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Companion to East and
Inner Asian Buddhism**

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Mario Poceski

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Preface and Acknowledgments

Together with its companion volume, *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to South and Southeast Asian Buddhism*, this book is meant to serve as a comprehensive survey of Buddhism that incorporates the most recent results of academic research in the field of Buddhist studies. Taken together, the two books cover the whole sweep of Buddhist history, from the time of the Buddha until the present, and offer a variety of scholarly perspectives on a wide range of texts, traditions, doctrines, practices, and institutions. By tracing key historical trajectories, examining the growth of diverse traditions, and surveying the profusion of philosophical systems and soteriological paradigms subsumed under the broad category of Buddhism, the two volumes highlight the extraordinary richness and variety of localized expressions of Buddhist religiosity. Moreover, as the various chapters examine the evolution of assorted theoretical elaborations and applied modalities of the Buddhist dharma, in relation to constantly changing social milieus and cultural predicaments, the books also contribute to the general study of religion, in part by problematizing some of the prevalent theoretical templates, distinctions, and assumptions that influence academic research.

When the publisher first approached me with the idea of contributing a volume to the Wiley Blackwell Companions to Religion series, the initial idea was to do a single volume on Buddhism. However, it soon became clear that, even with the hefty size of the volumes included in the series, there is simply too much ground to cover for a single volume. Because of the diverse historical, textual, and cultural heritages of Buddhism, and the broadness of the field of Buddhist studies, there is a profusion of material that needs to be included in order to provide a reasonably adequate coverage. Consequently, I suggested to divide the whole project into two separate but related volumes, which the publisher accepted enthusiastically. We decided to have one volume focusing on Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia, and another one on Buddhism in East and Inner (or Central) Asia.

Given the scope of the project and my other professional commitments, I also proposed to bring aboard a second editor, whose area(s) of expertise will complement mine (Chinese Buddhism being my primary area of research). We were fortunate that Michael Zimmerman, a specialist in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism, accepted the invitation to edit the

volume on Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia. The two editors have worked together to make sure that the two volumes are carefully structured and integrated, so that they can effectively function as a set. That kind of arrangement was meant to facilitate cross-referencing and help avoid repetitious coverage of common topics. Nevertheless, each volume is intended to be self-contained and able to stand on its own.

The various chapters included in this volume represent a variety of approaches and viewpoints deployed in the field of Buddhist studies. There are also contributions by scholars whose main areas of expertise are in other academic fields, such as art history, literature, and history. Great efforts were expended on ensuring that the book provides a fairly comprehensive and balanced treatment of Buddhism as it developed historically—as well as the ways it presently exists—in various parts of East and Inner Asia. On the whole, the introduction and the twenty-five chapters provide an informative, well-organized, and wide-ranging coverage of the histories, texts, traditions, practices, and other relevant areas of Inner and East Asian Buddhism. They also exemplify the present state of the field in the academic study of Buddhism, albeit with a bit more focus on the way it is constituted in North America (in contrast to the companion volume, which has more contributions by European scholars). However, given the vastness of the subject matter and the specific format of the series, the book does not aim at encyclopedic or all-inclusive coverage of Buddhism.

Effective mapping of broad field(s) such as Inner and East Asian Buddhism—especially within the restrictive scope of dividing the whole area into a fixed number of sections (or chapters) of roughly equal size—involves extensive analysis, some fine-tuned balancing acts, and attention to all sorts of details. Given the scope and complexity of the project, as well as a host of practical matters that accompany the production of this kind of volume, there are inevitably certain gaps, and it is not difficult to come up with additional topics that could have been included. Some of these omissions are for reasons of space and related practical considerations, as well as other contingencies that the editor had no control over.

Some seeming absences also have to do with the coordinated coverage of the two companions to Buddhism. For instance, in this volume there is no dedicated chapter on theory and method in Buddhist studies because we decided to include that chapter in the companion volume on South and Southeast Asian Buddhism. Similarly, there is a chapter on Buddhism in Europe but none on Buddhism in America because the second topic is covered in the other volume.

The book uses standard transliteration systems for Tibetan and various East Asian languages, reflecting common scholarly customs in the USA and other English-speaking countries. Notwithstanding the editor's efforts to standardize style and usage, given the scope of the volume and the vastness of its subject matter, as well as the notable variations in scholarly practice, there are occasional inconsistencies, for instance in the renderings of names and titles of classical texts.

I would like to thank all scholars who contributed to this volume, along with Michael Zimmerman who kindly agreed to undertake the editing of the companion volume and provided feedback on the Introduction. I also received valuable suggestions regarding the Introduction from Beata Grant, and on the initial book prospectus from Jason Neelis. In addition, I would like to thank the editorial team at Blackwell for their excel-

lent work and high level of professionalism, especially Rebecca Harkin, Georgina Coleby, Bridget Jennings, and Karen Raith, as well as Fiona Screen for her excellent copy editing. Special thanks to Andrew Humphries, who in his role as a commissioning editor for religion initially approached me with the idea of producing a volume on Buddhism, prior to his departure from Blackwell Publishing.

Furthermore, I appreciate the responses I received from my graduate students at the University of Florida, who read and discussed several draft chapters from the book as part of my graduate seminar on Buddhist traditions. To a large extent, it was the lack of suitable text(s) for seminars of that kind that prompted me to accept the task of editing this volume, which I hope others will find useful in the context of graduate education. I would also like to acknowledge the positive feedback I received from the six anonymous scholars who served as external evaluators (five of them commented on the original prospectus for the two volumes, which I wrote, and one reviewed the final manuscript for this volume). Finally, I would like to thank my wife Hiroko Poceski for her love, patience, and support.

Mario Poceski
Hamburg, August 2013

Introduction

Past and Present Intersections

Mario Poceski

Buddhism has a long, rich, and multifaceted history. Over the millennia Buddhist beliefs, doctrines, practices, and institutions have influenced or interacted with other facets of social and cultural life in many areas of Asia. Accordingly, they are very much integral parts of the broader history of Asia. Buddhism is also one of the major religions of the modern world, not only with traditional strongholds in various parts of South, Southeast, and East Asia, but also with a global presence and a growing influence in many other areas of the world. This volume covers both the past and the present, and tries to convey the profuse diversity of Buddhist life and thought as they have manifested at various times and places, with a focus on East and Inner (or Central) Asian forms of Buddhism. Given that we are dealing with a religious tradition with a very long and complex history—in which communal remembrances or creative reinventions of the past are of utmost importance—naturally the past occupies more pages than the present. We have, however, made every effort to ensure that modern developments are afforded adequate coverage.

The Buddhist past is expressed or observed in a number of different ways, including the lives and teachings of ancient sages (or villains), the mores and ideals of religious communities, the contents and transmissions of canonical texts (and other relevant sources), and the assorted forms of political or economic activity that have influenced the religion at different epochs and locations. There are also the colorful rituals and related cultic practices that often echo transcendental principles as well as prosaic concerns, the rules for monastic congregations and other aspects of institutional religion, the visual representations of hosts of Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and other deities, and much more. Much the same can also be said of the present, although its study allows us to make use of additional sources of data and different methodological approaches, such as ethnographic research.

This volume covers Buddhism in a broad sense as it developed and is practiced in Inner and East Asia, and looks at many of its constitutive elements from both historical and contemporary perspectives. Its combination of general surveys and somewhat more detailed analyses of specific topics will hopefully make it useful to a broad range of readers, from students and general readers wishing to learn about various aspects of Buddhism—its history, traditions, doctrines, practices, texts, institutions, artistic representations, and present-day actualities—to specialists in Buddhism, religious studies, and other academic fields. The chapters included in this book present a variety of scholarly views and approaches, covering major historical trajectories as well as exploring contemporary realities. While an attempt has been made to integrate all of the chapters into a wide-ranging but coherent whole, each chapter can also stand on its own. Consequently, readers have the option of reading the entire volume or going directly to specific chapters.

In addition to providing a wealth of information about Buddhism, this volume is intended to facilitate fruitful reflection and discussion, expand intellectual horizons, stimulate interest in the study of Buddhism, and open up further areas of scholarly enquiry. Readers are invited to ponder the scholarly accounts or stories about Buddhism contained in its chapters, with a hope that its contents will also stimulate interest in exploring or learning about additional themes or narratives that, due to various constraints, have not been told or covered. In that sense, the volume is a reflection of the current state of Buddhist studies as an academic field or area of study, although it also provides glimpses into future areas of research or emerging theoretical paradigms.

Past and Present

Over the centuries Buddhism has exerted numerous and far-reaching influences on many of the great civilizations of Asia. Prominent vestiges of those influences can be seen in numerous examples of monumental architecture, timeless works of art, entrancing literary narratives, and other elements of cultural patrimony. Buddhist history, teachings, traditions, and artistic representations are, among other things, indispensable elements for understanding the complex and fascinating histories of important parts of the world, including the (re)emerging world powers of China and India. In a sense, they constitute key components or building blocks of larger civilizational patterns, which have shaped the general course of human history. In addition to being an important part of a common human heritage that provides significant links with the past, as described below, Buddhism remains an important presence in the contemporary world, a diverse tradition that is an integral part of the global religious landscape.

In the ongoing quest for arriving at a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of a multidimensional religious tradition such as Buddhism, we need to carefully study both the past and the present, in their totality and from a variety of angles or perspectives. It is sometimes fruitful to study the past and the present in relation to each other: the past inheres in the present, often in ways that might not be readily obvious. Therefore, the present cannot be understood without recourse to the past. At the same time,

it is imprudent to approach or reconstitute the past primarily in terms of present-day values, suppositions, or realities.

The same can be said of the ingenious or utilitarian use of the past in order to justify or obfuscate certain elements of present-day reality, including peculiar mores, ideological suppositions, or religious institutions. In the religious sphere the past often remains a contested territory open to a variety of interpretations that to some extent reflect the distinct agendas of various parties, including scholars, members of religious groups, politicians, and others. (In a way, much of the same can also be said of the present predicament.) To a degree, the tensions that are refracted via such contestations point to overlapping issues of authority, power, and identity. When it comes to understanding and interpreting a religious tradition such as Buddhism, there is tangible potential for disputes over who has the proper authority and expertise to define or explain the religion, which at times might place scholars and practitioners on opposing sides.

While professional academics do not have a monopoly on these kinds of intellectual endeavors, the past also does not belong to present-day groups or communities, who often bring with them inherent biases, ideological assumptions, and self-serving agendas. Perhaps we all—inside and outside of the academia—need to keep in mind that, notwithstanding our efforts at scholarly objectivity or self-reflection, we are all, in a sense, prisoners of our time and culture, and we operate within frameworks that impose all sorts of limitations to our capacity for knowledge and understanding. We can never quite exhaust the depth or complexity of the topics we discuss, and even with all the benefits of hindsight, our vantage point is not a privileged one. Additionally, we might want to remind ourselves that we should appreciate and study the past for its own sake, and on its own terms, perhaps out of intellectual curiosity, but also with the aim of deepening and expanding our common human knowledge.

A Living Tradition

In addition to being the dominant religion in a number of Asian countries (such as Thailand, Burma, Sri Lanka, and Japan), or an influential one in others (China and Malaysia, for instance), with the ongoing growth of globalizing trends Buddhism is now a truly worldwide religion. In a globalized world that seems to be constantly shrinking, there are now notable Buddhist presences in many parts of the planet outside of Asia, including Europe and the Americas. For instance, if a person living or visiting Brazil was interested in Buddhist practice, she might consider participating in a meditation retreat (*sesshin*) at Mosteiro Zen Morro da Vargem (Zenkoji), a Sōtō Zen monastery located in Ibiraçu, in the state of Espírito Santo (for Zen in Brazil, see Rocha 2006). Before going there, she would be able to go online to find out about the monastery's programs for children, the elderly, students, teachers, businessmen, ecologists, and artists. In a similar vein, it is possible for anyone to attend a repentance ceremony, or a number of other rituals organized by Foguang shan, a large Buddhist organization headquartered in Taiwan but with branches all over the world, including Nanhua temple in Bronkhorstpruit, South Africa, Chung Tian Temple in Queensland, Australia,

and Guangming Temple in Orlando, Florida (for studies that deal with modern Buddhism, see Madsen 2007; Chandler 2004; and Learman 2005).

As they become integral parts of the local religious landscapes in places that are far removed from their original Asian homelands, these and other Buddhist traditions are adding unique elements and new textures to the cultural and social lives of their local communities. In the process of their growth, they are opening up fresh avenues of spiritual exploration, philosophical reflection, social engagement, identity formation, or esthetic sensibility. At the same time, as they negotiate the sometimes delicate relationship between the public sphere and the private realm, they also raise assorted financial, legal, and political issues, and elicit a variety of opinions and responses within their host societies.

When looking at the religious landscape of contemporary Asia, one can see that Buddhism is facing all kinds of problems or challenges, including governmental control or suppression (e.g. Vietnam, Malaysia, and China), as well as political or ethnic conflicts (e.g. Sri Lanka and Southern Thailand). Buddhism also continues to be an integral part of societies that are still experiencing serious economic troubles or political transitions (e.g. Burma and Cambodia). On the other hand, in Asian countries such as Japan, Buddhism is often perceived, especially in its traditional forms, as a sclerotic remnant of a bygone era, with limited relevance to modern life. There are also places where Buddhism is experiencing various degrees of resurgence or revival, albeit not without all sorts of complications, for instance in Taiwan, Singapore, and Korea (perhaps we can also add China, Vietnam, and Malaysia to this group, notwithstanding the aforementioned problems), or is deeply imbedded in the sociopolitical system as a national religion (e.g. Burma and Thailand).

As a living tradition characterized by an astounding diversity and a seemingly endless capacity for adaptation, Buddhism continues to evolve in the course of its encounters with a variety of cultural milieus and social conditions. As has been the case throughout most of its history, Buddhism continues to experience numerous vicissitudes and challenges brought about by diverse internal and external factors. That includes the aforementioned host of social, economic, political, and cultural issues, as well as the development of new technologies and shifts in demographic patterns. Presumably in the future Buddhist movements and traditions will continue to go through all sorts of vagaries and adjustments, including patterns of decline, revival, and stasis, as they have done over the last twenty-five centuries (or so), but it is fair to assume that Buddhism will be with us for the foreseeable future.

When we look at the contemporary religious situation in broader terms, we can assert with fair certainty that, for better or worse, the proponents of the secularization theory were mistaken when they predicted a modern world in which religion, with its supposedly dated values and superstitious beliefs, would disappear (or at least experience an irrevocable decline). According to this sort of one-sided narrative, which developed within a peculiar ideological milieu infused with Eurocentric attitudes and untenable assumptions, religion was supposed to be unable to resist the momentous impact of rationality and the march of human progress, fading away in a modern world dominated by scientific thinking and technological advancement. However, recent developments in most parts of the globe have come to highlight the continuing vitality

and central importance of religion in human life. Consequently, making sense of Buddhism, as well as other religions, should be an essential part of our efforts at understanding the world we live in, with all of its confounding complexity, and its enduring capacity for beauty and ugliness, wisdom and stupidity, goodness and depravity.

The Ancient Sage and his Disciples

According to tradition, the story of Buddhism began in northern India some twenty-five centuries ago, with the life and teachings of the Buddha (ca. 480–400 BCE?). The precise details about the Buddha's historical existence and the formation of his early community are shrouded in mystery, as much of the information comes from later accounts that contain all kinds of literary embellishments, allegorical motifs, or mythopoeic tropes. In time, the scope of narratives centered on the Buddha was expanded to also include mythical stories about the Buddha's past lives, exemplified by the Jātakas that to this day remain a prominent part of popular Buddhist lore. Since the various teachings attributed to the Buddha, who in Buddhist literature is often referred to as Śākyamuni ("sage of the Śākya"), were not put into writing for several centuries after his passing away, at the earliest, we also have no way of knowing the actual contents and exact parameters of his teachings.

Now and again, Buddhist scholars and devotees have engaged in searches for the original Buddhism purportedly propounded by the historical Buddha. Some have even made dubious claims about being able to reconstitute "what the Buddha taught" (for instance, see Rahula 1974, a popular book which is still widely used as a classroom textbook). While research into the history of early Buddhism remains an important area of academic study, for the most part contemporary scholars acknowledge that the search for origins is an inherently problematic undertaking, often based on untenable suppositions and questionable uses of sources. It is especially unfortunate when this search for a "pure" or original Buddhism leads to a dismissal or neglect of later forms of Buddhism, including those surveyed in this volume, which developed beyond the religion's homeland on the Indian subcontinent.

Within many communities the image of the historical Buddha has been, and still remains, a potent symbol of perfect spiritual awakening and unconstrained freedom, as well as a host of sublime qualities associated with the great sage, such as wisdom and compassion. That hallowed image also serves as a source of guidance and inspiration that, among other things, provides a template about how to lead a morally upright and spiritually fulfilling life. Nonetheless, it is fair to say that, for the most part, in its comprehensive version the story of Buddhism is about the arrays of beliefs, texts, doctrines, traditions, artistic representations, practices, and institutions created by generations of people with varied backgrounds, who considered themselves to be followers or disciples of the Buddha. In other words, as is the case with many of the world religions, Buddhism was mostly created and transmitted by the disciples, not the original master. In that sense, perhaps we can say that most of Buddhism is in various ways inspired rather than formulated by the Buddha, notwithstanding the significant foundations laid down by the ancient sage and his earliest followers.

Accordingly, the main builders of the grand edifice we call Buddhism were countless “Buddhists”—as well as many others to whom we might not necessarily attach that label—who lived at various times and places. As befitting a great religious tradition that influenced large parts of the world, these people came from all sorts of backgrounds: Mongolian or Japanese, monastic or lay, rich or poor, saintly or sinful, wise or foolish, famous or unknown. To tell the story of Buddhism in a manner that does justice to its historical richness and complexity requires that we find a way to take the beliefs and actions of all of them into account, with sensitivity to the variety of contexts within which they engaged with Buddhism. That might be a bit more challenging, perhaps, but also preferable to narrower approaches centered on the study of classical texts or abstruse philosophical discourses, which purportedly contain valuable pieces of information or convey the essence of Buddhism, as envisioned by some of the pioneering figures in the academic study of Buddhism (dated approaches that, alas, are still pursued in many places).

With the historical growth of Buddhism, and the continuing evolution of Buddhist creeds and ideals, the manner in which the Buddha was remembered or imagined underwent various changes. This was accompanied by an ongoing reconceptualization of the meaning and significance of Buddhahood, which is reflected in a number of Mahāyāna doctrines, including the doctrine of the three bodies of a Buddha (*trikāya*). There appeared also a proliferation of narrative depictions of celestial Buddhas such as Vairocana and Akṣobhya. Together with a host of celestial bodhisattvas and other deities, these Buddhas came to populate a rich pantheon that anchored profuse forms of cultic practices and other forms of popular piety, which addressed diverse salvific needs and utilitarian concerns.

Throughout the history of Buddhism we can trace notable shifts in devotional attitudes and practices. In a number of instances that involves a change of focus or attention away from the historical Buddha, and a redirection of religious faith and devotional adulation toward other religious figures. For instance, in the Pure Land tradition that during the late medieval period came to flourish throughout East Asia, the main object of worship and devotion is Amitābha, the celestial Buddha of infinite light associated with Sukhāvatī, a mythical pure land located in the western direction. This kind of idea also came to influence popular beliefs and attitudes about the afterlife, with rebirth in Amitābha’s pure land becoming the primary religious goal of many Buddhists. The move away from the historical Buddha and his teachings is also observable in the Nichiren tradition of Japanese Buddhism, whose founder, the controversial priest Nichiren (1222–1282)—who among other things promoted persecution of the various Buddhist sects that existed in thirteenth-century Japan—is widely worshiped as the real Buddha of the present age.

Fluid Boundaries and Expansive Frameworks

From a broader academic perspective, the study of Buddhism is not about a nebulous or enduring essence, nor is it about a narrowly demarcated tradition established on the basis of a particular canon, doctrine, or lineage. At some level, as Bodhidharma,

the putative founder of the Chan tradition in China, supposedly said to Emperor Wu (r. 502–549) of the Liang Dynasty (according to a presumably apocryphal story), “it is only vast emptiness,” with nothing to grasp or hold on to. Fortunately, we are also told that emptiness gives rise to all sorts of forms and appearances, the traces of which, in the case of Buddhism, provide us with manifold avenues of ongoing intellectual enquiry.

Within the context of a volume such as this one, the study of Buddhism, with all of its historical frameworks and theoretical distinctions, involves critical enquiry into changing values, beliefs, aspirations, and actions, as manifested in the individual and communal lives of Inner and East Asian people, past and present, especially those who believed or claimed to follow the teachings and precepts of Buddhism. It is also about the texts they translated, wrote, or commented upon; the ritual observances they engaged in; the philosophical systems they formulated or ruminated about; the ethical codes they observed (or transgressed); the contemplative techniques they deployed or talked about; the deities they worshiped and beseeched; the art they sponsored or produced; the histories they created; the sectarian squabbles and power grabs they engaged in, and much more.

Given that Buddhism has never existed in isolation or had fixed boundaries, its study also involves critical analyses of the societies and cultures where Buddhist activities have taken place, or where Buddhism has established an institutional presence. That brings to the fore other factors as well, such as political power structures or systems of economic production. We also need to add to the mix other religious traditions that over the centuries, with changing patterns of geographic spread and diffusions, came to share common social and cultural spaces with Buddhism. That includes consideration of the modes of interaction between Buddhism and other religions such as Daoism, Confucianism, Shinto, and Christianity, which entailed creative crosspollinations as well as hostile competitions.

Plethora of Traditions

After establishing its initial presence in what is now northeastern India and southern Nepal, by the end of the reign of King Aśoka (r. ca. 269–232 BCE), widely acclaimed as one of India’s greatest emperors and the most prominent patron of Buddhism, the burgeoning religion spread to most of the Indian subcontinent. Aśoka’s Maurya dynasty ruled a vast area, from present-day Afghanistan in the west to Bangladesh in the east, and from what is now Central Asia in the north to the southern part of India. From that time onward, we can speak of Buddhism as a pan-Indian religion, as well as a missionary religion that over time spread to other parts of Asia. Much of the outward growth of Buddhism in various parts of Asia was linked with long-distance trade. Major trade networks became key conduits for the diffusion of Buddhism into Central Asia, from where it was transmitted to China, and then to the rest of East Asia.

By the end of the first millennium of its history, Buddhism had been introduced into a great variety of cultural and geographical regions, establishing its presence in much of Asia, from what is now Iran in the west all the way to Japan at the eastern edge of the vast continent. Before long, Buddhism also found its way to Tibet, where after initial

tribulations it became firmly established as a central presence in Tibetan life and a key source of cultural identity. Accordingly, we can talk of Buddhism gradually becoming one of the world's great religions, with important ramifications for Asian history. As part of that process, most elements that constitute Buddhism underwent significant transformations, and the religion assumed a variety of localized forms or expressions.

