms were fierce, they were not as formidable as bullets. Why should I fear again? Although we had to meet storms ten or a hundred times that size, I still commanded the people while talking casually.

Upon hearing these words, I felt so elated as if flying, although I had no wings. I woke up yawning and stretching my limbs and paid homage to Darwin and Napoleon, saying: "Were your achievements this unusual and great? Later generations should vie for the praises of your life."

From these examples, we can know that adventurous thinking comes from knowledge and experience, and it is not that people are born with it or without it. Have you not seen those living in steep mountains like the Geumgangsan or Seoraksan

Mountains? They do not hesitate in walking, as if they are flying, over precarious streams or cliffs, where people living in the plains cannot walk at ease and would crawl in fear and trembling. Why are they so adventurous? This should have come from their experience.

People, however, are not like this when they face a situation where they are treated like slaves or cattle; they retract their heads like turtles or beg like flies without putting up a fight at all. Given the fact that worldly affairs are similar to the perilous streams and cliffs, why is that people become cowardly in worldly affairs while they are brave in mountains? It is because people have experience in mountains while they have no experience in worldly affairs. Why is it so strange that Buddhist monastics living in remote mountains have no knowledge and experience?

Liang Qichao said:

Those who live inland tend to think of earthly things, so that they have many things that would tie them down. But if they were given the chance to see the ocean, they suddenly get awakened and detached from all cumbersome things and attain an endless freedom in their actions and thinking. Those who live near the ocean for a long time are able to make their minds stronger and loftier each day; it is why, since ancient times, people living near the ocean tend to be more spirited and progressive than people living inland.⁹³

From this, we can see that the thinking of people living inland is far behind that of those living near the ocean. What can we say then about those living in temples located in so remote and deep mountains where there is nothing to look at except the sun? This is the second case regarding the relationship between adventurous thought and location.

3. Next I will discuss the absence of the thought of saving the world. Šākyamuni, Confucius, Jesus, and Mozi⁹⁴ all did the most to save the world. They lived together with other people, not alone. Chao Fu, Xu You,⁹⁵ the four hermits of Mount Shang⁹⁶ and Yan

Ziling⁹⁷ were all extreme nihilists. They lived in the mountains, not in the cities. Since ancient times, altruists have not liked to live alone, while nihilists liked to live in the mountains. Why do altruists live amid many people, not alone? It is because they like to observe broadly the joy and sorrow of people and rectify ill effects. Why do pessimists like to live in the mountains, not among the people? They like to avoid all the worldly pleasures and pains in order to cut off all emotional ties with people.

When people see a newborn baby crawl into a well, they, whether they are relatives or not, whether they are friends of the parents of the baby or not, rush to rescue the child without thinking. Similarly, when the wife of one's elder brother is drowning, one would certainly rescue her; this person would not weigh the proper method of rescuing her, whether pulling her hands out of the water or other well-regarded manners as appropriate of a brother-in-law. When people see someone in danger, they feel the urgent need to rescue and act on that urge without thinking.

In general, the mind arises when it contacts with circumstances, and the circumstances are generated by the mind. Even though we want to be undisturbed, how can we maintain no-mind when facing the circumstances? Even though we want not to act, how is it possible when the mind is stirred? This is why superior men (*gunja*)⁹⁸ regard the selection of residence as an urgent matter; this does not mean that they believe the fortunes or misfortunes of the location are based on the principle of geomancy, but they are picky because of the importance of circumstances.

It is said that the reason why the ancient recluse received huge respect from people is because they remained loyal and waited for the right time to act. But they are, in fact, a group of pessimists who chose their locations for themselves, yet people elevated their names by saying that they are waiting for the right time. These hermits are deceiving people. If they wanted to hide, it would

be sufficient to hide among people—why was it necessary to hide in the mountains? The locations of Korean temples in deep mountains are good for promoting pessimism, not for altruism; so how are Buddhist monastics able to have unselfish minds? If they have pessimism even an inch of it, the essence of Buddhism will regress a foot. How can we not reflect on this? This was my third point on the relationship between altruistic thinking and location.

4. Next, I will discuss the absence of the competitive spirit. Originally, Buddhist monastics formed a world outside of the world and a humankind outside of the majority of humankind so that their world has been largely separate from other societies. Without any intersecting interests with the world, they have established an isolated self-righteous society.

What then is this world outside of the world? It is the Buddhist temples. What is this humankind outside of the majority of humankind? It is those people who do not care about the affairs of the world and focus only on purifying themselves. Yet, it is not fair to blame only the monastics because past political situations were overly oppressive on them and forced them into such practices. If the monastics had been allowed to live with people in cities and developed relationships with people, I believe that political oppression would have been relaxed and that their competitive power would have not fallen so low as it is in today's situation, which is impossible to resuscitate.

Living in quiet and secluded valleys deep in the mountains, they would not have known even though the world fell into pieces. The drums and bugles of the struggle between different religions tremble the earth, yet Buddhism is unable to muster scattered troops even when the bells are ringing for a truce. The flags of other religions are as many as the trees in the forest, yet Buddhism is unable to even to raise a flag of surrender. Why is that? Buddhist monastics think that other religions will not force their ways into Buddhism even though the competition

among religions is fierce; so they believe that their victories, defeats, dexterity or foolishness are like floating clouds, having no consequential effect on them. They thus do not know at all how all the victories, defeats, dexterity or foolishness have affected Buddhism.

When two sides are confronting each other, everybody knows that one will lose, if the other wins. It is clear then that our Buddhism will be weakened, if the other religions get stronger. Yet, the monastics do not care just because the soldiers of other religions are not shedding our blood for now—it is as if one believes that the fish in the pond will be fine because the fires at the gates of the fortress are not burning the pond right now. This shows that they do not know how to think.

Intention is an important element that leads to an action. Is it not then that the element that creates an intention should be regarded most important? To correct the fault of having no competitive thinking, one must rectify the microcosms [temples] in which the monastics live. Passion is the source that leads to our health or sickness. Is it not that the element that produces passion should be regarded most important? Therefore, to correct the fault of having no competitive thinking, it is also necessary to rectify the temples. This was the fourth point concerning the relationship between competitive thinking and location.

These are the strange and amazing effects of the location of Buddhist temples on the ways of thinking. Besides this, there are many more inconvenient things, which are caused by the location, in the handling of various affairs. The remote location caused inconveniences for monastic education, propagation, relationships with the general population, communications, group activities, and finances. I will not explain them because they are easy to understand without further elaboration. There are four things that are related to the ways of thinking with remote location and six things that are related to conducting affairs with a particular location. If even one

out of these ten things is missing, we could feel the pain seriously; yet we do not have all of them. What should we do about it?

Being away from the mundane world, going alone into the mountains, cutting off all thoughts, sweeping the clouds with a broom, drawing water from the mountain springs, watching flowers, and nurturing my Buddha-nature are not something that I do not like. But destruction would not be constant just because large fires⁹⁹ undergo frequent change; and when mulberry groves change into deep blue seas in one morning, old fishermen smile on a mountain peak, and shepherds get disappointed at the rapid torrents at their feet. At this time, how could we cope with the situation? There will be no ways other than seeking death. This is what I am afraid of, and so I cannot be satisfied. How could we protect Buddhism for the future while forsaking all the lax and lazy practices? Once the frenzied, crazy waves fall over, it is difficult to reverse the flow even with great force. The *Analects* states: "In a fright, the pheasants took flight."¹⁰⁰

Are there ways to change the location of the temples? I would say there are three ways. The best option would be destroying all mountain temples except those few memorable ones and building new temples in every county town and port city. The second best would be to keep the large and beautiful temples, pull down smaller, old and dilapidated temples, and move them to big cities. The last option would be to demolish only hermitages and merge them with the main temples, and unite temples of each province or every few counties and have these temples open missionary stations at important places to propagate and educate. We do not need other ways than these.

Among these three ways, which one should we choose? The best option would be impossible to implement today because monastics' level of wisdom is still low. We can implement the second option, if we can find the proper people, but it would be impossible without qualified people. The last option can be implemented, but to have everyone agree with the enterprise we need to have people who are

better than ordinary people. Among the monastics, are there such people? If there are, why have I not met them? If there are not, how can the Buddhists tolerate the situation?

I have come to a conclusion: If the youngsters and adolescents will grow to become heroes and great men in the future and protect the temples, I am sure that the relocation of the temples to the cities is possible. But if those older than forty continue to occupy the higher positions, reform is certainly impossible. If you do not trust my words, please think about it yourselves. It would be sad that even the lowest option could not be implemented. But because heroes are born not only among a special kind of people and success or failure is floating around, we cannot decide the fate of any affair in advance. If we keep trying, there is nothing that we cannot achieve. Remember, Columbus found the Americas, and Faraday completed his theory of magnetism. If we pay attention, there is nothing we cannot achieve; and if we do not make an effort, there is nothing that we can achieve. I would thus guess that all the monastics today are heroes and great people. I believe that they are more qualified than just carrying out the best reformation.

10. Buddhist Icons for Worship

Korean Buddhism has so many religious icons and paintings that there are more than a hundred different kinds. Some have argued that it would be the best to destroy all of the icons because they are the products of superstitious beliefs. They have insisted that Korean Buddhism could thus clean out the temples, eradicate the superstitions of the dark ages, and rebuild a new country for Buddhism by upholding the truth. These words sound good, but they are like a case in which people have tried to force open a new road with one stroke of a huge sword or a broad axe for a sick person whom they think is lacking in wisdom and knowledge and thus unable to explore new ways. They seemed to have no inhibitions and no consideration of human emotions; I am afraid that they were too excessive even though they were straightforward and had some merits. I thus would have liked to add my opinion and wait for the judgment of the wise.

In general, phenomena are illusory images of truth, and icons are illusory images of phenomena. From the standpoint of the truth, religious icons are illusory images of illusory images. Nonetheless, these icons have existed for so long in the world. Why is that? The human mind is originally quiet, but it is inclined to move when interacting with the material world. Except for those extremely wise people or extremely stupid ones, there is no one who is not affected by outer circumstances. People feel sad when seeing a dead person and happy when hearing people recover from illness; they want to emulate them when meeting the wise, are watchful when seeing the evil, and try to do good. These are the examples of people's interactions with circumstances.

When the mind moves, actions follow. Realizing this, the ancients were afraid that people could take a wrong direction, not the right path; they thus created illusory images of proper behavior, and religious icons were one such image. For example, people set up the images of sages and wise people at a home altar and offered ritual food to them; and they thus made an example of honoring the sages and respecting the wise. People enshrined the images of loyal subjects and righteous people at shrines, provided sacrifices to them, and made them an example of loyalty and integrity. People also built monuments for filial sons and chaste women to award them and made them heroic examples to emulate. These examples are ways to pay respect to those ancestors and to encourage future generations to follow. By remonstrating one person, they try to make hundreds find the right way. By awarding a person, they try to encourage tens of thousands to follow. They wish to offer an example by creating an illusory image—this is why religious icons came into being. Icons are objects with which the populace can interact.

Alas! Among those idealists, who would not denounce religious icons for being useless and delusional objects? More radical people believed that the icons could confuse people's minds, and they thus condemned and disdained the icons. They could be right. Yet, who would imagine that those illusory images were able to influence people morally? I will offer my own experience to show their impact.

When I was young, I visited a shrine dedicated to Confucius.¹⁰¹ I saw a solemn stone statue of Confucius standing in the middle of the shrine. Watching the dried lips, exposed teeth, and waist ten fathoms in circumference, I unconsciously paid respect to him while reflecting on his written achievements interpreting the laws of Yao, Shun, Wen, and Wu¹⁰² and teaching them to the thousands of later generations. When I visited the shrine of Guan Yu¹⁰³ and saw his jujube-colored face, beautiful beard, and his remarkable height of nine *chi* 尺 [2.07 meters]. I thought about his sense of righteousness, which led him to light a candle each night¹⁰⁴ so that he could read the *Zuo Chronicle*, and his sense of trust that led him to behead generals Yan Liang and

Wen Chou.¹⁰⁵ With this thought, I felt the spirit energy of Guan Yu become awe-inspiring, and it was as if he could run to a someplace else at a single bound.

We can find the accomplishments of Confucius in the *Book of Changes*, the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, and the *Analects*, while the accomplishments of Guan Yu are seen here and there in historical books. Whenever, while reading books, I found phrases related to Confucius and Guan Yu, I never failed in paying respect to them. Yet I felt a sense of frustration at how the reading was not sufficient in leading me to do good. Then watching a lump of earth and stone [the statue], the most false thing in the world, gave me such vital and sincere feelings.

Why is that writings and icons are different in moving the human mind even though they are illusory representations? Direct representations move the mind directly while indirect ones influence it indirectly. What is then indirect representation? It is writing. What is direct representation? It is images. Writings are called indirect representation because they record human words and accomplishments. Images are called direct representations because they depict people as they are. The difference between directness and indirectness is the product of our own assumptions. But it is inevitable that our minds and feelings are changed as we see different objects. It is why we can see the merit of religious images.

Even in the present time, people make stone or bronze images for those who have extraordinary abilities or amazing achievements, and this belongs to a similar category. Unless everyone achieves ultimate wisdom or ultimate stupidity, I am sure that the creation of religious icons will not disappear from the world. Today, people are so uncultured that they make images of spirits that they do not worship; they offer sacrifices, pray for worldly benefits, and use them for fortune-telling. Therefore, we have to be very selective in choosing religious images in order not to create confusion, and images have to be simple, not too complicated. Korean Buddhists, however, are not selective in worshipping their icons, and the icons

are just too numerous and confusing. I dare to express my own opinion regarding which icons would be acceptable or unbefitting to Korean Buddhism.

1. Arhats¹⁰⁶ are the saints of Hīnayāna Buddhism, who indulge in the joy of nirvāṇa within narrow Hīnayāna views and are content with the small achievement of their own enlightenment, and they would not willingly enter the world of suffering to save sentient beings. They were thus chided by the Buddha. According to the *Sūtra of Complete Enlightenment*, the achievements of hundreds, thousands, or even tens of thousands of arhats and *pratyekabuddhas*¹⁰⁷ are not as good as the attainment of one person who hears this teaching of complete and unhindered enlightenment, accepts it, and cultivates it for even a moment. The sūtra also states that *pratyekabuddhas* cannot attain full Buddhahood.¹⁰⁸

Viewed from this vantage point, we can see that arhats and *pratyekabuddhas* are certainly the criminals against the Buddha and heretical to the monastic community. The Buddha entered hell and the realm of animals and willingly assumed all suffering; it is because he wanted to save all beings. Therefore, Buddha's every word, every moment of silence, every movement, and every moment of quietude came because he intended to benefit all beings. Yet, those followers of Hīnayāna Buddhism do not follow his teachings and indulge themselves in small things, not attempting to save others. They are certain to be reproved by the Buddha, and, they cannot be condoned by the current trend of stressing social concerns. It is thus good for Buddhists to distance themselves from arhats; it is good to reject them, not worshipping them.

2. The worship of the Seven Stars is much more ridiculous and laughable. If Korean Buddhists want to worship the image of the Seven Stars, why do they choose only the Seven Stars while there are so many stars in the sky? If it is because the Seven Stars are

- the avatars of the Buddha, why are the Seven Stars the only ones while heaven and earth, sun and moon, and all the myriad things are the embodiment of the Buddha? It should be sufficient for Buddhists to worship the image of the Buddha. If they extend their worship to all the avatars of the Buddha, this is surely complicated.
3. The ten kings of hell are the ten rulers of Yamarāja's realm.¹⁰⁹ It is said that they control at will the life and death of humans, make judgment on human karmic sins, and punish or reward them according to the gravity of their karma. Simply speaking, they are the judges of the dead. At a glimpse, they look most formidable, but if we look deeply, there is nothing about them to be fearful of. Why is that? Judges are viewed as those who punish criminals, but they also protect those who are innocent people. I would thus be protected if I did not commit any wrong doing. In addition, judges master the law so thoroughly that they examine every case with sufficient knowledge; therefore, no one could escape from punishment accidentally or receive punishment unfairly. So, why should we afraid of them? Given that Buddhists are surely to be born in the Land of Bliss and that this land is not a territory belonging to the Yamarāja's realm, why are we afraid of the ten kings?
- If we produced bad karmas and fell into hell, we would be punished based on our evil actions. What is then the use of flattering the kings? Even if we luckily escaped the punishment, the kings should be very busy passing their judgments on those countless dead people throughout the world and would thus have no time to come to this world to see if people offer prayers for them. It should be impossible to cleanse your bad karma even by praying ten thousand times. Yet people still create images of the ten kings with gold and jade and paint them with bright colors to pay homage to them by prostrating themselves. What would be the use of such worship?
4. The multitudes of divine generals are the supernatural beings

who accompanied the Buddha to protect him when he was residing at the Vulture Peak.¹¹⁰ The protection of Buddhism is their real duty. There is nothing for them to be concerned about if we try to use force or nothing to stop them even if we try to prevent them. They just follow the Buddha's intentions and do not exercise their free will.

Buddhism includes the three jewels of the Buddha, the dharma, and the saṅgha; so when the divine generals protect Buddhism, they certainly protect the monastics [the saṅgha]. If they do not protect the monks and nuns, the Buddha will chide them, saying, "Buddhist monks and nuns are the ones who follow my teachings and fulfill the teachings by cultivation. How can you fail to protect them?" They cannot thus ignore the monastics. The monastics are like officers and the divine generals are like his police guards. If an officer prostrates himself and begs his guards by bowing down to them, it is like he is obeying his subordinates. This is really ludicrous. Why can't our monastics see themselves? Now, some monks and nuns compete with one another in praying to the divine generals for worldly benefits. I cannot tolerate such an inverted value. During the Han dynasty of China there was a person called Jia Yi,¹¹¹ who said: "The legs are above, and the hands are below; they stand upside down, yet no one knows about it."

The other objects of worship such as the heavenly gods, kitchen gods, mountain gods, and spirits of state preceptors are all absurd and not worth mentioning here. They are the most ambiguous and unacceptable of all the images worshiped by Korean Buddhists now. Alas! Has the intellect of Korean Buddhists been as dark and disrespectful as that? I have finally come to know that the law of the survival of the fittest did not appear overnight but had deep roots. Fortunes and misfortunes are something that humans created, yet Korean Buddhists sacrifice the freedom of their whole bodies and worship those absurd and incompetent gods like servants. We have

gone to an extreme of ill effects in worshipping the images. Who could burn away all these images or throw them into water in order that they would no longer exist in the world and that Buddhism would restore its true flawless face?

Critics say: "If the superstitions disappeared, Buddhism would lose its religious character. Are you going to make Buddhism into a philosophy?" I should reply: "How are you so vulgar?" Religious superstition means to believe in one god, not many. Even if we were to call Buddhism a superstition, worshiping only the Buddha would be sufficient. How can we make our religion consistent while worshiping the Buddha in the morning, and then arhats in the evening, and the Seven Stars, the ten kings, divine generals, heavenly deities, kitchen gods, mountain gods, the spirits of state preceptors, and so on? This is like a goblin who is lost when morning breaks, going to the mountains, waters, trees, stones, and finally becoming too exhausted. This is not even a superstition but the enemy of superstition. If this is neither a wise religion nor even a superstition, what is it then? As I cannot properly name these beliefs, I shall arbitrarily call them "chaotic beliefs" (亂信). This is a faithless faith, so that anyone accepting it should fail. If we call it superstition, this means that Korean Buddhism has more superstitions than any other religion. If superstitions are regarded as the character of religion, this means that more superstitious religions become stronger. If this is the case, why is it that Korean Buddhism, while having numerous superstitious practices, failed in spreading the religion widely to the world, barely managing its life even in remote mountains and just focusing on surviving one day at a time?

Therefore, we can see that Korean Buddhist monastics do not have even superstitions. Buddhism is very different from superstitions, and its teachings are very truthful and lofty; so, those followers of the "chaotic beliefs" cannot even wish to see. We should first reform the objects of the "chaotic beliefs," the images of multiple deities. If a venomous snake has bitten a hand, a strong man will cut off his arm. When the venom is worse than that of any snake, and

reform is easier than cutting off an arm, why are we hesitating in embarking on the reform?

While reforming the objects of “chaotic beliefs,” what should we do with the images of buddhas and bodhisattvas? We could retain those images, but they are still too many. The names of buddhas and bodhisattvas are different, but they are the same in principle. It is thus good to have one of them represent the rest. If we choose one to unite all of them, the Śākyamuni Buddha should be the one. The Śākyamuni Buddha carried on the line of the previous buddhas before him and saved the sentient beings by going so far as to enter the hells as frequently as if they were inns. For the later generations, he gave dharma talks as abundantly as rain falling from clouds. He thus genuinely represents all the thousands of buddhas and the teacher guiding all the myriad generations. It is definitely proper for later generations to commemorate and worship him by making his images of gold, silver, lapis lazuli, agate, cornelian, and other precious materials. All Buddhist temples should have only the image of the Śākyamuni Buddha, pay sincere respect without being impolite, think of his teachings and compassion while looking up to his face, and try to emulate him sincerely.

Such practice would then be close to the truth without being shameful even though the images are illusory. It would also be good to establish a separate building of commemoration for buddhas and bodhisattvas and people, regardless of epoch or nationality, who left unusual deeds or fame for Buddhism, and we should enshrine their spiritual tablets in the building, and make sacrifices to them in order to make honorable examples of respecting the wise and teaching later generations. This does not mean to pray for worldly fortunes; it just means to commemorate those great ones.

11. Buddhist Rituals and Ceremonies

All the hundreds of customs and procedures in the Korean sangha are inadequate, and so nothing deserves mentioning. Specially, among them, ritual offerings (the Buddhist hymns called, *beompae* 梵唄 played with four instruments, ritual dances, repentance rituals, etc.) or sacrificial rites (the entertainment of the dead called *daeryeong* 對靈, the bestowal of food upon hungry ghosts called *sisik* 施食, etc.) are so complex, chaotic, and disorderly. They are just too diverse and substandard. It would be proper if we call all these rituals the tricks of goblins. It is shameful even to mention about them, and so I will not analyze them. And all the other daily rituals (daily offerings to the Buddha around eleven o'clock in the morning, morning and evening rites to the Buddha, invocations and chanting, etc.) are also disorderly and lack truthfulness. We should thus put an end to all of those rituals, big or small, and create only one simple ritual. And then how do we perform the simple ritual? Each temple should execute the ritual only once a day. Both monastics and lay people reverently gather at the main hall (where the Śākyamuni Buddha's image is enshrined) after the signal bells ring five times, they then offer incense, prostrate themselves fully three times, and sing a hymn to the Buddha (the hymns will be made known later) before departing.

Some people may say that all the other suggestions are fine but that it would be too simple if we conduct the ritual only once a day by making only three full prostrations and removing the midday food offerings. I would reply that it is not so. If rituals are too complex, they become disorderly; if they are disorderly, they are not respectable. If they are not respectable, the original intention of rituals will disappear. Rituals stress their original meaning, and thus

funeral rituals are based on grief; and sacrificial rituals are based on reverence. All the other minor procedural matters will be okay even if we do not pay full attention to them. Which one is better—being complex yet disrespectable, or being simple yet respectable? Which one would be closer to a good ritual—one that is familiar yet undignified or one that is unfamiliar yet respectable? For the image of the most revered one, we should pay homage solemnly and should not act irreverently. We cannot say thus that conducting a ritual only once a day is simple.

