

## BUDDHISM IN KOREA A HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

by *Hee-Sung Keel*

### 1. The Three Kingdoms and the Coming of Buddhism

When Buddhism came to the Korean peninsula in the latter half of the fourth century, Korea was divided into three separate kingdoms, each forming an ancient state of a tribal confederation trying to expand its territory at the expense of the others. The religious beliefs and practices of the people were predominantly animistic and tribalistic. They believed in the spirits residing in nature such as heaven, earth, sun and moon, stars, mountains and seas. They also worshipped the ancestral spirits of the head of the tribe, or in case of a tribal confederation the ancestor of the royal family. But with the emergence of the centralized state powers the Korean society was moving beyond its tribalistic stage, and it was ready for a new form of religion with broader horizon.

Among the three kingdoms, Koguryō in the north was the earliest in forming a centralized state and it was by far the strongest of the three. Although there is some evidence that Buddhism had been known earlier, it was in 372 A.D. during the reign of King SOSURIM that it was officially introduced into Koguryō. King SOSURIM maintained a friendly relationship with the Former Ch'in in northern China which had destroyed the former Yen, the enemy of Koguryō. It was in this political context that FU CHIEN, the most powerful ruler of the Former Ch'in as well as an ardent supporter of Buddhism, sent an envoy and a monk named SUNDŌ together with Buddha images and scriptures to Koguryō. Significantly, in the same year King SOSURIM accepted Buddhism he also established the T'aehak, an academy for Confucian learning, and the next year he promulgated legal codes, laying the foundation for a centralized state.

While Buddhism came to Koguryō by way of the Former Ch'in in northern China, it reached the kingdom of Paekche, situated in the southwest of the Korean peninsula, from Eastern Chin in southern China with which Paekche was in close diplomatic relationship. As in the case of Koguryō, it was not a mere coincidence that Buddhism, a new religion with a universalistic ethos, was introduced into Paekche around the time when it was in the midst of consolidating the royal authority – most notably by King KŪNCH'ŌGO (346–375) – over against the tribal powers. The kingdom of Silla, being situated in the southeastern corner of the peninsula, was geographically not in a favorable position to absorb the high culture of the Chinese continent. Hence Silla became the latest recipient of Buddhism as well. Even though the official record of the *Samguk sagi* [The Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms] says that Buddhism came to Silla as early as the time of King NULCHI (417–447), it was not able to make much progress at first, apparently due to the severe opposition of the ruling aristocratic families deeply rooted in the

tribal religious tradition. But with the continued strengthening of the royal power, the kings and the supporters of the court kept a constant interest in Buddhism as a new ideological force which would not merely loosen the tribal ties but also have an edifying effect on the people at large. On the occasion of the martyrdom of ICH'ADON, a loyal minister, King PŎPHŬNG finally proclaimed the official recognition of Buddhism in 527. His name "PŎPHŬNG" means "Flourishing of the Dharma". Again it is significant to note that earlier in 520 he had promulgated legal codes for the country, and two years after the official recognition of the new religion he prohibited killing of life in the land.

The introduction of Buddhism into the three kingdoms meant the coming of a host of novel religious and cultural phenomena accompanying it: the monks representing religious leader clearly demarcated from the rest of the population, the Buddha statues constituting the new objects of devotion for the people, the scriptures containing hitherto unheard-of philosophical ideas and metaphysical worldviews, and the temple architecture representing the new religious institution clearly separate from the rest of the society. Monks were not just religious figures; they were magicians, writers, calligraphers, architects, painters, and even diplomats and political advisers. While it took a while for the Korean Buddhists to have a solid understanding of the philosophical subtleties of Buddhism, its visible benefits alone were enough to win the hearts of the kings and the people.