Over the centuries, as it spread across much of the Asian continent, Buddhism gave rise to rich arrays of doctrines, practices, texts, and traditions. Most of them were ascribed to or linked with the historical Buddha, as evidenced in the numerous scriptures that claim to contain records of his teachings. These include the voluminous canonical sources produced by the various schools of early Buddhism, which in the scholarly literature are sometimes referred to as Mainstream schools, as well as the numerous scriptures produced by the Mahāyāna and the Tantric movements. Upon closer scrutiny, notwithstanding efforts to impute a sense of intrinsic unity or internal coherence to Buddhism, there are powerful centrifugal forces, and on the whole Buddhism is more characterized by diversity rather than unity. Given the variety of texts, approaches, and traditions that are subsumed under the general category of Buddhism, it might be more appropriate to think about the religion in plural terms. Namely, it is helpful to remember that we are dealing with a multiplicity of Buddhisms, each constituting a valid topic of study in its own right, as well as in relation to the rest.

Some of these traditions emerged and flourished in India, but many of them developed in other parts of Asia. In most instances, their initial formation and subsequent transformation were shaped by convoluted combinations of diverse factors and influences. Generally, that involved inner dialectical or developmental processes (doctrinal, institutional, etc.), as well as responses to external pressures or influences (political, economic, etc.). As Buddhism spread to various parts of Central and East Asia, it came in contact with various cultures and became integrated into different types of local societies. It also adapted to diverse kinds of political and economic systems.

The remarkable ability of Buddhism to adjust to a variety of social predicaments, and to engage or absorb assorted elements from diverse cultures, was to a substantial extent facilitated by its decentralized institutional structures. The monastic order, which at most times and places occupied a central position and played a key role in the spread of Buddhism, lacked unified ecclesiastical structures and a central source of authority. From early on, this helped unleash notable centrifugal forces, which are reflected in the proliferation of various schools, movements, or traditions.

Another factor that contributed to the profusion of Buddhist traditions was the lack of a rigid or narrow form of scriptural authority, along the lines of what we find in other religions, such as Christianity and Islam. This in part reflected a general rejection of dogmatism, and a disinclination to delineate orthodoxy in overly restrictive terms. Nonetheless, that does not mean that Buddhism was (or is) immune to the development of fundamentalist attitudes. Instead of affixing narrow parameters to their canon, as the Christians did by the fifth century—after the initial recognition of Christianity as official religion in the Roman Empire during the reign of Emperor Constantine (r. 306–337)—for a very long time various kinds of Buddhists engaged in prolific processes of scriptural production.

Over the centuries Buddhist scriptures and other types of canonical texts were produced not only in India, but also elsewhere, including China. Pertinent examples include the apocryphal texts composed in China that were presented as translations of Indian scriptures, purportedly containing teachings given by the Buddha himself. This sort of protracted and somewhat haphazard process of canon formation was facilitated by the widespread embrace of the notion of an open canon. Different Buddhist schools created their own canons, sometimes with substantial overlaps among them. Some canons, like the Pāli canon of the Theravāda school, eventually stabilized and after a lengthy process of canonization achieved a point of closure (see Collins 1990). Others, however, including the Chinese and Tibetan Buddhist canons described in more detail later in this volume, remained open and came to circulate in a number of versions and editions.

Most of the regional flavors or peculiar forms of Buddhism reflect protracted processes of acculturation and indigenous development, which operate at a number of different levels. Often they echo ingenious responses or creative elaborations, grounded in native values, symbols, or systems of meaning. These involve reinterpretation or recasting of received Buddhist mores, texts, and teachings, as well as the production of new religious elements or traditions. Some of these later traditions, like Chan in China or Dge-lugs-pa in Tibet, produced voluminous new texts and novel teachings, and devised alternative sources of religious authority. They also brought about other notable transformations into the local religious landscapes, including changes in monastic life and practice. In so doing, they made their own imprints on the broader historical trajectories of Buddhism, as well as on the societies in which they flourished.

Parenthetically, the term Buddhism—used widely and featured prominently in the title of this volume—is a fairly late designation created by Europeans. It is without precise analogies in classical Buddhist literature, and in its original usage the term carried a host of parochial Western notions about the nature and meaning of “religion” (yet another Western term fraught with all sort of problems). Notwithstanding some of the baggage and the potential misconceptions that come with the term, given its common usage and heuristic value, using it need not be overly problematic, as long as we are aware of its limitations and avoid the temptation to reify what, at some level, is a somewhat vague abstraction or, as classical Buddhist texts would put it, a conventional designation devoid of any intrinsic reality. We might also want to be mindful of the problems associated with indiscriminate attempts to set inflexible parameters or define what is included in (or excluded from) the general category of Buddhism.

While there are interesting facets of the historical development and current usage of the conventional and somewhat nebulous construct we call “Buddhism,” in the present context they are not nearly as important, or problematic, as the analogous issues related to the hotly contested deployment of the term “Hinduism.” As pointed out in the volume on Hinduism in this same series, edited by Gavin Flood, there is no scholarly consensus as to what Hinduism is. Some scholars (as well as politically oriented proponents of distinct Hindu identity) assert that we are dealing with a single religion, with a discrete essence that manifests in a variety of forms, while others argue that we are dealing with a diversity of religious traditions that share some common features, but lack a fixed core. Still others, however, contend that what we are dealing with is a vast array of diverse beliefs and practices inappropriately subsumed under a

single religious category, (mis)labeled Hinduism under the influence of Western colonial power (Flood 2003: 1–5; see also 21–63).

Diversity of Approaches and Perspectives

As noted earlier, from the perspective of humanistic scholarship Buddhism has no singular form or ascertainable essence, nor can we talk about it in terms of a distinct system with clearly defined boundaries. Buddhist beliefs, texts, traditions, and the like developed within the context of specific cultural backgrounds and were molded by particular social milieus. Their contours and the meanings ascribed to them also changed over time, often in the course of their involvements or interactions with other areas of human life. Accordingly, the study of Buddhism ideally implies awareness of a host of varied phenomena, including the centripetal and centrifugal forces that shaped the broad historical trajectories of Buddhism. It also involves study of a multitude of related things, including relevant aspects of politics, economy, law, literature, society, and art.

Given the complexity and excitingly broad scope of Buddhism, there is ample space for the utilization of a variety of approaches in the study of Buddhist-related phenomena. Within the context of Western—especially American—academy, this frequently involves the application of theoretical models and methodological approaches grounded in a variety of (more or less) established academic disciplines, such as religious studies, philology, philosophy, history, cultural studies, sociology, political science, anthropology, various forms of area studies (Chinese studies, Korean studies, Tibetan studies, etc.), archeology, art history, epigraphy, architecture, and literary studies. Specific methods and theories might have their peculiar strengths or inherent limitations, and their applicability varies in light of the issues or topics being studied, as well as the availability of relevant sources.

Over the centuries a number of Buddhist writers, intellectuals, and devotees have engaged in fairly sophisticated and wide-ranging reflections on various aspects of their religion, including its history, systems of doctrine, and soteriological paradigms. More often than not they have been monks, although there are also notable examples of contributions by laymen, and even a few by lay and monastic women. This sort of scholarly activity continues to this day. It would thus be remiss of us not to mention the significant contributions made by individuals that locate themselves within the tradition, notwithstanding some of the inherent limitations of the normative approaches they often espouse.

The roots of the academic study of Buddhism, in the modern sense, go back to the nineteenth century and are linked with the European origins of the comparative study of religion. In that context, one of the most prominent figures is Max Müller (1823–1900), a German-born philologist active in England, best known for his study of religion and mythology, with a special focus on Sanskrit texts and Indian religion. Müller is particularly recognized for his advocacy of a distinctive “scientific” approach to the study of religion, modeled on the natural sciences that at the time were establishing their dominance. Like many of his Victorian contemporaries, he was also interested in

tracing the origin of religion, and subscribed to the view that it was possible to devise a general scholarly theory of the origin and function of religion.

A central part of Müller's positivist approach was the close study and translation of classical texts such as the *Rigveda*. He and his followers believed that these ancient texts contained essential messages and preset meanings inextricably linked to the historical contexts that produced them. He was also convinced that the ageless mysteries encapsulated in the texts were directly accessible to the astute scholar with the necessary philological expertise. According to this paradigm, the study of a religion such as Hinduism, as well as of other aspects of Indian civilization, was primarily based on careful translation and scrutiny of classical texts and presupposed a firm grounding in Sanskrit (for Müller's life, ideas, and writings, see Stone 2002; Bosch 2002; and Sharpe 1986: 35–46).

The nineteenth century saw a growth of European interest in Buddhism, facilitated in part by the colonial expansion of European powers into Asia. This found some resonance in elite intellectual circles, as evidenced by the presence of Buddhist themes or concepts in the writings of prominent philosophers such as Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860) and Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) (for early European misconceptions about Buddhism, especially its characterization as a nihilistic religion, see Droit 2003). Dominant trends in the early study of Buddhism, which reflected the intellectual horizons, religious backgrounds, and cultural suppositions of the (mostly) European scholars, included an emphasis on philology and textual study, especially the study of scriptures; the privileging of doctrine (or philosophy) over actual everyday practice; and an overemphasis on Indian (or more broadly South Asian) forms of Buddhism. Some of these trends exemplify the impact of Christian, especially Protestant, assumptions about the nature and study of religion, such as the primacy of scripture (Schopen 1997: 1–22). Others are reflections of historical contingencies, including the legacy of colonialism and the availability of particular texts or canonical collections. For instance, scholarly interest in the study of the Pāli canon in England during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries can be linked to the British colonial rule in Sri Lanka and Burma.

Slowly but surely, earlier scholarly attitudes and predispositions gave way, to some degree, to different theoretical and methodological concerns, along with refocusing of scholarly attention to different sets of themes, issues, or traditions. As is to be expected, with the passage of time the study of Buddhism grew in both volume and sophistication, although this was often accompanied with overspecialization and concomitant inability to deal with the larger picture. Some of the more recent foci or orientations in Buddhist studies include a growing interest in the examination of material culture, the rituals and everyday practices of contemporary Buddhists, the social organization of Buddhist communities, questions related to women, sexuality and gender, and the intersections of Buddhism and politics. Recent decades have also seen an increase of interest in Tibetan and East Asian forms of Buddhism. The first of these, often presented under the (somewhat questionable) designation of Indo-Tibetan Buddhism, is to a large degree influenced by the contemporary popularity of Tibetan forms of Buddhism in the West, although the increased availability of relevant textual sources is also a contributing factor.

The increase in the number of scholars working in various areas of Buddhist studies (and related fields) has brought about notable shifts in specialization. With the growth of Buddhist studies programs or subfields in various academic departments, especially at American universities, scholars are increasingly trained as specialists in the academic study of Buddhism, although something roughly analogous has already existed in Japan for some time. This represents a contrast to the earlier model, still dominant in parts of the European academia, in which scholars who deal with Buddhist texts or subject matters primarily identify themselves as Indologists, Sinologists, Japanologists, and the like. In addition, typically scholars choose narrower specializations, defined in terms of a particular geographical area, tradition, or time period (e.g. Lay Buddhism of the Song era, Shingon in Tokugawa Japan, intellectual history of Tibetan Buddhism, etc.).

In some quarters there has also been a growing interest in the history and development of Buddhist studies as an academic field or discipline (see Lopez 1995; Silk 2003; Jong 1987—the coverage in Jong is partial, with focus on Indian Buddhism and philology), or the application of various theoretical models to the study of Buddhist phenomena. A subset of this kind of theoretical reflection about the nature and contours of the academic study of Buddhism is the issue of disciplinarity (for general discussions of disciplinarity, see Christie and Maton 2011; Klein 1996). Namely, the question being asked is whether Buddhist studies can be considered to be a distinct academic discipline, even if only a nascent one (Gómez 1995; Cabezón 1995). Or, if it has not yet achieved that status, can it ever evolve into a coherent and well-defined discipline, and if so, what steps are necessary to make that happen.

Conversely, given the enormous range and thematic heterogeneity we find in Buddhism, there are those who question whether or not it is realistic or desirable to expect the emergence of a semblance of consensus regarding methodology (Cabezón 1995). Given these factors, and the variety of institutional contexts in which the study of Buddhism takes place, it seems likely that Buddhist studies will remain a loosely defined field of study that lacks intrinsic theoretical coherence or methodological consistency, and is connected to a host of established academic disciplines. This might not necessarily be a bad thing, as avoiding the straightjacket of disciplinary rigidity can allow for a sense of intellectual and scholarly freedom, as well as the exploration of all sorts of interesting possibilities and potentially fruitful avenues of research.

Institutional Moorings and Delimiting Outlooks

Being primarily imbedded in various academic institutions, like other fields of scholarly inquiry, Buddhist studies is increasingly a part of an established economy of knowledge, with its values, conventions, and inducements, as well as its political backdrops and mechanisms of control. Notwithstanding the evocation of noble ideals about selfless pursuit of knowledge that contributes to the betterment of humanity, scholars working in the field are not immune to the parochial concerns and careerism that pervade the world of academia. These, along with other factors, exert subtle (or perhaps not so

subtle) influences on the direction and nature of scholarly research. The impact of particular cultural and institutional settings is to some degree observable when we compare the general contours of Buddhist studies in various parts of America, Europe, and Asia.

In Japan, for instance, where Buddhist studies is fairly well developed and has been flourishing for a long time, often we find peculiar amalgamations of modern critical approaches with habitual models of sectarian scholarship, with an overall emphasis on textual study. To a large extent this is related to the institutional moorings of Buddhist scholarship, with much of the academic activity taking place at colleges or universities established by the major sects of modern Japanese Buddhism, such as Komazawa University in Tokyo, which is affiliated with the Sôtô sect of Zen. Similar situation obtains in Korea, exemplified by the close connections between Dongguk University in Seoul and the dominant Chogyé sect. As is to be expected, the situation at public universities in both countries is somewhat different.

In the North American context, Buddhist studies programs, or individual faculty that specialize in some aspect of Buddhism, tend to be located either in departments of religious studies or area studies (East Asian, South Asian, etc.), although one can also find scholars working on Buddhism in other academic fields, such as art history and anthropology. Frequently scholars have dual or multiple academic identities or allegiances. For instance, a scholar specializing in the history of modern Chinese Buddhism may think of herself, or be perceived by others, as a specialist in Chinese studies, religious studies, or history; she might also have relevant expertise in other academic areas, such as Chinese literature, politics, popular culture, media studies, or philosophy.

As has already been noted, in European academic settings somewhat traditional—or old-fashioned, according to some—approaches tend to be more common. Typically this entails a focus on the philological study of texts, manuscripts, or collections, under the rubric of established fields such as Indology, Sinology, or Tibetology. There is also a strong emphasis on South Asian and Tibetan forms of Buddhism, with a corollary neglect of the Buddhist traditions of East Asia. Of course, these are broad generalizations, as many scholars do not fit neatly into these conventional patterns (or stereotypes). It is not impossible to find, for instance, American scholars who are much more at home with European-style discussions of philological minutiae, rather than with the abstract theoretical discussions that are popular in some American contexts.

In addition to its intrinsic value and contemporary relevance, increased attention to the study of Buddhism can also benefit a number of relevant academic disciplines, especially those that deal with related themes or issues that overlap with particular manifestations of Buddhist religiosity. Within the broader context of the academic study of religion, Buddhism offers many potentially useful points of contrast and comparison with other religious traditions. In addition, Buddhism presents unique opportunities to rethink or re-conceptualize a host of central issues in the academic or theological study of religion, including the general meaning, construction, and function(s) of religion. In a world in which monotheistic assumptions and archetypes are still dominant in many places, the ongoing integration of a predominantly non-theistic tradition such as Buddhism into general models of religion, or interpretations of religiosity, may pose some real challenges, but also offers fascinating possibilities.

We have come a long way from the time when the dominant paradigms in the field reflected somewhat dubious Eurocentric perspectives and biases, or were primarily influenced by Christian (or more broadly monotheistic) theological conceptions, including ingrained notions about the formation of exclusive religious identities, the primacy of belief, the centrality of revelation, and the authority of scripture. Nonetheless, despite the increased openness and sophistication observable in some scholarly circles, there is still ample room for improvement in a number of areas—within and outside of the academy—including the discussion of religion in the public square, and scholars working in Buddhist studies are well-poised to make meaningful contributions.

About this Volume

As is the case with other books in the Wiley Blackwell Companions to Religion series, this volume is intended to serve as a comprehensive resource and useful reference for scholars, students, and others interested in the study of Buddhism. It is intended to flesh out the broad picture of Buddhism, with its richness and diversity, as it was transmitted and developed in Inner and East Asia. The contents include relevant concepts, issues, traditions, historical developments, and other pertinent topics, and span the past and the present. As noted in the Preface, this volume does not aim at providing encyclopedic coverage of the full range of Buddhist texts, schools, customs, practices, deities, and the like, which at any rate is impossible to achieve in the present format. (Examples of exhaustive coverage include several dictionaries and encyclopedias, such as Buswell 2004; Buswell and Lopez 2014; Keown 2003). Instead, our intention is to provide an opportunity for individual contributors to go more deeply into specific topics or issues, within the scope and objectives of the volume as a whole.

All essays included in the book are newly commissioned and are written by academic experts on the topics they deal with. The contributors include scholars from North America, Europe, and Asia. They represent a variety of academic departments, with a balance between junior and senior scholars. On the whole, the volume is envisioned to function as an insightful, serious, and comprehensive survey of Inner and East Asian Buddhism, as well as a representative digest of the main trends and latest findings in Buddhological research. All the contributors were asked to produce chapters that are highly informative and academically rigorous, yet clearly written and easily readable. The chapters are only lightly annotated, if at all, and the authors have made a point of avoiding unnecessary jargon and of striking a balance between inclusive coverage and superfluous detail. Each chapter is followed by a selected bibliography with suggestions for further readings. It might be useful to think of the book as a general reference, meant for both professional academics and non-specialists, as well as a wide-ranging survey that, among other usages, can be employed in graduate courses on Buddhism.

The essays included in the book approach the relevant topics and materials from a variety of perspectives. They exemplify the broad range of areas of study, theoretical stances, and methods of research adopted by scholars working in the field of Buddhist studies. Generally speaking, this includes a variety of historical, anthropological, textual, philosophical, feminist, and literary methodologies, as well as hybrid or trans-

disciplinary approaches. While most scholars featured in this volume can be identified as specialists in Buddhist studies, the book also includes a few chapters written by scholars whose work need not be narrowly classified as such, given that they are primarily specialists in history, literature, or art history.

Some of the chapters included in the volume provide fairly broad coverage of significant historical trajectories, divided in terms of major geographical and cultural areas, such as Tibet, China, or Korea. Others tend to be a bit more focused or narrow in scope, dealing with a particular topic or issue, such as healing, pilgrimage, ritual, or cultic practice. Given the impossibility of covering all conceivable topics, as well as of doing full justice to all regional manifestations of particular elements of Buddhism, in a number of instances particular topics are paired with specific geographic or cultural areas. For instance, healing is only explored in the Tibetan context, while the practice of pilgrimage is primarily discussed within the confines of Japanese Buddhism.

A volume of this kind, despite the best scholarly endeavors to provide a comprehensive, balanced, and up-to-date coverage of its subject matter, in the end can serve only as a window or a point of entry into what we have seen is a particularly varied, composite, and multilayered religious world. While we must address a complex subject matter such as Buddhism with critical rigor, appropriate knowledge, and attention to nuance, we should also approach it with a sense of humility. In addition, while perhaps it is obvious, it should be reiterated that this is a book about Buddhism, especially in its Inner and East Asian variants, not about Buddhist studies, which is still an evolving academic field. Accordingly, in the Buddhist worlds described in the subsequent pages the main protagonists are generations of Buddhists—monastic and lay, virtuous and corrupt, past and present—not the scholars who study and write about them.

While there is appropriate place for reflection on the history, nature, or scope of Buddhist studies as an academic field (or discipline), ultimately the study of Buddhism is not about us, the (mostly Western) scholars who research and write about various aspects of Buddhism. It is also not about our cultures' attempts to make sense of, or creatively reimagine, what many still seem to perceive as an exotic or unfamiliar religion. At its core, it is about the religious lives and traditions, the mores and ideals, of the people we study. Accordingly, in this volume there is less overt attention to theoretical issues and methodological concerns of the kind that occupy scholars operating within certain academic circles, even though contemporary scholarly debates are by no means absent. Rather, our primary goal has been to present an outline of the fascinating story of Buddhism, as it unfolded over the centuries in Inner and East Asia.

Overview of Contents

This volume is divided into six parts and twenty-five chapters (plus the Introduction, for a total of twenty-six chapters). The five chapters included in Part I survey the broad historical trajectories and general patterns of growth of Buddhism in pertinent parts of Inner and East Asia. They cover five main geographical and cultural areas: Central Asia (Mariko Walter), China (Mario Poceski), Korea (Sem Vermeersch), Japan (Heather Blair), and Tibet (James Apple). Although most of these chapters focus on the pre-modern

period, the chapters that deal with Buddhism in Korea and Japan are complemented with corresponding chapters in Part VI that pick up the story and carry it into the modern period. For reasons of space and other factors, it was not possible to extend the same treatment to the other geographical areas such as China and Tibet.

In Part II the main focus is on some of the main traditions and doctrinal systems that developed in Tibetan and East Asian Buddhism. Instead of providing straightforward surveys of several key traditions and systems of doctrine—which in the East Asian context are often referred to as distinct schools of Buddhism—the basic idea was to pair generalized descriptions of some of these major traditions with key themes or central issues that help us arrive at a broader understanding of Buddhism in Tibet and East Asia. Accordingly, there are separate discussions of (1) the efforts to integrate doctrinal reflection and contemplative practice, within the context of the medieval Tiantai school of Chinese Buddhism (Haiyan Shen); (2) the rarefied speculations about the nature of reality developed by major thinkers associated with the Huayan school (Imre Hamar); (3) the debates about orthodoxy that took place in various Chan/Zen milieus (Albert Welter); and (4) the influential Tibetan formulations of a Tantric path of practice and realization (David Gray).

The chapters included in Part III explore a variety of popular expressions of Buddhist piety and religious practice. Jimmy Yu's chapter on the range of devotional practices developed within the broad parameters of the Pure Land tradition challenges conventional notions about it being a coherent and integrated system of practices. This is followed by four chapters that explore (1) the growth of major bodhisattva cults that developed in China, and the various imageries, texts, rituals, and other practices, including pilgrimage, that grew around them (Natasha Heller); (2) the historical growth of funerary Buddhism in Japan, and the structure and function of the various types of rituals associated with it (Nam-lin Hur); (3) the widespread practice of pilgrimage in Japanese Buddhism (Henny van der Veere); and (4) the role of Buddhism in relation to healing practices prevalent in Tibetan societies (Geoffrey Samuel).

Part IV deals with two major issues: the institutional foundations of Buddhism, and the interactions between Buddhism and other religious traditions. The first two chapters, written by Huaiyu Chen and Lori Meeks, primarily deal with the development and character of Buddhist monasticism within the East Asian context, although the chapter by Lori Meeks also raises important issues about the role of gender and the notable positions occupied by women in East Asian Buddhism. The chapter by Livia Kohn focuses on some of the key patterns of interreligious interaction that involved Buddhism and Daoism, especially in the areas of politics, philosophy, and religious practice; by extension, it highlights the importance of studying Buddhism in relation to broader religious contexts, and in terms of its interactions with other religious traditions.