These days, our monastics are always facing Buddha's images whether they sit, lie down, stay, eat, or even chat. They become naturally so familiar and close to the images that they act carelessly without any prudence. This is because the monastics feel too close and accustomed to the images. It would thus be better that they conduct rituals less frequently so that they can find time to cherish feelings of admiration. They would then feel respectful and devotional when they conduct the ritual next time. They might feel that even conducting the rite once a day would be too cumbersome. But if they conduct the rite too sporadically, they could become lazy and forgetful. It would become difficult for them to stay awake. It is thus better to conduct the rite once a day.

Even prostrating themselves three times would not be a reduction in numbers of prostrations that existed in previous rituals. The current daily rituals to the Buddha involve twenty to thirty or even eighty to ninety prostrations, but in reality, only one prostration is offered, representing several hundreds or thousands, or innumerable buddhas and bodhisattvas as well as the dharma and the sangha. (During the rituals to the Buddha, the monastics call out the names of the three jewels—Buddha, dharma, and sangha—one by one, prostrating before each of those holy beings. They thus usually prostrate themselves up to eighty to ninety times.) Since time immemorial the number of the three jewels has been infinite, so that sentient beings cannot pay homage to all of them. Twenty to thirty or eighty to ninety prostrations should thus be too simple. My proposal of prostrating only to

the Śākyamuni Buddha is not an oversimplification compared to previous rituals. Prostrating three times would be a middle way between simplicity and complexity.

In addition, as for offerings to the Buddha, only dharma offerings (法供)¹¹² are meaningful, not the offerings of food (飯供). If monastics continue offerings of food, they only insult the Buddha. Why is it wrong to abolish such food offerings? It should be, though, permissible to offer pure and precious food during special occasions (the Buddha's birthday, the day of Buddha's enlightenment, the day of Buddha's death) as a way of showing people's sincere devotion.

Some people ask: "What are you going to do with ritual offerings and sacrificial rites?" I would reply that both rituals pray for good fortune. But one cannot earn good fortune by prayer; and because the Buddha is not in charge of dealing with good or bad fortune, he cannot help obtain good fortune despite all these prayers. The sacrificial rites are the ceremonies in which descendants remember their grandparents or parents or comfort themselves by providing ritual offerings and paying homage because they still feel the kindness of their ancestors. Descendants no longer perform sacrificial rites to the ancestors beyond four generations because they do not remember those distant ancestors. But why is that these days our monastics tirelessly offer sacrificial rites every year to every Mr. Jang and Mr. Yi to whom they are totally unrelated? Given that Buddhist teachings focus on the salvation of sentient beings, is this because of the compassion of monastics that they are motivated to conduct the rites that send the souls of the deceased to the Pure Land? If this is true, why do the monastics offer the rites only to those whose descendants pay for the rites, not for everyone? If the deceased can be born in the Pure Land by performing sacrificial rites, it would be enough to offer the rite only once; and if it is impossible to be born in the Pure Land with the rites, providing the rites ten thousand times would be ineffective.

Yet, why do they keep offering rites generation after generation? I know the reason. It is because the monastics covet what remains

of the sacrificial rice and soup. They worry that they will not be able to acquire their rice and soup by making shoes or mats. They thus compromise with such inappropriate rituals, yet they do not regard their actions as bizarre. How sorrowful! Because the meaning of ritual offerings and sacrificial rites has been tainted like this, it should be reasonable to abolish them.

Some people ask: “Does this mean that we should not worship the Buddha from now on and that our monks and nuns should not conduct sacrificial rites?” I reply that it is not so. I do not mean that people stop worshipping the Buddha or making sacrificial rites to their ancestors and teachers. I just mean that people should not perform the rites in order to pray for good fortunes. This may sound like a trifling matter, but it is very important in reality. We should thus reform it urgently. Among those who speak of ritual offerings and sacrificial rites, there are some who wish to rid them of their complexity and make them simpler; but there is no one who calls for their complete abolition. It is because people do not examine root causes and just see unessential things while being bound by old habits. Those discussing these things should have correct views, set aside customs and personal interests, and examine them based on universal principles; and then they will make no major mistakes.

Some people ask: “If ritual offerings and sacrificial rites have all been abolished, the temples’ finances will be drained, and the monastics will be badly off. How is it possible for Buddhism to survive?” I reply: “Alas! Indeed! You do not understand.” There are so many religions in the world, and yet none are less prosperous than Buddhism. Is this because they conduct ritual offerings and sacrificial rites? If our monastics are satisfied that the maintenance of the temples and the survival of the monastics depend on ritual offerings and sacrificial rites, this is why Korean Buddhism is inferior to other religions. It is as if they go to the west when they have to go to the east. Why don’t they rethink and change the direction?

12. The Restoration of Monastics' Status Depends on Their Engagement in Production

Korean Buddhist monastics have suffered unprecedented oppression for several centuries. They have been enduring inhumane treatment. One great contributing reason is that monastics received their food and clothing without working. Taking food and clothing without working is what today's economists call parasitism. Parasites are certainly harmful to other people, to the country, and to the world. The reason people can wear cloth is because they weave it; the reason people can eat is because they plough the earth. If people wear cloth without doing the weaving it, it means that they wear the cloth that is woven by others. If they eat food without engaging in ploughing, it means that they eat something produced by others. When they eat and wear things that are produced by others, they should offer something valuable to compensate for what they eat and wear. If then, there are no harsh feelings among people, and the entire economy is also restored without deficiencies. If someone eats and wears without working or compensating, this person is just wasting what others weave and plough; and from the point of the entire economy, this means a loss of a person's productive ability.

The growth or decrease of the workforce and the development or contraction of the economy are proportional to the number of parasites; it is thus the parasites who are the enemies of productive labor. It is inevitable that they are oppressed by the producers and that they have certainly no words to defend themselves. If I have produced nothing of considerable value and have been supported by others, it means that my survival depends on others, not on myself. Unless I wish to die, I will have to take gladly all kinds of contempt

and mockery from others and be content with barely surviving. Under such circumstances, how can I preserve freedom and avoid oppression?

Among Korean Buddhist monastics, is there anyone who is not called a parasite? For a long time there have been two ways for monastics to support themselves: one by fraud and the other by begging. What do I mean by fraud? Those having some bookish knowledge and a sly trick entice credulous women by using such words as *bosi* (Skt. *dāna*) [giving] or good/ill fortunes; they act servilely like dogs and flatter donors like foxes to procure clothes to wear and food to eat. What do I mean by begging? It refers to what the majority of monastics have long done, begging money or grain at a doorstep by bowing down. Aside from this, they have no other way to support themselves.

There is a strange belief among monastics. It is the belief in the “all bodhisattva actions.”¹¹³ They believe that begging is the highest value of all bodhisattva actions; they thus regard begging for food as the principle teaching of Buddhism, compete with one another in begging, and are afraid that they may fall behind other people in begging. When they see anyone engaging in productive labor, they slander the person severely as if she or he were to lose dignity as monastics. But begging for food is just one of the tens of thousands of actions taken by bodhisattvas.

Even this begging originated from the sincere intention to save sentient beings and cultivate the mind; this was not intended that monastics would beg as a major means to provide for themselves. No current monastics, however, care about the other 9,999 kinds of bodhisattva actions. They choose one, begging, and keep to it diligently. What kind of sublime dharma is it? Hundreds and thousands of such people are occupying temples, and the so-called high class monastics are used to making a living by fraud. How is it possible then that they wish other people not to disdain them?

As a result, everyone in the country sees the monastics as though they were cows, horses, or slaves, without any feelings of pity toward them. Yet the monastics regard the profession as their calling and

never regret the status of their current situation. Even some of the more serious ones think they practice “patience”¹¹⁴ through humility all the while facing those insults, and they are even afraid that they do not receive enough contempt from people. The more contempt they receive the happier they feel. What kind of people are they, given that natural human rights are equally and widely given to people, so that they are not lacking for some and excessive for others? How extreme are they in damaging their natural rights on their own without being ashamed of doing so?

The Buddha was a man of great character and power and proclaimed that he was the only one honorable in the heavenly realm and under the heavens; yet what did the current monastics learn from him that they display the exact opposite? They are excessively passionless. It is because they are unable to support themselves. When they depend on others for their living, it is inevitable that they have to make their bodies soft like a willow tree and bend their mind like a blade of grass in the wind. This gives me deep sadness.

It is not an overstatement that more than half of the present world is obsessed with competing for monetary gains. All civilized ways are possible through the power of money, and every success or failure is determined in the competition for profits. Without production, the world will be destroyed, each nation will decline, and individuals will perish. The relationship between people and production is comparable to that between fish and water. If the waters of the rivers Yellow River and Yangzi River are abundant, flocks of fishes will swim freely and with vitality and someday reach the Great Northern Sea or the Southern Ocean. But fish living in a ditch made by a passing chariot will be found at a dried fish shop.¹¹⁵

Likewise, those depending on others for their food and clothing will ruin themselves, which is why civilized people hate and despise parasitism the most. I am sure that our society will progress further as time passes; and what would others think of us if monastics keep refusing productive labor? We monastics will experience unprecedented hardship, exhaustion, oppression, and contempt,

which could be much harsher than the oppression wreaked by the earlier absolutist monarchs. It is no use if we regret at this time. If we wish to get away from past oppression and restore natural human rights, we should engage in productive labor and attain self-sufficiency. If we get rid of the source of contempt, who could disdain us even a bit?

If someone blames us for not engaging in production, we can offer two reasons in our defense: first, a lack of capital and, second, our ignorance of production methods. These words are not totally wrong. We have led a simple life, wandering around as clouds float or water flows, and we haven't heard anything about affairs of the world. We have merely expected that the heavenly flowers would fall on our bodies and fragrant foods would be inexhaustible. Suddenly one morning winds, and showers, and a thunderbolt from foreign skies sweep through our land and awake Asian civilization from its dreams. We look around and realize that our rivers and mountains can no longer indulge in spring dreams. The blessings of the Paranirmita Heaven¹¹⁶ become null and void; we thus have neither capital nor the methods of production.

But I do not think this is something to worry about. Things having any value can be capitalized. The reason that things can become capital is that human effort is necessary for the materialization of capital. A jade stone, a *cheok* in size, or a lump of wood measuring several arms-lengths look beautiful and treasurable, but only after going through the artful work of skilled craftsmen do they become unmatched and can be sold for unusual prices. If the craftsmen did not intervene, the jade would not have been separated from its stone, the wood could not leave the mountains, and they would not cost even a penny. Human labor would thus be the capital of all capitals, and methods of production utilize capital to produce profit. Those without capital should think about ways to have capital, and ways of making profits are just secondary. In order to have capital, labor is the only way, and labor is the natural form of capital and the first method of earning capital. No matter how large capitals are or how complete the methods would be,

everything has to begin with small efforts like raising hands or moving feet. All human organizations come from human labor. Besides human labor, there exists nothing comparable in value. What a good form of capital labor is! And what a good method labor is! Labor is something anyone can do freely, and it is something that anyone can do without waiting. If we monastics are not engaged in labor now, it is just because of our laziness.

If we wish to engage in productive labor, we may have two different features of labor than other people, one in the natural world and the other in human affairs. What is different in the natural world? It is the fact that the temples own large areas of mountainous forest lands. These lands are mostly empty, going uncultivated, and even for those who are producing, they are inept at protecting what they have produced; the lands are eventually devastated, and this causes knowledgeable people to lament. The Confucian canons state: "If there is land, there comes wealth." Yet in spite of having a great deal of land, we do nothing and accept our poverty—this is nonsensical. We should embark on afforestation (by planting fruit trees, mulberry, acorn trees, tea plants, etc.). If we adopt good methods from East and West, examine the climate and control the qualities of the soils well, and work diligently, we will have small results in four or five years, and we will be greatly successful in ten years with abundant profits.

What are then the different features of human affairs? We clerics usually live together in the temples in several tens and hundreds, so it would be easier for us to communicate with one another and work together. It is thus collective ownership (joint-stock company, partnership, collective enterprise, etc.) that is best for us. Collective ownership is a good practice in the commercial world, and it can be operated among people living in different countries. Isn't it better for people living together to become partners? These aforementioned two differences are unique for Buddhist clerics and not to be found among others. How beautiful it is! Alas! If the bright jewels sewn into his clothes cannot relieve the poverty of a wage worker,¹¹⁷ who is to blame for this?

13. Clerical Marriage and the Future of Buddhism

If someone asked me how to revive Buddhism, I would reply that abolishing the law prohibiting clerical marriage is one of the most important and urgent things. But my critics may then condemn me by saying: “Why do you taint Buddhist precepts by uttering such hasty words?”

They would continue to say: The *Brahmajāla-sūtra*¹¹⁸ states that Buddhist monastics should neither perform sexual acts nor have others perform them, and they are not allowed to engage in any illicit sexual acts with women.¹¹⁹ The *Dharmagupta-vinaya*¹²⁰ teaches that committing unclean acts as would an animal leads to a *pārājikā* offence.¹²¹ The third precept of the ten precepts of *śrāmanera*¹²² is not to perform sexual acts; the first of the four *pārājikā* offences of fully ordained monastics is also to prohibit sexual acts. There are just too many other Buddhist texts forbidding sexual acts; as such, Buddhism repeatedly prevents the monastics from marriage. How dare the monastics try to adopt marriage and harm the religion? It is not to revive Buddhism by clerical marriage, but it is to destroy Buddhism.

I should reply: Your words are right, but they are lacking in understanding the supreme teachings of unimpeded interpenetration in the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*. These teachings are lofty, subtle, deep, and endlessly wide. They show no difference between the truth and what is false and that merits and punishments are innately empty, and they teach that everything is interpenetrated and all-inclusive. How can such great teachings be found in those trivial precepts? Seeking Buddhism in precepts is like fishing a dragon from a cup of water or finding a tiger in an anthill. How is it possible? Admittedly marriage can prevent the achievement of Buddhahood, why is it that there was

none among all the seven ancient buddhas¹²³ who did not have sons or that all those innumerable bodhisattvas came from the laity? Those precepts were made as expedient means to control those Hīnayāna practitioners with inferior faculties who tend to be easily swept up by their desires.

Generally speaking, Buddhist teachings are both substantial and empty, both permissible and prohibitive, both like the way of the kings and like the way of hegemons, both like heaven and earth and like a particle of dust. Therefore, they are beyond description, and it is impossible to define them from any single perspective. The subtle and supreme teachings of Buddhism lead people to enter the Way following their own past actions while prescribing medicine based on their disease. If you follow the principles of Buddhism with a calm mind and search for the fundamental tenets of Buddhism, you can attain something. The search is far-off and wide, indeed. How can a frog in a well hear about the ocean that far surpasses in size the rivers and lakes? How can a crow-tit nesting on a bough know the meaning of flying high off to the Southern Ocean? The perfect teachings (圓教)¹²⁴ of the Hwaeom school cannot be comprehended by the followers of the Disciplinarian school. One may find Buddhist teachings in the calm mountains on which autumn moonlight is falling and in the great ocean into which springtime waters are flowing.

According to a Buddhist scripture, if a person lives in the present world and yet follows the ways of the past, disasters will certainly strike. Today's stage is not that of the past; one can thus no longer dance properly without changing the long-sleeved dress to the short-sleeved one. It was inevitable for the Buddha to teach the Āgamas and Vaipulya sūtras¹²⁵ because five thousand of his disciples left when he gave lessons on the *Lotus Sūtra*.¹²⁶ In order to teach a lustful man, Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara had to manifest himself in a female body to save the person. All these are ways to teach sentient beings according to the times and their faculties. Even though clerical marriage violates the vinaya rules, we can adopt the practice as an

expedient means if it will be beneficial to Buddhism while fitting with the current times and faculties of the monastics. We can abolish the marriage practice anytime when we think it is no longer fitting to the times. If we do so, then no one can blame us. How can the prohibition of the clerical marriage be harmonious with the ways of this world? I will discuss below why it is not harmonious:

1. It is harmful to morality. The lack of filial piety is a great sin of the human sins; and the failure of producing an heir is even worse. It is because memorial rites will be discontinued and the family lineage will be stopped. How can I be forgiven if I fail my bodily existence in connecting to the numerous generations of ancestors and descendants? People will be falling into a grave crime if they fail to marry. It is about this that so many people throughout the ages have talked. I shall not mention it further.
2. It is harmful to the nation. Today, ethnic nationalism is widespread throughout the world, and all politicians talk about colonization loudly. The production technologies and hygienic knowledge are developing as time goes on, but they run short day by day.

Because a nation consists of people, all civilized nations allow people to get married. It is why the growth of their populations is exceptionally fast, and accordingly the speed of evolution is also very fast like a fire on the field. Marriage has never been stopped. Were any great Western politicians to hear about the prohibition of clerical marriage, would they not feel odd, shocked, or saddened? If we do not stop the prohibition now, the state should make it obsolete by a law in the future. We will then abide by the law even though we do not wish to violate the vinaya rules.

3. It is harmful to propagation. Are we going to keep prohibiting clerical marriage or will we have monastics spread the religion to the world by permitting them to marry? All the myriad things have continued to exist since time immemorial and will continue to exist without interruption. Among such things, was there anything

that has continued to live without death? No, there was not.

Dachun¹²⁷ and Peng Zu¹²⁸ are known to the world for their longevity. Some of these beings have counted a thousand years as a single spring or five hundred years as a single autumn. But the morning mushrooms and summer cicada are known to the world for their short spans of life. Some of these beings do not know the first and last days of a month, and some of them do not even know even morning and evening. These are extreme examples of longevity and short lives, and the lifespans of all the remaining beings lie somewhere between these two extreme ends while some beings live longer and some shorter. When they die, they become the past; the process of being born and dying is their present; and after being born, they become the future. Past, present, and future merely refer to the times of births and deaths. If a being is not born after another being has died, it is impossible to guarantee that we can see any moving or unmoving beings within a century.

Now Buddhism is spreading to the world, yet its precepts prevent the monastics from producing children by banning marriage, and who could then enter the saṅgha to observe the precepts? Every temple has monastics returning to the lay life after entering the saṅgha; it happens almost every day. Why is it so? There could be many reasons, but the main reason lies in preventing clerical marriage. This greatly hurts Buddhism in its propagation. How is Buddhism going to solve such a problem? It will be difficult to preserve Buddhism if the prevention continues. Buddhism is like spring in that it likes life and does not like death. It favors the ways of humanity and dislikes evil ways. How is it then possible to practice the teachings of the great saint without preserving the human race? Unless we abolish the prohibition of clerical marriage, even eloquent speakers like Su Qin and Zhang Yi¹²⁹ can do nothing for the propagation of Buddhism.

4. It is harmful to fostering good customs. People have myriad

desires. Among them, desires for food and sex are most common to everyone, the wise and the stupid, the intelligent and the foolish. Even one person has innumerable desires, but it is the desires for food and sex that remain in joy and anger, sorrow and pleasure. Once we are born in this world of dust with this physical body, it is just an empty talk or nonsense to say that we do not have the desires for food and sex. It is just impossible not to have the desires. If one is not messy in his sexual life, he deserves to be called a noble gentleman. We can call people noble, if they are not disorderly in sexual life. But it is extremely difficult for everyone in the world to become a noble gentleman. Thus, if the desires for food and sex break rules and reach a peak, people disregard even their own lives and do not regret it later.

Alas! The more you try to stop the water pouring down, the heavier it gets pouring down; the harder you try to control the fleeing horse, the more violently it behaves! Similarly, the more you oppress the desires for food and sex, the stronger they become. They are the ordinary feelings of people. Although there are more people who are lower than the average level, Buddhist precepts try to prevent them from having pleasures by oppressing their desires. Is this possible? Even though it is possible to oppress desires by force, it is just a formal, nominal submission. A butterfly going through the winter gets sick by missing flowers; a cuckoo who has left its valley gets crazy when tied down to a willow tree. These things happen when desires oppressed for a long time reach a peak. If sexual desires are suppressed, the mind runs one thousand *lis*.

Since ancient times, there have been cases like the man coming to his lover with a dead roe deer wrapped in straw¹³⁰ or the woman crossing the Zhen River to meet with her lover.¹³¹ If the prohibition against clerical marriage continues, what could be more severe in harming the customs and destroying the spirits of people? If we review Buddhist history since the latter years of Goryeo, we can see plenty of cases in which the lewd behaviors

of monastics ruined the whole of Buddhism. This shows how serious the relationship between the prohibition of marriage and public custom is.

Based on the arguments made above, I am certain that clerical marriage should not be banned. But I do not mean to ignore all Buddhist precepts and make all monastics violate the precepts that prohibit sexual conduct. I only argue that we should give the choice of marriage to individual monastics. Why is that? Among ancient people, Gibbon, David Hume, and Balfour did not marry and regarded historiography as their wife; Descartes, Pascal, Spinoza, Hobbes, Spencer, Locke, Rousseau, Bentham, and Kant did not marry and made philosophy their wife. Newton and Adam Smith did not marry and made science their wife; Voltaire and Goethe did not marry and made literature their wife. William Pitt and Somma¹³² did not marry and made politics their wife; and Cavour did not marry and made Italy his wife.¹³³ All these people had wisdom and the tactic of depriving heaven and earth of their vitality and making the ghosts weep. They also left great accomplishments to myriad generations yet did not take a wife. I do not know that Buddhist monastics also take Buddhism as their wife and refuse marriage. If they do, why do I not want to remain celibate while paying my utmost respect to them, worshipping them, dreaming about them, and praising them?

Among the buddhas of the past, there was Vipaśyin, who married early and had a son called Fangying.¹³⁴ The second buddha of antiquity, Śikhin also got married and had a son called Ananta. The third buddha of antiquity, Viśvabhu, was married and had a son called Bhadrabodhi, and the fourth buddha of antiquity, Krakucchanda, was married and had a son called Uttara. The fifth buddha of antiquity, Kanakamuni, was married and had a son called Satthavaha; the sixth Buddha of antiquity, Kaśyapa, was married and had a son called Vijitasena. The Śākyamuni Buddha was also married and had a son called Rahula. These buddhas were the ancestors of

the thousands of buddhas and the origin of the myriad dharmas, yet all of them were married and had sons. I do not know that our Buddhist monastics also take Buddha's mind as their mind and regard Buddha's work as their own while getting married and having sons. If they do, why do I not wish to get married while paying my utmost respect to them, worshipping them, dreaming about them, and praising them?

Alas! Bigan completed his loyalty by dying¹³⁵ while Ji Zi achieved his humaneness by continuing to live.¹³⁶ The reason for the defeat of Zhi Bo's armies was the strategy of using water,¹³⁷ and the reason for the defeat of the armies of the state of Wei at the Chibi River was the strategy of using fire.¹³⁸ Life is opposed to death, and water is opposed to fire; but the use of the two opposing extremes may not be contradictory, if they are used aptly. In a similar vein, what harm would there be, if today's monastics worship the Buddha by relaxing the precepts while the ancients worship the Buddha while observing the precepts against sexual acts? It has only to be appropriate to the time. I have thought about such a reform and insisted on it loudly; but no one listened to my proposal. I thus tried to appeal to political power for the reform and sent petitions to the government twice. I include the whole letters for you to read.