It was Silla, at first the most backward among the three kingdoms culturally, which nevertheless benefited most from Buddhism by turning it into a unifying force of the country. It became the source of religious patriotism and provided the creative energy which enabled Silla finally to achieve the great task of unifying the three kingdoms. King CHINHŬNG, the successor of PŎPHŬNG, was the first Silla monarch who legally allowed his people to become Buddhist monks, and he himself became a monk around the end of his life, taking a Buddhist name PŎBUN (Dharma Cloud) for himself; the queen followed suit. This was an act demonstrating the unity of the state and the *saṅgha*, the king assuming leadership in both the secular and sacred areas of life. Beginning with PŎPHŬNG many of the Silla rulers adopted Buddhist names such as ŚUDDHODANA, MĀYĀ, ŚRĪMĀLĀ, for themselves as well as their families, seeking Buddhist sanctification of the royal house. Behind the close alliance of Buddhism and the Silla ruling class were many outstanding Buddhist monks who not merely were engaged in their own spiritual cultivation but also provided political services for their country. Eminent monks Like WŎN'GWANG (?-630) and CHAJANG (7th century), both of whom had studied in China, were good example of this. Here is a story about WŎN'GWANG, for example, in the *Lives of Eminent Korean Monks*:

In his thirtieth year (608) King Chinp'yŏng, troubled by frequent border raids by Koguryŏ, decided to ask help from Sui [China] to retaliate and asked the master to draft the petition for a foreign campaign. The master replied, "To destroy others in order to preserve oneself is not the way of a monk (*śramaṇa*). But since I, a poor

monk, live in Your Majesty's territory and waste Your Majesty's clothes and food, I do not dare disobey." He then relayed the King's request to Sui.<sup>1</sup>

WŎN'GWANG was clearly aware of the conflict between the universalistic ethical norm of Buddhism and the particularistic duty demanded by secular authority, but he ultimately found no serious problem in compromising these two norms. This was also the spirit underlying his so-called *sesok ogye* (five precepts for laymen), for which he is well known:

Kwisan and Ch'wihang from Saryang district came to the master's door and, lifting up their robes, respectfully said, "We are ignorant and without knowledge. Please give us a maxim which will serve to instruct us for the rest of our lives." The master replied, "There are ten commandments in the Bodhisattva ordination. But, since you are subjects and sons, I fear you cannot practice all of them. Now, here are five commandments for laymen: serve your sovereign with loyalty; tend your parents with filial piety; treat your friends with sincerity; do not retreat from a battlefield; be discriminating about the taking of life. Exercise care in the performance of them."<sup>2</sup>

It is indeed significant to note that WŎN'GWANG gave these rules instead of the common five precepts Buddhism teaches lay people to observe – namely the precepts against killing of life, lying, fornication, stealing, and drinking liquor – which he must have known undoubtedly. Here we see a clear example of how an eminent monk reinterpreted Buddhist ethics in such a way as to render it serviceable to the pressing need of an expanding kingdom in its crucial period of history.

CHAJANG was originally a member of the high nobility, the *chin'gol* (true bone) blood. He went to T'ang China in 636, the fifth year of Queen SŎNDŎK, and returned home after seven years of study of Buddhism. Upon his return, he was given the title of "Grand National Director" (*taegukt'ong*) and charged with the task of controlling all the monks of the country. He installed the platform for ordination of monks at the T'ongdo Monastery and strictly enforced Buddhist discipline throughout the *saṅgha*. Wishing for the peace and prosperity of the country, he also built a magnificent nine-story pagoda, about 225 feet high, in the compound of the Hwangnyong Monastery which was like the Buddhist center of the country. He was also responsible for many stories which suggest that Silla was the ideal Buddhist country and that Buddhism was by no means a new religion in Silla.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Development of doctrinal studies and Sŏn Buddhism

While the rulers and the aristocratic families were interested in Buddhism apparently for worldly reasons such as protection of the state, welfare of the family, and magical services often provided by the monks, there were many monks of great learning who studied and taught the profound philosophical doctrines of Buddhism. On the whole, the Buddhist thought in the three kingdoms were heavily indebted to that in China during the period of the northern and southern dynasties. In Koguryŏ, along with the Confucian and Taoist learning, the Samnon (San-lun) studies seems to have been very active; one of the Koguryŏ monks, named HYE GWAN, went to Japan around the end of the dynasty to become the first Sanron patriarch in Japan. Such Mahāyāna