The first two chapters in Part V, written by Jiang Wu and Phillip Stanley, survey the histories, structures, contents, and functions of the Chinese and Tibetan Buddhist canons, arguably the largest collections of canonical literature in the world. The discussion of Buddhist literature continues in Beata Grant's chapter, but with a very different focus: the intersections between Buddhism and poetry as they unfolded within various East Asian milieus. In the last chapter of this section, Michelle Wang provides an illuminating survey of the development of distinctive forms of art and architecture in East Asia.

Finally, the four chapters included in Part VI take us into the modern world. The first three, written by Melissa Curley, Pori Park, and Inken Prohl, present overviews of Buddhism in modern Japan, Korea, and Europe, respectively. The last chapter, by Morten Schlütter, provides a fitting conclusion to the volume as a whole with its timely discussion of the growing impact of digital technologies on the academic study of Buddhism, and the use of such technologies by various Buddhist groups and individuals.

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PART I

Patterns of Historical Growth

CHAPTER 1

Buddhism in Central Asian History

Mariko Namba Walter

Central Asia covers a vast and historically significant area in Eurasia, where ancient civilizations flourished, although there is no common agreement about its precise boundaries. Here Central Asia is provisionally defined to include the southern, western, and eastern parts of Central Asia, which roughly corresponds to present-day Afghanistan, Pakistan, northwest India, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region in northwest China. Although from early on the region was surrounded by superpowers—such as the ancient empires of Greece, India, and China—for considerable stretches of history Central Asians managed to retain relatively stable kingdoms. At times these independent kingdoms lasted for several centuries, despite the constant intrusions and interferences from the dominant neighboring empires. According to Greek, Chinese, and local sources, the residents of the ancient city-states in Central Asia were mainly speakers of East Iranian, Turkic, and Tokharian (an archaic Indo-European language). Many of the local population had Caucasoid physical features, but since their exact race or ethnicity is unknown, they are often identified by the languages they spoke.

Buddhism initially spread into the region around the first century of the Common Era, at the latest, and it flourished there for more than half a millennium, until the Islamization of Central Asia, which started during the seventh century. Kuṣāns were major contributors to the early spread of Buddhism in Central Asia. In the early first century CE, the Kuṣāns migrated from the northwestern regions of China and conquered Greco-Bactrian Kingdom in present-day Afghanistan. They further conquered northwest India and the southern part of the Tarim Basin, including Kroraina and possibly Khotan. Around the first century CE, Gandhāra (modern Peshawar region), which at the time was under the Kuṣān empire, became a vibrant Buddhist region, and Gandhāran Buddhism had direct impacts on the development of Central Asian Buddhism. Buddhism settled in the oasis-states of western Central Asia—Indo-Parthia and Sogdiana—fairly early, before the introduction of Buddhism into China during the first century CE. Buddhism was already divided into various schools by the time it reached

Central Asia. Mahāyāna Buddhism was present in the Central Asian kingdoms from the early period of its growth and transmission.

In accord with the longstanding character of Buddhism as a missionary religion, Buddhist missionaries from Gandhāra, mid-India, and Central Asia were active in the transmission of Buddhism into China. Notable examples of Central Asian monks that arrived in China around the middle to late second century CE include An Shigao (147–167 CE in China), originally from the Indo-Parthian kingdom, Lokakṣema (147–188 CE), from the Kuṣān empire, and Kang Mengxiang (190–220 CE), whose ancestors were from Sogdiana. Chinese accounts about these and other Buddhist missionaries from the region, together with other historical sources, provide us with valuable evidence about the presence of Buddhism in Central Asia around the beginning of the Common Era. The legendary tales of Khotan and Kucha also point in the same direction. Among the Chinese sources that indicate the presence of Buddhism in Central Asia during the first century, the *History of the Later Han (Hou Hanshu)* tells the story of Emperor Ming's (r. 58–76 CE) dream about a flying "golden man" (identified as the Buddha), and the account of an envoy from the kingdom of the Dayuezhi (the Kuṣāṇas), who supposedly brought Buddhism to the Chinese court in 2 BCE (Zürcher 1972: 19–22; see also Chapter 2 by Poceski in this volume).

This chapter examines the history and character of Buddhism in each of the six main regions of Central Asia: Kuṣāṇia, Kroraina (Shan-shan), Sogdiana, Khotan, Kucha, and the areas populated by the Uighur (a Turkic people). During the early centuries of Buddhism's presence in the region, the Kuṣān empire and the oasis kingdoms around the Tarim Basin made a variety of notable contributions to the transmission of Buddhism into China. Later on, however, Central Asians became recipients of Chinese forms of Buddhism, especially during the Tang dynasty (618–907).

Buddhism in the Kuṣān Empire

In the middle part of the first century CE, Kujula Kadphises (r. 30–80 CE), the founder of the Kuṣān empire (located in present-day Pakistan and Afghanistan), conquered the Greco-Bactrian kingdom. Kujula and his successors continued to expand their territories. Eventually they established a vast empire, which included the areas both north and south of the Hindu Kush Mountains, bordering with Iran in the west, China in the east, India in the south, and Sogdiana in the north. The Kuṣāṇs were one of the offshoots of nomadic people called the Yuezhi by the Chinese.

The Yuezhi originally inhabited the northwestern regions of China and the steppes of Mongolia, but then the Xiongnu, a Mongol-Turkic tribal federation from north China, started to attack their neighboring populations. The Xiongnu effectively pushed the Yuezhi westward in the second century BCE. Subsequently the Yuezhi reached Bactria at the western end of their journey, and around 128 BCE they conquered the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom located in the area that corresponds to present-day northern Afghanistan. The Yuezhi divided the empire into five territories, ruled by different *yabgus* (regional generals), one of which was the territory of the Kuṣāṇs. This became the name of the whole empire in the late first century BCE.

The fourth ruler of the Kuṣān empire, Kaniṣka (r. 127 CE?)—whose name appears in various Buddhist texts—is the best known of the Kuṣān kings. As Kaniṣka extended his territory deeper into India, he moved the main capital to Puruṣapura (modern Peshawar). That brought Kaniṣka in close touch with the Buddhist communities of Gandhāra, located in the northwestern part of India. The depiction of the Buddha image on some of his coins is taken to reflect Kaniṣka's closeness to the Buddhist communities that flourished at that time. These coins indicate that Kaniṣka, if not a Buddhist himself, favored or supported Buddhism.

The same connection between Kaniṣka and Buddhism is implied by some Buddhist texts. Some Buddhist texts stress the important role Kaniṣka played in the early growth of Buddhism. That includes the building of a huge stūpa in a suburb of Puruṣapura, as well as Kaniṣka's active role in convening the fourth Buddhist council in Kashmir. Some Kaniṣka legends are also supported by archaeological evidence. For example, a reliquary found near Peshawar, which is inscribed as "Kaniṣka sanghārāma (monastic temple)," may indicate the location of the legendary stūpa of Kaniṣka. As Kaniṣka was a notable patron of Buddhism, it is likely that during his reign a number of Buddhist missionaries went from his empire to Central Asia and China.

Many Kharoṣṭhī Buddhist inscriptions have been found in north India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the surrounding regions. The Kharoṣṭhī script was derived from the Semitic script, and was used for the composition of early Buddhist literature. Later it was adopted by the Kuṣāns as their administrative language. A number of Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions, usually inscribed on stone or other materials such as copper plates, record the donations of various objects to Buddhist institutions. Sten Konow published numerous Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions that are dated around the first or second century CE, namely around the time of Kaniṣka, which represents the peak of the Kuṣān empire (see Konow 1929).

One of the interesting things we learn from the inscriptions is that Buddhist women in the Kuṣān empire were active donors. It is probable that these women owned some properties and had independent financial means, which made it possible for them to donate Buddhist statues or lion capitals. For example, the Jamālgarhī pedestal inscription from the Peshāwar Museum provides a short description of two Buddhist women donating jointly a statue to a monastery: "Gift of the mother (Ambā), together with the wife of Vāsishṭha, in honor of all beings and for the benefit of health for the Master" (Konow 1929: 114).

Much longer inscriptions found in Mathurā describe how the queen of a local king, representing all womenfolk in the royal household, donated a lion capital. Her brothers also donated land to the local Sarvāstivādin sangha. These women's active participation in the growth of early Buddhism differs from the typical images of women we get from within the Brahmanic tradition, or from some early Buddhist texts, which often emphasize the negative nature of women. Even when donations are initiated by husbands or fathers, they tend to mention their wives and daughters as donors, so that they can share the merit accrued by the pious act. For instance, we have a record of a local Greek general in Taxila who, together with his wife, donated a stūpa in honor of his mother and father.

These kinds of explicit mentions of female religious participation may be partially due to the international character of the Kuṣān empire. As there was an intermingling

of Greco-Roman, Iranian, and Indian cultures, Hindu culture was not as dominant as in India proper. Epigraphic studies have shown that some donors had Greek names such as Theodoros, a donor of relic-vase found in Swat. Others had Iranian names such as Vagramarega, who founded a vihāra that bore his name, as well as a stūpa that he built in honor of his parents, his brother Hashthunā Marega, and all sentient beings.

These inscriptions, along with the accounts of Chinese traveling monks, indicate that different Buddhist schools or traditions existed in the area ruled by the Kuṣān empire. The Sarvāstivādins seem to have enjoyed royal patronage, as indicated by some Kaniṣka stories, but the Mahāsāṃghika tradition, with its subdivisions, also had a stronghold in the region. They were particularly influential in areas that correspond to the western and northern parts of Afghanistan. They managed to find an especially solid base in Bāmiyān, as evidenced by the two giant standing Buddhas, dated around the fifth century, which were unfortunately destroyed by the Taliban in April 2001.

In the course of examining the history of transmission and translation of Mahāyāna sūtras, some scholars have proposed that northwest India, namely the Gandhāra region extending to Mathura, was the birthplace of the Mahāyāna movement. Translator-monks from the Kuṣān empire, whose place of origin in Chinese sources is usually indicated by the “surname” Zhi, translated many Mahāyāna sūtras into Chinese. Zhi Loujiachen or Lokakṣema, who arrived in China in the second century CE, translated only Mahāyāna sūtras. In contrast, other Kuṣān monks such as Zhi Yao (fl. 185 CE) also translated so-called Hīnayāna or Śrāvakayāna texts. Another well-known monk with Yuezhi ancestry was Zhi Qian (223–253). He was born in China, where his family settled after his grandfather immigrated to China. Zhi Qian was very productive in his translation activities: he is said to have translated 36 sūtras in 48 volumes, which include both Mahāyāna and Śrāvakayāna texts.

There were also multilingual Kuṣān monks that resided in Dunhuang, an important area along the Silk Road where Central Asians and Chinese lived together. Among them, Zhu Fafu or Dharmarakṣa (233–310) was the most well-known Yuezhi monk. Praised as Dunhuang Bodhisattva by the Chinese, he translated many significant Mahāyāna and Śrāvakayāna sūtras. The translation and missionary work of these monks contributed greatly to the early development of Chinese Buddhism. Since at the time only Mahāyāna practitioners would have studied both kinds of texts, we can surmise that the majority of translator-monks from the Kuṣān empire active in China had Mahāyāna orientation, even though there are no clear signs of early Mahāyāna presence in the Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions.

The influential Japanese scholar Hirakawa Akira, however, has noted that many donative inscriptions do not give the names of the recipient monastic congregations or sanghas. He assumes that these stūpas were donated to anonymous groups of Buddhists, who did not belong to the traditional monastic sanghas (Hirakawa 1990: 324–25). According to him, they lived close to the stūpas and managed them as their own, supporting themselves by means of the donations given to the stūpas. These individuals were neither ordained monks nor ordinary lay people. They formed groups of active Buddhist practitioners that promoted stūpa worship. These groups could collectively be called “bodhisattva sangha,” although there is no evidence of such designation from the time of Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions.

According to Hirakawa's controversial hypothesis, which has been critiqued by a number of Western scholars, the Mahāyāna movement seems to have born from such lay-based Buddhism, which centered on stūpa worship and lacked organized institutions. As for the earliest mention of the word Mahāyāna itself, it appears in one of the Brahmi fragments, written on birch bark and found in room 12 of Vihāra J of the Dharmarajika stūpa in Taxila, which has been dated to the fifth century, during the Gupta period. Accordingly, these putative predecessors, who lived in small vihāra quarters attached to the main stūpa, were not yet called Mahāyānist.

Besides the communities of stūpa worshipers postulated by Hirakawa, various early Mahāyāna groups developed at different locations. They emphasized distinct practices and teachings, which were eventually compiled into various strands of Mahāyāna. Accordingly, "Mahāyāna" seems to have been a loosely inclusive designation, which was subsequently adopted by different groups outside the traditional monastic establishments, represented by the mainstream schools of Buddhism. Eventually some kind of cult of the book, which involved the veneration of sūtras—rather than stūpa worship—became a prominent feature of most groups that were subsumed within the Mahāyāna movement. Even though Mahāyāna has always been a broadly inclusive term, from its beginnings down to the present, early Mahāyāna groups shared certain core beliefs and practices, such as focus on the attainment of Buddhahood, compassion toward others, bodhisattva vows, and cults of various Buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Mahāyāna flourished along the "spine" of the Kuṣān empire, namely the major cities connected with the main trade route, such as Mathurā, Taxila, and Gandhāra (Puruṣapura or Peshawar) in northwest India, as well as Nagrahāra, extending north to Kāpiśi in Afghanistan, even though both Faxian (c. 337–418) and Xuanzang (c. 600–644) reported that these regions were stronghold of the Sarvāstivādins and other Śrāvakayāna schools, which in Western scholarly literature are often referred to as mainstream schools. Presumably early Mahāyāna groups existed at the margins of the Buddhist mainstream, living in forests or vihāras, where both traditional and Mahāyāna monks were allowed to live together. It also seems that at times they were persecuted by the Śrāvakayāna monks. Gregory Schopen and others have suggested that the Mahāyāna movement never enjoyed a dominant position in India, which may help explain why Mahāyāna missionaries, some of whom suffered persecutions in their homelands, were so active in Central Asia and China (Schopen 2000: 14).

In his study of the *Ta zhi tu lun* (*Mahāprajñāpāramitā śāstra*), an important early text that serves as a compendium of Mahāyāna teachings, Étienne Lamotte also points to northwest India under the Kuṣān empire, where he believes the treatise was compiled (Lamotte 1940–1970). As the treatise often refers to the Yuezhi (the Kuṣāns), its author was provably living during the peak of the Kuṣān empire, namely around the second century. According to Lamotte, for many historical and cultural reasons, northwest India would qualify as the region where Mahāyāna Buddhism originated.

Northwest India was geographically the gateway that connected the Indian subcontinent with the outside world. That is why foreign invaders, starting with the Achae-menids in the fifth century BCE, one after another came to India through this gateway as they sought to conquer the region. The foreign invaders include the Greeks, who occupied sizable regions in the western areas of Central Asia, including Bactria, Sogdiana,

and Seistan (eastern Iran and southwestern Afghanistan). Having inherited and incorporated elements of Greco-Roman culture into their own indigenous East Iranian cultures, later invaders such as the Sakas, Parthians, and the Kuṣāns—who ruled Kāpiśi, Gandhāra, and Panjab—left a rich legacy of interaction among different civilizations. This in turn provided a fertile ground for new Buddhist movements to develop and flourish.

Ancient Buddhist Manuscripts from the Greater Gandhāra Area

Since the 1990s there have been significant new discoveries of many ancient Buddhist manuscripts from northern Pakistan, eastern Afghanistan, and Xinjiang, a large geographical area that Richard Salomon calls “Greater Gandhāra.” These manuscripts were ritually interred as a form of relic dedication, as well as due to a desire to ensure the Dharma’s transmission into the future (Salomon 2009: 31). They are mainly two kinds of manuscripts: those written in the Kharoṣṭhī script, in the Gāndhārī or northwestern Prakrit language, and Buddhist Sanskrit texts written in the Brāhmī script. There are also a couple of documents related to Buddhism that are written in the Bactrian language and in the Greco-Bactrian script. The materials used for these texts are birch-bark scrolls, palm leaves, parchments, and copper plates. They are dated from the first to around the eighth century, although the peak period of composition coincides with the crucial time of the Kuṣān empire, namely from the first to the fourth century (Allon 2007: 135). The content of the Buddhist manuscripts are diverse and they cover a number of genres. So far a number of mainstream or so-called Śrāvakayāna texts, along with a handful of Mahāyāna texts, have been identified and published.

Important collections of early Buddhist manuscripts include the British Library collection of Kharoṣṭhī Manuscripts and the Senior Collection. The collection of Kharoṣṭhī Manuscripts, acquired by the British Library in 1994, contains manuscript fragments from a number of Buddhist texts written on birch bark. These manuscripts probably originated from the Haḍḍa region in eastern Afghanistan. The original clay pot containing the manuscripts bore an inscription, describing the pot and the texts placed in it as belonging to the Dharmaguptaka school of mainstream Buddhism. The Senior Collection—named after R. Senior, a British collector—consists of two dozen birch-bark manuscripts composed in Gāndhārī, all written by the same scribe. It contains texts from the *Samyuktāgama* of the Dharmagputaka school.

On the basis of their study of the Kharoṣṭhī texts from the British Library collection, scholars have postulated the existence of an extensive library of early Buddhist texts composed in the Gāndhārī language, possibly dating from the first century BCE to the third century CE. Gāndhārī was the first language used in the course of the transmission of Buddhism from northwest India into Central Asia. The Dharmaguptaka school apparently used Gāndhārī as the primary linguistic medium for their missionary activities. Consequently, the source language of many early Mahāyāna sūtras translated into Chinese was probably Gāndhārī, before the Sanskrit Buddhist literature became more common throughout Greater India.

There is also the Bajaur Collection of Kharoṣṭhī Manuscripts from Pakistan, which consists of eighteen different birch-bark scrolls written by nineteen different scribes.

They were found in 1999 by locals at a Buddhist monastic site known as Mahal, in the Bajaur region, a remote border area between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Like the other collections, its contents represent a variety of genres of Buddhist literature. This collection includes a notable fragment of over 600 lines from a Mahāyāna sūtra related to the *Akṣobhyavyūha*, and a text associated with the *Prajñāpāramitā* corpus. The script belongs to the late phase of Kharoṣṭhī, from around the second century CE.

Among the other important collections are the Schøyen manuscripts from the Bāmiyān caves. Several thousand fragments of Brāhmī, Kharoṣṭhī, and Bactrian Buddhist texts were discovered by local people in one of the collapsed Zargaran caves, near the Bāmiyān cave complex, in 1994. Norwegian collector Martin Schøyen bought most of them. They are comprised of Sanskrit or Sanskritized texts in various forms of Brāhmī script, plus about one hundred small fragments written in the Gāndhārī language and Kharoṣṭhī script. The collection's manuscripts include Mahāyāna and Śrāvakayāna texts, which can be dated from the second to the seventh century. Although these manuscripts were presumably not written in Bāmiyān but were brought there from outside, they show the variety of Buddhist literature that was available in Bāmiyān at that time. The large number of Buddhist manuscripts from these collections provides scholars with significant opportunities for further study of the early spread of Buddhism across Asia—including its transmission and growth in Central Asia—covering an important period from the first to the eighth centuries.

Kingdom of Kroraina and Buddhism around the Third Century

Kroraina (Loulan in Chinese, also known as Kroran by the locals) is the name of the ancient kingdom in the area near the lake Lop Nor, on the southern rim of the Tarim Basin (in present-day northwest China). The kingdom consisted of several smaller oasis kingdoms, namely Cherchen, Endere, Caḍ'ota (Niya), and Ronglu. Kroraina was called Shanshan by the Chinese from around the first century BCE, when the Chinese conquered the area and set up a puppet king. The Shanshan kingdom had a total population of about 23,000, according to a Chinese survey from 60 BCE. The kingdom's people subsisted on a combination of agricultural and pastoral economy. They also profited from their connection with international trade, as the kingdom's oases were situated on caravan trade routes that connected the Roman Empire, China, and India.

In the early twentieth century, Sven Hedin (1865–1952) and Aurel Stein (1862–1943) independently discovered many handwritten manuscripts in Kharoṣṭhī and Chinese, written down on wooden tablets and paper, in the desert ruins of the ancient town of Loulan in Niya. These documents tell us about the nature of Buddhism that flourished in Kroraina, as well as about the society of Kroraina during the third century (see Boyer *et al.* 1920 and 1927; Rapson and Noble 1929). According to the Kharoṣṭhī documents, Kroraina faced threats of being colonized by the Kuṣāns during the first and the second centuries, but the Chinese Western Jin dynasty (265–315) put an end to the prospect of Kuṣān colonization.

The main population of Kroraina was referred to by the Chinese as the Lesser Yuezhi. They were a branch of the Yuezhi people that was pushed westward and settled to the

north of the Pamirs, near Endere and the surrounding regions. Like Kušānia, Kroraina was inhabited by East Iranian speakers, who had diverse religious cultures. According to the Kharoṣṭhī documents and Chinese records, their indigenous beliefs and practices included cow sacrifice, witchcraft, and purification through sacred bathing. They also adopted elements of Iranian religion, Buddhism, and Hinduism.

The heyday of Kroraina as a Buddhist kingdom seems to have been around the first and second centuries. The kingdom declined by the fifth century, due to Chinese and nomadic invasions, desertification caused by a course change of the Tarim River, and loss of economic status for part of its trade cities due to changes in trade routes. The kings of Kroraina had Buddhist titles such as “Standing in the True Dharma,” and they maintained control over a Buddhist sangha of the Mahāyāna persuasion. In the capital a Buddhist monastery was built right next to the palace. Each of the smaller city kingdoms also had a Buddhist community, which was centrally administered from the sangha headquarters located in the capital of Kroraina. The king appointed the heads of the central and local monastic communities, who managed both secular and religious affairs. The Buddhist communities in Kroraina, therefore, were integrated within the stratified sociopolitical system of the ancient kingdom.

According to the Kharoṣṭhī documents, many Buddhist “monks” in the kingdom were married, and they often held bureaucratic positions in the local government. They were called *śramaṇa*, a Sanskrit term that can be translated as monk, and had Indian personal names, even though the rest of the populations had Iranian or other non-Indic names (Brough 1965: 606). Some of the monks or part-time monks owned slaves, and they enjoyed considerable wealth and high status in society. It seems that many individuals of wealthy background became or were appointed as high-ranking *śramaṇas*, which served as a marker of social and religious prestige. The *śramaṇas* of the Kroraina kingdom probably did not live in traditional temples or secluded monasteries. Instead, they had their own family residences, where their lifestyles resembled the daily pursuits of laymen. The secular activities and lifestyles of these “monks,” such as marriage, raising children, property ownership, and involvement with other business, make it impossible for us to think that they lived in proper monasteries (Atwood 1991: 174).