Memorial to the Consultative Committee¹³⁹

I humbly think that among human affairs nothing would be better than change and nothing would be worse than the absence of change. If nothing has been changed, all the people who reside in the world now would hardly be seen today. Heaven and earth are prone to change, and myriad things are thus born from them. Myriad things are also changing, and thus they generate new things endlessly. When they generate endlessly and are subject to change

continuously, they evolve in leaps and bounds daily. Thus, even the best mathematician cannot count the number of changes even were they to spend one hundred years doing so. Because of such a high ratio of changing things to unchanging things, everybody values change highly. Among changes, people change one thousand year-old thought. Sometimes they change opinions that have lasted for a generation. Or sometimes they change days- or months-old things. The age of the things changed differs, but it is the same that all things are marching toward evolution. Change is thus none other than evolution. Without change, what can we accomplish?

Today, there must be limitless things that should be changed. But I will talk about changes that are relevant to me. I hope that you kindly pay attention to my petition. Buddhist monks and nuns have prohibited themselves from marriage for more than several thousand years. How are they so oblivious of the obligations of humanity? This issue of clerical marriage has significant relevance to the great scheme of the nation; thus, the government should not let monastics handle the issue without intervention. It would be hard to reduce all the current problems of the world into a single problem, but I guess that the most urgent is increasing the nation's population. The number of our monastics is about five or six thousand now, and I do not know how much the number will increase in the future. If we are left with the old system without changing it, it certainly harms the plan of increasing our population. About this, anyone with above average intellectual aptitude worries, yet I do not know why nothing has been done to rectify it.

In addition, Buddhist teachings are so broad and complete that nothing is forbidden. The precepts were instituted as expedient means for sentient beings who have lower faculties; yet monastics are ignorant of this and regard the precepts as golden rules without going forward even a single step to revise them. For many years, Buddhism has had little influence over the world of people, yet Buddhist monastics have not mentioned this issue at all. Isn't it distressing?

It cannot be helped if we do not care about letting Buddhism

disappear from the world; but if we care, we should preserve Buddhism by permitting the monastics to marry and produce children, expand the religion, and be triumphant in competition with other religions. Once the prohibition of clerical marriage is repealed, we will benefit both by increasing the population for the state and preserving Buddhism for the saṅgha. Why should we avoid reforming it? Because this prohibition has nothing to do with the laws of the state, it would be okay for the saṅgha either to maintain the prohibition or to annul it. It has practiced for a thousand years, however, so that it is difficult to repeal it overnight. Hundreds of different opinions appeared, and monastics became suspicious of one another. Many years have passed without implementing the reform even though they have intended to do so. Now the sun is setting and the road is still long. We can no longer delay the reform, and I dare to submit my foolish words. I hope that you give some consideration to this matter. You do not need to accept my proposal, if it does not contribute to today's evolution, but if you find it even a bit acceptable, I hope you will send it to the cabinet council and promulgate it as a law giving monastics permission to choose marriage so that social evolution will not be held back. Permission will be very beneficial both for the state and the saṅgha.

Third month, fourth year of Yungheui era (1910)

To His Excellency Gim Yunsik¹⁴⁰
Chairman of the Consultative Committee

Proposal to the Residency-General¹⁴¹

I respectfully believe that the prohibition of clerical marriage, although the prohibition has been practiced for a long time as a Buddhist precept, does not fit the present time when all kinds of

reformation are taking place. If the prohibition is not revoked, it will be harmful to the growth of the population, morality, religious propagation, and many other issues. I do not need to explain this issue because everybody knows about it. But it would be better to reiterate this issue as a point of procedure. For the profound truth and vast scope of Buddhism, nothing can be harmful or beneficial, including the prohibition of clerical marriage. The Buddha only wished sentient beings would attain enlightenment by departing from delusions and practice good things by rectifying evil. But the faculties of sentient beings are all so different that the Buddha could not teach them with a single method. It was inevitable for him to teach them to rid themselves of human emotions and desires. The Buddha wished to lead them toward enlightenment by having them follow what they like. The prohibition of sexual acts is just a expedient means, not the ultimate teaching of Buddhism. Why is then so harmful to revoke the prohibition?

Furthermore, for sexual desires, it is something that everyone, intelligent or foolish, has. If marriage is forbidden, it will produce evil effects; and evil effects produce more evil. In fact, Korean monastics also know that the prohibition should be revoked; but they are hesitant and full of doubts because they cannot annul overnight a prohibition, that has been practiced over a thousand years. Wishing to lift the prohibition through state laws, I already sent my petition to the former Consultative Committee in the third month of this year.

But no measures were taken by the government, and the mistrust of monastics worsens; the numbers of monastics leaving the religion are increasing daily, and the propagation of Buddhism is thus daunted. I wish that the government would annul the prohibition against clerical marriage quickly and let Buddhism survive. If a great number of Buddhist monastics were allowed to change, get married, and produce children, will it not be greatly beneficial to the state, ethics, and religion? With these reasons, I dare to present my petition. I ask you to investigate it seriously and announce

the annulment of the ban as a special ordinance so that the state can achieve an unprecedented accomplishment by abolishing the thousand year-old custom once and for all.

Renovation will be the foremost thing in politics. This issue of clerical marriage seems insignificant, but it is actually very important. I ask you to take measures quickly and plead with you earnestly.

Ninth month, forty-third year of Meiji (1910)
To His Excellency Viscount Terauchi Masatake¹⁴²

14. The Election of Abbots

What are the duties of the abbots? They are in charge of the administration of temples. If abbots are capable, a temple's affairs can thrive, and if the abbots are incompetent, things will not run well. The success and decline of temples depend on the abilities of abbots. Is it not crucial to seek ways of selecting abbots?

We have not elected the abbots yet. How have we then selected the abbot without election? I will randomly categorize the methods of selection into three. First, assuming abbotship by rotation; second, assuming the position by external patronage; and third, assuming the position by force.

The first way of taking on the abbotship by rotation means that monastics take turns in assuming the position according to the order of their age, the order of monastic seniority, or just simply the order of the location of their living quarters. No matter whether they are wise, foolish, prudent, or clumsy, they serve the abbotship without any exception. This method of selection is done in rather larger temples. To what does the second way of assuming the abbotship by external patronage refer? This refers to those occupying, through bribery, the position with the help of local officials or powerful local families; once taking on the abbotship, they usurp temple properties and abandon the position after nothing valuable remains. This method is practiced in remote hermitages and temples.

What is the next way of the assuming the position by force? This means that the abbotship was not taken by either general consensus or external pressure. The position is taken forcibly by the individual himself. Briefly speaking, it is taken violently and coercively as in the law of the jungle. This method is also practiced in remote hermitages

and temples. In fact, assuming the positions by external patronage or by force is the same in essence just with different methods. They have the same goal of self-profit through external patronage or use of force. Alas! The abbots are the representatives of temples, yet the methods of selecting abbots are as deviant as I have described. It is why Korean Buddhism has declined and deteriorated.

There must be reasons for this evil practice. What are the reasons? Simply put, it is because the regulation system for monastics is not established. There must be many kinds of failure in the regulatory system, but I will limit the discussion on the defects of the abbot system. First, the abbot system lacks unifying regulations; second, the abbots do not receive regular salaries. Because unification among temples is lacking, no relationship is established among temples.

Buddhist monastics do not care about the success or failure of other temples. It is as if the peoples of the Chinese states of Qin and Yue watched the fertility or infertility of each other's soils. There is nothing that those who are ambitious and greedy mind doing. They drool over the thought of temple properties, their bodies are consumed with their desires, and they harm all the properties. This is the reason that they choose the abbotship by external patronage or by force.

For larger temples, the way of utilizing wealth is different than smaller temples where despotic abbots do not leave even spoiled rice to others. If then, who would work for a year or several years for the places that have no properties to usurp or provide no monetary compensations for their work? As a result, monastics hesitate to take the position; the positions become vacant like the abandoned field of Yu and Rui,¹⁴³ and no one desires to take on the abbotship of larger temples. Monastics do not find the origin of the problem of flooding but only try to devise an inverse scheme to turn medicine into illness. Such a shameful method is to assume the abbotship by rotation. This makes me so sad that I cannot utter any more words.

What would be the way to rectify this problem? We should provide monthly stipends for abbots according to the size of temples

and the amount of tasks. We elect the abbots who earn two thirds of the votes and let remote hermitages and temples manage for themselves while adopting elections. Although it would be difficult to make the election perfect, I am certain that through elections we can select people who are relatively better. Compared with the situation before, wouldn't it be better?

15. The Solidification of Monastics

Even a single spark can melt metal and stone, if it is put together one by one, and even a strand of hair, it can pull things as heavy as a thousand *jun*,¹⁴⁴ if hairs are put together. In general, metal and stone are the hardest things, and a thousand *jun* is a very hefty weight. Wouldn't everyone think that a single spark and a strand of hair are unable to melt or pull anything at all?

But when small things are united and combine their strength, they magically augment this strength enough to melt or pull. Even such small inanimate things as sparks and hairs can have such great power when they combine their power. How about humans, who have splendid bodies and superb wisdom, if they pool their strength? There is nothing they cannot achieve, and nothing they cannot break. If they do not unite, a spark will become a cold ash; a hair remains just a thin thread; and humans cannot achieve anything. How marvelous is unity! How weird is not being united!

Anyone seeking Buddhist reforms often says that the weakest point of Korean monastics is their lack of unity. Is it really so or not so? If it is so, I feel fearful and sad, and I worry about Buddhism and feel sorry for our monastics. There is nothing one can achieve without unity. There is the unity of one person and the unity of the multitude.

What is the unity of one person? A person consists of innumerable individual elements, like ears, eyes, a nose, mouth, hands, feet, a heart, strength and so on. A person cannot do anything if these elements are not united; or the person can be paralyzed like a hemp stalk. Breaking off a branch from a tree for a superior is a matter done by an individual; one should first remember with the heart,

watch with eyes, walk with feet, hold a branch with hands, move by exerting strength, and then the branch will be broken off. It is thus clear that the five elements of the heart, eyes, feet, hands, and strength are united to break off a branch successfully. Talking to another person is also something done by an individual. The person needs to think by applying wisdom, utter sounds with lips and teeth, and move the tongue to make conversation. The person thus becomes successful in talking because of the unity of lips, teeth, wisdom, and tongue. Drawing from this, everything must work in the same way.

When people are working together with others, it is like breaking off branches. As mentioned before, it is impossible to break branches when the heart and eyes are not united. Without minds being united, is it possible or impossible to achieve anything? Is it necessary to make the argument that it is impossible?

When one individual cannot carry out a task, it is necessary to form a group and undertake the task together. As in sailing in a steamer, it is necessary that many people should work together. There are people who open the sea route, operate the machinery, guard the ship, or work with fuel or water. Everyone has different duties, but the goal is the same, that is, to reach the other coast. Similarly, a joint-stock company is also something to be run by many people. Some need to build factories, some should lay railways, some must purchase yarn or grain, and some are brokers in trading jade or silk. Their jobs are different, but their aim is the same, namely, to make profits. For example, if one hundred people gather and embark on an enterprise, all one hundred will share the profits when the enterprise is successful; and when it fails, everyone should sustain the damage together. Thus, if all one hundred people make equal efforts, they will succeed and share the profits. But if one of them does not do the work, the total strength will be shrunk by one, the enterprise will fail, and the profits will not be produced. Therefore, anyone in a group, who does not want to work together, will end up harming himself.

There are two kinds of the solidarity among a large number

of people. One is formal solidarity, and the other is spiritual solidarity. What is formal solidarity? It refers to the unity of people in a traditional marketplace. Several thousand people gather in a marketplace and form a group like a dense forest. But if a few dozen thieves suddenly attack them with clubs and knives to rob them of their properties, no one dares to defend the place. Soon, there are hardly any people entering the place; everything, including jade, silk, gold, and grain, is scattered around the place; the thieves take anything good; yet no one interrupts them. Property is what people desire most; yet several thousand people cannot prevent a few dozen thieves from robbing their beloved property. This is because their strength is not united.

What then is spiritual solidarity? It is something that cannot be divided. With united minds, even the alienated people from the states of Chu and Yue can become like brothers,¹⁴⁵ and people living apart from each other at a distance of one thousand *li*s can go through matters of life and death and hardships together. Wise people thus regard spiritual solidification highly but are not interested in formal solidification.

Today our monastics are the opposite case. They appear to be united formally because they live together in the same temple, but as for spiritual unity, I have never heard about it. If any of them try to do something, Korean monastics become jealous and oppose the proposal without thinking about the pros and cons or feasibility of the proposal. When someone proposes in the east, criticisms arise in the west; they agree in the morning, yet they disagree in the evening. They oppose anything violently like a dog baring teeth, and thus nothing can be accomplished.

How serious it is! Why are they not just dissatisfied with not being united, but conversely harm the project? Why do they not content themselves with being indifferent, but conversely resent the activists? Liang Qichao has already written a piece that scolded the idle spectators.¹⁴⁶ This writing is like a photograph taken of the current situation of Korean monastics. I will quote its important

points, discarding the unnecessary details, in order to warn Korean monastics:

The most hated, abominated, and despised people in the world are the idle spectators. Idle spectators are those who just watch whatever happens around them with folded arms from the point of the third person. They are thieves harming humanity and the enemies of the world. There are six kinds of idle spectators:

1. The first kind is the confused.

They are completely ignorant about what is going on in the world. They eat when they are hungry and sleep when they are tired. Even matters of life and death or of rise and fall have no influence on them. It is like a fish, caught and thrown into boiling water, mistaking the heat of the boiling water for the warmth of the river waters in spring. And it is also like a swallow whose nest is half consumed by flames but still believes that the nest is warmed by shining sunlight. They are like machines that can move but cannot discern what they are doing. They do not know that they are idle spectators even though they act like them. Among the many kinds of idle spectators, they are like the people of nature. The Korean saṅgha swarms with ignorant monastics; these, about nine out of every ten monastics, belong to this category.

2. The second kind is the egoists.

They refer to those who, according to the proverb, sit and pack their bags even though thunder strikes. They know what they should do, but they just think that they should be idle spectators instead of taking on hardships and adventure. It is because they think that it will not be beneficial to them if they do something or that it will not be harmful if they do nothing. It is like teeth that do not care that the lips are missing,¹⁴⁷ and it is like a rabbit who does not grieve the death of a fox.¹⁴⁸ These people are thus the most foolish. Those who try to guard their positions and increase their fortunes while being misers belong to this

category.

3. The third kind is those who lament.

These people are doing nothing but lamenting, sighing, wailing, and weeping. They always look worried and talk frequently about their apprehensions about world affairs, but when they are asked to do something about these affairs, they usually reply, “although I agree that we should do something, there seems no way for us to do anything.” When they are asked about the crises and decline of our times, they often respond: “It is really perilous, yet what can we do? There is no way to rectify the situation.” Pressed further, they say: “It is just the fate of the time and depends on the will of heaven.” They then do nothing with folded arms. This can be compared with the situation where people lament the fierceness of a fire while watching the evolving flames without trying to extinguish them, or it is like people who, without even attempting to rescue the person, lament the strong currents when they see someone drowning. They just make world affairs the subject material for poems or conversation but do not initiate any actions to improve the situation. Among Korean monastics, those having warmth yet lacking wisdom or those possessing wisdom yet lacking courage belong to this category. Alas! Even among this category of monastics, there are not many of them.

4. The fourth kind is those who mock and curse.

They are those who ridicule others behind their backs and criticize others with bitter curses. They are not only idle spectators themselves, but they also force other people to become idle spectators. They criticize the conservatives and revile the reformers. They denounce the inferior people and curse the superior people. When they see old people, they condemn their senility. When they see young people, they curse their rashness. When seeing the successful, they cynically say: “This guy has made himself a name!” When seeing the losers, they say: “I knew that this guy would fail.” They denounce others constantly without rest. They

stop things with a good potential of success by scorn and curses. They destroy successful things by ridicule and curses. They are the most evil people in the world. It is like a case in which this kind of people blame wind, waves, ocean, and the boat, and then all the people on board. But if they are asked: "In what ways can the ship arrive at its destination?" They cannot answer, of course. It is because they have no strategy besides mocking and cursing. They just denounce others as idle spectators. But when they are placed in a situation where they cannot be idle spectators, they are unable to even mock or curse. These ignorant monastics are pedantic, hate those better than them, and despise those who are inferior, all the while, incapable of carrying anything out, they prevent others from accomplishing tasks. They ridicule and denounce those attempting to start things. They cannot think of ways to be better than others by doings ten things when others do one or doing one hundred things if others do ten. On the contrary, they become jealous, curse, and crush others' spirits; thus, they, together with others, attempt defeat. What on earth are they thinking?

5. The fifth kind is those who give up.

They consider themselves incompetent, depend on others, and have no expectations of themselves. They rely on the rich for politics, depend on the sages for morality, and depend on heroes for successful accomplishments. The first person shifts work to the second person; the second person shunts the work to the third person; by shifting continually, it reaches the last person; then the last person shifts back to the first. In the end, there is nothing that is not shifted. When the first person shifts work to the second person, the second person takes on the work without passing it onto others; would this be an achievement of the first person? This is as if you do not eat while having someone eat for you or you do not sleep while having someone sleep for you—is it really possible or not? Even though I am very foolish and inept, I am still a member of humanity. How can I then give up and lose my position as a human being? Those giving up should be

called sinners against humanity. Among the monastics, those promoting someone to the status of a sage or advocating the views of annihilation¹⁴⁹ belong to this category.

6. The sixth kind is those who wait for the right time.

They are actually idle spectators but do not regard themselves as such. If they say that they are waiting, it means that they cannot assure themselves whether they will succeed or fail. If I do something only after waiting until the right time arrives, the right time will never come. This means that eventually I will end up doing nothing. If I will be ready to do something only when the time is ready for it, how can I know that it is the right time? For those activists, anytime is a good time to act; for those idle spectators, no time is good for them to act. Therefore, those willing to act only create the trends of the times and never wait for the right time. Those waiting for the right time are watching how the world progresses and grab any possible profit. They go to the east, if the majority of people go to the east, and they follow them to the west, if others go to the west. They are thus typical hypocrites and most cunning among all the idle spectators. Those monastics, who mention the Mandate of Heaven, the principle of nature, the power of sages, or divine assistance, belong to this category. In addition are those who loudly recite the following phrases: "When the time is ripe, a favorable wind pushes a boat to the Tengwang Pavilion,"¹⁵⁰ but when luck is exhausted, a bolt of lightning hit the stele at the Jianfu Temple."¹⁵¹ They also belong to this category of people.

All of our monastics belong to the six categories discussed above; and some of them belong to several categories. This means that there is no one who is not an idle spectator. What can we do about this? Alas! Who says that our monastics lack unity? Once a group of idle spectators appeared, a flock of people gathered immediately to join the group. As such, they show unity around the idle spectators.

We have greatly enjoyed the benefits of our parents, the Buddha,

and people. Are we ready have to repay for the benefits? We entered monasteries by severing affections for and leaving our parents behind. We thus are not only unable to repay the debt to our parents but also add a crime that cannot be expiated.

(I was a formerly irresponsible son. I lost my father when I became an adult. While living with my widowed mother, I was not filial. In 1904, I entered a monastery and wandered around many places in Korea and abroad. I was estranged further from my family and stopped sending letters. Last year, when I ran into someone from my hometown on the road, I happened to hear that my mother had died three years ago. Since then, I have had everlasting regrets and committed a crime greater than the size of the sky. Even now, I still feel shameful and tremble, and it has been so difficult to forgive my behavior that I have often lost interest in people and social affairs. While writing thus, I feel my chest blocked up and my body shaking. I dare to write this to inform the world of my sins and wait for my punishment. Note added by the author, Han Yongun.)

Our monastics do not embody the teachings of the Buddha and thus betray the four kinds of benefits [benefits of our parents, the Buddha, people, and the three jewels]. They neither do any work nor accomplish anything. They make the religion decline and fail to repay the kindness of the Buddha. Moreover, they eat without farming, wear without weaving, and live on donations that they do not deserve to receive. Yet they do not do anything beneficial to others, and thus they fail to repay the kindness of people. Living thus, if they face their own death in vain, do they go to heaven or the hells? I know that the officials of hells are waiting for them by sweeping the dust from their seats. Once things go awry, we should not repeat those things. It would be the best to repent for our past and be vigilant about the future. Our monastics should give a loud shout, collaborate with one another with one mind, and work together for the wellbeing of people and the nation instead of being idle spectators. They could then avoid forsaking the compassionate spirit of the Buddha and expiate even a fraction of their past sins.

16. The Unification of Temples

Among the activities of the saṅgha, nothing is done in an orderly fashion. Each temple conducts different kinds of rituals, which are also different in size. There are also differences among individual people, differences by day and differences by year. Why are there so many differences? I heard that if things are changed without any consistent rules, it is as if threads get tangled; such changes produce no benefits. Even though things are changed ten thousand times, these changes are beneficial if they have only one goal. It can be compared to a skillful military general who in charge of ten thousand men develops endless tactics. He becomes unpredictable because he variably applies both regular and irregular strategies yet has clear ideas on the ultimate goals of the war. If things are dealt with like this, what worries are then left with regard to the endless changes?

But the present changes in our saṅgha are different; there are no consistent rules for what is changed or remains the same. Things get changed randomly and suddenly. Therefore, even living in the midst of changes, monastics cannot be aware of them. Under such a context, how can they make their minds without attachment?¹⁵² How can they produce attachment while being mindless? This situation is too serious, and Buddhist monastics are so different from each other. It is because they are not unified. There is no leadership because of the lack of unity, and they are on their own because of the lack of leadership. Thus they all become estranged from one another. There is discord among them because they are different, and there is no unity because of the disharmony. It is thus certain that they cannot achieve anything without unification. To revive Buddhism, the most urgent thing to achieve is unification.

There are two ways for the unification: complete unification (渾合統轄) and sectional unification (區分統轄). What is complete unification? It intends governing the entire saṅgha with one central system. What is sectional unification? It intends to accomplish partial unification by establishing two or more independent regional centers. We cannot adopt both systems. So what do we need to adopt or discard? Each has merits and limitations; I will briefly discuss them below.

Merits of complete unification:

1. It is convenient for conducting business because people and properties are concentrated in one place.
2. It is easy to have consensus among the whole membership of the saṅgha when conducting business. There will be no differences in the efforts made by the members.
3. There will be no confrontations among the members, so there will be no ill effects of discord.

Merits of sectional unification:

1. People in less civilized societies tend to like divisions and dislike unity. They do not cooperate with one another and like to win over others. They thus tend to confront each other with competition and jealousy, which are not positive values, but such values can be advantageous when conducting business or making progress.
2. Because they hold each other in check, they cannot commit such evils as random, dictatorial management of business.
3. It will be simple and easy to conduct meetings and negotiations. I have compared the advantages of the complete and sectional unifications above.

The advantages of the complete unification are the disadvantages of the sectional unification, and the advantages of the sectional unification are the disadvantages of the complete unification. What can then we adopt from these two? From the point of principle, it

is beyond discussion that we should adopt the complete unification since everyone respects unity and disrespects disunity.