texts as the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, the *Daśabhūmikāsūtra-śāstra*, and the *Ta-chih-tu-lun* were also studied, and the T'ien-t'ai School was also introduced into Koguryō toward the end of the dynasty. In Paekche, on the other hand, the Vinaya studies were active. A Paekche monk named KYŌMIK went to India and came back with a lot of Hinayana Abhidharma and Vinaya texts; he translated seventy-two works relating to the Vinaya. The Vinaya studies flourished so greatly in Paekche that three of the Japanese nuns came to Paekche to study Vinaya. Besides, many Paekche monks went over to Japan, with which Paekche was in close diplomatic ties, and played important roles in the formation of the early Japanese Buddhism and culture. A Paekche monk named HYEJA, for instance, went to Japan in 594 and became the mentor of the famous SHŌTOKU TAISHI. The doctrinal study in Silla Buddhism was behind that in Koguryō or Paekche at first, but with the return of WŎN'GWANG and CHAJANG from China Silla monks reached a new level of doctrinal understanding in the first half of the seventh century, laying the foundation for the great period of Silla Buddhist thought in the latter half of the century.

With Silla unifying the three kingdoms in 680, Silla Buddhism also reached its apogee. Three eminent monks have to be mentioned as representing this new period of Silla Buddhism: ŪISANG, WŎNHYO, and WŎNCH'ŬK. ŪISANG (625-702) studied under CHIH-YEN, the second Chinese Hua-yen patriarch, and upon return to Korea he became the founder of the Hwaōm School in Korea. Under the hands of the ten prominent disciples he produced, the Hwaōm School became the most flourishing and influential doctrinal school not merely in Silla dynasty but throughout the rest of Korean Buddhist history. Although not as philosophical as the Hua-yen thought of Fa-tsang, ŪISANG's thought puts a great deal of emphasis upon the Hwaōm practice of contemplation as can be seen from his short but masterful work, the *Hwaōm ilsŭng pōpkyedo* [Diagram of the *Dharmadhātu* of Hwaōm, the One Vehicle].

WŎNHYO, commonly regarded as the greatest figure in Korean Buddhism, was a master of doctrinal reconciliation. He tried twice to enter T'ang China with ŪISANG; once he failed and the other time he changed his mind. On the first journey he and ŪISANG were detained in Koguryō on the suspicion of being spies; they escaped in 650. When Paekche was destroyed in 660, they tried the sea route. Waiting for a ship bound for T'ang in 661, they met a severe storm one night and took refuge in an earthen cave. Waking up in the following morning, they found the place where they had spent overnight to be not an earthen cave but an old tomb. They had to spend another night in the same place, but this time in fear of the devils moving around them. WŎNHYO realized the truth: Everything comes from the Mind and is nothing but consciousness; one should not seek for truth outside the Mind. WŎNHYO turned his step back to Silla and ŪISANG alone continued the journey.

WŎNHYO was a prolific writer. He wrote no less than 86 works out of which 23 are extant (of which 15 are complete and 8 in fragments). By his time most of the important *sūtras* and treatises had flown into Korea from China, and

the diverse ideas and doctrines contained in them caused a great deal of confusion for the Silla Buddhists as they did for the Chinese as well. It was WŎNHYO's special genius to find a way to interpret all of the diverse texts in a harmonizing way and reveal the underlying unity of them without sacrificing the distinct flavor of each text at the same time. He was particularly concerned with the conflict between the Mādhyamika philosophy of emptiness (*mu*, nothingness) and the Yogācāra philosophy of ideation-only (*yu*, being). But he found the way to resolve this conflict in the *Awakening of Faith in Mahāyāna* with its doctrine of the two aspects of One Mind, i.e., the gate of Suchness and the gate of Birth-and-Destruction. This became WŎNHYO's consistent hermeneutical key in his interpretation of all the other texts. His commentaries on the *Awakening of Faith*, the *Taesŭng kisillon so* and *Taesŭng kisillon pyŏlgi*, greatly influenced FA-TSANG's interpretation of the text, and hence directly contributed to the development of Hua-yen thought in China. Another of WŎNHYO's work, his commentary on the *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* (*Kŭmgang sammaegyŏng non*), was so highly appreciated by the Chinese scholars that it acquired the title of a *lun*, a treatise. Unfortunately, his commentary on the *Avatam.saka-sūtra* is extant only in a small fragment, but his theory of doctrinal classification was well known among the Chinese scholars.