Some Kharoṣṭhī documents indicate that Mahāyāna Buddhism flourished in the Kroraina Kingdom around the third century CE. In a document numbered 390, the *cozbo* Ṣamasena, who seems to have been the most influential man of a local oasis, is referred to as the one “who has set forth in Mahāyāna.” Similarly, document no. 288 refers to the *cozbo* Saṃcaka as “Bodhisattva in person,” which also implies a Mahāyāna connotation. The presence of Mahāyāna can also be established on the basis of archaeological evidence, unearthed at local stūpas in the region. An Indian-type stūpa with a square base was built adjacent to wooden temple buildings in Mīran, located 50 km south of Kroraina. This temple site was initially discovered from scattered wooden pieces near the stūpa site, inside a fortified compound, where the royal palace of the king of Kroraina was located (Stein 1921: 389–98). The sites of similar stūpas of varying sizes, built close to the main temples, were also found in the oases of Endere and Niya. Some have argued that the close proximity of the stūpas and the vihāras indicates that they were associated with the Mahāyāna movement, since many of the stūpas donated to Śrāvakayāna sangas were structurally separated from their vihāras.

Buddhist artifacts found in Miran indicate a strong influence of Gandhāran art. The Miran complex contains fourteen Buddhist temple sites, where there are twelve statues of “angels” with wings in Hellenistic style. They were found with the Roman inscription of “Titus,” probably the name of the artist. Furthermore, statues of Herakles and Athena holding a vajra, and of other Greek gods, were found together with statues of the Buddha. The stūpa of Kroraina was decorated with various motifs in Kuṣān style, displaying the kind of mixture of Hellenistic, Iranian, and Indian artistic elements that is typical of Gandhāran art (Rowland 1970: 33–44).

During the fifth century Faxian reported that the king of Kroraina still practiced Buddhism, but according to him by that time Mahāyāna Buddhism had died out and all monks in the kingdom practiced only Hīnayāna Buddhism. Non-Mahāyāna or mainstream sanghas might have also existed earlier, including during the peak of Mahāyāna’s influence in Kroraina. The Miran, Endere, and Niya sites provide the earliest textual and archaeological evidence for the presence of Mahāyāna Buddhism in Kroraina, which probably had a direct relationship with the Mahāyāna movement that existed in the Kuṣān empire. The ancient Kroraina kingdom thus provides us with an intriguing example of the presence of early Mahāyāna in the oasis kingdoms of that part of Central Asia during the third century.

Sogdians and Buddhism

Sogdiana (or Sogdia) proper is located in the Transoxiana region, between the Syr-Darya and Amu-Darya rivers, mostly in present-day Uzbekistan. There were also a number of Sogdian colonies in northern Eurasia. Some Sogdian colonies, like those in Mongolia and Semirechie, were under the protection of the nomadic Turkic empire. Other colonies, especially those along the northern trade route of the Silk Road, such as Lop Nor, Dunhuang, Hami, Liangzhou, and Changan, were under strong Chinese cultural influence. The Sogdians were successful merchants, playing an especially important role in the mediating of trade along the Silk Road, especially between China and countries located to its west.

Like other Central Asian city-states, the history of Sogdiana is marked by a series of continuous subjugations by neighboring empires, from the time of the Achaemenid Persians to the Arab invasions in the eighth century. After Alexander the Great conquered Samarkand in 329 BCE, Sogdiana was dominated by the Seleucid empire (323–60 BCE), and then by the Greco-Bactrian kingdom (250–125 BCE), which left a notable Greek legacy. From 260 to 360 CE Sogdiana was a part of the Sasanian empire. On its northeastern frontier it bordered the Kuṣān empire. The Chinese Tang dynasty extended its hegemony to western Central Asia by setting up one of its Western Protectorates in Sogdiana in 679. The Chinese were eventually pushed out from the region by the Muslims. The final blow to the Sogdian kingdom came when the Arab armies destroyed Samarkand in 712. This marked the end of the Sogdians as a distinctive people, along with a near extinction of their language except in the remote valleys of the Yagnob in Tajikistan.

In addition to being important carriers of material goods, Sogdians also transmitted several religions, including Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, Nestorian Christianity, and

Buddhism, which were introduced into Central Asia and China. Buddhism was probably introduced to Sogdiana before or during the period when the region was under the domination of the Kuṣān empire, around the first century CE. Influenced by neighboring countries closer to India, such as Bactria and Kuṣānia, by the second century Sogdiana probably already had a well-developed form of Buddhism. It can be assumed that Buddhist monks with the Kang surname, mentioned in early Chinese sources, were from Sogdiana.

Chinese historical sources provide information for about twenty monks from Sogdiana (Kangju). Among the early Sogdian monks that settled in China were Kang Ju (187–199), Kang Mengxiang (190–220), Kang Sengkai (or Saṃghavarman, who arrived at Luoyang in 252), and Ji (632–682, also known as Cien dashi). These monks were actively propagating Buddhism in Luoyan, Changan, and other major Chinese cities. There were also other monks with Sogdian ancestry, coming from expatriate families that had settled in China. Examples of monks belonging to this group include Kang Senghui (222–280), Kang Sengyuan (267–330), Kang Falang (310–420), and Shi Huiming (427–497). The ethnic Sogdians living in China were fluent in Chinese, and their outlook on Buddhism was heavily influenced by Chinese classical learning. In addition, at least a couple of Sogdian monks, including Baoyi (or Ratnamati, 420–502), came from India.

The Sogdian monks brought and translated into Chinese a variety of canonical texts, including Mahāyāna scriptures belonging to the *Prajñāpāramitā* corpus, the Vinaya of the Dharmaguptaka school, and āgama texts. It is unclear if these texts were brought into China from Sogdiana, as they could also have been obtained from various regions in Central Asia or India. After the well-known Chinese scholar and pilgrim Xuanzang visited Sogdiana in the seventh century, he reported that there were two Buddhist temples in Samarqand. However, the local inhabitants, presumably of Zoroastrian faith, supposedly burned the monks that came to the temples. By that time Zoroastrianism was the dominant religion in the area, and Sogdian Buddhism seems to have almost died out. By the beginning of the eighth century, Hyecho (704–787, or Huichao in Chinese) reported that the people of Sogdiana practiced Zoroastrianism and did not know anything about Buddhism. Still, the Korean pilgrim found one Buddhist temple in Samarqand, where one monk resided. Buddhism in Sogdiana disappeared completely by the eighth century, although Sogdian Buddhist literature continued to circulate in some of the Sogdian colonies in China.

A considerable number of Buddhist Sogdian texts, along with Manichean and Nestorian Christian manuscripts, were discovered in East Turkestan. Only a few of them are complete texts, and many are fragmentary (see Dresden 1983). The major sites where Sogdian Buddhist texts have been discovered are Turfan and Dunhuang, both located on the northern trade route around the Tarim Basin. Smaller quantities of Sogdian Buddhist texts were also found in other areas, but so far no Sogdian Buddhist texts have been found in Sogdiana proper. Most of the extant evidence, including the orthography of the Sogdian script, suggests that the peak of Sogdian Buddhist literature was from the seventh to the eighth century (Utz 1978: 8). That coincides with the height of Sogdian trade activities and the spread of Sogdian colonies into China.

The majority of extant Sogdian texts belong to the Mahāyāna tradition. They include canonical works such as *Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitā sūtra*, *Suvarṇaprabhāṣottama sūtra*,

Mahāparinirvāna sūtra, and *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa*. There are also some texts belonging to the popular *jātaka* and *avadāna* genres; for instance, Sogdian versions of the *Ves-santara jātika* (which tells the rebirth story of the Buddha as Prince Sudāśan) and *Daśākarmapatha-avadānamāla* were found in Dunhuang and Turfan. There are also Tantric and *dhāraṇī* texts, such as the *Nīlakaṇṭha-avalokiteśvara dhāraṇī*, probably written in the eleventh century. A large text titled the *Sūtra of the Causes and Effects of Good and Evil (Actions)* is considered to be a creation of local Sogdians from Dunhuang. Evidently most Sogdian Buddhist texts are translations from Chinese. Some translations are so faithful that in places the Sogdian texts clearly reflect the kinds of word usage and style that are peculiar to Chinese texts.

Some of the Sogdian colonies in the Dunhuang region lasted until the tenth century. In some cases, an entire village of Sogdians cultivated the land belonging to a Buddhist temple. We have information about a Buddhist community constituted by Sogdians that originally came from Bukhara, and which circulated instructions about leaving vegetarian foods in front of the Liantai temple as part of the funeral rites for a deceased member of the community. There are also records about a wealthy Sogdian who served as an official in charge of the Sogdian Buddhist community and who donated wheat, silverware, millet, and other provisions to the Pure Land Temple in Dunhuang; he also commissioned the painting of a Guanyin image in one of the Magao caves. These and other pertinent sources indicate that Sogdians were active in various aspects of Buddhist life in Dunhuang, especially during the ninth and tenth centuries.

Like the Tokharian people of the Kucha region, the distinct social and cultural character of the Sogdians disappeared from the history of Central Asia over a thousand years ago. Yet, unlike the Tokharians, Sogdians traveled and settled in various colonies in China, India, and Southeast Asia, where they primarily worked as traders. In the Dunhuang and Turfan areas, Sogdian Buddhist literature flourished during the eighth century. Sogdians who continued to live there were active in various aspects of local Buddhist life, until they were eventually assimilated into the local population and lost their distinctive identity (for more on Sogdian Buddhism, see Walter 2006).

Khotan and Buddhism

The capital of Khotan was established in an oasis located on the southern rim of the Tarim basin, about 1,000 km to the east of Shanshan. By the first century CE, both Khotan and Shanshan had become major powers along the trade route that connected China and the “West.” As the Khotanese spoke a middle-Iranian language, presumably there was an immigration of the Iranian people in the early history of Khotan, probably sometime after the third century BCE. The physical features of the modern population of Khotan are similar to the Iranian-speaking tribes of the Wakhān region in the Pamirs, whose language, Wakhī, is also the closest to Khotanese in terms of features, phonetics, and vocabulary (Bailey 1982: 7). While the indigenous population in modern Khotan does not have obvious Mongolian features, except further to the east, there seem to be some admixture of Tibetan and Turkish blood, reflecting the complex movements of people during the early history of the Central Asia.

From the first century onward, Khotan had always been caught in the struggles between the major sedentary power in the east, namely China, and the nomadic (or semi-nomadic) powers primarily situated in the steppes of Central Asia, namely the Xiongnu, the Kušāns, the Eastern Turks, and the Tibetans. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the colonial pressures exerted by the major powers, the Chinese and the nomads did not necessarily maintain direct rule over the subjugated regions. Khotan largely managed to maintain its indigenous royal line and its Iranian Buddhist culture fairly intact for many centuries, until the Islamic conquest at the beginning of the eleventh century CE.

According to *Prophecy of the Li Country*, a legendary Tibetan text about the history of Khotan, three brothers of the King Vijaya Jaya of Khotan invited Buddhist monks and established both the Mahāsāṃghika and Sarvāstivāda schools in Khotan. The early existence of mainstream Buddhist schools in Khotan can also be known from an account written by the Chinese monk Zhu Shixing, who traveled to Khotan around 260 CE to obtain a *Prajñāpāramitā* text. He supposedly obtained the text there and wished to take it back to China. However, he was obstructed by so-called Śrāvakayāna monks, who complained that the Mahāyāna sūtra would confuse people in China, because it does not represent the real words of Buddha. Zhu Shixing managed to take the sūtra to China, but the alleged episode indicates that non-Mahāyāna monks were prominent in third-century Khotan, even if some Mahāyāna texts were also available there. Gītamitra also brought into China the Sanskrit text of the *Prajñāpāramitā sūtra on the Praise of Light*, along with some āgama texts, from Khotan, which in 296 he translated into Chinese.

According to Faxian, who visited Khotan around 400, Mahāyāna was the prevalent form of Buddhism at the time. Faxian reported that the Khotanese king was a sincere Buddhist who held regular ceremonial banquets for the monks. Faxian also reported on the existence of fourteen large vihāras and many smaller ones in Khotan. Many Buddhist texts that were translated into Chinese, such as the *Dharmaguptaka Vinaya*, the sixty-fascicle version of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* (*Huayan jing*), and the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, were brought to China from Khotan around the fifth century. Around 470 the Ruanruan (Turco-Mongol nomads) invaded Khotan, but they did not destroy the local Buddhist temples.

It seems probable that in the sixth century the Ephthalites (most likely East Iranian nomads) destroyed the Buddhist infrastructure of Khotan. At the time, in wake of the nomadic invasions, the royal family of Khotan had to temporarily go into exile at the Northern Wei court. Despite these setbacks, Buddhism continued to develop even after the destruction brought by the nomads. At the beginning of the seventh century, Xuanzang observed that Buddhism was still flourishing in the kingdom. According to his account, “there are about a hundred saṅghārāmas with some 5,000 monks, who study Mahāyāna” in Khotan (Beal 1880: 309).

From the end of the seventh century, Tantric Buddhism started to gain momentum in Khotan. Devaprajña, a Khotanese monk, went to Luoyang in 689, where he gained a reputation for his mastery of mantras and his meditation expertise (T 50.719b). Then in 695 Śikṣānanda brought many Mahāyāna texts into China, including a manuscript of the *Avataṃsaka sūtra* that served as the basis for the eighty-fascicle

Chinese version of this important text, which was produced at the request of Empress Wu Zetian. At the time the *Avatamṣaka sūtra* was one of the most popular sūtras in Khotan, as can be seen from many paintings at Buddhist sites near Khotan, such as Dandan-uilik. In 726 Hyecho stopped at Khotan, on his way back from India to China. He reported that Khotan was a flourishing center of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

The *Dharmapada* in the Kharoṣṭhī script, dated to around the second century CE, is the only extant early Buddhist text found around Khotan. Nevertheless, there are a considerable number of Buddhist texts in Khotanese, a middle-Iranian language, written in the Brahmi script. Most of these texts are dated to around the eighth to tenth centuries. Surviving Khotanese texts include various Mahāyāna sūtras, such as the *Śaṅghāta-sūtra*, *Suvarṇabhāṣottama-sūtra*, and *Vajracchedikā-sūtra*, assorted jātakas and avadānas (e.g. *Āśokāvadāna*), and texts of local composition, exemplified by the *Book of Zambasta* (see Emmerick and Skjaervø 1989: 499–505). Khotanese Buddhists only started to write and translate Buddhist texts in Khotanese during the eighth century, although this relatively late trend of indigenization of the canon seems consistent with Buddhist texts written in other Central Asian languages.

During the tenth century, before the onset of the Islamic conquest, Khotanese kings and their subjects were still Buddhists, although Buddhism coexisted with other beliefs, especially Zoroastrianism and folk religion. In 971 the last Khotanese royal envoy to a Chinese court to be accompanied by Buddhist monks arrived in Chang'an. The last Buddhist king of Khotan fought for twenty-four years against an Islamic force led by Yusuf Qadr Khān, with aid from Tibetan and Buddhist Uighur forces. By 1,000 CE, most of the surrounding oasis states had been conquered by Turkic Islamic forces, and Khotan was almost the last Buddhist state to be conquered. The *Prophecy of Li Country* describes how an Islamic ruler confiscated Buddhist temples and their properties (Thomas 1935: 303–323). Some local monks escaped to Tibet, where they stayed for a while under the protection of a Chinese princess. However, they had to move to Gandhāra when the princess died. According to the *Annals*, after some disputes, they finally met their demise in Kauśāmbī, north India. Aside from this legendary account, it seems probable that at the time of the Islamic conquest Buddhist monks escaped in large numbers from Khotan to neighboring countries.

Buddhism in Kucha

Kucha is located on the northern rim of the Tarim Basin, in northwestern China. From the first to the tenth centuries it was one of the major Buddhist kingdoms of Central Asia (see Walter 1998). The people of Kucha and the neighboring Agni were speakers of Tokharian A and B, an archaic western branch of Indo-European languages, which is closer to Latin than to Indo-Iranian languages. Some philologists refer to Tokharian B as “Kuchean,” and to Tokharian A as “Agnian,” in order to avoid confusion with Tokharistan in ancient Bactria, although some scholars believe that the Tokharian language and Tokharistan might be related. There are several historical and linguistic hypotheses regarding how and when these early Indo-Europeans ended up in the northwestern

part of China, which happened sometime before the first century CE. Some scholars have postulated that they originated from an area in southern Russia, went to Babylon, then moved to Persia, and finally settled in the Kansu region of Chinese Turkestan. If that is the case, perhaps they could be called the first Indo-Europeans, as they appeared in Persia before the Hittites had arrived in Asia Minor. Ultimately, the unresolved question about the origin of the Kucheans in Chinese Turkestan has to be considered in relation to complex movements of people, which occurred over an extremely broad area in Eurasia over a very long period.

Kucha, with a population of 80,000 in the first century and with rich agricultural and mining resources, was one of the major trading posts on the Silk Road. Due to its wealth and strategic location, from the beginning of known history Kucha got embroiled in many wars that involved the Chinese, Xiongnu, Ruanruan, Turks, and Tibetans. Ancient Chinese annals mention the kingdom of Kucha as one of the major protectorates of China along the western border region. For centuries Kucha found itself caught up in ongoing struggles between the nomads and China, but the kingdom managed to preserve its indigenous political and cultural structures, within a broader system of colonial administration based on “indirect rule” over Kucha. For a period of over seven hundred years the kingdom of Kucha continued to flourish, regardless of who the overlord was, under a single dynasty called Bai or Bo.

Unlike Khotan, where Mahāyāna Buddhism was dominant, in Kucha the traditions of so-called Śrāvakayāna Buddhism flourished for over a thousand years, until the end of the tenth century CE. During the early phase of Kuchean Buddhism, members of the royal family and the aristocracy joined the Buddhist order. This can be ascertained from the fact that many monks had the royal surname of Bai or Bo. By the third century, missionary Kuchean monks started to arrive in China, where they transmitted various Śrāvakayāna and Mahāyāna sūtras. In the fourth century, the Kuchean monk Kumārajīva (344–413), under the patronage of the king Baichun, preached Mahāyāna texts and temporarily established a Mahāyāna presence in Kucha. However, his teachings were better appreciated in China. After his arrival in the Chinese capital, with the help of a group of scribes and other assistants, Kumārajīva translated over 300 Mahāyāna texts, including the *Lotus Sūtra*, several *Prajñāpāramitā* sūtras, and the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra*.

According to Xuanzang’s diary, in the seventh century there were just over a hundred monasteries in Kucha, with over five thousand monks, most of them belonging to the Sarvāstivāda school (Beal 1880: 19–24). Xuanzang also briefly mentions a ceremony called *pañca-varṣikā-pariṣad*, held every five years, when the king gave offerings to the Buddhas, monks, and poor people. Xuanzang’s report also provides vital information about the relationship between kingship and Buddhism in Kucha. In comparison with Khotan and Shanshan, the established Sarvāstivādins sangha in Kucha enjoyed relative independence from the king. Kuchean kings had to consult with the heads of the sangha regarding various administrative affairs. Each king was also regarded as a *dharmarāja* (king who protects the dharma), which implied ritual responsibilities toward the Buddhist sangha. Śrāvakayāna remained the dominant form of Buddhism in Kucha during the eighth century, according to Hyecho, although elements of Mahāyāna and Tantric Buddhism also continued to exist.

Many Buddhist texts in Tokharian were found in the Kucha and Agni (Qarašahr) regions. Tokharian A texts, all of them Buddhist and totaling around 470 fragments, were found in Šorčuq near Qarašahr, east of Kucha. Presently they are kept as part of the Berlin Collection in Germany. Over 780 fragments in Tokharian B, now in Europe and Japan, were mainly found in the Thousand Buddhas Caves of Kizil and in Šorčuq. Unlike Khotanese or Old Turkic texts, there are no Tokharian Buddhist texts translated from Chinese or vice versa. The texts composed in Tokharian A and B include many *jātaka*, *avādana*, *āgama*, *abhidharma*, *vinaya*, *stotra* (hymn), and other types of Śrāvakayāna texts. Mahāyāna texts are preserved only in Tokharian B.

Most of the Tokharian texts were translated from Sanskrit or Prakrit. Apparently Kuchean monks studied Sanskrit and read Sanskrit texts. Consequently, canonical texts were translated from Indian languages into the vernacular language of Tokharian B, presumably in order to teach the laity of Kucha. This perhaps helps explain why very few Abhidharma texts in Tokharian A or B have been found. The study of Abhidharma was prominent among the Sarvāstivādins, but the relevant texts were studied by monks in Sanskrit, not in Tokharian. That is confirmed by several Sanskrit manuscripts found in Kucha, Qarašahr, Dunhuang, and the Turfan region.

The Kizil caves, situated 65 km west of Kucha, are the largest Buddhist cave complex in the Kucha region. There are over 236 cave temples in Kizil, with various paintings decorating their inside walls and ceilings. They were carved into cliffs, stretching from east to west for a length of 2 km. The main subjects depicted in the murals, which are dated from the third to the eighth century CE, resonate with Tokharian Buddhist literature. They feature scenes and motifs associated with various *jātaka* and *avadāna* stories, as well as with legends about the Buddha. Earlier murals reflect Gandhāran influences, while later ones are a blend of Indian and indigenous styles. Later caves seem to have more designs that feature small thousand Buddha motifs, or sitting Buddhas with nimbus. A common characteristic of the caves is a conspicuous lack of Chinese influences.

Some paintings in the older caves were commissioned by a Tokharian king called “Mendre,” under the advice of Anandavarman, a high-ranked monk (Grünwedel 1920). The king ordered an Indian artist, Naravāhanadatta, and a Syrian artist, Priyaratna—who were helped by their disciples—to paint the caves. One mural depicts the Buddha’s miracle of walking on the water of the Ganges river, as described in the Vinaya text of the Mūlasarvāstivādavins. Bodily sacrifice was also a theme featured in the murals of the Kizil Caves, inspired by art from Gandhāra, where popular stūpas named “sacrifice with flesh,” “giving eyes,” or “giving head” existed (Legge 1886: 32). The scenes depicting the Buddha’s entry into final Nirvana, usually located on the wall behind the Buddha niche, also originated in Gandhāra. While the original artistic inspirations were from Gandhāra and India, in terms of their artistic style the Kizil murals reflect a local Central Asian interpretation of central Buddhist themes.

Turkic Buddhism

The vast steppes of Mongolia, namely the areas around the Tianshan and Altai mountains, were homelands of various Turco-Mongolian nomads such as the Xiongnu, as

well as of Indo-European nomads such as the Yuezhi and Wusun. By the third century BCE, the Indo-European nomads were pushed out from Mongolia in the westward direction by the dominant Xiongnu, who ruled the region for the next 250 years. In the second century CE, however, they were replaced by the Xianbei, a Manchu-Mongolian tribe who conquered and united the whole area of Mongolia. In the fifth century a Turco-Mongolian tribe named the Ruanruan dominated and ruled the region, until they were defeated by the Tujuezhī. This brought about the birth of the first Turkic nomadic empire, established in 552 by the Azhina clan and located in Mongolia.