Korean Buddhists, however, have been used to living divided and thus do not know about unity. Who could then be awakened and accomplish the unity of the saṅgha? If we try to implement complete unity, the circumstances are such that if we strengthen the east, the west will be insufficient, or if we fill up one side, then the other side will collapse. In addition, there are no competent monastics who can be in charge of the unification. All temples are lacking general knowledge and public spirit. It is thus impossible to implement the complete unification. If we adopt the sectional unification, I am afraid that we may divide the saṅgha further into fractions.

Because we do not know what to do with both ways of unification, I am worried that, being uncertain, we will end up doing nothing. This issue is not something that we, lacking insight, can resolve. Alas! Who was the person who shook the whole religious scene of Europe? It was Martin Luther. If he looked at Korean Buddhism with his grand vision for religion in Europe, Korean Buddhism should be so tiny that he would need a microscope to see it. It is such a small problem, yet I am not able to find ways for the unification of Korean Buddhism. I feel so absurd.

Epilogue

When people set their minds to do something, is it possible not to expose their intentions externally? It is probably impossible. If they are not going to act out their intentions, they should express the intentions verbally; if they do not express them in words, their minds will be expressed in their faces. How is it possible that internal intentions are not to be revealed outwardly?

As for any affairs, there is something that I have to do and something that others should do. Things that I have to do should be done by me. And for those things that someone else should do, it may be impossible for me to carry them out even though I want to. Why is this so? It is because the cause for the action lies with me, but the object of the action lies with others. If others do not want to do anything while being influenced by my action, I have to stop my action. But my intentions do not disappear completely just because others do not want to be influenced by me. It is because my intentions get stronger if others reject me more. The hotter my intentions get, the less content I feel. As I feel uneasy, I utter words; even though I say, nobody listens to my words. Then, inevitably I have to give a loud cry to the world. All the petty words, tens of thousands of them, expressed by me theretofore belong to this category.

I did not want to say all these words, but I could not stop my internal urge to express them; this treatise was thus born. How can I have any egoistic intentions even a little? Does this mean that this treatise is entirely right or entirely wrong? I cannot tell whether it is right or wrong. Can all the words in the treatise be implemented or not? I cannot tell whether they can be implemented or not, either. I

just expressed such words because my mind wanted to do so, and I only fulfilled my duty because my duty was such. I do not need to think about the rest hastily.

I would like, however, to send one more message to my colleagues. If there is anything that can be adopted from this treatise, I hope that they can put the words into practice together. If there is none to be adopted, they should discard it completely. But I want our colleagues to find other strategies to carry out. We have heavy karmic connections with Buddhism and sentient beings. We have also deeply connected with immeasurable worlds throughout immeasurable eons. Our responsibilities are thus infinite. We should renew ourselves day after day and even rescue beings in the various hells, which is what I want from our colleagues.

Alas! It is so sad! The winds with the stink of blood and the rains of blood are showering on people erratically. “The swords-leaf tree” and “the hill of swords” in hells¹⁵³ make great repentance. What kind of world are we living in? We live as if we are drunk and die as if we are dreaming. Is our life finite or permanent?¹⁵⁴ I have never heard of the views of annihilation or of permanence. Are we dreaming, or are we awake?

I have not seen both the butterfly and Zhuangzi either.¹⁵⁵ The night is long, and I cannot fall asleep. As I think things over, my worries go deeper. My worries are endless, and my sighs are mixed with songs. My elder and younger brothers! Can’t you hear it? It is not the humming of the fly. It is the crowing of the rooster!¹⁵⁶

Notes

- 1 This phrase relates to Cao Cao (155–220), a great general at the end of the China’s Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). He was portrayed as the archetypal shrewd, bold villain in the fourteenth century historical novel, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (*Sanguo yanyi* 三國演義). After Cao’s death, the last Han emperor ceded the throne to Cao’s son, Cao Pi, who established the Wei dynasty (220–265). During a campaign, his soldiers suffered from extreme thirst; Cao told the soldiers that not far away there should be a forest of plum trees; and then the soldiers’ mouths were watering, thus resolving the thirst.
- 2 A *gok* is a measure of grain nominally holding ten pecks (about 80.8 liters).
- 3 The six *pāramitās* are ways of crossing over from this shore of birthsm and deaths to the other shore, or *nirvāṇa*. They consist of *dāna* (giving), *sīla* (moral conduct), *kṣānti* (patience), *vīrya* (energy), *dhyāna* (meditation), and *prajñā* (wisdom).
- 4 This phrase means that the Buddha showed his feet from the casket to his principal disciple, Mahākāśyapa, when he showed up after the Buddha’s death. Mahākāśyapa was one of the ten chief disciples of the Buddha and was master of discipline.
- 5 *Bhūtatathatā* is unchanging or immutable as contrasted with form and phenomena. It is fundamental to Mahāyāna Buddhism, implying the absolute, the ultimate source and character of all phenomena.
- 6 The ten directions of space—the eight points of the compass and the nadir and zenith. There is a buddha for each direction.
- 7 It means using any method of teaching that fits the learner’s capacity.
- 8 The wisdom of all wisdom includes perfect enlightenment and purity.
- 9 Liang Qichao (1873–1929) was a Chinese philosopher and reformer during the late Qing dynasty and early Republic. He advocated a constitutional monarchy and, together with Kang Youwei (1858–1927), was instrumental in the Wuxu Reform (the Hundred Day’s Reform), which tried to reform the imperial system by establishing modern schools and starting institutional and ideological changes.
- 10 Liang Qichao, “On the General Trend in the Changes of Scholarly Thoughts

- in China" (Lun Zhongguo xueshu sixiang bianqian zhi dashi), *Yinbingshi heji* (The Collected Writings from the Ice-drinker's Studio), *Wenji* (Collection of Writings) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju chuban, 1989), 1:7, p. 76.
- 11 From *Zhuangzi* 莊子, "Wandering Beyond" (*Xiaoyaoyou* 遊遙遊), chapter 1. The parable relates that a family from the state of Song used a medicine that prevents hands from chapping to engage in bleaching cottons for generations. When a visitor found this medicine he reported it to the ruler of Wu, who in turn used the medicine for his army, which was engaged in long battles in rivers. He was subsequently appointed a general.
- 12 In an abridged form, Han Youngun cites Liang Qichao's 1903 treatise on Kant entitled "The Scholarly Treatise of Kant, the Greatest Philosopher of This Century" (Jinshi diyizhe kangde zhi xueshuo), *Yinbingshi heji*, *Wenji* 2:13, 58–60.
- 13 This means darkness without illumination, referring to the state of being unenlightened.
- 14 This refers to the *tathāgatagarbha* (the embryo of Buddhahood), always pure despite phenomenal conditions.
- 15 This phrase means that all our actions always leave some kind of traces/ marks on our minds.
- 16 *Great Learning* (*Daxue* 大學) existed as a chapter of the *Book of Rites* (*Liji* 禮記). Zhu Xi published the book separately as one of the "Four Books" of Neo-Confucianism. The other Four Books include *Analects*, *Mencius*, and *Doctrine of the Mean*. *Great Learning* emphasizes personal study and practice prior to renewing the people. Zhu Xi's commentary on *Great Learning* is titled *Great Learning by Chapters and Phrases* (*Daxue zhangju* 大學章句).
- 17 For an abridged translation of Zhu Xi's commentary, see Wm. Theodore de Bary and Irene Bloom, eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 1: 725–731.
- 18 Liang Qichao, "The Scholarly Treatise of Kant, the Greatest Philosopher of This Century," 60–61.
- 19 According to the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* (*Huayan jing* [Kor. *Hwaeom-gyeong*] 華嚴經), everything is intricately interrelated and interpenetrating. The *Hwaeom* universe is an organic, totalistic view of existence.
- 20 These are standard expressions used to refer to anything illusory or unreal.
- 21 This citation comes from Liang Qichao's 1902 treatise on Bacon and Descartes, entitled (Jinshi wenming chuzu erdajia zhi xueshuo), "The Scholarly Theories of Two Great Philosophers in This Century" *Yinbingshi heji*, *Wenji* 2:13, 2.
- 22 The *Śūramgama-sūtra* (*Lengyan jing* 楞嚴經) is believed to be an apocryphal

scripture, and it has been popular in China, especially in Chan Buddhism. A total of 127 commentaries on the scripture were produced in China. Its main themes include moral discipline, development of samādhi (mental absorption), and various delusions in meditation.

23 *Lengyan jing*, T 945.19.114a27–29.

24 *Lengyan jing*, T 945.19.116a27.

25 The six sense organs (Skt. *sañcindriya*): eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind.

26 *Lengyan jing*, T 945.19.120c25–27.

27 “Jinshi wenming chuzu erdajia zhi xueshuo,” 2:13, 8–9.

28 It is believed to be the Buddhist apocrypha, probably composed between the late seventh and early eighth centuries in China. It was mainly accepted by the Huayan and Chan schools. Its themes involve meditation practice, sudden and gradual enlightenment, and original Buddhahood.

29 *Da fangguang yuanjue xiuduoluo liaoyi jing* 方廣圓覺修多羅了義經, hereafter *Yuanjue jing* 圓覺經 (*Sūtra of Complete Enlightenment*), T 842.17.917a22.

30 *Yuanjue jing*, T 842.17.917c21–22.

31 *Yuanjue jing*, T 842.17.918b7.

32 *Yuanjue jing*, T 842.17.917b6.

33 *Yuanjue jing*, T 842.17.917b4.

34 Plato’s ideal of the collective republic is translated as *datong* (great unity) in the Confucian classics.

35 Both Lu Xiangshan and Wang Yangming were greatly influenced by Chan Buddhism, and they equated the mind with principle (*li*) and emphasized the mind’s direct intuitive grasp of the proper way. Their views were in opposition to Zhu Xi, who stressed diligent study or the investigation of things.

36 Yan Hui (521–481 BCE), who practiced the utmost diligence in his studies, was Confucius’ favorite disciple, but, unfortunately, he died young in poverty. Zhong You (542–480 BCE), also known as Zilu, was Confucius’ disciple and known for his valor and sense of justice. He was killed in the state of Wei in defense of his lord Kong Kui.

37 Da Ji (d.u.) was a wicked concubine of King Zhou, the notorious last ruler of Shang dynasty China (ca. seventeenth–eleventh centuries BCE). Da Ji has been seen as partly responsible for King Zhou’s misdeeds, which led to the destruction of the dynasty.

38 Diao Chan is a singing girl in the famous novel, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*.

39 Zizhan is the courtesy name of Su Shi (1037–1101), a famous statesman and poet of the Song dynasty. The source of the citation is Su’s 1082 *Chibifu* (Rhapsody on the Red Cliff), English translation by Robert E. Hagel, “The

- Sights and Sounds of Red Cliffs: on Reading Su Shi,” *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Review* 20 (1998): 11–30.
- 40 This quote comes from the *Yuanjue jing*, T 842.17.920c7.
- 41 The *icchantika* is one who lacks the desire or capacity for attaining enlightenment.
- 42 *Yuanjue jing*, T 842.17.917b7.
- 43 The lotus worlds (Skt. *padmagarbhalaokadhātu*) of the cosmic Buddha Vairocana and all other buddhas.
- 44 The evil courses are the realms of an animal, a hungry ghost, and hells. *Avatamsaka-sūtra* (*Dafangguang fo huayan jing* 大方廣佛華嚴經, hereafter *Huayan jing* 華嚴經), T 279.10.105–111.
- 45 King Yama (Skt. *Yamarāja*) is the Vedic god of the dead. In China he rules the fifth court of purgatory.
- 46 A similar phrase is found in the *Record of the Mirror of Orthodoxy* (*Zongjing lu* 宗鏡錄) compiled by Yanshou in 961. T 2016.48.913a2.
- 47 Yao, Shun and Yu are legendary sage kings of ancient China.
- 48 Chao Fu and Xu You are legendary Daoist hermits.
- 49 Recluses mentioned in the *Analects* 18: 6.
- 50 A Daoist adept of the later Eastern Zhou period. He believed that there are no gods and no after-life and that pleasure is the chief purpose of life.
- 51 The Zhou dynasty called schools *xiang*, the Shang dynasty *xu*, and the Xia dynasty *xiao*.
- 52 *Mencius* 3A: p4, p8, in *The Works of Mencius*, trans. James Legge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895).
- 53 A contemporaneous Japanese journalist and Christian pastor. He published *Gakujutsu jishūhō* 學術自修法 [Ways of Self-Education] in 1895.
- 54 *Zhuangzi* “Tian Zifang” 田子方, chapter 21.
- 55 Fu Xi, who supposedly lived between 2852 and 2738 BCE, was recognized as the first of the Three Emperors in the early Chinese dynastic history. He is the putative author of the *Book of Changes* (*Yijing* 易經). He created the eight trigrams, which symbolize the cyclical development of the universe, on the basis of a map found in the Yellow River.
- 56 This legend is mentioned in the “Great Plan” (*Hongfan* 洪範) chapter of *Book of Documents* (*Shujing* 書經). Emperor Yu was a legendary ruler who founded the Xia dynasty, China’s first dynasty, and he was famous for his flood control work and dividing the country into nine provinces.
- 57 Mentioned in the first part (“Book of Yu” [Yushu 噩書]) of the *Book of Document*, which was responsible for popular education under Emperor Shun.
- 58 Tairen was the mother of Emperor Wen, and Taisi was the wife of Emperor

- Wen of Zhou during the late Shang dynasty in ancient China.
- 59 The mother of Mencius was credited for her contributions to her famous son's upbringing. To provide a proper environment for her son, she changed her residence three times—from beside a cemetery to beside a marketplace to finally beside a school.
- 60 Reference to *Book of Songs* (*Shijing* 詩經), “Decade of Xiao Min” (Xiao Min zhishi 小旻之体) chapter 4. It is said that when the mulberry insect has young ones, the sphex carries them away and trains them to be like themselves. This means that one makes an imitator.
- 61 This episode comes from *Zhuangzi*. Yegong Zigao, an aristocrat from the state of Chu during the Zhou dynasty, liked dragons and drew a picture of a colorful dragon. But he ignored a real dragon when the dragon came to him. This episode tells us that he did not like the real one over a faked one. This episode thus stands for a fake, not genuine one.
- 62 The supreme ultimate is the source of the universe and is the basis of Neo-Confucian metaphysical thought.
- 63 One of the principle disciples of the Buddha. He was foremost in wisdom and learning.
- 64 *Gongan* (public cases): stories about the earlier patriarchs and teachers.
- 65 A mythical deer-like animal; it symbolized humaneness and rarity because it is believed to appear only when a sage has appeared.
- 66 One who just talks about Seon without having real experience.
- 67 A shouted exclamations used by Seon masters to push students toward a sudden awakening.
- 68 The Buddha of infinite qualities is like infinite life and infinite light. He is always associated with the west, where in his Pure Land (Skt. *Sukhāvatī*) he receives to immeasurable happiness all who call upon his name. It is because he made forty-eight vows to save all living beings to his Pure Land. He is flanked by Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara on his left, who is the embodiment of compassion and Bodhisattva Mahāsthāmaprāpta on his right, the embodiment of wisdom.
- 69 Dharma body (Skt. *dharma-kāya*), the embodiment of truth and law; essential Buddhahood; the absolute, the norm of the universe.
- 70 Dharma world (Skt. *Dharmadhātu*), the physical universe; or the absolute from which all proceeds.
- 71 In the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra*, a major Mahāyāna Buddhist scripture, Vimalakīrti is depicted as a respected lay householder, whose wisdom far surpassed that of the disciples of the Buddha who came to see him to inquire after his health.

- 72 A celestial bodhisattva, he is the embodiment of wisdom and often placed on the Śākyamuni Buddha's left, with the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra on the right as guardian of the dharma.
- 73 Han Xin (d. 196 BCE), a military general who served Liu Bang (256–195 BCE), the founder of the Han dynasty of China.
- 74 Xiao He (d. 193 BCE) was a Chinese statesman who served Liu Bang. He is also known as one of the three heroes of the early Han dynasty, along with Han Xin and Zhang Liang (250–185 BCE).
- 75 The place of good and evil; a universe where all are subject to transmigration.
- 76 Black mushrooms usually grow on alder-tree or oak roots.
- 77 *Yuanjue jing*, T 842.17.0920a13.
- 78 Expedient means is teaching according to the capacity of the hearer by any suitable method.
- 79 One *cheok* was a measurement used in the late Joseon period, equivalent to about 33 cm. Seven *cheok* would thus be equal to 2.31 meters or seven feet six inches.
- 80 An anecdote in the *Annals of the Later Han Dynasty* (*Hou Han Shu* 後漢書), fascicle 214.
- 81 Chang'an, today's Xi'an, was the ancient capital of more than ten dynasties in Chinese history.
- 82 Legendary musician from the ancient Chinese state of Jin.
- 83 A celebrated beauty of ancient Chinese state of Yue (ca. fifth century BCE). Many contemporary women were said to imitate even her frowning face.
- 84 Adoniram Judson (1788–1850), the first American Protestant missionary to work in Burma from 1813.
- 85 It seems an inaccurate transliteration of the name of Robert Maclay (1824–1907), one of the first American Methodist missionaries to China. He went to the city of Fuzhou in 1848 and spent ten years there before he had his first Chinese convert.
- 86 Guardian spirit (Kor. *sinjang*), divine beings who protect the dharma.
- 87 *Analects* 4:1.
- 88 Reference to Li Bai's (701–762) poem.
- 89 Hill of Swords, or swords-leaf tree hell (Skt. *asipattra*). One of the sixteen hells.
- 90 The three poisons are desire, anger, and ignorance, and they are the source of all the passions and delusions. The five decadences are: (1) the kalpa in decay; (2) deterioration of view; (3) the passions and delusion of desire, anger, ignorance, pride, and doubt prevail; (4) human miseries increase and happiness decreases; (5) Human lifetime gradually diminishes to ten years.

- 91 Liang Qichao's 1902 essay, "The relationship between geography and civilization" (Dili yu wenming guanxi), *Yinbingshi heji*, *Wenji* 2:10, 106–116.
- 92 Reference to *Zhuangzi*, "Autumn Water" (*Quisui* 秋水), chapter 17.
- 93 Liang Qichao, "The relationship between geography and civilization," 106–116.
- 94 Mozi (ca. 470–391 BCE) advocated universal love and challenged Confucianism for its graded love. He believed that the practice of undifferentiated love should cure human selfishness and partiality, which in turn led to the chaos in the world. His teachings, known as Mohism, flourished until the second century BCE when they disappeared suddenly.
- 95 Daoist hermits. According to a legend, when Emperor Yao tried to abdicate the throne to Xu You, Xu washed out his ears in a nearby river to refuse the offer; and Chao Fu turned away from the "polluted" river and went home with his ox.
- 96 Four legendary Daoist hermits who hid at Mount Shang away from the mundane world at the end of the third century BCE.
- 97 A Daoist hermit who lived during the time of Emperor Guangwu (r. 25–58) of the Eastern Han dynasty.
- 98 An ideal man in Confucianism, who would be loyal, obedient, knowledgeable, and humane.
- 99 Large fires will break out when the world is destroyed. They symbolize great change.
- 100 *Analects* 10:18.
- 101 The Confucian shrine (*munmyo* 文廟) was built in 1398 inside Seonggyun'gwan 成均館, an ancient Confucian College located in the present-day Confucian Sungkyunkwan University.
- 102 Yao (ca. twenty-fourth century BCE) and Shun (ca. twenty-third century BCE) were legendary emperors of China. Yao appointed Shun as his successor to the throne, and Shun handed over the throne to Yu, who established the Xia dynasty (ca. 2070–1600 BCE). Emperors Wen and Wu were semi-legendary founders of the Zhou dynasty (ca. 1046–256 BCE).
- 103 Guan Yu (d. 220) was a general serving under Liu Bei who helped him establish Shu Han in the Three Kingdoms period (220–280). He is best known for his loyalty and righteousness.
- 104 Guan Yu is said to have read the *Zuo Chronicle* (*Chungiu zuoshi zhuan* 春秋左氏傳), which elaborated the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, while sitting up through the night. In the *Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Chungiu zhuan* 春秋), Confucius elucidated righteous and great causes.