WŎNHYO showed a great deal of interest in the Pure Land faith as well and produced many works on it. But he was more than a scholar-monk. He tried to embody in his personal life the ideal of a bodhisattva who works for the well-being of the sentient beings in complete freedom. He married a widowed princess; he visited villages and towns, teaching people with songs and dances, and greatly popularized Buddhist message. But it has to be said that WŎNHYO was rather an exceptional figure in doing this and that, despite the popularistic movement he launched, Silla Buddhism never closed the gap between the monks and ordinary believers. The faith in Maitreya Buddha was also very popular in the early period of Silla; but it gave way to Amita Buddha faith later on. Judging from the numerous commentarial works on the Pure Land *sūtras* by the Silla masters, indeed Pure Land faith seems to have been widespread in Silla. Nevertheless it is significant to note that no popular Buddhism was able to establish itself as an independent sect in Silla – nor in any other period of Korean history thereafter – as in China or Japan.

WŎNCH'ŬK was another great Silla Buddhist thinker. As a student of the famous Hsüan-tsang, he formed an independent line of Fa-hsiang philosophical interpretation as opposed to the line established by K'UEI-CHI and his followers. WŎNCH'ŬK's commentary on the *Sandhinirmocana-sūtra* was even translated into Tibetan. It was his line of FA-HSIANG thought that was transmitted to Silla through such eminent scholar-monks as TOJŬNG, T'AEHY-ŎN, HŬNGGYŎNG, SUN'GYŎNG and formed the Korean Pöpsang School, the second most influential doctrinal school in Korea.

Silla dynasty began to show serious internal conflicts within the ruling class from the end of the eighth century on. Buddhism also began to lose much of

its earlier vitality and creativity. It was during this time that Sŏn (Ch'an; Zen) Buddhism was introduced into Korea from T'ang China. It took roots mostly in local areas, far away from the capital city of Kyŏngju, under the patronage of the local magnates or warlords. Most of the founders of the so-called Nine Mountains (*kusan*), the nine monastic communities of Sŏn, were recipient of the Dharma from the disciples of the famous MA-TSU TAO-I (707-786). Their radical approach to Buddhism soon created tension and conflict with the old-established schools of doctrinal Buddhism (Kyo), posing a major problem which Korean Buddhism had to deal with thereafter.

In the final period of the Silla dynasty social turmoil and unrest prevailed. The authority of the central government collapsed due to the political struggle among the aristocrats of the capital, the poor administration of the kings, and the rise of powerful local warlords. There was a wide-spread belief among the people in geomancy which gave magico-geographical explanation to the rise and fall of political powers in the confused world. A Sŏn monk named Tosŏn (821-898) was a great expert in geomancy. Eventually order was restored out of the chaos by Wanggŏn, a local warlord who founded a new regime, the Koryŏ dynasty (918-1392).

Although the dynasty changed, the intimate relationship between Buddhism and the state continued as before. In fact, Buddhism became even more solidly established as the state religion of the new dynasty. Wanggŏng attributed his political success to the protecting power of Buddhas. He was also a believer in geomancy and constructed numerous Buddhist temples according to the geomantic principles with a view to curb the evil forces of the geomantically unfavorable places of the country. Following the example set by the first king, all the subsequent kings of the Koryŏ dynasty became ardent supporters of Buddhism. During the reign of King Kwangjong (949-975) monks' examination system was established by the state, paralleling the civil-service examination. The monks who passed the examination began to climb the ladder of clerical ranks, and those who did not pass the examination could not be appointed abbots of monasteries. The highest honor was given to the royal preceptor (*wangsa*) and the national preceptor (*kuksa*).

As Buddhism flourished under the patronage of the state, monasteries became financially wealthy. Contributions from the court and the nobles, the privilege of tax exemption, the practice of lending money at interest, and various other commercial factors provided their economic prosperity. It is not hard to imagine that this lured many into the *saṅgha* who had material motives. Despite its external flourishing, however, Koryŏ Buddhism lacked the inner vitality demonstrated by Silla Buddhism, and there was no creative development that would set Koryŏ Buddhism apart from that of Silla. But with the appearance of Ŭich'ŏn in the middle of the eleventh century Koryŏ Buddhism began to show its own dynamics. Born in 1055 A.D. the fourth son of King MUNJONG, he entered a Hwaŏm monastery at the age of eleven. At thirty-one he went to Sung China, where he met many illustrious Chinese masters of various schools and collected large amounts of Buddhist literature.