The Western Turkic empire (Xi Tujue) was established in 563. In the sixth and seventh centuries it expanded its territory into the Tarim Basin, Ferghana, northern Afghanistan, and parts of Indus Valley. In 744, the Uighurs, one of the Nine Oghuz Turkic tribes, destroyed their former allies and established the Uighur empire in Mongolia, in the area around the upper Orkhon river. In 840, after suffering a defeat at the hands of the Kirghiz, the Uighurs dispersed as they fled into different directions. Those who fled to Kansu replaced Tibetan rule and established their dominance over the region, functioning as overlords from 890 to 1026. Other Uighurs that fled to Turfan, called Arslan (lion) Uighurs by the Muslims, settled there and ruled the region until the twelfth century.

Both the Tujuezhī and the Uighurs inherited sociopolitical structures prevalent among the Central Asian nomads, which were based on tribal federations. Within the nomadic states, various semi-independent tribal groups were administered by the dominant tribes. Dominant tribal rulers were able to levy taxes and require obligatory participation in warfare, which often involved the plunder of wealthy neighbors like China. Over time the Uighurs became more sedentary, due to their close contacts with the Sogdians and Chinese. The Uighurs were deeply involved with Chinese political affairs, and they maintained close contacts with the Chinese empire, often through marital alliances. The Uighurs adopted a modified Sogdian script, and they also embraced the religions of their neighbors. In the steppes of Mongolia they built a permanent fortified city, called Karabalghasun, with the assistance of Sogdian imperial advisors. Their indigenous religion was a kind of shamanism that incorporated belief in the sky god Tengri as the sole creator. Gradually they were exposed to a variety of cultural and religious traditions, coming from both east and west, including Manichaeism, Zoroastrianism, Nestorian Christianity, and Buddhism.

Buddhism was first introduced to the Turkic ruling class in Mongolia during the late sixth century, when a nomadic ruler named Tabar qaghan was converted by a captured Chinese monk. The qaghan then built a Buddhist temple and sought a copy of the *Māhāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* from China. Apparently he thought that Buddhism had magical powers that could strengthen his empire. Upon his request, a Chinese official translated the sūtra into Turkic, and then he sent what is supposedly the oldest Turkic sūtra (now lost) to the qaghan. During the fifth through seventh centuries many Buddhist monks also passed through the Tujue empire, often on their way from India to China (and vice versa). The traveling monks were courteously welcomed at the courts of the Turkic qaghans. By the seventh century Buddhism was widely accepted by various Turkic rulers; one of the qaghans even came to be known as “*pusa*” (boddhisattva). Buddhism, however, did not penetrate among the ordinary people until the eighth century, when Turkic Buddhist literature flourished in the Turfan region.

Most extant Uighur texts have been found in the Dunhuang and Turfan regions. These manuscripts include Buddhist, Manichean, and Nestorian Christian texts. Early Uighur Buddhist texts were written in the Sogdian script. They were mostly translated from other languages, such as Chinese, Tokharian, and Tibetan; there are also a few translations from Sanskrit. For example, *Maitrisimit*, various *avadāna* texts, *Pañcatantra*, and some tantric texts were translated into Uighur from Tokharian A or B. Uighur texts based on Chinese originals tend to be major Mahāyāna sūtras, such as the *Lotus Sūtra* and *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*. The Uighurs also composed their own Buddhist texts, in the form of *avadāna* and *jātaka* stories.

Early Uighur texts such as *Maitrisimit*—that centers on a Maitreya legend—include more Sogdian loan words. In contrast, later texts from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries use actual Chinese characters, which are read in Uighur. That indicates that many among the Buddhist Uighurs were bilingual. While surviving Uighur Buddhist literature includes both Mahāyāna and Śrāvakayāna texts, the Uighurs probably felt more affinity with Chinese versions of Mahāyāna teachings and practices. The Uighur embrace of both Mahāyāna and Śrāvakayāna texts is aptly illustrated by a copy of the Uighur version of *Abhidharma kośa* commentaries produced by the Sarvāstivāda school, which are written on the back of the Chinese version of the *Lotus Sūtra*. Tantric scriptures, in the form of Tibetan texts, were also introduced to the Uighurs during the period of Mongol domination, namely the thirteenth century.

According to textual and archaeological evidence, Buddhism and Manichaeism coexisted for several centuries in the Turfan region. Manicheans adopted specialized Buddhist words such as Buddha (used in reference to Mani), *cintamani* (wish-fulfilling jewel), *nirvāṇa*, and so on. Despite the tendency of Manichaeism to be adaptable and eclectic, Buddhism won in the end. Consequently, the Manichean cave temples in Bezeklik were converted into Buddhist sanctuaries, while Buddhist iconography was painted over Manichean murals.

Who taught Buddhism to the nomadic Uighurs? The Sogdians are said to have been responsible for the early transmission of Buddhist literature, as evidenced by the presence of many Sogdian loan words in Uighur Buddhist texts. However, many loan words were in fact derived from the Sogdian vocabulary of Manichaeism. Examples of such linguistic borrowings include *tamu* (hell), *nizvani* (desire), and *nom* (dharma) (Moriyasu, 1989: 464). Thus in terms of the development of native Buddhist vocabulary, Sogdian Manichaeism had major impacts on Uighur Buddhism. At the same time, the Tokharian influence on Uighur Buddhism also cannot be ignored, since most of the Uighur-Sanskrit words used in Buddhist texts were mediated by Tokharian A and B. Later on, the Uighurs learned the Sanskrit vocabulary of Buddhism, thereby bypassing other intermediary languages (both Central Asian and Chinese), although it is not clear how and why the Uighurs decided to use Sanskrit directly.

Uighur Buddhism continued to exist until around the fifteenth century. To some degree it coexisted with Islam from the eleventh century until the total Islamization of the area. Some small Uighur tribal groups in eastern Central Asia even remained Buddhist until the seventeenth century, as evidenced by a copy of a Uighur Buddhist sūtra dated 1687 that was discovered in Kansu. The text is a Uighur version of the *Suvarṇaprabhāsottama sūtra* that was translated from Chinese (see Finch 1993). Uighur Buddhism was multidimensional, reflecting the Uighurs' complex cultural interactions

with the Tokharinas, the Sogdians, the Khotanese, and the Chinese. As the Uighurs absorbed a range of elements from different Buddhist cultures, this contributed to the sedentarization and Sinification of the nomadic people with Turkic origins.

Decline of Buddhism in Central Asia

The first contacts of the Arabs with the Central Asians can be traced back to the mid-seventh century, when the Arabs conquered the Sasanians. In the beginning of the eighth century, Hyecho reported a revival of Buddhism under Turkic kings in both Tokhāristan and Gandhāra. Nevertheless, soon after Hyecho's visit, the situation changed. In 713, Qutayba ibn Muslim, an army commander of the Umayyad empire, occupied Sogdiana and Tokhāristan, thereby firmly established Islamic power in the region. In Gandhāra, Buddhism was revived briefly under Western Turkic rulers, until they were replaced by the Hindu Shāhī (870–1021), and by the Turkic Ghaznavids (977–1186). The Islamic ruler Maḥmūd of the Ghaznavids (r. 997–1030) invaded north and west India, where he implemented fierce destruction of other religions. Gandhāran Buddhism was presumably wiped out completely during his reign, in the early tenth century.

The first wave of the expansion of Islam into East Turkestan occurred in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. In the cases of Khotan and Kucha, Muslim conquest took the form of Jihad, but later the religion started to spread by peaceful means, through the influx of traders and Sufi missionaries. The first Islamic Turkic empire, the Qarakhanids (955–1140), contributed to a wholesale Turkicization of Central Asia, as they extended the territory under Turkic rule from Kashgar in the west to Khotan in the east. Their culture was the product of a synthesis between Islamic and Buddhist Uighur culture, and for some time both religions continued to coexist to some extent. Buddhism continued to flourish in some later Central Asian kingdoms, such as Xixia (1038–1227) and Qara-Khitai (or Western Liao, 1132–1211). In Turfan, Buddhism survived longer among the Uighurs, who sent a Buddhist monk and his disciples as envoys to Chang'an in 1408. However, by the thirteenth century Buddhism had died out in most of Central Asia, although Tibetan Vajrayana Buddhism became established in Mongolia, where it remained dominant over the succeeding centuries, down to the modern period.

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CHAPTER 2

Buddhism in Chinese History

Mario Poceski

Buddhism in China has a remarkably lengthy and complex history. Over the course of the last two millennia the Buddhist tradition has exerted extensive influences on virtually all facets of Chinese religious life, both at the popular and the elite levels. Moreover, Buddhism left multifaceted and lasting impacts on other aspects of Chinese civilization, including history, society, arts, and culture. In contemporary China, Buddhism still remains an integral part of the religious landscape. During the post-Mao era it has even been experiencing a modest revival, although its present strength and influence pale in comparison with the glories of long bygone eras. That is especially the case when the point of comparison is the Sui-Tang period, arguably the high point of Chinese civilization, during which Buddhism was unquestionably the most influential religious tradition throughout the sprawling Chinese empire.

In the process of its transmission, acculturation, and growth in China, Buddhism underwent extensive changes and manifold adaptations. As a result of the protracted encounter with Chinese traditions, Buddhist beliefs, doctrines, practices, and institutions underwent far-reaching transformations, even as for the most part they retained a sense of fidelity to the larger Buddhist religion that originated in India. This process of Sinification resulted in the formation of a rich and diverse Buddhist tradition that is quintessentially Chinese. The impact of these developments was also felt beyond China's borders, as Chinese forms of Buddhism were transmitted to other parts of East and Southeast Asia that traditionally were under China's spheres of cultural and political influence, namely Korea, Japan, and Vietnam. Consequently, Chinese Buddhism has traditionally formed the core of a pan-East Asian variety of Buddhism, and familiarity with Chinese models and developments is essential for understanding the rich Buddhist heritages of other countries in the region.

Throughout Chinese history, Buddhism shared common social and cultural spaces with other religious traditions, most notably Confucianism, Daoism, and popular religion. By and large, the various religious traditions not only coexisted with each other,

but they also engaged in complex webs of mutual interactions and exerted notable influences on each other (see Livia Kohn's chapter in this volume). That gave rise to the formation of unique forms of religious identities—some of which are notable for their fluidity or hybridity—and distinctively Chinese patterns of religious pluralism. On the other hand, Chinese religious history was not devoid of tension and conflicts, along with competitions over patronage, power, and influence. In that context, in the eyes of some of its detractors Buddhism retained an aura of foreignness, being the only one of the “three teachings” that did not originate in China (the other two being Confucianism and Daoism). That opened Buddhist teachings, ideals, and institutions to trenchant critiques, especially at the hands of xenophobic rulers and Confucian ideologues that were keen to promote particular brands of essentialist or fundamentalist visions of Chinese culture and society. Against that backdrop, the institutional fortunes and vitality of Buddhism changes over time. Eras of growth and flourishing were punctuated or disrupted with all sorts of challenges. In due course they gave way to periods of decline, which in turn eventually stimulated efforts at revival and reformation.

This chapter presents a broad historical survey of Chinese Buddhism. It covers the period from the initial transmission of the foreign religion into the Middle Kingdom during the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE) until the modern era, or roughly from the first until the twentieth century of the Common Era. I have primarily adopted a diachronic approach and have organized my discussion in terms of several relatively discrete historical periods. One should keep in mind, however, that such periodizations are provisional scholarly constructs and are inherently contestable. As heuristic devices, they are primarily used to organize complex sets of data and provide a meaningful narrative structure for the telling of a very long and complex story. At certain points I also pause to address, in fairly general terms, some important historical development or general features of Chinese Buddhism, such as the process of canon formation, the emergence of various Buddhist schools, and the common expressions of popular piety.

Initial Introduction of Buddhism into China

Chinese historical records contain a number of scattered references about the initial introduction of Buddhism into China, although their veracity is open to doubt. Effectively, we do not really know when Buddhism first “entered” China; at any rate, that is a problematic notion that presupposes a single point of officially sanctioned entry. Perhaps the most familiar quasi-historical account of that kind is the often-cited story about Emperor Ming's (r. 58–75 CE) dream about a mystifying foreign deity with golden hue, which one of the court advisors identified as the Buddha. In response, the intrigued emperor is said to have sent a western-bound expedition in search of the deity. The expedition purportedly brought back the first Buddhist scripture to come into China, the *Scripture in Forty-two Sections* (*Sishier zhang jing*, which some scholars believe to be an apocryphal text composed in China).

According to later versions of the story, the expedition sent by Emperor Ming also brought two Buddhist monks to Luoyang, the capital of China at the time. In response, the emperor ordered the construction of the first Buddhist monastery, which was

named White Horse monastery (Ch'en 1964: 29–31; Zürcher 2007: 22). While this story might be apocryphal, it exemplifies a prevailing tendency to focus on the “official” introduction of Buddhism, which is linked with the Chinese state and its ruler. Such associations had obvious propagandist value for the nascent Buddhist community in early medieval China, as they helped legitimize the new religion.

The type of legitimizing strategy that is exemplified by the stories told in official chronicles was often accompanied with a propensity to push back in time the arrival of Buddhism onto Chinese soil. Given prevalent Chinese tendencies to exalt antiquity and evoke the historicized past, this approach helped enhance public perceptions of Buddhism. These tendencies are evident in two legends that push back the chronology of the initial arrival of Buddhism and link it with famous monarchs. The first legend describes the arrival of Buddhist monks at the court of Qin Shihuangdi (r. 221–210 BCE), the famous first emperor who united China into a single empire (Zürcher 2007: 19–20; Ch'en 1964: 28). The second legend makes a connection between King Aśoka (r. 268–232 BCE), the famed Indian monarch who was celebrated for his generous patronage of Buddhism, and the arrival of Buddhist missionaries in China. In addition, another frequently quoted legend, mentioned in *Hou han shu* (Later Han History), places the arrival of Buddhism at the Chinese court in 2 BCE; in this instance, the first transmitter was a Central Asian envoy from the kingdom of Yuezhi, which was located in Bactria (Ch'en 1964: 31–32).

Notwithstanding lingering uncertainties regarding the historical reliability of the specific events depicted in these accounts, we can ascertain that Buddhism already had at least some presence in China during the first century of the Common Era. There is even a possibility that some Buddhists might have entered China earlier. The primary transmission route was the well-known network of trade routes that is commonly referred to as the Silk Road, which stretched from China's capital Chang'an to the Mediterranean, thereby linking China with Central Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East. The initial growth of Buddhism was thus linked with long-distance trade, with diplomacy also playing a role. That was in tune with a significant global pattern, as the spread of trade along the Silk Road was closely related to the transmission and expansion of a variety of religions, although warfare and political realignments could also have notable impacts. At that time, propelled by its missionary character, Buddhism was well on the way to developing into a pan-Asian religion, with a universal appeal and an ability to transcend established ethnic, linguistic, and cultural boundaries.

Most of the early monks and lay Buddhists that entered China came with merchant caravans from Central Asia, an area where Buddhism already had established a strong presence. Consequently, while the transmission of Buddhism can be viewed as the main element of a large-scale cultural exchange that linked China and India—two major civilizations with long histories and sophisticated cultures—Kushans, Sogdians, and other Central Asians were also important historical actors and key intermediaries (see Mariko Walter's chapter in this volume). Consequently, listings of notable Buddhist missionaries from this period are dominated by monks from Central Asia. Well-known examples of that trend are An Shigao (active ca. 148–180), a Parthian who produced early translations of a variety of scriptures and established preliminary standards of translation, and Lokakṣema (b. 147?), a Scythian who achieved wide acclaim for his

translations of a number of important Mahāyāna texts, including early scriptures that belonged to the perfection of wisdom corpus (see Zürcher 2007: 32–36).

At the outset, the majority of the followers of Buddhism were presumably immigrants from Central Asia. Nonetheless, from early on the foreign religion also attracted the attention of native Chinese, an increasing number of whom became inspired by its teachings and attracted to its rituals. As a variety of Buddhist doctrines, practices, texts, and tradition were introduced by the foreign missionaries, the Chinese made concerted efforts to come to terms with the new religion and understand its essential elements. Typically Buddhist concepts and teachings were interpreted in terms of native religious values and established intellectual frameworks, and this situation continued for an extended period.

By the end of the Han dynasty in 220 there were already a number of Buddhist establishments in various parts of China, and the stage was set for the exponential growth of Buddhism throughout the various kingdoms and empires that rose and fell during the Period of Disunion (220–589). The collapse of the Han dynasty's imperial rule gave way to a fluid sociopolitical situation, marked by a pervasive sense of fragmentation and an emergence of multiple centers of political power. The unstable circumstances also created a climate of intellectual and religious openness to new ideas, which helped ameliorate a persistent feeling of Chinese cultural superiority and ethnocentric bias. Those kinds of sentiments were accompanied with an increased skepticism about normative values and long-standing socioreligious paradigms. In the long term, the somewhat fluid and unpredictable situation probably benefited the growth of Buddhism.

Growth during the Period of Division

During the Period of Division (also known as the Northern and Southern Dynasties) the growth of Buddhism and its penetration into Chinese society continued at a steady pace. By the sixth century, which marked the end of this often turbulent but also fascinating period, Buddhism had established itself as the dominant religious tradition throughout most of the Chinese realm, thereby bringing to fruition a protracted historical process that Erik Zürcher called the Buddhist conquest of China (Zürcher 2007). Numerous followers and sympathizers of Buddhism could be found among members of all strata of Chinese society, from poor peasants to emperors. Buddhist ideas and articles of faith, including prevailing notions about rebirth, karmic law, salvific grace, and human perfectibility came to permeate Chinese culture and influence the lives of the Chinese people, even when they did not formally subscribe to the Buddhist faith.

During this period Buddhism also became a dominant force in intellectual life and exerted major influences on esthetic sensibilities and artistic creations. Among the lasting reminders of the period's extraordinary religious fervor are the surviving objects of Buddhist art, many of them presently in the collections of various museums in Asia, Europe, and America. There are also the remarkable complexes of cave sanctuaries at Yun'gang and Longmen, which were initially constructed during the Northern Wei Dynasty (see Michelle Wang's chapter in this volume). The size and influence of the

monastic order, which included both monks and nuns, also grew exponentially, with notable effects on the Chinese economy (Gernet 1995: 3–25). These developments were reflected in the size and architectural splendor of major monasteries, especially those in the capitals of major dynasties (e.g. Luoyang), which were not unlike imperial palaces (see Yang 1984).

As an expansive array of Buddhist texts and teachings were introduced into China, from early on Chinese Buddhists showed a clear preference for the Mahāyāna tradition. With the establishment of an inclusive and eclectic brand of Mahāyāna as the Buddhist mainstream, its central ideals and core beliefs became integral parts of the Chinese religious landscape. That included exultation of the bodhisattva ideal, especially its central virtue of universal compassion, as well as faith in a multiplicity of supremely wise and compassionate Buddhas that manifest in a multitude of worlds throughout an infinite cosmos, replete with sublime virtues and awe-inspiring powers. The successful growth of Buddhism was to a large degree based on the considerable appeal of its teachings, rituals, and practices, which came in an often bewildering profusion of forms and varieties. That included solemn repentance rituals and other religious ceremonies that were often enacted on a grand scale, along with rarefied philosophical reflections on the nature of reality. There were also various kinds of devotional practices, contemplative techniques, and ethical observances.

Buddhism also proved to be useful as a tool of political legitimization, especially for the rulers of the northern dynasties, most of whom were not native Chinese. For the Tuoba Wei and other ruling tribes in the north, the universalist ethos of Buddhism was appealing at least in part because of its sociopolitical utility, especially given the challenges that had to be tackled as they governed over ethnically and culturally diverse populations. Striking examples of the close relationship between Buddhism and the state were the occasional identifications of the emperor with the Buddha (McNair 2007: 7–30). Furthermore, this era's political fragmentation fostered the emergence of notable regional variations within Chinese Buddhism. Scholars typically contrast the northern style of Buddhism, with its emphasis on thaumaturgy, asceticism, political involvement, and cultic practice with the supposedly mellower kind of Buddhism that prevailed in the south, at least among the aristocratic elites that delighted in abstruse intellectual discussions, to a large degree inspired by the perfection of wisdom literature (Ch'en 1964: 121–83). The southern Buddhist milieu, however, was by no means averse to the mixing up of religion and politics. For instance, it gave birth to the most famous (or notorious) Buddhist monarch in Chinese history: Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty (r. 502–549), who was renowned for his public displays of Buddhist piety and his extravagant patronage of monks and monasteries.

The varied new elements brought by Buddhism enriched and expanded the contours of Chinese religious and cultural life. At the same time, certain aspects of Buddhism evoked comparisons or analogies with elements of native religious traditions, especially those of Daoism. After its initial emergence as an organized religion during the second century of the Common Era, Daoism experienced substantial development during the period of division, which in many instances intersected with the growth of Buddhism. Many Chinese glossed over the unique features or distinct boundaries that separated the two religions—especially at the popular level—which initially facilitated the

acceptance and assimilation of Buddhism. Over time the relationship between the two became increasingly complex. In general it involved a sense of complementarity, as there were numerous instances of mutual influences and interactions, but there were also tensions and contestations, which often revolved around ongoing competitions over patronage (for the ritual and textual connections, see Mollier 2008).

Notwithstanding its long-term success in China, in the process of its growth and assimilation Buddhism had to overcome a number of obstacles. On a basic level, there were linguistic problems, as literary Chinese was very different from Sanskrit, the main canonical language of the Mahāyāna tradition. There were also formidable challenges related to bridging the vast gaps in intellectual outlooks, cultural values, and religious predilections that separated China and India. In contrast to the transmission of Buddhism to many other parts of Asia, where its arrival was associated with the ingress of a superior culture, in the Chinese context the foreign religion entered a country (or a distinctive cultural and geographical area) with a well-established sense of self-identity and rich philosophical, political, and religious traditions. Within the Chinese scheme of things, theirs was the supreme civilization, grounded in enduring values and sustained by outstanding institutions. In the eyes of many Chinese ideologues and intellectuals, their culture was glorious and complete. It also had distinguished sages such as Confucius and Laozi, who in ancient times have revealed the essential patterns of proper human behavior and have plumbed the timeless mysteries of the Dao. Therefore, it looked unseemly for their countryman to worship an odd foreign deity, or to follow strange customs imported from distant lands.

With the increasing influence of Buddhism in medieval China, some of the literati, especially those with Confucian predilections, articulated a series of critiques of the foreign religion. The most prominent object of their trenchant criticisms was the monastic order (Sangha). Initially monasticism represented a novel type of institution, without a counterpart in Chinese society. Consequently, it was identified by some officials as being potentially subversive, or at least irreconcilable with China's traditional sociopolitical system. For instance, the monastic renunciation of social ties and the observance of celibacy were criticized as being incompatible with a dominant Confucian ethos, which privileged patriarchy and stressed the primacy of social relationships, especially those centered on the family. As a result, monks were criticized for deviating from established social norms. They were accused of not being filial, particularly because of their failure to marry and produce male offspring. In a society that lauded filial piety as a supreme virtue—which was tied up with the prevailing cult of ancestors—such charges represented serious impediments to the broad acceptance of Buddhism and the growth of the monastic order.