- 105 Yan Liang and Wen Chou fought against Cao Cao, whom Guan Yu served for a short time.
- 106 Arhat (Arhan, worthy, worshipful) is a saint or perfect man of Hīnayāna Buddhism. They are the sixteen, eighteen, or 500 famous disciples appointed to witness to Buddha's teachings and save sentient beings.
- 107 *Pratyekabuddhas* are those who seek one's own enlightenment, also called solitary buddhas.
- 108 *Yuanjue jing*, T 842.17.918a8–10.
- 109 The ten kings preside over the ten departments of purgatory. In the Vedas, Yamarāja is the god of the dead, with whom the spirits of the deceased dwell. In China, he was depicted as one of the ten kings, ruling the fifth court of purgatory.
- 110 The Vulture Peak is located near Rājagrha, the capital of Magadha, in northern India. It is believed that the Śākyamuni Buddha had taught major Buddhist scriptures here.
- 111 Jia Yi (ca. 201–168 BCE), a famous poet and statesman during the Han dynasty of China. He was so radical that he was exiled to a remote region and died there.
- 112 Dharma offerings mean the protection of Buddhist teachings and saving sentient beings.
- 113 They are all the deeds that bodhisattvas cultivate in regard to themselves and for the sentient beings.
- 114 Patience (Skt. *kṣānti*), one of the six *pāramitās* (means of crossing over from this shore of births and deaths to the other shore, or *nirvāṇa*). The other five *pāramitās* are: giving (Skt. *dāna*), moral conduct (Skt. *śīla*), energy (Skt. *virya*), contemplation (Skt. *dhyāna*), and wisdom (Skt. *prajñā*).
- 115 *Zhuangzi*, “The Outer Things” (Waiwu 外物), chapter 26.
- 116 “Obedient to the will of those who are transformed by others” (Skt. *paranirmita*). The Paranirmita Heaven is situated on the top of the Kāmadhātu, the realm of desire for food, sleep, and sex, consisting of souls in purgatory, hungry spirits, animals, asuras, men, and the six heavens of desire. People living in this heaven are believed to make the pleasures of other people into their own—it is a metaphor for the monastics who are making a living by depending on other people.
- 117 *Lotus Sūtra* (*Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經), “Prophecy of Enlightenment for Five Hundred disciples,” chapter 8, T 262.9.29a1–25.
- 118 It is said to have been translated by Kumārajīva around 406. But it is likely an apocryphal scripture composed in China. It contains ten central and

- forty-eight secondary precepts for both monastics and laity.
- 119 *Brahmajāla-sūtra* (*Fanwang jing* 梵網經), T484.24.1004b26–29.
- 120 The *Four-Fold Vinaya Rules* (*Sifen lü* [Kor. *Sabunnyul*]) 四分律, Skt. *Dharmagupta-vinaya*), developed by the Indian Dharmagupta school. They became important for the monastic communities in China and Korea.
- 121 The worst kind of offence for monastics, which justifies complete exclusion from the saṅgha.
- 122 Young monastics who receive ten precepts before taking their full ordination.
- 123 The seven ancient buddhas: Vipaśyin, Śikhin, Viśvabhū, Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, Kāśyapa, and Śākyamuni.
- 124 The Hwaeom school systemized Buddhist teaching by dividing them into three categories: gradual, sudden, and perfect teachings and placed the Hwaeom teachings in the category of perfect teachings.
- 125 The Tiantai school systematized Buddhist teachings into the five periods: the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, Ágamas, Vaipulya, Prajñāpāramitā sūtras, and the *Lotus Sūtra*, being the highest teachings.
- 126 The five thousand disciples refused hearing the Mahāyāna scripture, so that the Buddha had to teach the easier teachings of Ágamas, the Vaipulya sūtra.
- 127 The legendary long-living tree mentioned in “Wandering Beyond,” of the *Zhuangzi*.
- 128 An adept mentioned in *ibid*. He was said to live for 800 years.
- 129 They are known for their persuasive eloquence: Su Qin was prime minister of six states during the Warring States period, and Zhang Yi was prime minister of Qin during the same period.
- 130 Reference to the poem, “There is a dead deer in the wild,” chapter 2 of the *Classic of Odes*. In the poem, a male lover tries to show his love to a girl by showing her a dead deer.
- 131 Reference to the poem, “Holding up the Lower Garments,” chapter 7 in *ibid*. In the poem, a woman confesses her willingness to cross the river to meet her lover.
- 132 It is unclear whose name has been transliterated into Chinese characters—it reads as Suoma in Chinese.
- 133 These names of bachelors are taken from Liang Qichao’s 1899 essay, entitled “Great people who did not marry” (*Buhunzhi weijen*), *Yinbingshi heji*, *Zhuanji*, 1:2, 87–88.
- 134 See *Chang abhan jing* 長阿含經 (Skt. *Dirghāgama-sūtra*), T 1.1.1c20. Vipaśyin is the first of the seven buddhas of antiquity. The seven buddhas

- include the Śākyamuni and six buddhas preceded him.
- 135 Bigan was a close relative of King Zhou of the Shang dynasty. He was killed by the vicious king because he remonstrated with the king against his misgovernment.
- 136 Ji Zi was royal tutor at the court of King Zhou of Shang. He survived by pretending that he was insane.
- 137 Zhi Bo monopolized land and power as the head of a powerful family in the state of Jin in the Spring and Autumn period (late fourth century BCE). He was killed by a coalition of other Jin aristocratic families, headed by Zhao Xiangzi.
- 138 Cao Cao, the ruler of the northern Wei state, was defeated by Zhou Yu, the general of the southern state of Wu at the Battle of Chibi (208 CE).
- 139 The Consultative Committee (Kor. Jungchuwon 中樞院). This committee consisted of fifty counsellors appointed by the Korean cabinet in 1895. In 1905, the counsellors were reduced to fifteen; during the Japanese occupation it became ceremonial.
- 140 Gim Yunsik (1835–1922) was the minister of Foreign Affairs in the pro-Japanese reformist government of 1894–1896. Because of his cooperative stance with the Japanese colonization of Korea, he received the title of viscount and the ceremonial position of chairman of the Consultative Committee.
- 141 Korea became a protectorate of Japan in 1905. The Japanese Foreign Office assumed full authority over all aspects of Korea's relations with foreign countries. The Japanese resident-general took charge of Korea's foreign relations, being directly under the Korean emperor.
- 142 Terauchi Masatake (1852–1919) was appointed as Resident-General to Korea and the first governor-general after Korea was annexed to Japan in August 1910. He was notorious for his policies of severe repression during the first years of colonial rule.
- 143 The small states of Yu and Rui had a dispute over a border field but yielded the field to each other after being moved by the moral virtues of King Wen of Zhou.
- 144 One *jun* equals thirty *jin*, one *jin* is 600 grams. A thousand *jun* is equal to almost 39,700 lbs.
- 145 Chu and Yue were rival states during the Spring and Autumn period (771–473 BCE) and the Warring States period (473–221 BCE).
- 146 This is in reference to a piece written in 1900 entitled “Scold the Idle Spectators” (He pangguanzhe wen), *Yinbingshi heji*, *Wenji*, 1:5, 69–75.
- 147 This is in reference to the Chinese saying, “When lips are gone, the teeth

- feel cold.” It shows the interdependence of the two.
- 148 This is in reference to the Chinese saying, “The fox mourns the death of a rabbit.” It shows the interdependence of similar beings.
- 149 According to this view, no rebirth ensues after people die.
- 150 This is in reference to Wang Bo’s (649–676) poem “the Preface to the Poetry Collection of the Tengwang Pavilion.” The poem tells a story of an unexpected stroke of good luck. He was late for a banquet held at the Tengwang Pavilion when a sudden wind blew and pushed his boat to the pavilion in time for the banquet.
- 151 It refers to a stele located at the Jianfu Temple in Xian. A poor fellow made his living by making rubbings of the stele, but a bolt of lightning smashed it into pieces. This story has come to symbolize fated bad luck. Both the stories of Wang Bo and the Jianfu Temple stele come directly from *Myeongsim bogam* (1454), “On Following Destiny,” chapter 3.
- 152 This means that doing things without the thought of doing (not being attached to the actions). It refers to bodhisattvas’ unattached, selfless enlightened mind: The *Jingang bore boluomi jing* 金剛般若波羅密經 (*Diamond Sūtra*), T235.8.749c23.
- 153 “The tree of swords” is a hell in which a forest is made of swords, and “the Mountain of Swords” is a hell in which mountains are made of swords.
- 154 In other words, is anything left after our death, or does our soul continues to exist forever even after the death.
- 155 This is in reference to the story of Zhuangzi’s dream about being a butterfly (*Zhuangzi*, “The Adjustment of Controversies” [Qiwulun 齊物論], chapter 2). Zhuangzi dreamt that he was a butterfly. After he awaked, however, he does not know whether he was then a man dreaming he was a butterfly, or whether he is now a butterfly, dreaming he is a man.
- 156 The crowing of the rooster refers to his plea for awakening and reformation. This phrase is borrowed from the poem “A Rooster Crows” from *Classic of Odes*, chapter 8.

REFORM PROPOSALS FOR KOREAN BUDDHISM (JOSEON BULGYO UI GAEHYEOGAN)

Han Yongu

Introduction

1. Establishing a Central Organization
 2. Reorganizing Temples
 3. Guaranteeing the Financial Security of the Buddhist Cleric
 4. Translating Buddhist Scriptures and Treatises
 5. Practicing Buddhism for the Populace
 6. Promoting Meditation and Doctrinal Teachings

Conclusion

Introduction

We now have to face the urgent historical task of reforming Korean Buddhism rather than continuing our vain theoretical discussions. The stubborn mountain monks still do not understand the current of the times. While some conservative Buddhist clerics falsely believe they understand contemporary trends, they are desperately defending gradual reformation with their conventional minds, understanding only the immediate advantages. The grievances of young Buddhist clerics, however, have been piled up high like an artillery battery, and the changing world is like tumultuous crashing waves. Therefore, we must realize that the reform movement of Korean Buddhism will explode in many possible forms.

What contributions have 1,500 long years of Korean Buddhism made to Korean culture? In short, it is almost impossible to speak of Korean culture without referring to Buddhism, which has influenced Korean architecture, painting, sculpture, and literature. In addition, among all kinds of national customs, language, and place names (i.e., mountains, rivers, villages), there is hardly anything that has not been influenced by Buddhism.

The great thinkers of Korea worthy of the world's recognition include such eminent monks as Wonhyo, Uisang, Uicheon, Bojo Jinul, Seosan Hyujeong, and Samyeong Yujeong.¹ Among Korea's significant cultural legacy are works related to Buddhism that have attained a level that matches the world's greatest works: the printing blocks of the Goryeo Tripitaka housed at Haeinsa Temple,² the art works at the Seokguram Grotto at Bulguksa Temple,³ the [Korean vernacular] Han'geul Buddhist printing blocks, and Buddhist paintings and architecture.

After the introduction of Buddhism to the Korean Peninsula, Buddhism reached its peak during the Silla (57 BCE–935 CE) and Goryeo (918–1392) dynasties during which Buddhism penetrated into all spheres of society as there was very little indigenous culture, and the import of Chinese culture was also sparse. The Korean Peninsula and its civilization, therefore, has been thoroughly influenced by Buddhism whether consciously or unconsciously. Buddhism has been passed down from generation to generation, so that the peninsula and its culture, and even its spiritual world including religious faith, were rooted in Buddhism. For example, even for an ostensibly non-religious person, his religious tendency would be Buddhist; and even for those who have been converted to a different religion, the root of their faith, I bet, would have come from Buddhist heritage and practices.

Therefore, Buddhism cannot be separated from Korea and its people's lives; and to change anew the mental attitudes and life style of the Korean people, Buddhism, which has a historical leadership role for the Korean people, has to be reformed first. In other words, I am sure that the reform of Buddhism should precede the exploration of a new world for the psychology and livelihood of the Korean people because Buddhism has functioned as a midwife for the people in the metaphysical world.

What has become of Korean Buddhism now? Upon seeing all of the internal conditions of Korean Buddhism and Korea's political circumstances, it appears that Korean Buddhism is now facing a dire crisis. This is because Buddhism, which had enjoyed a period of brilliant splendor during the Silla dynasty, became the object of severe oppression, especially in the latter part of the Joseon dynasty (1392–1910).⁴ It became corrupted and decayed; those Buddhist practices that barely survived are superstitious in nature. There were a handful of eminent monks and scholiasts, but they were very rare.

In recent years a new group of people who, by making apt observations of the developments of the time and being critical of things, have argued for the reformation of Buddhism. Those who

are in charge of temple administration, however, are either of the old generation, with no knowledge of contemporary society, or they are mediocre people who are conventional and opportunistic. Among the abbots of the main temples (*bonsan*), there are still those who would flatter the government officials and impede the reform movement with their malicious and cowardly behavior. While these people are in decline in their numbers, they have not yet completely disappeared.

Korea faces an abnormal situation [colonization] and moreover is under the control of the Temple Ordinance (Sachallyeong). The anti-religious behavior of communists becomes stronger each day both in their ideology and action. Other developments, such as materialism, anarchism, nihilism, have overwhelmed us as if engulfed by mountains or steep hills.

In facing such crises, how can Korean Buddhism survive without internal or external conditions that are advantageous to us?

1. Establishing a Central Organization

For both religious organizations and non-religious organizations alike, they must have a sense of unity for their collective operation. This is because they should make progress in an orderly manner with a consistent leadership and programs for a code of conduct. Group operations are similar to a person's life. In an individual life, one is led by mind consciousness, so that the five senses and the four limbs carry out their functions without confusion. If mind consciousness loses its unitary functions, it would not be possible to maintain the order of conduct as a complete human being by harming the left hand with the right hand and disturbing hearing with eyesight. Likewise, if group actions are not coordinated in a unified way, collective meaning cannot be established. How would it then be possible to attain the desired goal?

It is obvious that Korean Buddhist temples have traditionally operated individually without any relationship to other temples. Recently, supposedly unified central organs, such as the Central Council (Jonghoe) and the Office for Religious Affairs (Gyomuwon), impede the collective business of the sangha, although they are just nominal institutions without any real functions as central organs.

In a word, the reason for this failure is that Buddhist clerics lack a grasp of reality. However, even when their perception is sufficiently sharp, if those organizations cannot perform their functions well, it will be difficult to achieve any collective goals. The central organizations of Korean Buddhism do not have enough power to lead the current thirty-one main temples, and the vague general bylaws of the main temples are only dead letters. Then, to what does wielding real power over the thirty-one main temples refer? It

is really simple; a central organization should appoint the abbots of the thirty-one main temples and unify the temple laws⁵ to ensure the abbots follow the orders of the central organization. These simple actions should be sufficient.

Since the enactment of the Temple Ordinance, these base folks, however, have regarded the appointment and dismissal of abbots by the [Japanese colonial] government an ultimate honor and thus bend their knees to the government and strain to keep their abbotships by flattering government officials. And they would oppose to the death the appointment and dismissal of abbots by the Korean saṅgha because they believe that the appointment/dismissal is abnormal and fearful.

Those who feel such fear are the ones who want to keep their status by collaborating with the Japanese regime; and these folks are surely the people of immorality. If our own Buddhist organization could appoint the abbots, it would appoint righteous people; therefore, those immoral ones among the current abbots would certainly be brought to ruin, and it is why their malign opposition is contemptible and even pitiful.

Given that slivers of clouds cannot blot out the sun and the lingering snow cannot prevent the coming of a bright spring, how can the abominable men of small character block the future brightness of proud Korean Buddhism?

Surely it is natural that religious groups should be able to appoint their leaders as they see fit. Why is it not right for a Buddhist group to establish its own unified central organization that can appoint all its temple abbots, lead, and coordinate all its related collective affairs?

There are two ways to operate the central organs; one is by establishing a headquarters for the main temples (*chongbongsan*) and the other is an office for religious affairs (*gyomuso*). The headquaters could be selected from either the existing main temples or other temples and then be designated as the central headquarters above all main temples; it can, therefore, autonomously unify the saṅgha by appointing all abbots and controlling all the administrative affairs of

the saṅgha. For the office for religious affairs, it should be an organ separate from the extant main temples and represent the whole saṅgha; and it should appoint abbots and perform all the affairs of the saṅgha by providing leadership to the Buddhist clerics.

These two central organizations look different from one another, but they are not different in their roles of uniting the saṅgha. Given the current circumstances of Korean Buddhism, it would be convenient to maintain the present main temple system and establish a separate organ like the office for religious affairs to ease the minds of Buddhist clerics.

No matter what kind of central organizations we can establish, what is at stake is that the central organ should have the power of appointing/dismissing abbots and that temple laws should be revised so that all clerics abide by the orders of the highest organization.

2. Reorganizing Temples

During the Silla and Goryeo dynasties, when Buddhism flourished, the majority of temples were located in towns and villages. Since the middle period of the Joseon dynasty, when Confucianism began to dominate, Buddhism was oppressed politically and socially. Buddhism thus gradually weakened and fell into a terrible predicament, so that temples had no options left except to leave the populated urban areas and shelter themselves deep in the mountains; temples in towns and villages had all been damaged and ruined, and the numbers of clerics were severely reduced. The remaining Buddhist clerics were forced out of society and had to live in seclusion at mountain temples. The sangha and the general public were completely separated as the clerics hid in distant remote mountains.

For a long time, even Buddhists themselves have believed that temples should be located only deep in the mountains, and people have misunderstood, believing that Buddhist teachings have nothing to do with people's lives. Even now there are still a great number of people among both Buddhists and non-Buddhists who think it odd or against Buddhist principles when they see Buddhist clerics engage in propagating in cities or they see Buddhist organizations involved in charitable social work.

It is fine to keep some Buddhists cloistered in quiet and uncontaminated mountains because those mountain temples, being away from the world, are needed as places to cultivate the mind. However, it would be nothing but the work of wicked anti-Buddhists if people forced all Buddhist temples to locate in remote places and thus had them defy the essential teachings of Buddhism,

which should be to redeem sentient beings and benefit things.

Buddhist temples had thus moved from high peaks to the mountain top, and from secluded valleys to the wild; their sites had thus reached the bitter end. Temples were shrunk repeatedly from large temples to small temples, to hermitages, then to caves; and they eventually became the turf for those inferior and defeated people.

What is the current situation of those surviving, lonely hermitages? Most of them have no monetary income, and those located near big temples are all vacant. The other temples, which have substantial source of income, usually have abbots who are neither monks nor lay people;⁶ the temple income supports only their private lives.

Buddhism remains only in the Buddhist statues and ritual instruments, which had been buried and ruined by the winds and rains under the ground of the surviving temples and hermitages. These temples and hermitages exist not for developing Buddhism but for maintaining the private lives of those pessimist clerics. They are thus unnecessary for the advancement of Buddhism, becoming instead an impediment to the unification of Buddhism and a target of criticism by the general public. Therefore, there is no reason whatsoever for keeping those temples.

No matter how small these isolated hermitages or ruined temples may be, the total sum of their assets, including the ground plot, forest, temple lands, and buildings, could be very substantial. Thus, it is not hard to estimate the entire assets of Korean Buddhism; if the assets were put together, they could reach a huge sum.

We should close all these temples and the hermitages scattered sparsely deep in the mountains because they offer no use for the improvement of Buddhism; they are not fitting as sites for cultivating the mind. In addition, there should be no problem merging temples and hermitages based on their geographic features and other valid reasons. Isn't it necessary then to collect those unused assets and use them properly for Buddhism?

If we continue to neglect these useless temples and hermitages

and maintain the current situation, we will first waste all the previous faithful generations' donations and end up having Buddhist clerics create negative karma by encouraging individual, pessimistic lifestyles. Second, we may lose those financial resources, which should be used for the development of Buddhism. It would thus be greatly beneficial if we were to initiate the closing and merging of temples and hermitages.

3. Guaranteeing the Financial Security of the Buddhist Clerics

The financial security of the clerics may be too vague to pin down because its scope is too broad; it is also certainly impossible to guarantee the financial security of all clerics. We are facing, however, a world where we need to provide financial security as much as possible to clerics in order to expand the religion. The world has embarked on a rush to materialism, so that the financial survival among all other issues of human society reigns supreme.

Whether the ideology of materialism is right or wrong is separate problem. It is true that the majority of the populace regards financial security as being fundamental for human life and understands materialism from the same point of view. It should not be what religion is about if religion would focus only on spiritualism or theism and try not to overwhelm the populace who struggle in the battle of life. Religion's essential meaning is to lead people to enhance their sense of happiness.

Buddhism should use different skillful means (Skt. *upāya*) for salvation according to the time, place, and faculties of people.⁷ When the Śākyamuni Buddha first gave his dharma talk on Mahayāna Buddhism and saw five thousand people leave their seats, he changed the talk to the teachings of the three vehicles.⁸ At the Deer Park, the Buddha gave lectures on both Mahayāna and Hīnayāna scriptures, taught the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* at the Nairanjana river bank,⁹ gave a talk on Brahmanism to brahmans, and taught non-Buddhist teachings to non-Buddhists. He utilized skillful means in accordance with the time, place, and faculties of people.

The core doctrines, however, do not change according to

the different trends of the time; it is only the skillful means that, responding to the wishes of the contemporary populace, should be adjusted. Because the populace aspires for financial security, if religion neglects the financial aspect of people and focuses just on propagating its own teachings, this means that religion turns against the social reality of people and tries to build its own imaginary heavenly kingdom. It should not be this way for a great religion [like Buddhism], which emphatically aims to edify all sentient beings.

We should convert the temples' fixed assets to liquid funds, merge all the various temples' assets, and have the central organization manage those assets by establishing manufacturing businesses and consumption enterprises (i.e., education, culture enterprises), from which clerics will receive financial benefits directly or indirectly. This financial engagement will lead to a great result. Although we could collect a very substantial sum by merging and gathering all the temple assets, utilizing those assets cannot completely guarantee the financial security of all the clerics.

A bottle of wine, however, cannot turn the river red, but it is able to move the minds of the three armies.¹⁰ Similarly, the Buddhist affairs can reflect the demands of clerics so that the Buddhists would welcome and gather around the new attempt. The execution of even one thing would be better than ten empty talks. As we did in the past, if we pray for the repose of both deceased lay people and major alms givers, conduct various Buddhist affairs to take donations from lay participants, or disregard extreme poverty among lay people, we are betraying the original meaning of Buddhism, that is, the salvation of sentient beings.

Moreover, what can we do about the desperate anti-religious movement of the communist proletarian masses who strive to live while observing myriad deaths in the battle of life? Or how on earth is it possible for those people who are on the brink of the destruction of their livelihood, seeking death as a way out of their horrible situation, yet unable even to end their lives, to come to the Buddha's hall, burn incense, and recite the Buddhist scriptures? Or how is

it possible for the leading young clerics to be active under such circumstances? Even now, we frequently witness that many intellectual young clerical leaders cannot support themselves financially, and they wander the crossroad of neither monk nor lay person. Therefore, the financial security of clerics could move forward the active propagation of Buddhism.

4. Translating Buddhist Scriptures and Treatises

Languages and letters are significant because they help people notice and understand the intentions and thoughts of others, and therein lies their necessity and value. Although foreign languages and letters look similar in meaning and shape, people cannot use them among themselves.

Modern people cannot understand ancient languages and letters, which have gone through many different changes. Even the same languages and letters can be disseminated quickly or slowly depending on whether they are composed easily or with difficulty.

The entirety of Buddhist scriptures is called the Tripitaka (Kor. *daejanggyeong*), which consists of too many volumes and is written in classical Chinese. Thus, even during ancient times when Chinese was the main medium of written communication, Buddhist scriptures were not well disseminated among ordinary people. And how about promoting Buddhist scriptures, which are difficult to read and learn, in this current era when people do not respect Chinese letters or even raise their voices to proscribe Chinese letters? This task of propagating Buddhism among the general public is thus almost impossible.

There are two direct methods of propagation—with speech or with writing. Using languages—that is, preaching is effective only temporarily when people gather at specific places; for propagation to have permanent and universal effect it has to be carried out only with letters. This is why to spread their teachings all religions attempt to interpret their doctrines with the simplest letters for the populace.

Buddhism has voluminous and enormous scriptures, the Tripitaka of eighty thousand volumes, but only a handful of

professionals can understand the scriptures mainly because they are written in difficult Chinese and have been kept in deep and remote temples without being printed and circulated to the people.

At the present time, in order to promote Buddhism, we have to translate the scriptures into Korean (Hangeul) or mixed letters of pure Korean and Chinese; and we also need to pursue editing and selecting them and composing new writings. Translation means both literal and liberal translations, and editing/selecting means to select appropriate Buddhist scriptures and other Buddhist writings and to edit/rearrange them. Composing new writings means to write original works.

In terms of translation, in Korea it is still too premature to translate the whole corpus of the *Tripiṭaka*. The first thing to do is to select scriptures that are relatively simple and clear in content and that are suitable for propagation to the populace and then to translate those scriptures with simple words; or we need to select sacred phrases or great passages from scriptures and translate them for pamphlets or books.

There are many ways to create new writings, of course, but it is most urgent to point out those aspects of Buddhism that are relevant to the current situation and to inform the populace that Buddhism has all possible suitable means of saving sentient beings in its vast and deep teachings.

The implementation of these tasks requires a huge expense, and the central organization of the saṅgha should pay for it; such expenditures should be the first priority among other expenses on the spending list. No other matter is more urgent for Korean Buddhism than disseminating the Buddhist teachings through print; doing something other than spreading Buddhism through printed matter is like abandoning the root and taking up the branches.

5. Practicing Buddhism for the Populace

The intended audience of Buddhism is, of course, all sentient beings. The phrases “All sentient beings have the Buddha-nature” and “All sentient and insentient beings can achieve the Buddhahood” epitomize Buddhist ideals, and as such Buddhism belongs to all beings. It is not just the Buddhism of temples deep in the mountains, nor is it only the Buddhism of monastics who keep the precepts and practice meditation.

A butcher called “Broad-Forehead,” who killed an innumerable number of cows, attained Buddhahood immediately,¹¹ and the daughter of the dragon king, although she is an animal being, achieved enlightenment in an instant.¹² Thus, there is no discrimination in attaining the Buddhahood whatsoever. That is not to say that Buddhism is not an other-worldly religion; it is just to say that Buddhism transcends the world by mingling with the world rather than leaving the world. It is like lotus flowers that grow in muddy water yet are not soiled by the water. For Buddhism encourages entering muddy water to save the world rather than living a life of an isolated pessimist.