While in China, he showed a particular interest in T'ien-t'ai (Ch'önt'ae) philosophy, and back in Koryŏ he deliberately promoted this school with a view to put an end to the long-standing conflict between Sŏn and Kyo. Emphasizing the idea of *kyogwan kyömsu*, the parallel cultivation of doctrinal study and contemplation, he wanted to incorporate the existing Sŏn into his Ch'önt'ae School which, significantly, was also called a Sŏn order. Royal support and his own ability soon made Ch'önt'ae the most flourishing order of the time, and it looked as if he might actually have succeeded in realizing his dream. But he died at the age of forty-seven, too soon to give his ideal a more solid embodiment.

Eventually the Ch'önt'ae Order became simply another sect in an already crowded field, and the distance between Sŏn and Kyo remained as wide as ever. In fact, ÜICH'ÖN's effort only helped to strengthen the denominational self-consciousness on the part of other schools, particularly the Nine Mountains of Sŏn which felt threatened by the Ch'önt'ae Order. Hence they began to show a movement of consolidation under the new name of Chogyŏ Order. It was a monk by the name of CHINUL who gave a new ideology to this movement.<sup>4</sup> Deeply disenchanted with the corruption of the *saṅgha*, CHINUL (1158–1210) led an independent reform movement in a remote place from the capital. He was also distressed by the conflict between Sŏn and Kyo in Koryŏ *saṅgha*. But unlike ÜICH'ÖN, he wanted to embrace Kyo, particularly Hwaŏm, into Sŏn. Greatly influenced by the thoughts of the Chinese masters such as LI T'UNG-HSÜAN and TSUNG-MI (780–841), CHINUL established a unique comprehensive approach to Sŏn which balances sudden enlightenment with gradual cultivation and which allows a Hwaŏm method of sudden enlightenment as well as the method of *hwadu* (*kōan*) meditation. CHINUL's Sŏn thought, which he had expounded in many of his writings on Sŏn, became the foundation for the thought and practice of Korean Sŏn tradition down to the present day.

Koryŏ Buddhism is noted for the monumental production of the printing woodblocks of the *Tripitaka*. When the Liao forces from China invaded Korea and occupied the capital city, King HYŎNJONG (1009–1031) had to flee to the south, and according to a legend, he turned to Buddhism for protection. He vowed that he would have the entire *Tripitaka* carved on printing blocks if only the invaders were driven out from the country. Eleven days later, the invaders did indeed leave the capital, whereupon the king kept his vow. Thus the first Koryŏ woodblock edition of the *Tripitaka* was produced, a project that began around 1010 and took over forty years to complete. It was based upon the Shu-pen edition of the Sung dynasty. In 1090, ÜICH'ÖN published his *Sinp'yŏn chejong kyŏjang ch'ongnok* [A Newly Compiled General Catalogue of Collections in All Buddhist Schools] which listed works not included in the *Tripitaka*, 1010 titles in 4740 fascicles. Subsequently, this entire supplementary collection of scriptural commentaries were carved onto wooden blocks. But unfortunately both the printing blocks of the *Tripitaka* and those of the supplementary collection, which were housed in Puin Monastery near Taegu, were completely set to fire by the

invading Mongols in 1232. Then King KOJONG, who had fled to Kanghwa Island, made a vow similar to that of Hyōnjong, and plans were made again to carve the entire *Tripitaka* on woodblocks. Thus the second Koryō *Tripitaka* was made, taking fifteen years from 1236 to 1251. These woodblocks, about 80,000 in number and the oldest printing blocks in the world, are now preserved in Haein Monastery near Taegu.