Buddhism was also rejected by xenophobic officials and literati because of its foreign (lit. “barbarian”) origins. In their eyes, that made it inimical to essential Chinese values and unsuitable as a religion for the Chinese people. Moreover, according to some of its detractors, the monastic order was economically unproductive, imposing an excessive and unjustifiable financial burden on both the imperial state and the general public. An additional point of contention, with serious political overtones, was the monastic order's insistence on its institutional independence—or at least a semblance of it—which clashed with prevalent views about the emperor's absolute authority and the

primacy of the Chinese state. At times these critiques even led to explicit calls to proscribe Buddhism, which on two separate occasions culminated in state-led persecutions, under the Northern Wei (446–451) and the Northern Zhou (574–577) dynasties. These, however, turned out to be only temporary setbacks, as in both instances the local Buddhist communities were able to recover fairly quickly (Ch'en 1964: 147–53, 190–94).

By the end of the sixth century, at the eve of the reunification of China under the pro-Buddhist Sui dynasty (581–618), Buddhism had already established durable roots throughout the whole territory of China. During the Period of Division Chinese Buddhism also came to play central roles in the vast processes of cultural diffusion and political realignment that brought other parts of East Asia closer into China's sphere of influence. Chinese forms of Buddhism from the north were first introduced into the Korean peninsula during the fourth century, and over the subsequent centuries there was a steady stream of Korean monks who went to study in China (see Sem Vermeersch's chapter in this volume). Then in the sixth century Buddhism was also introduced into Japan, where it quickly rose to prominence. Before long Buddhism became the de-facto national religion of the island state, and over the ensuing epochs it continued to exert notable influences on Japanese culture and society (see Heather Blair's chapter in this volume).

Canon Formation and Doctrinal Classification

Many of the missionary monks that entered China brought with them an assortment of scriptures and other Buddhist texts. For a number of centuries, until well into the Tang era, the translation of canonical texts into Chinese was one of the major concerns of the Buddhist clergy and its lay patrons. The focus on sacred texts and the reverence directed toward them reflected traditional Buddhist attitudes, but they were also influenced by the overwhelmingly literary orientation of elite Chinese culture, in which the written word was held in highest regard. On many occasions the state was a major sponsor of various translation projects. Prime examples of that are the voluminous translations produced by the large translation bureaus headed by Kumārajīva (344–413?) and Xuanzang (ca. 600–664), arguably the two best-known translators of Buddhist texts into Chinese. The Kuchan missionary and the Chinese monk both worked under imperial auspices in or around Chang'an, the imperial capital. Their officially sanctioned translation bureaus were situated at state-supported monasteries, with numerous prominent monks serving as their assistants. Xuanzang was also famous for his epic pilgrimage to India, from where he brought back numerous Buddhist manuscripts, while Kumārajīva was a prominent exponent of the doctrine of emptiness, as propounded by the Madhyamaka school.

The task of translating Buddhist texts into Chinese was a monumental undertaking not only because of the linguistic, conceptual, and transcultural challenges noted above, but also because of the huge size of the various canons that were produced by the main traditions of Indian Buddhism. The Mahāyāna tradition, which became dominant in China, had an open canon, and its adherents were especially prolific creators

of canonical literature. We also have to keep in mind that at the same time as Buddhism was growing in China, the Indian Mahāyāna movement underwent important developments and paradigm shifts, with notable impacts in the doctrinal, literary, and institutional spheres.

Notable developments in Indian Buddhism that took place during the early centuries of the Common Era, which came to exert significant influences on Chinese Buddhism, included the emergence of distinct philosophically oriented schools such as Madhyamaka and Yogācāra, each of which produced extensive literature. The emergence of the Tantric movement during the seventh century, notwithstanding its emphasis on ritual practices, led to the production of even more texts. Many of these texts were in due course translated into Chinese, which then prompted the creation of scriptural commentaries and other exegetical works. Accordingly, the Chinese Buddhist canon was constantly expanding and evolving, eventually becoming one of the largest collections of religious literature in the world (see Jiang Wu's chapter in this volume).

Among the numerous canonical texts translated by Kumārajīva, Xuanzang, and other noted translators were influential scriptures such as the *Lotus Scripture*, arguably the most popular scripture in China (and Japan), as well as the *Huayan Scripture*, the *Vimalakīrti Scripture*, and the *Amitābha Scripture*. The Indian provenance of some of these texts (e.g. the *Huayan Scripture*) is uncertain, while others (e.g. the *Amitābha Scripture*) were not that influential in the land of their birth, but for a variety of reasons captured the religious imagination of Chinese Buddhists and came to exert immense influence on the development of Chinese (and East Asian) Buddhism. Some canonical works, especially voluminous and multilayered texts such as the *Lotus* and *Huayan* scriptures, were approached from a variety of angles and put to a multitude of uses. In certain intellectual milieus they served as starting points for sophisticated philosophical discussions, including metaphysical reflections on the nature of reality (see the chapters by Haiyan Shen and Imre Hamar in this volume), but they also inspired arrays of cultic practices. In addition, they gave impetus to exquisite artistic creations: calligraphic inscriptions, paintings of well-known scenes from the scriptures, or sculptures of deities featured in them.

The imperial state's involvement with the canon did not stop with the sponsorship of translation projects. It also extended to the commissioning of catalogues of canonical texts, as well as the compilation and publication of the Buddhist canon, known as the "Great Collection of Scriptures" (*Da zang jing*). At times the government also asserted a self-designated prerogative to make decisions about what should be included or excluded from the canon. When a particular Buddhist movement or sect ran afoul of the government, that could lead not only to it being banned as a subversive heresy, but also to a proscription of its texts, as happened with the notorious Three Stages movement during the Tang era (Hubbard 2001).

Over time the canon grew not only in size, but also in terms of the variety of texts contained in it. Eventually many texts composed in China were incorporated in the canon—or rather canons, since there were a number of versions of the Chinese canon. That included numerous apocryphal scriptures composed in China, a number of which became accepted as canonical, with some of them becoming quite influential (see Buswell 1990). Cases in point are the *Treatise on the Awakening of Mahāyāna Faith*

(*Dasheng qi xin lun*) and the *Scripture of Perfect Awakening* (*Yuan jue jing*), both of which received extensive exegesis and were often quoted in a wide variety of texts that dealt with philosophical themes or issues related to spiritual cultivation. Even more numerous were texts composed by Chinese authors, most of whom were members of the monastic order. Examples of this type include various historical works and the plethora of texts produced by monks associated with Chinese Buddhist schools such as Chan, Huayan, and Tiantai.

The proliferation of canonical texts, coupled with the variety of different doctrinal perspectives and soteriological paradigms expressed in them, repeatedly became sources of perplexity for Chinese Buddhists, especially during the early stages of the spread of the “Indian” religion. The whole situation was compounded by the haphazard manner in which various texts and doctrines were introduced into China. For instance, what was the relationship between the Madhyamaka doctrines of emptiness, two truths, and conditioned origination, and the Yogācāra’s nuanced explorations of mind and reality in terms of distinctive categories such as three natures and eight consciousnesses? How about the related notions of Buddha-nature and tathāgatagarbha, which were not very influential in India and entered China at a later stage of doctrinal development, but eventually became accepted by most Chinese Buddhist as core articles of faith and key centerpieces of their worldview? One way of dealing with this proliferation of theoretical templates and overabundance of meanings was the creation of doctrinal taxonomies (*panjiao*, also referred to as classifications of teachings), which became one of the hallmarks of medieval Chinese Buddhist scholasticism.

The creation of doctrinal taxonomies was a particular Chinese way of coming to terms with the multiplicity of texts and teachings contained in the canon, although it was also related to certain religious predicaments and peculiar developments within the medieval Buddhist tradition. Generally speaking, the classificatory schemes reflected Chinese intellectual sensibilities, especially a penchant for seeking harmony, order, and all-inclusiveness. They adopted all-embracing and seemingly ecumenical attitudes toward cumulative Buddhist traditions, which were perceived as sacred repositories of timeless truths and sublime meanings. They affirmed that, in the final analysis, there is only one truth, which is ineffable and transcends all conceptual constructs. Nonetheless, there are a number of paths of practice and realization that lead toward the ultimate truth, tailored to the distinct spiritual aptitudes or capacities of distinct groups of practitioners. At the same time, the various texts and teachings were arranged in a hierarchical manner, according to predetermined criteria and in light of particular points of view. By these means the taxonomies also promoted the superiority of a particular text or teaching, thereby becoming potentially useful tools for the advancement of proto-sectarian agendas.

All these elements are evident in the prominent taxonomic scheme created by Fazang (643–712), a leading figure within the Huayan school and main architect of its comprehensive and sophisticated doctrinal system. Among the five levels of teachings enumerated in Fazang’s taxonomy, the teachings of the *Huayan Scripture*, which he dubbed the “perfect teaching,” occupy the highest position. In a manner that reflected his own philosophical outlook, Fazang also arranged the main doctrinal systems of Indian Buddhism into a hierarchical fashion, with the tathāgatagarbha doctrine above the

doctrines of the Yogācāra and Madhyamaka schools (see Gregory 1991: 127–43). As is customary in Chinese doctrinal taxonomies, the Hīnayāna or Small Vehicle teachings were placed at the bottom.

Similarly, in the taxonomic schemes produced by Zhiyi (538–597) and his Tiantai school, the *Lotus Scripture*, which served as the foundational text for Tiantai's comprehensive and ingenious system of Buddhist philosophy, was exalted as the most supreme text in the Buddhist canon, albeit with a caveat that no scripture, not matter how profound or sublime, has a monopoly over the ultimate truth. Furthermore, by applying different classificatory principles, the Tiantai school was able to produce several discrete classificatory nomenclatures. That is exemplified by the three taxonomic schemes collectively known as the “eight teachings and five periods,” which organize the totality of canonical texts and teachings into three separate groupings, in term of their doctrinal contents, means of instruction employed by the Buddha, and the main periods in the Buddha's preaching career.

Flourishing during the Sui-Tang Era

Buddhism reached the peak of its development and impact on Chinese society during the Sui (581–618) and Tang (618–907) dynasties. This era is often evoked as the golden age of Chinese Buddhism, distinguished by a remarkable combination of intellectual ingenuity, institutional vitality, fervent devotion, and artistic creativity. The Tang period is also unusually accepted as the highpoint of Chinese civilization, an era of unrivaled dynastic power and prosperity, celebrated for its cultural sophistication, effervescence, and cosmopolitanism. The apex of Buddhism in China thus coincided with one of the most significant periods in Chinese history, when the Middle Kingdom emerged as the most advanced and powerful country in the world. At that time Buddhism was clearly the most prevalent and influential religious tradition in China, though by no means the only one. Confucianism and Daoism also flourished, amidst a positive sociocultural environment that fostered what today we might call multicultural attitudes and acceptance of religious pluralism. In addition, during this era a number of other “western” religions were introduced into China, including Zoroastrianism, Islam, Nestorian Christianity, and Manichaeism.

During the Tang era Buddhist monasteries, temples, and shrines were prominent fixtures of both urban and rural landscapes. Monks and monasteries were highly visible symbols of the pervasive presence of Buddhism throughout China, which had significant social, political, and economic ramifications. The monastic order assumed key positions of religious leadership and was at the forefront of major institutional and intellectual developments. While most monastic leaders came from privileged backgrounds, there were also numerous monks and nuns with humbler upbringings that ministered to the religious needs of the common people.

Chang'an, the main Tang capital, had over 150 monasteries and convents, which housed thousands of monks and nuns. The capital's main monastic complexes were huge in scope, with numerous buildings, pavilions, and courtyards. They were also renowned for their architectural splendor and refined surroundings. Besides housing

various religious functions, which included rituals performed on behalf of the imperial family and the reigning dynasty, the monasteries were also important centers of social life, as well as sites where varied cultural events took place.

Luoyang, the secondary capital, was not much behind as far as the presence of Buddhist establishments and activities were concerned, especially during the reign of Empress Wu (r. 690–705), the only female monarch in Chinese history, who was renowned for her patronage of Buddhism. There were also notable buildups and expansions at Longmen and Dunhuang, the famed cave complexes that are among the largest and most important repositories of Buddhist art. The profusion of statues, frescoes, inscriptions, and reliefs that grace the cave sanctuaries bear striking testimony to the immense heights of Buddhist-inspired artistic creativity and religious fervor that characterized this age. They also afford us insights into the range of aspirations and motivations evidenced among the Buddhist faithful, which involved intricate intersections of religious, economic, political, and social considerations.

Many famous monasteries were also located at provincial or prefectural capitals. There were even more monasteries situated at various mountains—such as Wutaishan, Lushan, Tiantaishan, and Nanyue—which besides their primary role as centers of monastic training also served as major sites of pilgrimage (for Nanyue, see Robson 2009). Tang officials and literati often visited these kinds of monastic establishments, where they closely interacted with the Buddhist clergy. Many of them were also prominent patrons and ardent supporters of the Buddhist cause. On the whole, the literati played essential roles in the growth and transformation of Buddhism. A good number of them were even actively engaged in the propagation of Buddhist doctrines and practices. In addition, they affirmed the central place of Buddhism in Chinese cultural and social life, and at key junctures they defended the Buddhist faith against its various detractors (Halperin 2006: 27–61).

The pervasive influence of Buddhism in the cultural sphere is plainly evident in Tang literature and poetry, which frequently evoke Buddhist themes, ideas, and images. In various inscriptions written for Buddhist monasteries and other types of writings, the literati wrote about their personal devotion and presented embellished testimonies about the sublimity or efficacy of Buddhist teachings. Copious examples of such sentiments can be found in the writings of famous poets such as Wang Wei (701–761) and Bo Juyi (772–846, also known as Bai Juyi). Both poets were well known for their serious engagements with Buddhist ideals and practices, especially those associated with the nascent Chan movement, so it is not surprising that their poetry was imbued with Buddhist sentiments. In many poems Buddhist tropes or imagery assume center stage, which makes them useful sources for the study of lay attitudes and practices (see Poceski 2007b).

The growth of Buddhism also had notable impacts in the economic and political spheres. Many monasteries had official status and received funding from the state. Since religiously inflected giving was perceived as a prime generator of spiritual merit, donations from the faithful—who came from the ranks of the sociopolitical elites as well as the common populace—were a major source of income for the monasteries. Some monastic establishments were also major landholders. Other sources of income were commercial activities such as the operation of oil presses, mills, and pawnshops (Gernet 1995: 142–52, 167–86).

While the imperial state sponsored religious activities and extended certain privileges to the clergy—most notably the exemptions from taxes and military service—it also implemented a series of policies aimed at controlling the religion and its institutions, which were not necessarily unique to the Tang era. That included control of monastic ordinations, regulation of the building of temples and monasteries, and imposition of restrictions on the clergy's activities and freedom of movement. Given the relative comfort of monastic life and the large size of the clergy, which included individuals with all sort of backgrounds and aspirations, a certain level of monastic laxity and corruption was an ongoing problem. That elicited criticism from both outside and within the Buddhist community, along with occasional calls for purification of the clergy.

In the course of Chinese history many reining dynasties were keen to utilize the prestige and popularity of Buddhism for their political ends. That was notably the case during the Sui dynasty, which made extensive use of Buddhism as part of its overarching policy of unifying the country under its centralized rule. The situation during the Tang era was a bit more complex and fluid, in part due to an official policy that gave precedence to Daoism. Over the course of the dynasty, the state's level of official patronage and its attitudes toward Buddhism were influenced by a variety of factors, including the personal pieties of individual emperors. At one end of the spectrum was the aforementioned Empress Wu, who offered lavish support and made extensive use of Buddhism as a key source of legitimacy for her rule, which was unique in the annals of Chinese history on account of her gender (see Weinstein 1987: 37–47).

At the other end of the spectrum was Emperor Wuzong (r. 842–845), who during his short reign initiated one of the most comprehensive and devastating anti-Buddhist persecutions. While the persecution was extended to other “foreign” religions, especially Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, and Nestorian Christianity, Buddhist monks and monasteries were its major targets. The emperor ordered comprehensive destruction or closure of monasteries and other Buddhist establishments, laicization of the clergy, and expropriation of monastic lands and property (Weinstein 1987: 114–36; Ch'en 1964: 226–33). The persecution was short-lived, as the next emperor Xuanzong (r. 846–859) promptly changed state policy and became a generous supporter of Buddhism. Nonetheless, for some historians this traumatic event marked the end of a great era in Chinese Buddhist history.

Schools of Chinese Buddhism

At the elite level, the formative stages of Chinese Buddhist history were to a large degree shaped by the formation of discrete exegetical traditions and the systematization of explicit doctrinal or soteriological paradigms. These processes found their most notable expressions in the development of the so-called schools or traditions of Chinese Buddhism. When discussing these schools, however, we have to be mindful that the Chinese term for “school” (*zong*) presents us with a number of challenges, given its multiple connotations and its ambivalent uses in a range of contexts. The same term can be used to denote the essential purport of a particular doctrine (that might be associated with

a specific scripture, such as the *Huayan jing*), a tradition of canonical exegesis or philosophical reflection (e.g. Madhyamaka), a systematization of particular doctrines or practices, or a grouping of practitioners that adhere to a set of teachings or ideals. Often it involves a combination of several of these interpretative possibilities.

Generally speaking, in the Chinese Buddhist context the notion of school does not imply a distinct sectarian tradition, for instance along the lines of those that developed in later Japanese Buddhism, which came to incorporate a variety of institutionally independent sects such as Sōtō Zen, Jōdo, Tendai, Shingon, and Nichiren. Notwithstanding the existence of distinct group identities or factional divisions—along the lines of those that separate Chan from Tiantai, for instance—the schools of Chinese Buddhism did not develop into discrete sects that had autonomous ecclesiastical structures or institutional moorings that set them apart from the monastic mainstream. In effect, they were all integral parts of an inclusive Buddhist tradition, largely associated with the monastic order and the Buddhist canon, which was able to accommodate a broad range of approaches and perspectives.

This larger Buddhist tradition was open to all sorts of ecumenical gestures and syncretic amalgamations. It also had a capacity to absorb all kinds of doctrinal debates and factional disagreements. It is thus pointless or misleading to speak of Chan monks (or practitioners) as a distinct group in either the sociological or institutional sense, since there were no separate ordinations or other markers of official entry into the Chan school. Accordingly, monks associated with Chan (as well as with the other schools) were able to accommodate several overlapping, contextual, and porous identities. These involved their simultaneous participation within the broader Chan movement and in one of its lineages, as well as their membership in the monastic order and the common Buddhist tradition, with its rich history, cumulative lore, expansive literature, and multifaceted institutions (Poceski 2007a: 103–06).

By the same token, even when specific religious establishments were marked as “Chan monasteries,” they were open to all kinds of practitioners. For instance, when a system of Chan monasteries was established during the Song era, they were subsumed under the official designation of “public monasteries” (*shifang conglin*). These monasteries were open to all properly ordained monks in good standing. Only their abbacy was restricted to holders of the Chan lineage, who were also prominent members of the mainstream monastic order. The same was true of Tiantai monasteries, which belonged to a separate category of “teaching” (*jiao*) monasteries (see Schlütter 2008: 31–54). Furthermore, when the Chan school developed specific monastic codes for the regulation of this kind of monastery, they were to a large extent based on the Vinaya, the canonical code of monastic discipline, and they also incorporated a variety of customs and rituals that were in no way unique to the Chan school (see Yifa 2002, esp. Chapter 2).

During the early history of Buddhism in China, especially during the Period of Division, the monastic elite was concerned with attaining mastery of the principal doctrinal tenets and philosophical systematizations of the Indian Mahāyāna tradition, which were brought into China in several distinct stages. By the early fifth century, after Kumārajīva’s arrival in China, the dominant traditions of scholastic learning and scriptural exegesis revolved around the text and doctrines of the Madhyamaka school. Early Chinese appropriations of Madhyamaka doctrines are evident in the writings of Sengzhao

(374–414)—one of Kumārajīva's leading disciples—which are noted for their intellectual intricacy and creativity, as well as for their extensive recourse to native Chinese terminology in the exposition of subtle Buddhist ideas (see Liu 1994: 37–81).

During the sixth century Yogācāra texts and ideas became subjects of intense study and reflection, followed by a growing popularity of the Buddha-nature and tathāgatagarbha doctrines (see Paul 1984, esp. the Introduction). These trends coalesced around the formation of the Shelun and Dilun schools, which were primarily scholarly traditions of canonical exegesis centered on select texts, which involved narrow and loosely connected segments of the monastic elite that were renowned for their intellectual acumen and scholastic expertise. As the names of the two schools indicate, their primary textual points of departure were Vasubandhu's *Daśabhūmikasūtra śāstra* (*Shidi jing lun*, usually abbreviated to *Dilun*) and Asaṅga's *Mahāyānasamgraha* (*She dasheng lun*, or *Shelun*).

During the Sui and early Tang eras there was a resurgence of interest in Madhyamaka literature and teachings, primarily represented by the prolific writings and activities of the famous scholar Jizang (549–623), who had Central Asian ancestry. Jizang's Sanlun (Three Treatises) school is often labeled as a Chinese version of Madhyamaka, although for a variety of reasons, including Jizang's integration of the Buddha-nature doctrine into his idiosyncratic systematization of Buddhist philosophy, the simple equitation of Sanlun with Madhyamaka is questioned by some scholars. Others have also suggested that the Tiantai school has equal claims to the title of heir and developer of the Madhyamaka tradition's philosophical heritage (Swanson 1989: 16). During the early Tang there was also considerable interest in a variety of Yogācāra doctrine, brought into China by the famous translator and pilgrim Xuanzang, often referred to as the Faxiang (Dharma Characteristics) school.

Among the primary characteristics of these schools were their close connections with canonical texts, theoretical templates, and systems of philosophical analysis that had Indian provenance. While all of them enjoyed considerable popularity during their heydays, they ended up being largely supplanted by the new schools or traditions that rose to prominence during the Sui-Tang period, namely Chan, Huayan, Tiantai, and Pure Land, each of which is allocated a separate chapter in Part II or Part III of this volume. Being without exact counterparts in Indian or Central Asian Buddhism, these schools came to represent uniquely Chinese formulations of Buddhist doctrine and practice. Among them, Huayan and Tiantai are usually regarded as representing the highest points of doctrinal development in East Asian Buddhism, while Chan and Pure Land embody the dominant approaches to spiritual cultivation, although it is debatable if the second really constitutes a distinct school. The copious texts, beliefs, doctrines, and practices of all four schools were also exported throughout the rest of East Asia, where they became central or influential elements in the formation of the native Buddhist traditions.

Popular Pieties

While the major schools played significant historical roles and are important for understanding many aspects of Chinese Buddhism, they represent only a part of the

multifarious Buddhist traditions that developed in China. Moreover, they primarily involved the clerical elites and their upper-class followers, with a partial exception of the Pure Land movement, which was diffused more broadly. Consequently, the main schools—especially those with scholastic orientations, such as Huayan and Shelun—had relatively little direct impact on the religious lives of the common people, who espoused a variety of popular beliefs and cultic practices that often blurred the lines of demarcation that separated Buddhism from Daoism and popular religion. Key elements of the Buddhist worldview that shaped prevalent outlooks and guided everyday religious behaviors include the beliefs in reincarnation and the law of karma, which by the late medieval period also became widely accepted outside of the Buddhist community. These beliefs fostered a prevalent preoccupation with the procurement of favorable karmic recompense, which brought blessing in the present life—including utilitarian benefits such as the accumulation of wealth or the enjoyment of a long and healthy life—and secured auspicious rebirth in the next life.