The fact that Korean Buddhism has become the Buddhism of temples or of monastics is due to historical changes and social circumstances, which is a temporary phenomenon of historical decline, not the real face of Buddhism. Buddhists thus have to break away from such a phenomenon; therefore, such phrases as “from the mountains to the streets,” and “from monastics to the populace,” should be the “slogans” of current Korean Buddhism.

To save all sentient beings, great-minded bodhisattvas vowed to postpone enlightenment; they thus enter hells to rescue beings there, enter the world of hungry ghosts to save them, willingly fall in the

burning house of the ocean of suffering to save all beings, and are voluntarily subjected to the cycle of death and birth.¹³ How are such actions not admirable? It is thus that Buddhism cannot be practiced when removed from the populace, and the populace cannot be saved when removed from Buddhism.

Daejung Bulgyo means to practice Buddhism for the populace. Buddhists should neither abandon human society nor deny close and loving relationships with people. They instead attain enlightenment through defilement and achieve nirvāṇa in the midst of the stream of life and death. Being aware of this truth and getting involved in action are the practice of *daejung Bulgyo*.

However, it is not possible with theories only; the practice of *daejung Bulgyo* requires facilities that can carry out Buddhist social education and actions, which refer to the fact that Buddhists themselves reach out to society and make efforts for propagation. With social education facilities, Buddhism should go into the lives of the populace, by providing free Buddhist literary works, which can appeal to the general readers, with pictures and movies for propagation; by flyers and pamphlets for promoting Buddhism; by opening Buddhist libraries, for social aid programs for farmers and laborers; and, by offering other facilities for cultural programs.

To engage in *daejung Bulgyo*, Buddhists themselves have to be the actors in a play. If Buddhists do not have any relationship with the populace, they are nothing but the followers of Hīnayāna Buddhism or non-Buddhists, even if they are mentally focused and receive alms offerings from heavenly beings by leaving the polluted secular world and residing at pure temples among white clouds and flowing water. Buddhist clerics should experience “saving others before attaining enlightenment” and willingly enter the murky water to help people.

In sum, to practice *daejung Bulgyo* Buddhist monastics must destroy old practices of being content with living in quiet mountain caves and instead must advance the happiness of all people by reaching out to them while mastering all the skillful means of buddhas and bodhisattvas.

6. Promoting Meditation and Doctrinal Teachings

We cannot talk about Buddhism apart from Seon and Gyo because Seon/Gyo is Buddhism and Buddhism is Seon/Gyo. Seon refers to Buddhism's metaphysical philosophy while Gyo refers to Buddhist doctrinal teachings. We acquire wisdom from Gyo and meditative concentration from Seon. With the attainment of meditative concentration, we can reach *nirvāṇa* by crossing over the turbulent sea of life and death; and through Gyo we can acquire the wisdom of saving sentient beings. Therefore, Seon and Gyo are like two wings of a bird because neither of them be removed. The prosperity and decline of Buddhism thus influence the vicissitudes of Seon and Gyo.

Throughout the history of Korean Buddhism, Gyo has flourished, and Seon has been relatively weak. Korean Buddhism has produced many high scholiasts who strove to explicate the doctrines and composed a great number of writings. The content of these writings are extremely high quality, and the saṅgha also encouraged and promoted such activity, but these writings, also called exegetics, mainly focused on annotating the scriptures and treatises.

Even now, all the temples nationwide have monastic schools to teach young monastics; yet the education system has not been changed, so that all clerical students waste many years studying those numerous volumes of Buddhist scriptures and treatises written in difficult classical Chinese along with the difficult method of self-learning and self-understanding.

This system of learning would not have posed a problem during the peak time of Buddhism when monastics, with no challenging matters, could spend their time in leisure by leaving behind the polluted secular world. But the secular world became greatly

complicated as the sentient beings of the final dharma period continued transmigrating due to their bad karmas.¹⁴

Our society regards progress as an historical inevitability, and everything is understood in terms of dialectical materialism. Therefore, the ideological fight against the denial of religions and anti-religious movements in our society has become a formidable obstacle for the development of Buddhism. In addition, religions began attacking one another from their own point of view in which all other religions were wrong while they were right. Other religions tried to advance their own doctrines by criticizing the weak points of Buddhism. The environment is in such a state that everything creates a crisis for Buddhism. Under such circumstances, we should reform the methods of education for clerics and produce greater results than before.

To reform Buddhist professional education, we should compile textbooks to learn Buddhism efficiently and change teaching methods to be on par with those of public schools in order to save time and effort for learning and researching; these changes should make education easy and effectively widespread.

For Seon Buddhism, from the Silla and Goryeo dynasties to the present time, there have been more than a few eminent Seon scholars, but not many instances of such scholarship that the Buddhist world would support or popularize. Consequently, little systematic literature was produced. During the Joseon dynasty, Seon further shrunk so that no one would recognize its existence.

In the last several decades as the popularity of Seon has somewhat grown, temples have intentionally supported Seon, and the number of Seon scholars has increased. But Seon's guiding principles and its teaching methods were not uniformly controlled, and the normative atmosphere of Seon practitioners became unruly.

Some may argue that logical systematic words and letters or theories are not that important for Seon because it is transmitted separately from doctrinal teachings. Seon is transmitted from mind to mind. Moreover, Seon advocates "standing alone without

restraining, leaping once and for all, and entering immediately," so that any regulations would be as unnecessary as feet on a snake. Yet, to train a group collectively, we should have instructional theories and concrete regulations to guide members.

In summary, for Gyo teachings we need to compile textbooks and reform teaching methods; and for Seon we need to unify teaching concepts and complete a regulatory system that would be available for teaching and disseminating doctrines. We should establish monastic schools and meditation halls at proper locations in the peninsula and let the central organization, Administrative Headquarters (Chongmuwon), operate and control them. This is the way to unify the system and to promote Gyo and Seon.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I argued for the reform of Korean Buddhism through the application of the seven items above. But these suggestions are preliminary in light of the current situation of Korean Buddhism; they surely are not fundamental reform ideas. The implementation of these ideas is neither impossible nor easy; it depends entirely on the extent to which Buddhists are awakening to such ideas.

Notes

* Han Yongun, *Han Yongun jeonjip*, 2:160–169; *Bulgyo* 88 (1931): 2–10. Han first published the *Treatise on the Restoration of Korean Buddhism* (*Joseon Bulgyo yusinnon*) in 1913 and expanded his reform ideas further in this article, written in 1931

1 Wonhyo (617–686) was the most influential thinker and writer in Silla. He systematized different doctrinal schools of Buddhism under the rubric of one mind. Among his 119 works of 260 volumes, his commentary on the *Awakening of Faith* is one of the three great commentaries on that treatise, and his commentary on the *Adamantine Absorption Scripture* was elevated to the status of treatise. Uisang (625–702) was the founder of the Flower Garland school (Hwaeomjong), which became the most influential school in Silla. His “Diagram of the *dharma* According to the One Vehicle,” which consists of 210 letters, epitomizes the essence of Hwaeom teachings. Uicheon (1055–1101) founded the Cheontae school in Goryeo to harmonize the meditation and doctrinal schools. He compiled the *New Catalogue of Buddhist Sectarian Writings* (*Sinpyeon jejong gyojang chongnok* 新編諸宗教藏總錄) by collecting all extant copies of Buddhist scriptures. Jinul (1158–1212) revitalized Buddhism by reconciling meditation and doctrinal Buddhism. He showed the compatibility of Hwaeom and Seon in the idea of sudden awakening and gradual cultivation and developed an eclectic approach toward meditation practice. He created a religious society called the “Compact of the *Samādhi* and *Prajñā*” in 1190 and Suseonsa (later Songgwangsa) in 1205. Seosan Hyujeong (1520–1604) is regarded as the greatest Seon master of the Joseon dynasty. During the 1592 Japanese invasion, he organized a militia of monks to protect the nation. He compiled *Mirror for Meditation Practitioners* (*Seon'ga guigam* 禪家龜鑑) and *Secrets of Meditation and Doctrine* (*Seon Gyo gyeol* 禪教訣). He tried to harmonize meditation and doctrine in order to revitalize Buddhism. Samyeong Yujeong (1544–1610) was Seosan's main disciple. He led a militia of Buddhist monks together with Seosan during the Japanese invasion and served as a royal envoy to Japan after the war.

2 The extant Goryeo Tripitaka is the second edition of woodblocks carved

between 1236 and 1251. The carving of the first edition began in 1010 and was completed after several decades, but it was destroyed by the Mongol invasions. This Tripitaka consists of about 82,000 wooden printing blocks, which have been kept at Haeinsa since 1398. The repositories on the monastery grounds that house the Tripitaka became a UNESCO world heritage site in 1998. It provided the major basis of reference for the three modern editions of the Chinese-language Buddhist canon published in Japan: *Shukusatsu zōkyō* 縮刷藏經, the *Manji zōkyō* 卍字藏經, and the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經.

- 3 Seokguram is located east of Bulguksa Temple near the peak of Tohamsan Mountain. Built around the eighth century during the Unified Silla dynasty, it is famous for its beautiful statue of a seated Śākyamuni Buddha. UNESCO designated it Korea's first world heritage site in 1995.
- 4 The Joseon dynasty adopted Neo-Confucianism as its state religion and initiated political oppression of Buddhism, which it reinforced throughout the dynasty. With such long-term anti-Buddhist policies, Buddhism suffered institutionally, doctrinally, and socially, losing its influence over the religious, social, and cultural life of the people.
- 5 Based on the Temple Ordinance and detailed regulations, each main temple made its own temple laws (*sabeop*) and sought to have them approved by the governor-general. Eventually though, the temple laws of the thirty temples were the same in content except for their locations, names, founding patriarchs, and founding years. The temple laws established regulations concerning the relationship between main and branch temples and rules about abbots, property, rituals, clerics, proselytization, etc.
- 6 The expression “neither monks nor lay people” refers to those married clerics.
- 7 *Upāya* is a mode of approach, an expedient, stratagem, and device. It means to teach to the capacity of the learner by any method that is appropriate.
- 8 The three vehicles (Skt. *triyāna*) carry living beings across saṃsāra to nirvāṇa. They include śrāvaka (the hearer or disciple), pratyekabuddha (one who seeks enlightenment for himself), and bodhisattva (one who is to become awakened). The *Lotus Sūtra* treats the three vehicles as *upāya* and offers a buddha vehicle as the final vehicle.
- 9 The Nairāṇjanā river flows past Gayā. After six years of practicing an austere lifestyle with five ascetic companions, Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha-to-be, bathed at the river and crossed to Bodhagayā where he attained enlightenment. The Deer Park, where the Buddha gave his first sermon to the five ascetics, is located at Sārnāth, about 130 miles from Bodhagayā.

- 10 The three armies refer to the armies of a feudal lord while the emperor had the six armies.
- 11 *Daban niepan jing* 大般涅槃經 (Skt. *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*), T 374.12.479b. In the state of Varanasi, a butcher called “Broad-Forehead” killed an innumerable number of sheep, yet he received the eight precepts from Śāriputra (who was one of Buddha’s major disciples and was foremost in wisdom), and because of this he was born as the son of the king of the northern heaven after his death.
- 12 *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經 (*Lotus Sūtra*) 12, T 262.9.35bc. The dragon king’s daughter, who was eight years old, earnestly embraced faith in the *Lotus Sūtra* and attained Buddhahood.
- 13 The burning house refers to *samsāra* (the cycle of death and birth), which is full of suffering like a burning house. The world is burning with the fires of old age, sickness, and death. The extent to which the world is so full of suffering is compared to the endless ocean: See the *Miaofa lianhua jing* on “Parable of the Burning House,” T 262.9.12b–13c.
- 14 The last of the three periods following Buddha’s passing consist of the age of the right dharma (the first 500 years during his disciples’ time), the age of semblance dharma (the second 1000 years), and the final day of the dharma (degeneration and extinction of the Buddha dharma).

TREATISE ON THE RENOVATION OF KOREAN BUDDHISM

(JOSEON BULGYO HYEOKSINNONG)*

Yi Yeongjae **

1. The Reformation of Buddhism
2. The Establishment of a Dharma Nation
3. Urgent Tasks

To My Fellow Young Clerics

1. The Reformation of Buddhism

The main-branch temple system implemented under the Temple Ordinance (Sachallyeong) caused the division of the saṅgha, which had been a single but feeble body, into thirty groups.¹ It also triggered disputes among saṅgha members, who had been at least somewhat cooperative, and it made the saṅgha, which had been a typical republic, into a dictatorship of main temple abbots.

Although the motivation for establishing such a system might not have been malicious, given the results of its implementation—that is, the division of the saṅgha, the discord among saṅgha members, and the despotism of the abbots of the main temples—the main-branch temple system cannot be considered a good system.

Even if we concede and admit that the system is rational, the standard used for selecting the thirty main temples is far from clear. Was the selection made according to denomination, location, or administrative district? The selection was not made according to the historical worth of the temples, the properties of the temples, or the numbers of Buddhist clerics in them. It was a decision made arbitrarily by the Japanese regime and a few clerics.

It is especially absurd for the main temples, which were established without transparency, to try to control dozens of branch temples. Attempting to control the whole saṅgha through the main-branch system, which was formed without legitimacy, is also extremely despotic. Moreover, now it is not uncommon to witness the abuses and corruptions of the abbots of the thirty main temples, and it is so difficult to bear that both the saṅgha administration and the regime acquiesce to such behaviors by the abbots.

Even if the [Japanese colonial] regime did not expect such negative

ramifications from the main-branch system when it was enacted, I wonder why the regime is still supporting such an evil system and letting the abuses of the abbots to multiply when everyone has been arguing against the system, pointing out its irrational and dishonest aspects, for more than ten years since its establishment.

The harms inflicted by the main temple abbots backed up by the main-branch temple system have become an open secret, as many honorable clerics and respectable critics have pointed out whenever possible. It is not necessary for me to reiterate the crimes of the abbots. However, I have to write down in no particular order ten major harms inflicted by the abbots. Having examined the problems of the saṅgha, I have to mention the following ten faults of the abbots of the main temples:

1. As the people who are principally responsible for the saṅgha, the abbots have not made an effort to disseminate Buddhist teachings; rather, they took advantage of the Buddha, defamed the dharma, and undermined the saṅgha.
2. Although as leaders of the saṅgha they have to train promising clerics and educate the populace, for over ten years they have done no work to spread Buddhism nor any social work that is worth mentioning.
3. They have made the future of the saṅgha hopeless by sending promising young clerics off to prison or pushing them out into the secular world by defrocking them with charges of resistance or an unwillingness to compromise with the Japanese regime.²
4. They have rallied their own dharma families to form cliques and have revealed their ambitions to monopolize abbotships by oppressing or forcing other clerics out.
5. They were constantly striving to maintain their power, their names and fortunes by bribing those in power and praising the regime; and as a result they neglected their administrative duties for the saṅgha.
6. In dealing with the affairs of the saṅgha, the abbots have

performed arbitrarily, eschewing any cooperation with other Buddhist clerics. In their tyranny they have ignored the rights and dignity of other clerics; they have rejected involving other clerics in any business whether the matter is small, large, good, or bad, while insisting that the rise and fall of Korean Buddhism lies only in their own hands.

7. They have not carried out any work for the last ten years, yet they have consumed all the money they earned by selling crops from temple lands and cutting temple forests to support their wives and children; they have also wasted the sacred properties of the three jewels³ by frequenting the capital, Seoul and other cities with their cliques.
8. As the elders of the saṅgha, they have not abided by the temple laws, have behaved as they please, have broken precepts, and have thought nothing of violating rules; therefore, they have disturbed the morals of the saṅgha and harmed the dignity of Buddhism.
9. By neglecting Buddhist institutional reform, they have not adapted the saṅgha to today's new trends, and they have encouraged the collapse of Buddhism by supporting the irrational main-branch system.
10. They established the Office for Religious Affairs (Gyomuwon) without legitimate grounds and cheated saṅgha members by making the Office for Religious Affairs into a foundation. The abbots have also opposed the Buddhist reform movement, which arose by responding to the demands of the time, and sabotaged the movement in many ways.

This is not to say, however, that all the abbots of the main temples committed the blunders described above. Among the abbots, surprisingly, there are some who are innocent and honest. In addition, I am not merely hurling accusations at those corrupt abbots. What I hate above all else is the main-branch system, which is the source of those abbots' corruption.

1) The Dawning of Buddhist Reforms

Because of aforementioned flaws in the system, Buddhism today has fallen into a pit from which it is difficult to get out. Not only has it lost religious functions and activities but the numbers of Buddhist clerics have shrunk, and temples have fallen into ruin. Therefore, Buddhism has lost its value in society and its very reason for survival as a religion.

Yet Buddhist clerics without principles hate and envy one another, so that they are falling into an abyss of fire and destruction. Although it is the final age of dharma, in the present era is there still room left for the further decline of Buddhism?

When *bi* 否 (blockage) is exhausted, *tae* 泰 (opening) comes into being,⁴ and when decline runs to extremes, there naturally comes a chance to restore Buddhism. Today, Buddhism has reached an extreme end in its decline in terms of doctrine, cultivation, education, and propagation; therefore, if Buddhism makes one false step, it will fall into the land of death, and if it is tilted even a little, it will sink into the sea of destruction.

This is the time for Buddhism to perish, and this is also its time to rise again. In light of *bi*, it is the time for Buddhism to perish; and in light of *tae*, it is the time for Buddhism to revive. Depending on the efforts of Buddhists, Korean Buddhism can either vanish or prosper; this means that time has come for Buddhism to reform itself. Moreover, the modern world demands the established religions go through great reforms.

I think, therefore, that today is the only opportune time for Buddhism to embark on reformation. Among seven thousand clerics, if there are those who have the wisdom to see through a thousand years and ten thousand countries and can find with their diamond-like faith a fountain of reformation from lifeless Buddhism to draw the sweet dew of new life from the fountain, then they are the ones we can call bodhisattvas, incarnate and saviors of the modern era.

2) The Preparation for Reformation

To implement great reforms for Buddhism by fighting off the strict power holders of the saṅgha and breaking down the outmoded traditions, we need suitable preparations. That is, we have to have weapons to achieve such a goal.

What are the weapons that can accomplish the great innovation of Korean Buddhism? Are they cannons or bombs? Or beating drums? No, they are not. The revolution of Buddhism does not need any material arms. For spiritual revolution, only spiritual weapons are necessary.

The fundamental reason for the decline of Buddhism is the loss of right faith, which is the spiritual food for monastic life and the main beam for maintaining the saṅgha. As in the saying, “Those who fall to the ground need to pick themselves up from the ground,”⁵ those who are destroyed by losing the right faith have to restore the right faith to be revived. Therefore, I assert that the weapons for Buddhist reforms are those that recapture the right faith.

At this critical juncture, if Buddhists are awakening to religious faith and willing to risk their lives for Buddhism with the sense of full responsibility, even clutching the trichiliocosm⁶ with two hands and instantly inverting heaven and earth would not be regarded as amazing. What then can the problem be with trifling human emotions and money? And why do we worry about our differences in expression and the resistance of a few abbots? Our saṅgha reforms should be a common affair.

In assuming full responsibility for the saṅgha it should not be overly difficult for us to dedicate our lives and have selfless faith. Everyone has to die once no matter what one does; one can die at war, collapse while governing the nation, or die of famine or sexual indulgence; everyone dies naturally or according to one’s own karma.

If people believed that they had met a natural death when they had died quietly after living only halfheartedly, then they should feel shameful. By dedicating this filthy body to Buddhism, we will

continue the magnificent Buddha's lamp and benefit all beings; this is the work of the second Śākyamuni Buddha—isn't it something that all clerics should vie to do?

If no clerics are awakened to their religious duties and none can risk their lives for the right faith by taking full responsibility for the saṅgha, the reform ideas, although they consist of countless wonderful and rational words and phrases, will be useless and futile.

Therefore, I would not seek bombs or cannons as weapons for Buddhist reformation but rather seek the selfless right faith, which would make Buddhist clerics risk their lives for the reformation. Those who try to reform Korean Buddhism should first prepare themselves with such a right faith and then put themselves on the frontline of the reformation; only then will they be ever-victorious.

3) Overthrowing the Main-Branch Temple System

The main-branch temple system instituted by the Temple Ordinance made the already deteriorated Korean Buddhism fall further into decay; and its ill effects appeared in great numbers, as discussed above. To reform Buddhism, therefore, we should first topple the main-branch system to uproot the abuse of the main temple abbots. But it will be difficult to overthrow the main-branch system and stop the abuses of the abbots overnight because the Temple Ordinance stood behind the main-branch system and the abbots had the backing of the formidable power of the Japanese regime.

In order to overthrow the main-branch system, we should thus embark on the movement of abolishing or revising the Temple Ordinance by arousing domestic and international opinion, stop the abuses of the main temple abbots by uniting the abbots of the branch temples, and begin the institutional reforms by rallying all Buddhist followers.

(1) The Movement to Abolish the Temple Ordinance

It is not entirely difficult to abolish or revise the Temple Ordinance. If we petition to the government concerning the unreasonable nature of the Temple Ordinance and its abuses, arouse public sentiment by disclosing the facts of the Temple Ordinance, or prepare ourselves for self-government by urging our colleagues to self-awareness and demanding revisions to the Temple Ordinance, then the regime, which is trying to implement the cultural policy,⁷ would not necessarily insist on maintaining the outdated, unreasonable laws by ignoring public opinion and the demands of the clerics.

In response to Christian missionaries' complaints in the fall of 1919 to the authorities, the government revised the rules of propagation in April 1920 so that missionaries only needed to report their missionary activities to the authorities instead of getting government permissions for their activities. The government also tried to honor missionaries by removing monetary penalties and revising the regulations for private schools, which had been prohibited from teaching religion, to allow them to teach about religion; it also sought to guarantee the protection of religious properties by granting the establishment of incorporated foundations that had the goal of religious propagation.

Under such circumstances in which the regime tends to change various regulations in accordance with the demands of the new era, it should not be futile if all Buddhists unite and embark on a movement to reform the Temple Ordinance.

I am not merely criticizing the temporizing attitude of the regime, which pathetically attempts to maintain the outdated Temple Ordinance. The abbots of the thirty main temples are the ones responsible for maintaining the Temple Ordinance. In addition, it would be the government's naive imaginary worries that Korean Buddhist clerics are not awakened fully enough to engage in self-government.

Therefore, although today all of the laws and regulations relating

to religion that were enacted during the first governor-general [1910–1916] Terauchi Masatake's rule are undergoing change, there are still no attempts to reform the Temple Ordinance. The responsibility cannot be entirely pinned on the government; it also results from Korean clerics' lack of self-awakening and their activities. If we did our best in launching a campaign against the Temple Ordinance at this time, the regime would surely revise the ordinance and all temple regulations. It is thus absolutely necessary for us to embark on the movement against the Temple Ordinance on top of other Buddhist reform activities.

We have to be cautious about our attitudes toward the government; it would not be a good strategy to protest the government all the time. If possible, we need to compromise and resolve our issues faithfully.

(2) Solidarity among the Abbots of the Branch Temples

While campaigning against the Temple Ordinance, we need stop the abuses of the main temple abbots by uniting the abbots of the branch temples and restoring their stolen rights. Although abuses of the main temple abbots began with the Temple Ordinance, they were aggravated by the ignorance of the branch temple abbots. Seen from past examples, the abbots and clerics of the branch temples could not exercise their rights specified in the temple laws and became the slaves of the main temple abbots by fearfully following their orders without distinguishing right from wrong.