Even after the Mongol invasions, Koryō Buddhism flourished as before externally. The Koryō court and aristocrats, now under the dominion of the Yüan China, continued to support the *saṅgha* which in turn provided them with various ritual services such as prayers for rain and good harvest and lecture assemblies on *sūtras* that emphasize the idea of protecting the state through Buddhism. While Koryō *saṅgha* was continuing to enjoy its secular privileges, in particular its enormous economic power, there began to develop a new attitude toward Buddhism among the Confucian scholars and officials, especially among the younger lesser bureaucrats. They viewed with alarm the breakdown of the *kongjōnje* (public field system), the basis of the Koryō economic order, and the ever-shrinking government revenues due to the sequestering of large land holdings by the powerful high officials in the capital and by the numerous influential Buddhist monasteries throughout the country. Contemporary with this was the introduction of Neo-Confucianism, which is critical toward Buddhism, into Koryō. Thus the voice of anti-Buddhist accusations began to be raised openly. Such accusations were heeded already by King KONGMIN (1351–1374), but the decisive measures were not taken until Yi SŎNG-GYE took power in 1389, representing a new social force that called for land reform, pro-Ming diplomacy (against the moribund Yüan), and the curbing of Buddhism. The anti-Buddhist accusations and measures were moderate at first, and mostly confined to economic aspects, but they grew harsher and were applied with dogmatic fervency as time went on.

Yi SŎNG-GYE, the founder of the Yi dynasty (1392–1910), was in some ways a pious Buddhist. But with the change of the social and economic structure and the shift of political power, it was inevitable that Buddhism, which had been so closely identified with the established system of the previous dynasty, should suffer losses. Thus Yi abolished the tax-exempt status of the Buddhist monasteries, banned construction of new monasteries, and initiated the monk-license system. King T'AEJONG (1400–1418) officially recognized only about 250 monasteries, confiscating the land and slaves of the others and laicizing many monks. In the capital only one monastery representing each sect was allowed to exist, and in the provinces only two, each representing Sōn and Kyo. Then King SEJONG (1418–1450) took even more drastic steps, regrouping the existing Five Schools of Kyo and Two Orders of Sōn<sup>5</sup> called *ogyo yangjong*, into simply the Two Orders of Sōn and Kyo, *sōn'gyo yangjong*; thus Sōn and Kyo became the names of Buddhist denominations. SEJONG even banned monks from the capital and mobilized them for various construction works. These drastic measures were calamitous for the Buddhist community, which had never known such persecution since Buddhism came to the land

about a millennium previously. King Sejo (1455–1468) was a devout Buddhist who lent support to the *saṅgha*, but after his death an even stronger reaction set in. King Songjong (1469–1494), a dedicated Confucianist, forbade people to become monks, and the notorious despot Yŏnsan'gun put an end to whatever official relationship the state still had with Buddhism by abolishing the monk examination altogether.

For a brief period during the reign of Myŏngjong (1545–1567), when his mother Queen Munjong took charge of governmental affairs behind the screen, Buddhism seemed to revive under her lavish patronage and under the able leadership of the monk named Pou. The monk examinations for Sŏn and Kyo were revived, and the various restrictions against Buddhist activities were removed. It was during this time that Hŭyŏng (1520–1604), regarded as the greatest figure of Yi-dynasty Buddhism, took the examination and began his religious career. Once again, a violent reaction against this temporary revival ensued; Pou was exiled to the Cheju Island and murdered there. Never again thereafter was Buddhism to see such a turn of fortune in Korean history until modern times.

Hŭyŏng, or the Great Master of Western Mountain (Sŏsan Taesa), was the central figure in the history of Yi-dynasty Buddhism. Most of the eminent Korean monks from the seventeenth century on, whether in Sŏn or Kyo, trace their spiritual lineage to either Hŭyŏng or PUHYU who, like SŌSAN, was also a prominent disciple of PUYONG Yŏnggwān (1485–1571). But the line of the former prevailed. Hŭyŏng's approach to Buddhism closely follows that established by CHINUL of Koryŏ. After Hŭyŏng, the distinction between Sŏn and Kyo, which had already become blurred by the abolition of the monks' examination system, grew even more tenuous, and Korean Buddhism became predominantly Sŏn-oriented with doctrinal Buddhism occupying lower position. Presently, a typical large Korean monastery has a hall for meditation, called *sŏnwŏn*, as well as a hall for doctrinal study, called *kangwŏn*. A monk or nun normally begins with a few years of doctrinal study and then moves over to the *sŏnwŏn* where he or she is engaged in Sŏn meditation under the guidance of a Sŏn master. The texts they study in the *kangwŏn* include *Tosŏ* (TSUNG-MI's *Ch'an-yŭan chu-ch'ŭan-chi tu-hsŭ*), *Chŏryo* (CHINUL's work), *Sŏnyo* (*Kao-feng ho-shang Ch'an-yao*), *Sŏchang* (TA-HUI's letters in *Ta-hui yŭ-lu*), *Kisillon* (*The Awakening of Faith in Mahāyāna*), *Kŭmganggyŏng* (*Diamond Sutra*), *Nuŏngm-gyŏng* (*Leng-yen ching*), *Wŏn'gakkgyŏng* (*Yŭan-chŭeh ching*), and the *Hwaŏmggyŏng* (*Hua-yen ching*).