The pious accumulation of wholesome or positive karma could involve all sorts of ritual gestures and meritorious acts, along with cultivation of the full range of spiritual disciplines included in the bodhisattva path of practice and realization. Among the most prevalent practices were charitable giving, observance of ethical precepts, and worship of various Buddhas and bodhisattvas. Much of the religiously inflected giving was meant to support the construction or upkeep of monasteries, which also involved support of the resident clergy. The laity's generous donations were also directed toward the construction of various statues, sanctuaries, and other objects or places of worship, including stūpas and pagodas. Buddhists were similarly involved in charitable giving aimed at alleviating poverty, sickness, and other forms of suffering. To that end, they established various forms of charitable organizations that provided valuable social services to the broader community.

Another common expression of Buddhist piety was the adherence to ethical precepts. At the most basic level, that implied observance of the traditional five precepts for the Buddhist laity, which involve abstention from killing, stealing, lying, sexual misconduct, and consumption of alcohol. Some committed laymen, and even more laywomen, also received the bodhisattva precepts, which were based on the (presumably) apocryphal *Fan wang jing* (Brahma Net Scripture). Another prevalent practice that was inspired by the bodhisattva ideal of universal compassion was the observance of a vegetarian diet, which is among the defining features of Chinese Buddhism. Consequently, during the medieval period the organizing of communal vegetarian feasts became a prominent feature of Buddhist festivals and other public celebrations. While all members of the clergy were expected to be vegetarian, vegetarianism was optional for their lay supporters, though partial or full adoption of a vegetarian lifestyle was (and still is) widely perceived as a mark of commitment to the Buddhist path.

Throughout Chinese history prevalent manifestations of Buddhist faith were usually infused with devotional feelings and articulated via an array of ritual acts and observances. In effect, devotionalism and ritualism were among the most pervasive and readily recognizable features of Chinese Buddhism. Besides the regular liturgical services that were part of everyday monastic routines, the ritual calendar was also filled with many other festivals, commemorative celebrations, and other public rituals. Some forms of

ritualized practice, such as sūtra-recitations and elaborate repentance ceremonies, could last for extended periods—days or even weeks at a time. The same can be said of the series of public lectures that provided systematic exegesis of popular canonical texts. All these events were also significant sources of revenue for the monasteries, as they attracted many lay people who made generous donations.

Chinese Buddhists had a variety of choices when it came to objects of cultic worship and adulation. The Buddhist pantheon is complex and vast, populated with a large number of Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and other kinds of deities. Besides Śākyamuni (Shijia mouni), the historical Buddha, there are also many other celestial Buddhas that supposedly all share the same fundamental nature, identified as the “body of truth” (*dharmakāya* or *fashen*), which is no other than the formless and ineffable essence of ultimate reality. The most popular Buddhas are Vairocana (Pilushena), the sublime cosmic Buddha featured in the *Huayan Scripture*, Amitābha (Emituo), who presides over his fabled pure land in the west, and Bhaiṣajyaguru (Yaoshi), the Buddha of healing. There is also Maitreya (Mile), the future Buddha, who is often referred to as a bodhisattva. After the Tang era he was primarily represented as the fat laughing Buddha, a ubiquitous image based on the tenth-century monk Budai. Throughout the history of Chinese Buddhism all these Buddhas were widely worshiped and implored as supreme sources of spiritual authority or salvific power.

The same can be said of the main bodhisattvas, some of whom are also commonly depicted as consummate embodiments of key Buddhist virtues. For instance, Avalokiteśvara (Guanyin), by far the most popular bodhisattva and a pervasive object of cultic worship throughout China and the rest of East Asia, is represented as the embodiment of compassion (see Yü 2001). While in India Avalokiteśvara was conventionally portrayed as an aristocratic male figure, in China he underwent a gender transformation of sorts: from the tenth century onward the bodhisattva came to be represented in a number of female forms. Other widely worshiped bodhisattvas include Mañjuśrī (Wenshu), the personification of wisdom, and Kṣitigarbha (Dizang), who is said to descend to the various hells in order to save their unfortunate denizens. The dominant bodhisattva cults also became closely associated with the practice of pilgrimage. This is exemplified by the four main Buddhist mountains in China—Putou, Wutai, Jiuhua, and Emei—each of which is identified as the main sanctuary of a key bodhisattva (for more on these bodhisattvas, see Natasha Heller’s chapter in this volume).

According to prevailing Mahāyāna mores and ideals, especially the ethos of universal compassion, the performance of rituals and the participation in all kinds of practices were supposed to be dedicated to the wellbeing and salvation of all living beings. However, often the main sources of motivation were much more personal or subjective. There was of course the basic goal of personal salvation; however, time and again that was mixed or replaced with the pursuit of all sorts of worldly benefits, not only for oneself but also for members of one’s family. The inclusion of others was predicated on the belief that merit accrued by giving or sponsorship of particular rituals could be directed toward the realization of specific goals, including the salvation of other persons. This resonated with deeply engrained attitudes and the customary ritual observances centered on the cult of ancestors, which became key elements of Chinese social and religious life long before the introduction of Buddhism. By providing fitting venues for

ritual expressions of prime Chinese virtues such as filial piety, and by cornering a substantial part of the lucrative market for ancestral rites, the Buddhist clergy was able to further integrate itself into the central social and cultural matrixes of Chinese life. That also enabled it to tap into additional sources of economic support, even if the performance of rituals for monetary compensation often led to neglect of other aspects of monastic life, including contemplative practice.

Decline and Revivals of the Late Imperial Era

The main beliefs, doctrines, practices, schools, and institutions that are emblematic of Chinese Buddhism all developed during the first millennium of the religion's history in China. The main core of the canon was also pretty much complete before the end of the Tang era, even though many additional texts were written or compiled during the subsequent centuries. Generally speaking, the impacts of Buddhism on Chinese culture and society were noticeably weaker during the second millennium, which for the most part coincides with the late imperial era in Chinese history. These realities, along with other related historical facts, led Kenneth Ch'en in his influential history of Chinese Buddhism to sketch the story of Buddhism during this period as a narrative of protracted decline, a gradual fall from the glories of the Tang era (Ch'en 1964: 389–454). This broad characterization is for the most part unproblematic, being accepted by the majority of East Asian Buddhists and scholars alike. The same can be said of the historians of late imperial China, who among other things draw attention to the ways in which the resurgent Confucian tradition, especially in the Neo-Confucian version formulated by Zhu Xi (1130–1200), largely eclipsed Buddhism from the Song period onward.

There are, however, some dissenting voices that diverge from the dominant narrative of decline, primarily represented by American scholars who work on Buddhism of the Song era. In their keenness to highlight the importance of the era and subject matter they study, some have even gone as far as to suggest that Song Buddhism, after all, rightly deserves the epithet of a “golden age” of Chinese Buddhism (Gregory and Getz 1999: 2–4). It is true that Ch'en's study is fairly dated, and many of his interpretations, including parts of his largely dismissive treatment of later Chinese Buddhism, can be questioned. Furthermore, there is a host of issues that complicate the mapping of larger historical trajectories, and the same can be said of the quantitative and qualitative comparisons of different eras. Nonetheless, without going into the details of specific arguments or the circumstances that drive this sort of scholarly debate, the basic gist of Ch'en's overall narrative about Buddhism in late imperial China remains closer to historical reality than the aforementioned unconvincing attempts at historical revisionism.

Even so, it is true that there was a considerable flourishing of Buddhism during the Song era. During this remarkable period of cultural effervescence, Buddhist monasteries and other places of worship still remained important fixtures in the social landscape, and the religion had numerous followers among sociopolitical elites and commoners alike. Buddhist monasteries still housed numerous monks and were recipients of state

patronage, while the pervasive Buddhist impact on the arts during this period is evident in the many graceful statues and beautiful paintings that feature Buddhist themes or images. The same can also be said of the writings of noted intellectuals such as Su Shi (1037–1101), the famous writer, poet, thinker, and official, who was among the main personalities of the Song era (see Grant 1994).

Notwithstanding the creeping signs of intellectual and institutional decline, during the Song era there were notable developments in a variety of areas, including Tiantai scholasticism and Chan literary production (for developments within Song Tiantai, see Chapters 9 through 13 in Gregory and Getz 1999). Furthermore, many elements of late Chinese Buddhism that are still evident today were formulated during the Song era. That includes the peculiar codifications of monastic life represented by the “rules of purity” (*qinggui*) that were developed by the Chan school, which was the dominant elite tradition of Song Buddhism. Additional examples are the various forms of popular piety subsumed within the loosely structured Pure Land tradition (discussed in Jimmy Yu’s chapter in this volume), and some of the major styles of contemplative practice, epitomized by the “observing the critical phrase” (*kan huatou*) approach of Chan meditation that was championed by Dahui (1089–1163). These and other features of Song Buddhism were also exported to Korea and Japan, with significant ramifications for the subsequent development of Buddhism in both countries.

For the most part there were not many innovative developments or notable paradigm shifts after the Song era. The lack of innovation and creativity in areas such as philosophical speculation, scriptural exegesis, ritual performance, or institutional development were accompanied with a prevalence of conservative attitudes. Even when there were intermittent attempts at Buddhist revivals, often they involved evocations of past glories and somewhat frustrated efforts to recapture key elements of former Buddhist traditions. That is evident, for instance, in the revival of classical forms of Chan during the seventeenth century, which among other things involved the mimicking of iconoclastic rhetorical and teaching styles that, in accord with popular Chan lore, were linked with the great masters of the Tang and (to a lesser extent) Song eras. That included the ritualized shouting and beating of students. While these kinds of dramatic acts were supposedly meant to evoke the true spirit of Chan, they were also criticized for being little more than theatrical performances, primarily meant to impress unsophisticated monastic and lay audiences (see Wu 2008).

That does not mean that Buddhism ceased to be a notable part of the religious landscape in late imperial China. However, in many significant areas Buddhism was overshadowed by a comprehensive Neo-Confucian orthodoxy that not only dominated intellectual, social, and political life, but also provided the literati with appealing avenues of spiritual cultivation. The relative weakness of Buddhism is evident in the lack of convincing and effective responses to the challenges posed by the primacy of Confucianism. At the same time, a closer look at local Chinese society reveals that the relationship between Buddhism and Neo-Confucianism was a bit more complex than is often assumed. For instance, during the late Ming era (1368–1644) many members of the local gentry, notwithstanding their Neo-Confucian education and allegiance, were frequent visitors and important patrons of Buddhist monasteries (Brook 1994). There were also the activities of a variety of Buddhist reformers—such as Yunqi

Zhuhong (1535–1615) and Zibo Zhenke (1543–1603)—who tried to formulate new responses to changing social and cultural predicaments. Some of them were also fairly successful in mobilizing the laity.

Among the significant events that took place during the late imperial period was the transmission of Tibetan forms of Buddhism into some parts of China, including the imperial capital in Beijing. The initial introduction of Tibetan Buddhism came about at the beginning of the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368), during the reign of the great Khubilai Khan (r. 1260–1294), the dynastic founder and the first Mongol monarch to establish stable and lasting rule over China. In the aftermath of the Mongol conquest of Tibet in 1252, Khubilai Khan and the Mongol elites turned to Tibetan Buddhism as their religion of choice, even though they continued to maintain a general policy of religious tolerance. The most notable Tibetan Buddhist missionary was the ‘Phags-pa Lama (1235–1280), who was invited to the Mongol capital. There he offered religious instruction to Khubilai and other members of the imperial court. ‘Phags-pa and his followers also transmitted various forms of Tantric rituals and practices that were in vogue at the time.

Tantric varieties of Tibetan and Mongolian Buddhism were also patronized by the Manchu rulers of the Qing dynasty (1644–1911). That was partially driven by political considerations, as the Qing emperors were keen to consolidate their influence over Tibet and Mongolia. Emperor Qianlong (r. 1735–1795) even presented himself as an incarnation of Mañjuśrī (Wenshu), the popular bodhisattva who was worshiped as an embodiment of wisdom. However, these exotic forms of Buddhism had little impact on the religious lives of the Chinese subjects ruled by the Manchus, as traditional Chinese styles of worship and practice remained dominant within the broader Buddhist milieu of Qing China. A major disruption during the latter part of the Qing dynasty, which had particularly negative consequences on the fortunes of Buddhism, was the violent Taiping rebellion (1850–1864) that brought the once mighty dynasty to its knees. Led by Hong Xiuquan (1814–1964), who was inspired by Christianity and proclaimed himself a son of God, the zealous rebels were ill-disposed toward Buddhism, and many Buddhist monasteries were damaged or destroyed during this bloody and anguished period.

Buddhism in Modern China

The gradual collapse of the old imperial order came to a conclusion with the Republican revolution of 1911, which marked a turning point in the history of modern China. With the disappearance of age-old sociopolitical institutions and traditional ways of life, as well as important realignments in the international arena, China was faced with a multitude of challenges and difficulties. Despite faltering attempts to create a strong and prosperous state—and, in a broader sense, to come to terms with a modernity that was largely defined in Western terms—throughout much of the turbulent twentieth century China experienced a series of major disasters and misfortunes. That included wars, economic collapses, corrupt and incompetent governments, natural disasters, starvations, and misguided revolutions. Buddhism, which was not in the best shape at

the end of the Qing era, was unavoidably drawn into all of that, although often as a relatively minor player.

As it tried to recover and to address internal issues such as monastic corruption during the Republican period (1911–1949), the Buddhist community also had to deal with a host of external pressures. That included critiques from a variety of sources, especially intellectuals and other urbanites with modern education who saw Buddhism, along with other traditional religions, as a dated superstition, and Christian missionaries involved in aggressive missionary activities who were highly critical of their competition. There were also the policies enacted by the corrupt Nationalist government that had a negative impact on the economic foundations of Buddhist institutions. That included the uncompensated seizure of monastic lands and the inappropriate use of Buddhist properties by the military and the civil authorities, as well as the forced conscription of monks into the army. In response to these kinds of problems, along with the general need to adapt to the modern world, some Buddhist monks and lay people made various efforts to safeguard and revitalize their religion.

The efforts to revive Buddhism and make it relevant to life in a rapidly changing society took several forms. In certain Buddhist milieus the quest for revival took largely traditional forms, such as an increased interest in scriptural study and related intellectual pursuits, or renewed focus on familiar practices and observances. Among some Buddhist intellectuals that meant an emphasis on philosophical discussions of select Buddhist doctrines, such as the Yogācāra theories about the nature of mind and reality. There was also a renewed interest in the practice of meditation, with Xuyun (1840–1959), the best known and most influential Chan master of the era, attracting thousands of monastic and lay followers. Others, such as Hongyi (1880–1942), who prior to becoming a monk was known as an artist and a poet, advocated the importance of the monastic code of discipline. Furthermore, the Buddhist laity took initiative in organizing various devotional activities, forming associations, operating charitable events, and publishing Buddhist literature for a mass audience.

In contrast, other Buddhist leaders from the Republican era took a distinctly reformist approach, as they tried to radically reorganize Buddhism in strikingly modern terms. For them the continuing relevance (or even survival) of Buddhism hinged on its ability to adjust and successfully meet the challenges posed by modernity, with its emphasis on science, technology, and rationality. Some monks with reformist leanings and agendas even became openly politicized and joined the major secular movements of the day, pursuing mundane aims such as the safeguarding against foreign encroachment or the rebuilding of the Chinese nation. The most famous reformist monk from this period is Taixu (1890–1947), who is credited with the creation of a novel form of modern Buddhism (see Pittman 2001). Popularly known as “humanistic Buddhism,” this vision of Buddhist modernism remains influential to this day, especially in Taiwan.

With the end of the Chinese civil war and the establishment of Communist rule in 1949, Buddhists had to contend with a ruling party and a governing ideology that were openly hostile toward religion. During the early years of its rule the Communist government introduced a series of measures aimed at controlling Buddhist institutions and restricting Buddhist activities. The situation worsened gradually, and reached a nadir during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), when (along with all other religions)

Buddhism experienced violent repression and wholesale devastation. During this dark and chaotic period, as part of the effort to rid China of all forms of feudal superstition, there was an indiscriminate destruction of monasteries, forced laicization of monks and nuns, and proscription of all forms of religious belief and expression. The situation started to change for the better during the late 1970s, with the institution of more liberal social and economic policies by the new Communist leadership.

Over the last several decades Chinese Buddhism has been experiencing a sense of measured revival or rejuvenation, somewhat tempered by continuing efforts at political control. In mainland China the ongoing Buddhist revival is evident in the rebuilding or restoration of monasteries and other Buddhist sites, the ordination of clergy, and the renewed interest in traditional Buddhist teachings and practices, including popular forms of cultic worship and pilgrimage. There has also been some progress in the education of monks and nuns, albeit not without compulsory elements of political indoctrination. There is even a modest revival of interest in contemplative practice and eremitic lifestyle. In addition, there is a growing emphasis on promoting Buddhism as an integral part of traditional Chinese culture, which to some extent is linked with the growth of the tourist industry. The rising profile of Buddhism in society, especially in urban contexts, is similarly fostered by the increased availability of various types of Buddhist publication and the public embrace of Buddhism by some celebrities. That is accompanied with a growing interest in the academic study of Buddhism.

Notable growth in the appeal of Chinese forms of Buddhism have also been taking place outside of mainland China, especially among the Chinese diaspora. That includes the ethnically Chinese populations of Singapore and Malaysia, among whom Buddhism is now the main religion, and the Chinese diaspora in North America and Australia. However, arguably the most far-reaching revival of Buddhism has for some time been underway in Taiwan, especially since the ending of military dictatorship and authoritarian rule in 1987. The notable shift toward popular embrace of modern forms of Buddhism in Taiwan can be related to a host of relatively recent changes, including economic development, urbanization, increased social mobility, and greater cultural openness. It is also possible to establish links between the growth of Buddhism, which at present is firmly established as a central part in the Taiwanese religious landscape, and the development of democratic values and institutions (see Madsen 2007).

A peculiar aspect of modern Taiwanese Buddhism is the remarkable growth of large and multifaceted organizations such as Foguangshan (Buddha Light Mountain), founded by the monk Xingyun (Hsing Yun, 1927–), and Ciji (Tzu Chi Foundation), founded by the nun Zhengyan (Cheng Yen, 1937–). Led by their charismatic founders, these sizable Buddhist groups have been able to establish complex organizational structures, set up numerous local outposts, and organize arrays of activities that reflect their concerted effort to reformulate traditional mores and ideals, and to attune them to contemporary sensibilities and lifestyles. With their entrepreneurial spirit, they have also been able to amass substantial financial and human resources. Moreover, the diverse undertakings of these organizations, which are not without critics, at times blur the conventional lines of demarcation between religious and secular concerns.

In addition to traditional Buddhist rituals and practices, the activities of these sprawling organizations include the running of diverse charitable programs, educa-

tional institutions (from nurseries to universities), medical facilities (including large hospitals), modern-day fundraising operations, monastery stores and restaurants, and media outlets (including newspapers, publishing houses, and TV stations). Another key aspect of their ambitious agendas is the establishment of global networks, which involves the setting up of branch temples or centers in numerous parts of the world, including countries with negligible Buddhist populations. Globalization, it seems, will remain an increasingly important trend into the foreseeable future. Without being restricted to large organizations with deep pockets, these and other globalizing forces will presumably have notable impacts on the forthcoming transformations of Chinese Buddhism.

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CHAPTER 3

Buddhism in Korean History

Sem Vermeersch

Following its introduction into Korea during the fourth century, Buddhism became intimately entwined with Korean society, culture, and politics. Soon after its introduction, the new religion was adopted by the Three Kingdoms that ruled on the Korean peninsula, and became so pervasive that it defined kingship, justified social order, and inspired a vibrant Buddhist culture. Unified Silla (668–935) and Koryŏ (918–1392) therefore deserve to be called Buddhist civilizations. Although Confucianism was recognized as a useful ideology for organizing the government, and Shamanism and other beliefs were widely practiced, during this period Buddhism provided the only worldview and value system shared by everyone regardless of status or origin. This situation changed dramatically during the Chosŏn dynasty (1392–1910). The Neo-Confucian scholars who were the leading force behind the new dynasty saw Buddhism as the main cause for all the social and political problems of the previous dynasty, and planned to eradicate the religion once and for all. Although in the end they did not succeed, they managed to severely reduce its hold over society and remove it from the public sphere.

The suppression of Buddhism in Korea only ended after the intrusion of foreign powers in the second half of the nineteenth century. Western missionaries lobbied for ending the persecution of Catholicism, and managed to persuade Chosŏn authorities to institute religious freedom. But they looked down on Buddhism, and it was left to Japanese Buddhist missionaries to take up the cause of Korean Buddhism and lobby for the repeal of anti-Buddhist laws. Korean Buddhist monks thus looked up to their Japanese brethren, but after Japan annexed Korea in 1910, this attitude changed radically. They came to the conclusion that Japanese Buddhist missionaries had merely tried to use Buddhism to foster a positive image of Japan, and thus lower the people's resistance to the eventual annexation of Korea. Barely relieved of nearly five centuries of Confucian repression, Korean Buddhists thus had to struggle against another oppressor. It was only after liberation in 1945 that the Korean *saṅgha* could start with the still ongoing process of rebuilding its identity and institutions.

Thus, making sense of the Korean Buddhist identity is impossible without an understanding of this historical context. Distinct scholastic traditions and Buddhist institutions were either merged or abolished during the Chosŏn period, making the reconstruction of Silla and Koryŏ Buddhism very difficult. The remaining documents suggest that Korean Buddhism developed in close connection with Chinese Buddhism. This fact was used by colonial Japanese scholars to argue that there is no such thing as “Korean Buddhism,” while modern Buddhist scholars in Korea have in contrast argued for the absolute uniqueness of Korean Buddhism. As usual, the reality is much more complex and, as will become clear in this historical overview, it is the historical experience itself that defines the characteristic features of Korean Buddhism.

The Study of Korean Buddhism

Given the contested nature of “Korean Buddhism,” it is perhaps best to start this historical overview with a short history of the study of Korean Buddhism in the modern period. Although there are pre-modern antecedents to the critical reflection of what makes Korean Buddhism Korean, it is only in the context of the intrusion of Western ideas about modernity in the late nineteenth century that we first see Korean monks and intellectuals being forced to take an explicit stance on the identity of Korean Buddhism. At first, it seems that Korean Buddhists were simply curious to learn and absorb, and were enticed by the prospect of how new ideas introduced from the West and Japan might help them to emancipate their tradition from centuries of Confucian suppression. When the Japanese Nichiren-monk Sano Jenrei (1864–1917) succeeded in 1895 to obtain a permission for Korean monks to enter the capital, one monk wrote to him in gratitude, stating “You allowed us, Korean monks, to throw off the 500-years old [*sic*] humiliation” (Tikhonov 2004: 28).