Some bad main temple abbots thus took advantage of those clerics and became despotic. Like the saying, “raccoons act like tigers in the village where tigers disappear”; they ignore both the temple laws and vinaya rules,⁸ appoint branch temple abbots arbitrarily, and squander the properties of the main and branch temples; they use the public properties of the saṅgha as though they were theirs and regard the abbot positions as something to be inherited for posterity. They try to continue their power by supporting the outdated main-branch

system.

I feel pity toward those abbots who do not know the trend of the time and the light of truth, but both heaven and human beings cannot forgive their crimes of harming Buddhism, squandering Buddhist properties, and obstructing the reformation of the Buddhist system.

All the abbots of the main and branch temples should thus act in unison to punish the abbots for their abuses and focus on disseminating the right dharma; they should also cooperate to abolish the main-branch system, reform the saṅgha, and create a new life for Buddhism.

One more thing to pay special attention to is that we need to keep a close watch on the abuses of the abbots of the head branch temples in addition to those of the main temple abbots. During the summer of this year [1922], I went back to Korea and visited various places, including Sabulsan Mountain.⁹ I also discovered the abuses of the abbots of the head branch temples; this is the transplantation of the despots, not overthrowing them. This is not what we need for our saṅgha; we need to build a democratic republic system instead of an absolute monarchy, immediately, without going through an aristocratic interim government.

(3) The Solidarity of Buddhists

While launching the movement to alter or abolish the Temple Ordinance, all Buddhist have to work together and all branch temple abbots must unite. The reformation of Buddhism cannot be left to the main temple abbots nor entrusted only to the abbots of the branch temples.

This era of *minjung* (the populace) requires two major weapons for entrepreneurs, that is, the propagation of principles and the formation of general opinion. For conducting the great business of Buddhism, we should not depend on just a select few people, including abbots. We should gather ideas from all clerics and lay

people and decide everything based on public opinion; and we should promote the spirit of reformation by advertising our beliefs in and out of the saṅgha and stirring up the general opinion of society; and following public opinion we can eventually do our best for the reformation.

The reformation of Korean Buddhism is not something that a particular rank of people, a group, or one or two people can do on their own; to attain a great result, all Buddhist followers have to put their minds together and devote themselves to the reformation.

2. The Establishment of a Dharma Nation

I emphasized the destruction of the old system above and will write about the construction of a new system. Nobody will be opposed to the fact that our old system should be destroyed; those who might think otherwise must be followers of evil people like Mr. So-and-so.¹⁰

People, however, will differ in their opinion on how to build a new system; someone may suggest a system of the head master, a council of senior members, or a union system. Regarding the merits and shortcomings of these various systems, last spring I wrote in this newspaper an article titled, "On the Buddhist Constitution";¹¹ I thus need not mention them again. In addition, I do not think that we can adopt those existing systems without revisions because they have both good and bad aspects.

There is no such thing as completely perfect human affairs, is there? When reforming an old system and looking for a new one, we should seek as safe a system as we possibly can. In order to overthrow our old system and establish a new one, I think that we should build a kingdom of truth based on the new system of the nation-state.

1) The Kingdom of Truth

Both the nation-state and religion are parts of human life; the nation-state tries to secure the stability and wellbeing of people who are living within its territories; religions try to promote spiritual peace and enlightenment. For the nation-state, governing people through its administration is its highest goal, while religions regard saving people with spiritual teachings as the highest ideal. The scope

of the nation-state's goal is merely narrower than religion's goal; it would thus be appropriate for religions to imitate the most developed system of the nation-state for their administration.

The idea of the kingdom of truth is my own creation. In terms of Buddhism, our founder, the Śākyamuni Buddha already established the kingdom of truth at the Deer Park 3,000 years ago.¹² The first turning of the dharma-wheel (*chojeon beomryun*)¹³ is the literal translation of the Chinese term for "wheel treasure" (*lunbao*).¹⁴

The original word for *chojeon beomryun* (Skt. *dharmacakrapravartana*), means, however, the establishment of the kingdom of truth. *Dharma* is the laws that refer to truth; *cakra* means a kingdom, and *pravartana* means to build. Western scholars thus translate "*dharmacakrapravartana*" as the establishment of the kingdom of truth.

What I mean by building the kingdom of truth is neither my own arbitrary opinion nor an imitation of the kingdom of God in Christianity. My idea of building the new kingdom of truth by overthrowing an old system is based on Buddhist teachings and in accordance with the new era. I will summarize below the ideas for the establishment of the kingdom.

2) Ratification of the Saṅgha Constitution

All developed nation-states promulgate constitutions to establish the sovereignty, duties, and rights of people, and the general rules for administration, legislation, and jurisprudence; the nation will thus be governed legitimately. Similarly, to realistically govern the saṅgha, the Buddhist kingdom of truth should also ratify a constitution to establish its ecclesiastical authority, the duties and rights of clerics, and regulations for administration, legislation, and jurisprudence.

Previously, the Buddhist Reform Association (Bulgyo yusinhoe) attempted to put in place a saṅgha constitution by forming the Constitution Establishment Committee;¹⁵ I sincerely applauded such an attempt and wrote my opinions on the establishment of the

constitution. But unfortunately it is so regrettable for the saṅgha that this attempt was aborted without ever being actualized.

3) Religious Identity of the Saṅgha

Nation-states have both a political system and a system of government so that they have their own sovereignty and the function of government; similarly, the kingdom of truth also needs to establish principal icons of worship, principal sūtras, practices, and rituals.

(1) Integration of Principal Icons

It would be a major weak point for us in light of our religious identity and the unification of the saṅgha if we had no coherent system for disseminating doctrines because the principal icon of worship was not clearly defined. This does not mean, however, that we should destroy all competing images in the name of worshiping a principal idol. Buddhist images are symbols that are the expressions of the earnest desire of people with deep religious faith. It is natural for people to have faith in what they worship and to express their faith in material forms.

It would be a corruption of faith to materialize and formalize its spiritual aspects, but human beings cannot survive only through the spiritual lives of their souls. They also have to lead a material, formalized life with their bodies. Inevitably they express the objects of their religious worship in material forms; furthermore, such material forms seem much more natural when we observe the personification of gods and buddhas.

Every religion has symbols; the objects of religious worship are symbolized in various forms including in language and material forms. Some people recite the names of gods and buddhas, and others recite the titles of scriptures or express the forms of gods and buddhas in sculptures and paintings.

These actions are not without reason. Jesus of Nazareth became “Logos” and “Christ.” Gautama Siddhartha became the Buddha, dharma, and saṅgha.¹⁶ It is necessary for the religious psychology of people to regard as sacred the robes and bowls of the Buddha, the daily instruments used by the Buddha, those places that the Buddha stayed, the phrases of scriptures or even the cross, which was used for the rack; for the same reason atheistic Buddhism has numerous icons and paintings of buddhas and deities.

Destroying all those objects of worship is not a matter of lacking in understanding; it is simply impossible. Although national laws may allow destroying all Buddhist statues and paintings of Buddhist deities, Buddhists would manage to worship them anyhow.

One such example is that monolithic Christianity brought about the Greek Orthodox Church by blending its beliefs with Greek beliefs. Even the absolute monotheism of Christianity was then influenced by the Greek practices of polytheism; the apostolic worship of Christianity was derived from the Greek practice of polytheism, and the Greek goddess Isis gave birth to the worship of the Virgin Mary.¹⁷

However, the making and worshiping of various Buddhist statues and paintings of deities should be considered a corruption, deviation, and contradiction to the pantheistic Buddhist teachings that are epitomized by following phrases:

Even one matter or one odor, there is nothing that is not the middle way
 All beings including trees and lands have the nature of the Buddha
 Even the murmur of a stream is the dharma talk of the Buddha,
 How is then the green mountain not the pure body of the Buddha?¹⁸

Buddhists then should not keep paintings and statues of Buddhist deities, which will lead to charges of idol worship. Although Buddhist images and the paintings of the deities are products of the Buddhist faith, we do not need such material forms or symbols. Only one example is needed to fulfill the desires of people for expressing

their religious piety in material forms.

It is thus right to destroy all the Buddhist statues and the paintings [murals] of deities; but it would not be possible to destroy all of them because they are expressions of sincere Buddhist faith and the people's custom for thousands of years. Despite all this, however, we should not forget the essence of doctrines and disturb the object of faith by keeping such symbols; each temple should thus keep only one statue of the Śākyamuni Buddha in the main hall and get rid of all other statues of buddhas, bodhisattvas, and deities. Those extant statues that are valuable in their artistic qualities should be kept in a separate hall as precious assets, not as the objects of worship.

If propagation branch temples have to have statues due to strong demands from lay people, then they should keep only the Śākyamuni Buddha statue, but they should not install an elevated Buddhist altar. At all the other branch temples where there is no such special demand, there should be no Buddhist statues at all.

(2) Integration of Doctrines

For the consolidation of a religious group, it is necessary to unify the principal icons of worship and to determine the principal canons by systematizing doctrines. Among other religions, Buddhism is first in the volume of scriptures and variety of methods [denominations] of teachings. Not a few Buddhist scriptures are thus restricted by time and place [some scriptures were produced after the Buddha's demise or much later in time, and some were written outside of India], some were forged, and some were corrupted as time passed.

Unfortunately I have not read all the Buddhist scriptures yet, so I cannot speak decisively about the principal canons. But I think that we should make the scriptures of Mahāyāna Buddhism, which represent the highest point in the development of Buddhist teachings, the principal canons for our Buddhism.

(3) Integration of Rituals

It is necessary to unify rituals and methods of cultivation. Contemporary Korean Buddhism has unsystematic rituals that fall into formalism without significant meaning, do not fulfill their ideal goals, and lose their original intent—similar consequences are very rare in other religions. Regarding the various Buddhist rituals and the mural paintings of Buddhist worship, the Venerable Han Yongun [1879–1944] already presented his deep insights on this about ten years ago;¹⁹ thus I do not need to add further opinions. But we should prohibit all the rituals that are irreligious, superstitious, irrational, or unnatural, and regulate the rituals in order to convey their true teachings.

4) Centralization of the Saṅgha

In the same way that a complete kingdom can appear only after all feudal lords have been consolidated, the Buddhist kingdom of truth should unify the saṅgha by overthrowing the feudal system of the thirty main temples and establish a single central institution, which is highest in rank and complete.

Only when a religious order has a central organization can it fulfill its function as a unified group. Korean Buddhism should consolidate all regional temple districts and establish a central institution that will rule all the Buddhists and bring all the subordinate temples under its rule. The central organ should be transformed into a corporation, and it should consolidate all Buddhist assets scattered across the nation so that sacred Buddhist properties will strengthen the corporate foundation.

5) The Establishment of Parishes

After consolidating the saṅgha, we need to divide the nation into several parishes in order to establish local supervisory organs for administrative convenience. I would recommend the following five parishes for the saṅgha:

the first parish: Gyeonggi-do, Chungcheongbuk-do and Chungcheongnam-do

the second parish: Jeollabuk-do and Jeollanam-do

the third parish: Gyeongsangbuk-do and Gyeongsangnam-do

the fourth parish: Gangwon-do, Hamgyeongbuk-do and Hamgyeongnam-do

the fifth parish: Hwanghae-do, Pyeonganbuk-do and Pyeongannam-do

6) The Concentration of Administrative Power

It is absolutely necessary to concentrate political power in order to unify the saṅgha, improve the status of Buddhism, educate clerics, and save the resources. As a republic selects a president to exert sovereignty, the saṅgha should unify its power by selecting a head who would govern the saṅgha in accordance with the sacred laws of the three jewels [the Buddha, the dharma, and the saṅgha].

7) Separation of Legal and Administrative Powers

In modern nations, as constitutions decree, the three branches [of government]—administrative, legislative, and judicial—are independent of each other. Likewise, we should separate the administrative and legislative powers. In other words, like the parliament of a nation, we should establish an independent legislative body that represents the views of the saṅgha members, passes the laws of the saṅgha, votes on the budget, accounts, and other important saṅgha business, and oversees administration.

In addition, we should establish an administrative organ that runs like a parliamentary cabinet system to assist the supreme leader [supreme patriarch] and administer saṅgha affairs decided by the Saṅgha Assembly. These two organizations should be independent from one another, and we need to establish an advisory council for the president like the elders assembly or the privy council to provide advice and suggestions as requested by the supreme leader.

8) The Organization of the Saṅgha Administration

The saṅgha institutions need to be simple and effective; the supreme central institution should be located at the capital, and a local headquarters will be placed at each regional parish, and the temple/mission branch will be the unit group. It should thus be very convenient to organize the administration into a three-level system of a central organization, a local headquarters, and temples/churches.

(1) Central Organizations

a. Supreme Patriarch

The Supreme Patriarch (Daebeoptong) is the person who carries out the tasks that correspond to those of the president of a nation; it is the highest governing position in the saṅgha and is in accordance with the sacred teachings of the three jewels. The Supreme Patriarch is the orthodox disciple of the Buddha, the transmitter of the great dharma, the saṅgha representative, the appreciative eyes of humans and gods, the great teacher of the three worlds,²⁰ and the sovereign of the saṅgha.

The Supreme Patriarch should thus be of good character, master the three learnings,²¹ embrace sentient beings with virtue, influence all beings with his actions, and penetrate the three worlds with his wisdom eyes so that we can uphold the holiness of the saṅgha. Those who have shallow knowledge or talents cannot perform the duties of

the Supreme Patriarch.

The Supreme Patriarch should lead the whole saṅgha and should be selected by a vote of the members of the saṅgha. The duties, rights, and methods of election of the Supreme Patriarch should be stated by the constitution, and tenure should be limited. After retirement, the Supreme Patriarch belongs to Elders Assembly and participate in the council of the saṅgha.

b. Elders Assembly

The Elders Assembly (Nodeogwon) is an elders' assembly and an advisory body for the Supreme Patriarch. The members will be selected among those who master the three learnings and can become the candidates for the Supreme Patriarch. It provides advice to the Supreme Patriarch and participates in the council of the saṅgha. It would be good to make a rule that the members retire at the age of seventy.

c. Administrative Headquarters

The Administrative Headquarters (Chongseobwon) is the central brain-like organization of administration like a cabinet or the pope's Vatican Council. It is the cabinet that will assist the Supreme Patriarch as he executes saṅgha affairs, which have been decided by the Saṅgha Assembly, carry out other saṅgha business, and supervise local administrative organizations.

The Administrative Headquarters has the executive director (*dochongseop*) as its head and the following five departments. The Saṅgha Assembly elects the executive director and director (*chongseop*), and the Supreme Patriarch will approve the appointments. The tenure of the cabinet is not limited, but the assembly can pass no-confidence vote for the cabinet in order to dissolve it. The saṅgha members thus organize the cabinet and disband the cabinet; it is a parliamentary cabinet system.

The Organization of the Administrative Headquarters

The head of the cabinet: executive director (*dochongseop*), one person

General Affairs Department (Chongmubu): director (*chongseop*), one person

Office of General Affairs (Seomuguk), deputy director, one person

Office of Legislation (Beopjeguk), deputy director, one person

Office of Personnel Affairs (Insaguk), deputy director, one person

Office of External Affairs (Oesaguk), deputy director, one person

Religious Affairs Department (Jongmubu): director (*chongseop*), one person

Office of Buddhist Doctrines (Gyoriguk), deputy director, one person

Office of Sectarian Teachings (Jonguiguk), deputy director, one person

Department of Education (Gyohwabu): director (*chongseop*), one person

Missionary Office (Seonjeonguk), deputy director, one person

Social Work Office (Sahoe saeopguk), deputy director, one person

Department of Education and Management (Hangmubu): director (*chongseop*), one person

Educational Affairs Office (Gyomuguk), deputy director, one person

Editorial Office (Pyeonjipguk), deputy director, one person

Department of Accounting (Gyeribu): director (*chongseop*), one person

Finance Office (Sagyeguk), deputy director, one person

Accounting Office (Gyeongriguk), deputy director, one person

All staff below deputy directors will be appointed at the cabinet meeting.

d. Saṅgha Assembly

The Saṅgha Assembly (Seonguiwon) is like the parliament of a nation. It is the highest level agency to vote on legislation, budget, and accounts, and is the most important organization among Buddhist institutions. Other religions have either a unicameral legislature or a bicameral system, and they have many types of assembly members. For us, it would be better to adopt a single chamber system. So that

clerics and lay people can participate in the governance of the saṅgha, we should not discriminate between them.

Even though we are compelled to have two kinds of members, clerics and lay people, there should be no discrimination regarding the qualifications and rights of assembly members. All Buddhists should elect them by casting their votes, and the numbers of the assembly members should be decided in accordance with the numbers of the clerics and lay people. Because the Saṅgha Assembly is the most important organization of the saṅgha, the laws concerning the assembly and the election of the members should be codified and strictly defined.

(2) Provincial Organizations

a. Provincial Administrative Headquarters

The Provincial Administrative Headquarter (Seomniwon) is the local administrative headquarters that supervises temples and mission branches (churches) under its parish, and each parish establishes a Provincial Administrative Headquarters. Its locations are as follows for the convenience of supervision:

- the first parish: Seoul
- the second parish: Jeonju
- the third parish: Daegu
- the fourth parish: Wonsan
- the fifth parish: Pyeongyang

The Provincial Administrative Headquarters has one executive director (*doseomni*) as its head, and executive director administers the local public affairs by instituting offices (*guk*) and sections (*gwa*) as follows; the Buddhist members within the parish elect the executive director and director (*seomni*), and all staff below the section heads should be appointed at the local cabinet meeting:

the head: executive director (*doseomni*), one person

Executive Office (Samuguk), director (*seomni*), one person

Internal Affairs Section (Naemugwa), section chief (*gwajang*), one person

External Affairs Section (Oemugwa), section chief (*gwajang*), one person

Religious Affairs Office (Imuguk), director (*seomni*), one person

Propagation Section (Pogyogwa), section chief (*gwajang*), one person

Education Section (Goyoukgwa), section chief (*gwajang*), one person

Finance Office (Jaemuguk), director (*seomni*), one person

Finance Section (Sagyegwa), section chief (*gwajang*), one person

Accounting Section (Gyeongnigwa), section chief (*gwajang*), one person

b. Local Saṅgha Assembly

The Local Saṅgha Assembly (Uisahoe) is like the Provincial Administrative Headquarters; each parish has one Local Saṅgha Assembly, which is a legislative organ that decides on legislation, budgets, and accounts for the parish. The Local Saṅgha Assembly system and the election of and the types of the assembly members will be same as of the Saṅgha Assembly.

(3) Temples and Churches

a. Temples

We should overthrow the main-branch system and at the same time subordinate all the temples under the Seomniwon, the provincial headquarters. Each temple will be self-governing and establish legislative and administrative organs. The head of administration will be the abbot of the temple and Executive Department (Samubu), Religious Affairs Department (Imubu), and Finance Department (Jaemubu) will be established under the head. All staff will be elected by all temple clerics.

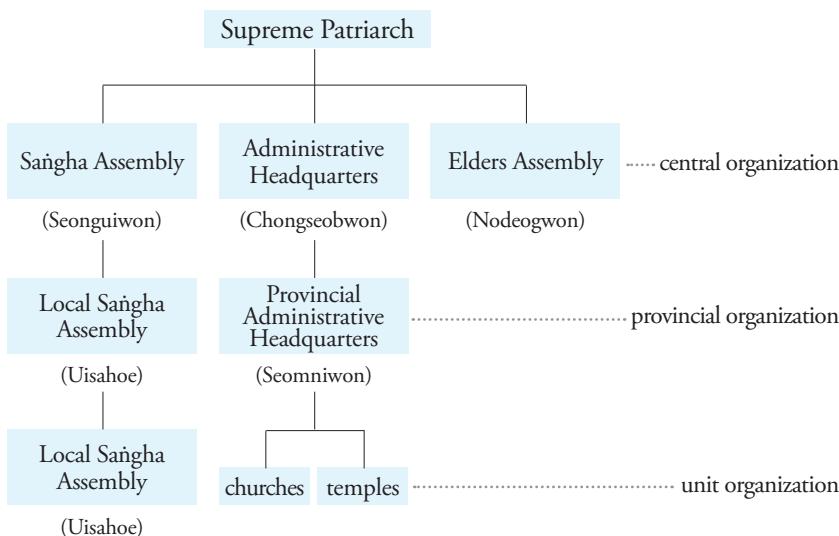
b. Churches

Churches are missionary stations, and they should belong to

the Provincial Administrative Headquarters, not to temples as they do now. They should have the same status as temples. Each church will be self-governed by its lay members and will establish legislative and administrative organs. The director (*gyogam*) will be the head of the administration, and the head of the Department of Religion (Jonggyobu) and Department of Social Work (Sahoebu) will be in charge of propagation and social charity, respectively. All lay members will elect the staff, and the missionary clerics (*pogyosa*) will be appointed and dispatched by Provincial Administrative Headquarters.

The organization of the saṅgha administration is summarized by the following diagram:

The organization chart of the saṅgha administration



Regarding the organization of the saṅgha administration, its procedures, titles, and the duties of each position, these have been arbitrarily selected and possibly distorted by me. My main point is, however, to encourage the centralization and unification of the saṅgha, the independence of a legislative body, and a responsible

cabinet. Therefore, I am not the one who should make decisions about the organization, procedure, or names of the positions; the saṅgha members should decide these for themselves.

Everyone agrees that the saṅgha should be unified and the administration centralized, and I have already argued for the independence of a legislature under the title of “On the Buddhist Constitution.” Today I will comment only on the separation of churches.

So far the temples have been operating the churches, so that each temple had its own reasons for building churches and methods for operating churches. Temples control all the affairs of churches and do not permit lay people to participate in the operation of churches. As a result, the relationship between churches and lay people has been simplistic and weak.

In terms of administrative procedures, when churches are under temples, there is likely to be a four-level governing system, which is inconvenient for governing. We should make churches independent from temples and incorporate them directly under the Provincial Administrative Headquarters. I believe that it would be most desirable for both administration and propagation to make churches self-governing by having lay people participate in the administration of churches.

3. Urgent Tasks

1) Propagating

Propagating is the most important task for a religion to grow and flourish. Individual cultivation, such as cultivating the mind and pure actions and chanting incantations and Buddha's names, is also a kind of indirect propagation, but its effect on proselytizing is negligible. Religions should educate the general public by propagating their teachings in order for people to practice religious faith in daily lives.

Propagating is the most important task for religions. Every undertaking, such as the unification of the religious order, the expansion of its various organizations, and the promotion of education and social charity, is a means of propagating Buddhism and achieving the ultimate goal of saving people.

Korean Buddhism has about 900 traditional temples, but most of them are located deep in the mountains without any close contact with society, so how can they then have any function in propagation? And the new type of temples, churches, even though they are located in cities where they can have close relationships with the general public, are so few in numbers that they amount to no more than a drop in a bucket.

They have neither good management plans nor good tactics for proselytizing, and the majority of the so-called missionaries are not familiar with the new era, so that it is almost impossible for them to fulfill their mission of converting the people of the new era. There are tens of Buddhist churches now, but how many have more than a hundred lay followers and how many provide regular sermons to their congregations?