From the end of the nineteenth century Korean Buddhism came under the increasing Japanese influence as was the nation as a whole. As a gesture of goodwill, SANO, a Japanese priest of the Nichirenshu, recommended the government to lift the ban imposed on the Korean monks to enter the capital city. His recommendation was accepted, and the ban, which had been in effect for over 400 years, was lifted in 1895. Many Japanese Buddhist sects vied with each other to absorb Korean temples into them, but they failed. The *saṅgha* became divided into two factions: Wŏnjong and Imjejong. The former was the pro-Japanese group led by YI HOE-GWANG, and the latter was

anti-Japanese group led by HAN YOUNG-UN. The Japanese Government-General in Seoul decided to put Korean Buddhism under direct political control. Thus it promulgated the ordinance on temple affairs in 1911 according to which thirty "head temples" were to be in charge of the "branch temples" in their districts. Most of the appointed heads of the temples led a very dissolute life and became arbitrary in handling temple affairs. They wore Japanese-style mantles instead of traditional Korean robes and began to take wives like Japanese priests. Despite oppositions by some monks, regulations on temple administration were revised to allow monks to marry. It was this emergence of married monks that eventually became the source of bitter struggle between the married monks (*taech'ö'sŭng*) and the celibate monks (*pigusŭng*) in the period following Korean liberation from the Japanese rule (1945), leading to the split of Korean *saṅgha* into two major groups: the Chogyejong of celibate monks which occupies the majority and the T'aegojong of married monks, the second largest denomination.

Despite the persecution it suffered during the five hundred years of Yi dynasty and despite the effort by the Japanese to deprive it of its spirit and freedom, Korean Buddhism has survived. Not merely has it survived, it is flourishing today. There are more than ten thousand monks and nuns who rise up at three o'clock everyday for the morning service and live their lives in purity, and there are thousands of Buddhist temples, large and small, scattered all over the country which continue to draw millions of devout lay men and women. With its due pride in the rich cultural and spiritual contributions it has made to Korean people, it is at the same time seeking to find new ways to utilize its vast reservoir of tradition to meet the challenges of modern life.

<sup>1</sup> PETER H. LEE, (trans.) *Lives of Eminent Korean Monks: The Haedong kosŭng-jŏn* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969), p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 78-79. I left out the Chinese characters from LEE's text. It is very interesting to note that according to LEE's footnotes, both KWISAN and CH'WIHANG died in their campaign against Paekche and were granted posthumous titles by King CHINP'YŎNG.

<sup>3</sup> For a brief discussion on the Buddhist patriotism of Silla monks before the unification, see LEE's introduction, pp. 13-17, of the above book.

<sup>4</sup> Recently, two English books on CHINUL have appeared. One is *The Korean Approach to Zen: The Collected Works of Chinul* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983), trans. by ROBERT E. BUSWELL Jr., and the other is *Chinul, The Founder of the Korean Sŏn Tradition* (Berkeley: Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series, 1984) by HEE-SUNG KEEL.

<sup>5</sup> The Five Schools of Kyo at the time were: Hwaŏm, Chaŭn (Fa-hsiang), Chungsin (The Esoteric Buddhism), Ch'ongnam (The Vinaya School), and the Sihŭng (unclear). The Two Orders of Sŏn were: Chogye and Ch'önt'ae (T'ien-t'ai).