Strictly speaking, Korean Buddhism has lost its ability to propagate its beliefs and has no contact at all with the general public. It is not an overstatement that Korean Buddhism remains only an empty shell devoid of life. To restore its vitality, to become the model for people's lives and the driving force of Korean culture, Korean Buddhism should, first of all, focus on propagation.

(1) The Merger and Transfer of Temples

To propagate most effectively, Korean Buddhism first needs to destroy all temples located in remote valleys deep in the mountains and move them to cities. As fishermen go to the ocean and woodcutters go to the mountains, it is no mystery why Buddhism should set up its base in cities where many people live. If Buddhists know the current of the time and think about the future of Buddhism, how would they dare to oppose the movement of temples to cities?

Therefore, we should make it a rule to transfer all the temples located in remote mountain valleys to cities. We make an exception only for those temples that have special reasons or historical importance not to move, but even for them we should destroy any attached buildings that are unimportant. For those temples that are not easy to move because of transportation difficulties or high expenses, we should destroy them and consolidate all their assets in the Administrative Headquarters.

(2) The Expansion of Church Organization

Although we have dozens of churches [missionary stations], these stations all belong to main or branch temples. Thus, their management methods are not well developed, the mission tactics differ from each other, and they are not located evenly throughout the country; with such a system it is impossible to reach the goal of the revival of Buddhism.

We have to launch a great reform of the missionary stations; first, we should make the stations free from temple operations by making them independent and having lay members govern them for themselves; and we should make the status of the churches equal with temples and have them belong directly to the management of the Provincial Administrative Headquarters.

Second, we should expand the church organization. Missionary churches usually have one propagator who gives a stopgap dharma talk, but it is not right to think that they fulfill the job of propagating just by praising Buddha's mercy and the virtues of Buddhist teachings.

We cannot revive Buddhism by believing that such dharma talks are the only way of propagating. We should engage ourselves actively in society in order to make Buddhism a living faith; Buddhism should lead the culture of society and inspire the masses to lead their lives in such a way that we can save all beings and spread the Buddhist teachings.

Therefore, we should reform the system of churches to be self-governed by lay people and expand the organization by having one head (*gyogam*) and placing two departments of religion and society under the head. The Department of Religion will be in charge of researching and teaching doctrines and the execution of rituals. The Department of Society will deal with the general public; it will operate kindergartens, Sunday schools, boys clubs, night schools, and offer cultural courses in order to help the local population.

In addition, the Department of Society should establish service organizations such as employment offices, reform schools, orphanages, resting places for laborers, relief works for the poor, child protection services, counselling offices, and hospitals according to particular circumstances.

To improve regional cultures and the lives of the populace, churches should both spread doctrines and run religious, faith-based social service businesses. Likewise, churches should become the centers of regional cultures or the daily lives of people, and then they

can fulfill the goal of propagating.

It is not necessary to keep church buildings dark like old fashioned temple structures; the main halls should be made into large halls that can hold several hundred people by installing chairs instead of having people sitting on the floor with shoes off. Churches should not be used only for delivering sermons and conducting rituals, but also they can be used for Sunday schools and kindergartens, for teaching cultural courses on Sundays, for teaching academic and job-related courses on weekdays, and for the night schools for workers.

Missionary churches can also be open to meetings for the regional population so that they have visitors day and night. Lay members should operate churches, including the head and the departments, independently. It would be better, however, that missionary clerics be sent by the central organization.

(3) The Training of Missionary Clerics

For propagating, training missionary clerics is the most urgent thing to do. It would be useless without missionary clerics even though we might end up having many churches. We should produce propagators from among our clerics and lay people by establishing a temporary institute until we have formal educational facilities for them. We should then send them off to various places and have them proselytize systematically. We should not ruin the important task of propagating by randomly hiring anyone who has no qualifications or historical knowledge.

Currently, the central administrative headquarters (Chongmuwon) has established the Buddhist Academy to produce missionaries, and this is a timely and praiseworthy move.

(4) The Arrangement of Churches

If we can arrange church locations well, we can expedite the propagating. We should plan well and position churches with the

geographical and social circumstance of each church taken into account, and they should be organized equally and regularly.

We should make a rule that each district, which would be consisted of 100 households, has one church. We could first establish one church at each county seat and then expand the establishments to townships and villages; therefore, even extremely remote places can witness church flags. And there will be no one, including even the ignorant masses, who do not receive the benefits of the Buddha; in other words, we should fill everywhere with the mercy of the Buddha.

(5) Overseas Missions

We cannot focus only on domestic propagating; in order to explore new lands for the religion and spread the providence of the Buddha, we need to send missionaries to foreign countries where Buddhism has not been propagated. We also need to establish churches under the direct control of the Office of the Mission of the Administrative Headquarters at Jiandao,²² Russia, Hawaii, and Japan, where significant numbers of Korean expatriates live, to transmit Korean Buddhism and provide religious centers for overseas Korean communities.

(6) Textual Propagation

Along with propagating activities at churches, it would be very effective if the Administrative Headquarters and Provincial Administrative Headquarters published various tracts to spread Buddhism. For propagating journals are almost as effective as lecture tours by thousands of missionaries; journals also boost the morale of Buddhists and strengthen public attitudes toward the saṅgha. Together with the main activities of the churches, we should thus pay attention to propagating with literature through the publication of journals, pamphlets, and posters.

2) Education

It is so apparent now that we need to establish educational institutions to train clerics, but the operating policies of such institutions still remain problematic. We have produced passionless clerics at temple seminaries (*gangwon*) where students learn commentaries and the private recordings (*sagi*) of eminent monks. We also have the so-called modern schools, yet we don't have uniform education policies. Moreover, the management methods and facilities are not yet sufficiently complete to provide a good education.

It is thus very important to provide an organized education through a unified education system with consistent principles. This is the reason that the Administrative Headquarters should try to establish a Department of Education and Management.

While producing competent clerics for the saṅgha by establishing education facilities, we should also build schools for the general public so that we can exert a positive influence on society and develop Buddhist culture. Through our effort at proselytizing we can eventually build a strong kingdom of Buddhism.

Among educators of the saṅgha, some have argued that our education needs to follow the general education model of society. But they are wrong because they do not understand the meaning of religious education. We should educate students at various Buddhist educational institutions by focusing on Buddhist culture. It is the government of Japan that prohibits us from teaching religion in schools, but in Europe and America, where modern education began, courses on religion are taught from elementary school on in order to produce good citizens. It is ironic that religious schools exclude religious education.

For present-day Korea, because of school shortages, religious schools may need to educate people without teaching religion. But given that religions teach people to destroy ignorance, people should understand the necessity of religious education for producing people with healthy minds. Therefore, Buddhist education facilities should

not forget their missionary tactics while providing general education to students.

(1) School Education

We should establish elementary, middle/high schools, and colleges; we should provide the general public with education at the elementary and middle/high schools and train competent clerics for the saṅgha at the colleges. Each church or temple could operate elementary schools but pay attention to the social education of the local people if the region already has elementary schools.

For middle/high schools, each parish should establish one school under the direct operation of the Provincial Administrative Headquarters and educate all children in a district including non-Buddhists; the school should adopt public school textbooks and teach Buddhism.

We should pay great attention to college education in order to make colleges the foundation of Buddhist culture. We should establish a college at the capital, putting it under the direct control of the Administrative Headquarters and adopt the curriculum and the management of the school from other public and private colleges. We should have departments of religion and philosophy, make them the center of the college, and add more departments of law, economy, education, literature, etc.

By making Buddhism the center of education and also incorporating international knowledge, we can produce outstanding members of the saṅgha. Colleges should also institute graduate schools to advance professional learning for various departments and open schools to the general public as many venues as possible to promote education for the public.

(2) Education for the General Public

On one hand, we should make an effort to train our clerics through

college education, and on the other hand we should develop a correspondence education system for local people to plant Buddhist culture in people's daily lives.

We should stop the conventional ideas about churches being places exclusively for delivering sermons and officiating at rituals and instead open churches to many other activities for local communities such as Sunday schools on Sundays, boys/girls clubs, night schools for laborers, kindergartens, job training schools, and cultural instructions on weekdays to improve regional cultures.

Churches should be open day and night so that they are always crowded with people; churches should be operated mainly for local people. Likewise, churches ought to exist without losing the masses, and the masses ought to live without abandoning churches. Churches and local communities and Buddhism and the masses should maintain close relationships so that the mercy of the Buddha will fill the daily lives of the masses and the ultimate goal of saving all beings will be realized.

How can it be true that the Pure Land exists in the West region, one trillion miles away from the earth?²³ I thus argue that we should make churches that can fulfill both spiritual and material aspects by establishing departments of religion and society rather than using churches only for delivering sermons.

(3) Studies in Foreign Countries

While perfecting the domestic education system, we should also send our clerics who have great potential to foreign countries to train them; they can go to Japan to learn Japanese Buddhism, to China to study the history of Chinese Buddhism, or to India to make pilgrimages to the Buddhist sacred sites and translate into Korean any Buddhist scriptures that are unknown to us. It is also necessary to send them to Europe or America to visit other religious institutions or to acquire other relevant knowledge, in addition to the knowledge of religion. In the annual budget of the saṅgha, we should thus add

expenses for sending students to study in foreign countries.

At present, there are about thirty students who study in Japan at the expense of their temples. But unfortunately temples do not have any consistent policies regarding those students. As a result, some temples stop financial support for those who have not yet finished their studies or randomly send students back to Korea; moreover, because temple sponsors let students choose any major on their own, they eventually cannot use the students for advancing Buddhism. Temples thus need systematic and unifying plans for sending and managing those students.

Before sending students, temples should calculate expenses, examine the qualities and personalities of students, and assign them specific majors, which include religion, religious history, the Buddhist system, Buddhist doctrines, Christianity, politics, economy, philosophy, law, music, or painting. Once students know their assigned majors, they will work hard, and the saṅgha can then benefit from those who specialize in the diverse areas of studies.

3) Scriptural Translations

It is a serious problem for Korean Buddhism not to have the Buddhist canon translated in Korean. Without the translated scriptures, strictly speaking, it is not an exaggeration to say that we do not have Buddhism for Koreans despite 1,500 years of Buddhist history on the peninsula. I wonder how Buddhism has survived for those long years without a translated canon.

What is the purpose of the canon? The canon is the record of the Buddha and bodhisattvas' turning of the dharma wheel to save sentient beings. The reason that the Buddha's disciples assembled the Buddha's teaching is to spread Buddhism widely.

It is natural for any religion to translate its canon into different languages whenever they move to different places. The Buddhist canon was translated into Chinese in China and into Japanese in

Japan. In Korea, although Buddhism entered 1,500 years ago, we are still using the canon that was translated in Chinese. Even for commentaries, we use those in Chinese; therefore, we suffer the ill effects of focusing on exegesis and literary indulgence.

There is no use for Buddhist scriptures that are vast and deep, if we do not understand them. There is also no use for those tens of thousands of Chinese canons because people do not understand them. How can people have faith in Buddhism without understanding the doctrines? How can people live without having faith?

It is because we do not have a canon translated into Korean that there are few who understand Buddhism even though Buddhism was introduced 1,500 years ago; without such a translated canon Korean Buddhism has lost its vitality and interactions with society.

Christianity provides an example to corroborate my point; it has entered Korea only seventy or eighty years ago, yet it became a major religion because people easily understand its doctrines. The reason for such success is due to the translations of the Christian Bible into Korean, not because Christian doctrines are easier than Buddhism.

The Administrative Headquarters should thus not only publish old Buddhist scriptures but also launch a translation of the canon. It is appreciated that some people try to translate the canon on their own these days; but it is highly possible that those translations would be imperfect. Even if all of the entire canon was translated, it would be useless or even harmful to the great doctrines, if the translations are flawed.

Such a grand task as the translations of the Buddhist canon should be done by the sangha, not by individuals. As a collective task, we should establish a translation institution to hire Buddhist scholars to embark on translations with thorough research and assessment.

4) Establishment of the Saṅgha Financial Organization and the Publication of Saṅgha Newspapers

After unifying the saṅgha and consolidating its assets, it will be necessary to establish a saṅgha financial organization. Using saṅgha assets and the investments of lay Buddhists, we can create a fund and establish a central bank in Seoul and branches at each parish so that we can protect saṅgha assets and help lay people circulate their money.

In addition, the Administrative Headquarters should publish saṅgha newspapers to promote relationships among Buddhists, report saṅgha news, and disseminate Buddhist teachings; it also needs to publish a saṅgha magazine to illuminate the deep teachings of Buddhism and spread Buddhist culture.

5) Social Charity

The importance of religions lies in real experience. No matter how hard we praise the mercy of the Buddha and talk about the saving power of God, it is no use at all if religions do not show any effects in real life. Therefore, on one hand, religions should transmit spiritual doctrines by explicating the principle of God or the message of the Buddha; on the other hand, they should combine the ideal and reality by engaging in various social enterprises based on their spiritual ideals.

Good religions are not based on the excellence of doctrines; rather, they are judged by the extent they have effectively brought their social engagement into the daily lives of people. Although its doctrines are not profound, for example, the Salvation Army became prominent for its social influence because it has helped people in need with various charities and social work.

On the contrary, Buddhism has profound doctrines, but Korean Buddhists have failed to prove their excellent teachings by being

helpful to people in their daily lives; while situated in the corner of remote mountains, Korean Buddhism has thus become a dead religion without social influence. To restore its social status and religious power, Korean Buddhism should engage in social charity work as much as possible, in addition to its exclusive dharma talks.

In other words, while promoting Buddhist faith through sermons, Korean Buddhists should also operate kindergartens, boys/girls clubs, juvenile protection services for local communities, offer job training and night courses for laborers, and cultural courses to develop local cultures; and they should also establish day care centers, nursing homes, clinics, and pharmacies for the poor; or they should engage in emergency rescue work for those who are affected, save the unemployed with employment services, offer bunkhouses for day laborers, or help the local people improve customs; they should choose among these enterprises according to the unique conditions and demands of each community. Buddhist churches should thus make Buddhism practical and active by fulfilling the ideals of Buddhism in daily life. They should promote local cultures and enhance the living standards of the populace.

Likewise, Buddhist churches help shape local cultures and stabilize the lives of the populace. The masses live with the support of churches, and churches exist because of the local communities; when churches, local communities, and the populace can form close relationships, therefore, the populace can take refuge in Buddhism without Buddhist missionary work, and the benefits of the Buddha can spread to everyone while Buddhism can become easily influential in society without exerting much effort.

We can then achieve our religious missions and soon build the ideal paradise, the Pure Land here in this world. Accordingly, I passionately argue that our central organ, the Administrative Headquarters, should establish the Office of Social Work to promote social charity and that churches should institute a department of social work to engage in local development. Buddhism should thus devote attention to society in order to be a vibrant religion, and

society can become influenced by Buddhism to build the Pure Land here and now.

All things are Buddhist dharmas.

—*Wisdom Sūtra*

Don't do evil things, do good things, and purify the mind. Such are the Buddhist teachings.

—*Nirvāṇa Sūtra*

To My Fellow Young Clerics

Thus far through my poorly written article I have severely criticized the corruption of the saṅgha, earnestly advocated for the reformation of the saṅgha administration, and even mentioned such a small task as publishing saṅgha newspapers for the reconstruction of the saṅgha.

But I have barely expressed less than even one fourth of my thoughts. If I stretch my thoughts, even ten thousand words are not enough to express them; and if I were to cut out my thoughts, even one word would be lengthy. Talking about the corruption of the saṅgha in the past and the construction of a new system in the future would be irresponsible and idle. The only urgent matter is overthrowing the old system.

Korea's stagnant Buddhism requires only one revolutionary, not hundreds of scholars or thousands of artists. It is not that I criticize you for becoming scholars or artists. By all means, become great scholars and great artists. But I want to dissuade you from becoming old-fashioned scholars and uncreative artists for the future of both you and the saṅgha. You should be great scholars and artists, but become revolutionary scholars and artists.

You are religious leaders for the new era, and your religious aspirations and great redemptive ideals are extraordinary. But your aspirations and ideals will not be realized under the corruptive circumstances of the current saṅgha. You can fulfill your hopes and

ideals only in a new world after going through the violent storms of a great reformation.

My dear colleagues! We need only a reformation to rectify the rotten saṅgha, not hundreds of other tasks. It will not be helpful for Buddhism to improve partially, to provide routine education, or propagate in a half-way manner; Buddhism will rapidly decline as before. To revitalize the weak life of our diseased Buddhism, we need an operation, a great reformation.

Dear colleagues! The fate of Buddhism depends on whether or not we can reform the system. Korean Buddhism has reached the depth of its decline, and we thus have no time to hesitate—today is the only time to launch the saṅgha revolution. About 600 years ago, the Buddhists at the end of the Goryeo dynasty foolishly lost the opportunity to reform Buddhism; and now we face a second chance to reform Buddhism through trial.

Colleagues! What are you going to do? Are you going to cowardly cover your eyes and ears and experience the sad moments of the downfall of Buddhism? Or are you going to resolutely overcome all the challenges of a Buddhist reformation and win the victory of survival? Standing at the crossroads, you have to choose one or the other.

Colleagues! Rise up! Overcome all obstacles! With failure you become a traitor, if you succeeded you become a king—this is called the courage of a soldier. As for the courage of a religious person, if you fail, you sacrifice yourself for the dharma, and if you succeed, you save all sentient beings. A win and a defeat are ordinary for the military; but the revolution of Korean Buddhism should be ever-victorious.

Colleagues! If you do not take the heaven-sent opportunity for reformation, your end will be calamitous. Who would say that heroes and patriotic martyrs are the product of their time? They could be the product of their time or the creators of the time. What will you do? Are you going to produce a drama on a stage that will test your iron-like arms and stone-like fists? Or will you cowardly and

willingly cede your rights and become extinct?

Colleagues! Seize the time courageously! The heaven-sent stage will not last forever. Break free and rise up! Whether the saṅgha survives or perishes depends on your battle for reformation.

Colleagues! Be aware of what is happening around the world!

Colleagues! Sacrifice your life for the right faith! Fight courageously by being at the head of your group!

Colleagues! All evils will vanish in the light of truth!

Oh, patriots! Oh, loyal people who worry about Buddhism! You should know that only reformation can bring both an ideal world to the nation and ultimate joy to the religious.

Colleagues! Colleagues! What indeed will you do?

It has been 3,000 years since the demise of the Buddha. Both clerics and lay people have withered, and the great dharma falls like dead leaves. This is the reason why conscious Buddhists drop hot tears and courageously face up to the situation.

Colleagues! Colleagues! What will you finally do?

November 1, 1922

In commemoration of the birthday of Martin Luther

We vow to save all beings without bounds;

We vow to sever defilements inexhaustible;

We vow to learn all dharmas without measure;

We vow to attain the Buddhahood, nothing-higher.

—The Four Encompassing Vows²⁴

I wish all these merits spread everywhere in order that all the beings including me become enlightened.

—*Lotus Sūtra*

Notes

* This article was serialized in twenty-seven installments from November 24, 1922 to December 30, 1922 in *Joseon Daily* (*Joseon ilbo* 朝鮮日報), but the initial seven installments have been lost. Only twenty pieces of writing remain. This translation begins from the eighth installment and is based on the primary material that Yi Cheolgyo discovered, annotated, and published through the library of Dongguk University in *Dabo* 4 ([Winter 1992], 255–274).

** Yi Yeongjae (1900–1927) was born in Cheongju in Chungcheongbudo and worked as a civil official at the provincial office before entering the monastery. As a Buddhist cleric, he graduated from the Department of Religion at Nippon University and entered the Department of Indian Philosophy at Tokyo Imperial University. He embarked on a pilgrimage to Buddhist sacred sites in India in 1925 and met an untimely death in Sri Lanka in 1927. He wrote “Treatise on the Renovation of Korean Buddhism” when he was a junior at Nippon University.

1 The Japanese colonial regime decreed the seven articles of the Temple Ordinance in June, 1911; the ordinance reorganized the Korean saṅgha into a system of thirty main-branch temple districts (later thirty-one districts), which became an independent administration system.

2 The Japanese regime labeled such Koreans as *bullyeong seonin* 不逞鮮人, those who are rebellious or reject government policies.

3 The three jewels (Skt. *triratna*) are the Buddha, the dharma, and the saṅgha; they are the objects of worship for Buddhists.

4 *Bi* (Ch. *pi*) 否 means blockage/misfortune and *tae* (Ch. *tai*) 泰 means opening and luck. They are names of the trigrams from the *Book of Changes*.

5 Jinul, *Gwonsu jeonghye gyeolsamun* 勸修定慧結社文 [*Encouragement to Practice: The Compact of the Samādhi and Prajña Community*], HBC 4.698a.

6 The trichiliocosm is the entire universe, composed of myriads of world systems.

7 After the March First Movement, a nation-wide, peaceful independence movement in 1919, Japan’s policy of military dictatorship became more conciliatory, which allowed an increase in Korean cultural activities,

- including a lifting of restrictions on the vernacular press.
- 8 Vinaya rules refer to rules for monastic discipline.
- 9 Sabulsan is located at Mun'gyeong in Gyeongsangbuk-do. Daeseungsas, built in the sixth century, is the major temple on Sabulsan.
- 10 This Mr. So-and-so would refer to Kang Daeryeon, the abbot of Yongjusa Temple, one of the main temples located at Suwon in Gyeonggi-do. In the early 1920s young Buddhist clerics formed Buddhist youth associations and challenged the status quo of the abbot system and the Temple Ordinance. Kang opposed every activity of the youth associations and became the youth movement's public enemy number one. In March 1922, about one hundred young clerics insulted Kang by putting a drum on his back and having him march around the main streets of central Seoul.
- 11 We know that Yi Yeongjae wrote such an article, but no copies are extant.
- 12 The Buddha gave his first sermon after attaining enlightenment at the Deer Park in Sārnāth, India.
- 13 It refers to the first sermon of the Buddha.
- 14 *Lunbao* 輪寶 is one of the seven treasures that were given to the *cakravartin* (the wheel-turning emperor) as a karmic reward. By rolling the wheel-treasure, he subdued all his enemies. Likewise, Buddha's teachings defeat all the suffering and defilements of all beings.
- 15 Buddhist Reform Association (Bulgyo yusinhoe) was formed with more than one thousand members in December 1921. Experiencing government pressure the association closed after three years because of financial difficulties.
- 16 The three jewels (or refuges) of Buddhism.
- 17 Isis was an ancient Egyptian goddess who was worshiped throughout the Greco-Roman world as the ideal mother and wife as well as the patroness of nature and magic.
- 18 A poem composed by Su Shi (Su Dongpo, 1036–1101), a Chinese writer, poet, and statesman of the Song dynasty.
- 19 Han published the *Treatise on the Restoration of Korean Buddhism* (Joseon Bulgyo yusinnon) in 1913.
- 20 The three worlds are the world of desire, the material world, and the immaterial world.
- 21 The three learnings consist of discipline (Skt. *vinaya*), meditation (Skt. *dhyāna*), and wisdom (Skt. *prājña*).
- 22 It is located in the southeast of China's Jilin Province.
- 23 This means that the Pure Land should be here not so far from here. The Pure Land (Paradise of the West) is presided over by Amitābha Buddha.

- 24 The four encompassing vows of a Buddha or bodhisattva are considered as arising one by one from the four noble truths (suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path that leads to the extinction of suffering).

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