From the 1880s onward some Korean monks went to study in Japan, and they were generally impressed by the “progress” of Japanese Buddhism. A prime example of this is Han Yongun (1879–1944), who traveled briefly to Japan in 1905. Later he became one of the foremost advocates of reform, publishing an ambitious reform manifesto in 1913 that called for the thorough modernization of Korean Buddhism. Some of his proposals were inspired by the modernization of Japanese Buddhism. They also show that Han had internalized some of the Western critiques of Oriental religion as quietist and incompatible with progress. Meant to conform to Social Darwinist ideas about the “survival of the fittest,” his reforms were ultimately aimed at making Buddhism “fit to survive” in the modern world. Consequently, he sought to break down barriers between monks and laity, and argued that Buddhism is compatible with modern liberal values such as egalitarianism.

After Japan annexed Korea in 1910, however, Japanese scholars sought to justify the takeover by claiming that Korea never had its own distinct identity, and hence no *raison d'être*. Buddhist scholars such as Nukariya Kaiten and Takahashi Tōru argued that Korean Buddhism was merely a pale imitation of Chinese Buddhism, and characterized it as stagnant and derivative. The first Korean scholar to resist this kind of Japanese colonial discourse was Ch'oe Namsŏn (1880–1957). He argued that Korean Buddhism

was characterized by its unique ability to integrate various schools and interpretations into a coherent system (*t'ong Pulgyo*). After liberation, the idea that Korean Buddhism was characterized by its spirit of nation-protection (*hoguk Pulgyo*) also became prevalent. Since then, these two characteristics have consistently been represented as the hallmarks of Korean Buddhism.

Although these two key ideas indeed form a recurrent thread throughout the history of Korean Buddhism, their reification and superficial application obscure as much as they reveal. Moreover, since the Meiji restoration almost exactly the same characteristics have been asserted by Japanese Buddhist scholars for their tradition (Jorgensen 1997: 247–49). Robert Buswell has argued that they form the linchpin of what is essentially a modern re-imagining of Buddhism as a “national tradition.” He shows that even though from the very beginning Korean monks were very much cognizant of their ethnicity and proud of the development of Buddhism in their country, scholastic Buddhism was always very much a part of the Sinitic tradition. It is probably more accurate to say that Korean monks actively collaborated in the formation of Chinese Buddhism, rather than that they strove to form a distinct tradition of their own (Buswell 1998).

The focus on perceived essences of the tradition has, ironically, tended to favor the high-brow intellectual tradition. However, the scholastic treatises of monks like Wŏnhyo (617–686) and Ŭisang (625–702) probably impacted only a tiny minority of the Buddhist clergy, and had even less influence on the laity. The historical interaction of Buddhist ideas and practices with society and politics, together with the material expressions of Buddhist faith through art and architecture, actually reveal far more about the indigenization of Buddhism on the Korean peninsula. Consequently, I will focus comparatively more on these areas than on scholastic trends.

Early History: The Three Kingdoms Period

Buddhism entered the Korean peninsula before the formation of a polity that united the whole territory. Indeed, its introduction coincided with the formation or consolidation of central, monarchical authority in the cases of both Paekche (Best 1982) and Silla (Pankaj 1995). From early on, the Korean historiographical tradition has celebrated certain years for the acceptance of Buddhism in each of the three kingdoms that represent the earliest well-organized states: 372 for Koguryŏ (37 BCE–668 CE), 384 for Paekche (18 BCE–660 CE), and 527 for Silla (57 BCE–935 CE). Although these dates have to be taken with a grain of salt, they form important benchmarks in the recognition of Buddhism by the elites of these three states.

Koguryŏ

According to the *Samguk sagi* (Historical Records of the Three Kingdoms, compiled in 1145), in 372 King Fujian (351–355) of the Former Qin dynasty (351–394) in China dispatched a diplomatic mission to Koguryŏ. With this embassy was the monk Shundao

(Kor. Sundo). Two years later another monk was dispatched, and in 375 the Koguryō king built monasteries for the two monks. Evidently the court of the Former Qin, one of the numerous states that existed in northern China during the period of disunion, wanted to bestow the religion upon Koguryō, which it regarded as a vassal state. It has been speculated that this was a reward for Koguryō's (modest) assistance in bringing down the rival Yan kingdom (348–370). It is therefore likely that, as with the rulers of the Former Qin, Koguryō leaders looked to Buddhism as a potent religion that provided magico-religious support for their rule.

Very little is known of further Buddhist developments in Koguryō. Doctrinally, however, the Samnon school (Ch. Sanlun, often identified as a Chinese version of Madhyamaka) seems to have been prominent. Sūngnang (fl. 476–512), whom the sources identify as a Koguryō monk, was one of the great early exponents of this school in northeast Asia. He was active mainly in China, and spent the last years of his life in the vicinity of present-day Nanjing. He may have been among the first to develop a three-level scheme to explicate Madhyamaka theory. Although no writings by him are extant, Jizang (549–623), the school's most famous theorist, acknowledged the influence of Sūngnang (Plassen 2005).

After Sūngnang, Koguryō monks continued to study Samnon doctrine, which they eventually transmitted to Japan. There is, however, little to no evidence of other Buddhist schools in Koguryō, and no writings remain of Koguryō monks. Toward the end of the dynasty, King Pojang (r. 642–668) even rejected Buddhism for Daoism, which perhaps is another factor that helps explain why we know so little about Koguryō Buddhism.

Paekche

As in the case of Koguryō, Buddhism was transmitted to Paekche via a Chinese embassy, albeit from a different Chinese state. Rather than from the “barbarian” north, in this case it came from the “legitimate” southern state of Eastern Jin (317–420), in 384. An Indian or Central Asian monk named Mālānanda was the first to introduce Buddhism to the Paekche court; here too the king built a temple for this monk and allowed him to ordain other monks. Apart from the date of its introduction, however, we have virtually no information about early Buddhist activity in Paekche. It is only around the year 500 that we see the emergence of a distinct Buddhist culture, which would have a decisive impact on neighboring countries.

A crucial role was played by King Sōng (523–554), who turned to Buddhism to enhance his kingship, and initiated the construction of the first large temple complex, Taet'ong-sa. The temple was inspired by and dedicated to Emperor Wu of Liang (502–549), who was famous for his patronage of Buddhism. Its symmetric rigor, grandeur, and spatial alignment in turn inspired the architecture of temples in Silla and Japan. Undoubtedly the most famous Paekche temple is Mirūk-sa, dedicated to the future Buddha Maitreya. One of its pagodas still remains, and excavations have confirmed it as one of the biggest temple complexes in Asia at the time. The importance Paekche kings attached to Buddhism can be seen from a letter sent by King Sōng to the King of Yamato, in which he recommended his Japanese counterpart to embrace Buddhism:

This doctrine is the most excellent of all doctrines, but it is hard to explain and hard to comprehend . . . but it can create limitless religious merit and retribution . . . every prayer [to the Buddha] will be fulfilled without fail." (*Nihon shoki* 19.34–35, adapted from Aston 1972: II, 66).

According to the *Nihon shoki*, this took place in 552, but another Japanese source claims 538 as the date when Paekche introduced Buddhism to Japan. Regardless of what the "official" date may be, Paekche monks had almost certainly entered Japan before 552.

Although we do not have sufficient information on the doctrinal activities of Paekche monks, it is clear that by the second half of the sixth century Paekche Buddhism had sufficiently matured to be able to send missionaries abroad and to start offering its own interpretations of the main East Asian Buddhist schools of thought. This is illustrated by the biography of the Paekche monk Hyŏngwang. Having studied with the "second patriarch" of the Tiantai school, Huisi (515–577), he was recognized as a consummate practitioner of meditation based on the *Lotus Sūtra*, and was enjoined to spread this practice in his home country (Best 1991: 181–83). While we do not know if he left any compositions, recently a text has been determined to have been written by a Paekche monk of the Samnon school, which proves that in the second half of the sixth century some monks in Paekche had mastered the main trends in East Asian Buddhism (Ch'oe 2007). The strength of Paekche Buddhism is also seen in the fact that by the mid-sixth century it felt confident enough to transmit Buddhism to Japan. The initial century of Buddhism in Japan is heavily indebted to Paekche, both in terms of the formation of Buddhist institutions and the development of Buddhist art and architecture.

Silla

The case of Silla is somewhat different from those of Koguryŏ and Paekche, in so far as it was not a Chinese embassy that brought Buddhism to Korea. According to accounts in the *Samguk yusa* (Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms, compiled ca. 1280), by at least the fifth century monks had secretly entered the country to proselytize, but failed to gain acceptance by the court and were forced underground. However, their activities undoubtedly helped to prepare the ground for a miraculous event that occurred in 527. At that time, with the tacit approval of the king, the courtier Ich'adon provoked the ire of the nobility by starting the construction of a Buddhist temple. He was accused of treason and executed, but when his head was cut off, it supposedly flew away to a nearby mountain and a white substance spouted from the neck. Duly impressed, the nobles gave up their resistance to Buddhism, and in 535 the first temple was built and monks ordained.

Although Silla accepted Buddhism on its own terms rather than at the recommendation of a Chinese emperor, in truth a diplomatic mission to the Liang court in 521 had probably helped to pave the way. For Silla it had been difficult to gain access to Chinese civilization due to its isolated location in the southeastern corner of the Korean peninsula, but thanks to an alliance with Paekche it was allowed to send a mission to China,

which went there on a Paekche ship. There is a telling anecdote of how a Liang envoy came to the Silla court and presented incense. Nobody knew what it was for or how it was used, so envoys were sent out to search for people who could identify it. Finally, one of the monks who had been in hiding presented himself at the court and showed how to light the incense and use it in devotional rites.

This legend shows that the impact of Liang Buddhism, though perhaps not so great as on Paekche, was still crucial for the development of Silla Buddhism. King Pŏphŭng (r. 514–540), whose title literally means “he who made the Dharma flourish,” probably modeled himself on Emperor Wu of Liang in his patronage of the religion. Perhaps even his decision to abdicate and become a monk at the end of his life was inspired by Emperor Wu giving himself in ransom to Buddhist temples. While we can thus see the influence Buddhism received from the southern Chinese dynasties, there was also a strong impact from Northern Chinese Buddhism. In 551 the monk Hyeryang was abducted from Koguryŏ and appointed as chief of clerics (*kukt’ong*). This position, first created under northern dynasties, was intended not only to regulate monks, but also to ensure that they could be used as instruments for the state. Monks were supposed to give not only religious instruction, but also to help inculcate loyalty to the sovereign.

This kind of political use of Buddhism is evident in the *hwarang* institution, a kind of elite youth corps that combined a cult centered on the future Buddha Maitreya with native traditions. Many *hwarang* went on to become military leaders, and thus the institution played a crucial role in the unification wars. An example of this can be found in the biography of a soldier, likely a follower of a *hwarang* troupe. He took guidance from the monk Wŏngwang (fl. 589–630), who conferred on him the so-called five secular precepts: serve your sovereign with loyalty, serve parents with filial deference, be faithful to friends, do not retreat in the face of battle, and be discriminating in taking life. We can thus see how the Buddhist five precepts were seriously compromised to adapt Buddhism to the demands of the times.

Wŏngwang was probably the first Silla monk to gain advanced knowledge in the major Buddhist texts and schools of the day. During an extended study sojourn in China he immersed himself both in basic “Hīnayāna” scriptures and in the newest Mahāyāna texts, such as the *Mahāyāna-saṃgrahaśāstra* (Compendium of Mahāyāna), which was translated into Chinese while he was staying in China. Upon his return to Silla in 600, however, he was employed by the government to organize rites for state protection, write diplomatic correspondence, and give moral instruction to lay believers. At the same time, he did not neglect to build temples and instruct followers, helping to lay the foundations of textual studies in Silla. Although no writings by Wŏngwang or his contemporaries have survived, from various biographic and historic sources we know that all new texts and doctrinal trends that emerged in Sui (581–618) and Tang (618–907) China were introduced virtually immediately to Silla. Despite periods of relative isolation, Korea always maintained an active link with Chinese Buddhism, meaning that not only was it always in touch with developments on the mainland, but at many crucial junctions Korean monks also took an active part in shaping the direction of Chinese Buddhism.

While Wŏngwang is famous for laying the doctrinal foundations of Silla Buddhism, the organization of the monastic order through creating a sophisticated system of

ordinations, precepts, and monastic administration was left to Chajang (fl. 636–650). According to his biography, as a young monk Chajang was so dedicated to his vocation that even when threatened with the death penalty by the court, he declared “I would rather observe the precepts for one day and die, than live a full life having broken them” (T 50.639a). This may be taken as an assertion of the independence of Buddhism, which was no longer completely subordinate to the state. Following his return from China in 643, where he had studied the Vinaya tradition, he was instrumental in ensuring that the Silla saṅgha followed the precepts correctly. He was given the position of chief monastic overseer by the state, and resided at Hwangnyong-sa, which acted as the country’s central Buddhist temple. Near the end of his life, he also managed to establish an ordination platform at T’ongdo-sa, as the ordination procedure is the key institution in maintaining a healthy saṅgha. To this day, T’ongdo-sa remains the most important ordination temple in Korea.

Development of Doctrinal Schools in Unified Silla

In spite of the incessant warfare on the peninsula that culminated in unification by Silla around 668, Buddhist developments in Silla seem to have continued unabated. The monk Ŭisang is said to have cut short his study in Tang China in 671 to return to his country and forewarn the king of an impending Chinese invasion. In spite of this patriotic gesture and the vicissitudes of the times, he and his fellow monks dedicated themselves to the perfection of scholastic Buddhism.

Ŭisang left his country in the early 650s. According to one source, he was first interested in learning Yogācāra from the famous scholiast Xuanzang (ca. 600–664), who had returned from India in 645. However, soon after arriving in China he sought out Zhiyan (602–668), who was retroactively recognized as the second patriarch of the Huayan (K. Hwaōm) school. Basing itself on the expansive *Huayan Scripture* (Avataṃsaka-sūtra), this school uses Chinese philosophical concepts and categories, such as *shi* (phenomena) and *li* (principle), to explain its fundamental doctrine and practice. In its cosmology, it stresses the fundamental unity and interconnectedness of everything through concepts such as perfect interfusion (*yuanrong*) and metaphors such as Indra’s Net.

Ŭisang was among Zhiyan’s most prominent disciples, and had he not cut short his stay in China to give warning of the impending Tang attack, he might well have become recognized as its third patriarch. This honor went instead to his younger fellow student Fazang (643–714), to whom Ŭisang was very close. After his return to Silla they kept up a correspondence. One of Fazang’s letters to Ŭisang has been preserved, and it shows how he esteemed his fellow student and solicited his advice on his own interpretations of the Huayan teachings. Undoubtedly the most famous work of Ŭisang is his *Hwaōm ilsūng pōpkyedo* (Dharma Chart of the Single Vehicle of Avataṃsaka), a brilliant summation of the Huayan teachings. The “Dharma chart” in question is actually a poem in 210 characters, which are organized in a meandering pattern from the center of a square. It starts with the character “Dharma” and ends with the character “Buddha” right below it; thus it manages to capture in graphic form the spirit of the school’s principle of interpenetration, showing the interrelatedness of the Dharma and the Buddha.

After his return to Silla, Ŭisang devoted himself to training disciples and creating a foundation for the new Hwaŏm school by constructing numerous temples. The most famous of these is Pusŏk-sa, some 100 kms north of the Silla capital Kyŏngju. Hwaŏm-sa, carrying the school's name, is also said to have been founded by him, but probably dates to a later period. It is difficult to overstate Ŭisang's importance for Korean Buddhism. Although the Hwaŏm school did not survive the Chosŏn persecutions of Buddhism as an institution, its teachings have always been present in Korean Buddhism. Later they were also incorporated into the dominant Sŏn tradition. Commentaries on Ŭisang's "Dharma chart" were made until the end of the Chosŏn period, and to this day Hwaŏm remains one of the main intellectual currents in Korean Buddhism.

Initially Ŭisang had planned to travel to China together with the monk Wŏnhyo. According to Ŭisang's biography, on the way to the harbor they had to find lodging for the night. Trying to find shelter from the incessant rain, they discovered what in the dark appeared to be a cave. At one point Wŏnhyo woke up thirsty in the cave; as it was still dark, he groped around until he found what felt like a cup, which contained sweet, refreshing water. At daybreak, however, it turned out that the cave was actually a tomb, and that the water cup was a skull filled with putrid liquid. Wŏnhyo immediately felt disgusted, and during the second night they had to spend in the cave he was plagued by ghoulish nightmares. Finally, however, this made him realize that it was the overactive, karmically burdened mind that determines whether an experience is good or bad:

From this [experience] one can understand that it is because a thought arises that the myriad dharmas arise. If a thought subsides, then the cave and the tomb are no different. Thus the three worlds are merely mind, the myriad dharmas are only consciousness. Outside the mind there are no dharmas, and there is no use in searching elsewhere (T50.729a).

After this enlightenment experience, Wŏnhyo realized there was nothing further to learn in China, and promptly returned to his temple. The story may have been created to explain why Wŏnhyo never went to China, but more importantly it points to the high esteem in which he was held among Korean Buddhists, as someone with the unique ability to perceive the truth for himself. Wŏnhyo is without doubt the most famous Buddhist figure Korea produced, someone with the ability to comprehend the fundamental unity underlying the broad diversity of Buddhist teachings that had accumulated in the 1,000 years since the Buddha had lived. All of Wŏnhyo's writings—about twenty-two of which still survive—thus aim to show how texts from various Buddhist schools contradict each other only from a superficial standpoint. Fundamentally, their message is the same. This project of reconciling the differences has become known as *hwajaeng* or "pacifying the disputes," after the title of one of his seminal works, the *Ten Approaches to the Pacification of Disputes* (*Simmun hwajaengnon*). Although it survives only in part, it shows the logical system he employed to reveal the underlying unity of different canonical texts. This project is sometimes thought to have led to the creation of a new school, the Haedong school, but in fact Wŏnhyo managed to transcend allegiance to any particular school.

Wŏnhyo's last opus was a commentary on the *Book of Adamantine Adsorption* (*Kŭmgang sammaegyŏng*). According to Robert Buswell, this sūtra was probably composed in Korea, and is characterized by the influence of the incipient Chan school. The text also indicates an overriding concern with showing how all the main modes of practice and discourse lead to the one mind (*ilsim*), the Buddha-nature that everyone is endowed with (Buswell 1989).

Wŏnhyo's legacy and stature are beyond dispute, but his actual influence on later Korean Buddhism is sometimes overstated. Although his thought can be characterized as *t'ong Pulgyo* or Synthetic Buddhism, it is often assumed that by extension all Korean Buddhism shares this characteristic. Although we see attempts at integrating different strands in later periods too, this is almost always from a sectarian standpoint, that is, we are dealing with attempts at subsuming other doctrines under the doctrinal system of one school. Thus later attempts at harmonization are fundamentally different from Wŏnhyo's supra-sectarian standpoint. Wŏnhyo's influence on later Korean Buddhism was probably greater through the example of his life than through his exegetical works. Following his stellar scholastic career, he put fame aside to spread the Buddhist gospel among ordinary people, and even broke the monastic precepts to elope with a princess. Thus he put in practice the ideal of "unhindered action" (*muae*), which implied transcending social conventions, as he had transcended sectarian differences.

The third seminal figure of this period is Wŏnch'ŭk (613–696). He traveled to China when aged just fifteen, and would never return to his fatherland. Little is known about his early career, but he rose to prominence as one of the most gifted disciples of Xuanzang. Following his return from India, Xuanzang set about translating the texts he had brought back with him, and he was also active in instructing numerous disciples on the interpretations of Yogācāra doctrine that he had learned in India. Wŏnch'ŭk seems to have been linguistically gifted. According to one source, he had mastered six languages, and because of this skill he was involved in the translation project. He also became one of Xuanzang's closest disciples, but his official biography in the Song-era compilation of monastic biographies (*Song gaosengzhuan*) alleges that he stealthily overheard lectures given privately by Xuanzang to his favorite disciple Kuiji (632–682), and later passed on what he had heard as his own interpretation. This negative image may have been caused by rivalry between the two students of Xuanzang, or may be a later embellishment. In any case, Kuiji became recognized as the successor to Xuanzang and the founder of the Faxiang school, and later patriarchs of this school were often very critical of Wŏnch'ŭk.

The main rift seems to have been over earlier interpretations of Yogācāra in China. The first prominent scholar to introduce this tradition was Paramārtha (499–569), who translated the *Mahāyāna-saṃgraha* into Chinese, and based his interpretations on that text. Xuanzang, by contrast, attached more importance to the *Cheng weishilun* (Treatise on the Completion of Consciousness-only; a compendium of various translations of Yogācāra works). A major point of discussion was whether there existed a ninth consciousness or not. Paramārtha posited the existence of a ninth "immaculate" consciousness, while Xuanzang maintained the highest consciousness was the eighth "storehouse" consciousness. Wŏnch'ŭk is often thought to have sided with Paramārtha,

but in fact he sought to reconcile these positions by arguing that the ninth consciousness was simply the pure aspect of the eighth (Cho Eunsu 2005: 182).

Although Wŏnch'ŭk never returned to Silla, various Korean disciples introduced his teachings and writings, which helped to shape the Korean Yogācāra school. His commentaries were also translated into Tibetan, where, amongst others, Tsongkhapa (1357–1419) was influenced by them. In Japan too Wŏnch'ŭk's interpretations were initially influential, but after the Heian period (794–1185) the “orthodox” views of Xuanzang and Kuiji became dominant.

Thus the seventh century marks the apogee of Buddhism in Unified Silla. This period coincided with the flourishing of Buddhism in early Tang China, and the emergence of distinctly Chinese schools of Buddhism. Wŏnch'ŭk and Ŭisang were active participants in this process rather than passive recipients, while Wŏnhyo contributed to finalizing an epistemic model that reconciled indigenous Chinese Buddhist thought within an Indian framework.

Hwaŏm and Yuga (Yogācāra) would remain the main pillars of doctrinal Buddhism in Korea. After their disappearance as independent schools, Hwaŏm thought alone remained influential. Other doctrinal schools likely existed during Unified Silla. The Samnon and Ch'ŏnt'ae traditions that had appeared in the Three Kingdoms period likely continued to be studied, along with other traditions such as the Vinaya. However, we simply have no evidence that these existed as independent schools. There were many other worthy scholars and exegetes active during the remainder of the Unified Silla period, but their work cannot be adequately covered here.

Buddhist Practice in Unified Silla

A hierarchic network of national (*kukt'ong*), provincial (*chut'ong*), and prefectural (*kunt'ong*) monastic overseers was implemented in 551, and was later refined by Chajang. Until the end of the Unified Silla period the state continued to appoint a *kukt'ong* residing at Hwangnyong-sa or other Kyŏngju temples, who acted as head of all the monks and temples in the country. All monks were thus inscribed on the rolls of the main temple, and state rites, such as the reading of the *Humane Kings Scripture*, were often convened at the main temple.

Buddhism was therefore a central part of the Silla political system. Stories from the *Samguk yusa* describe how Buddhist ideas about karma and rebirth were used to justify the rigid bone-rank system, a kind of caste system that ascribed one's rank in society according to one's descent. After King Pŏphŭng, many Silla kings identified themselves as *cakravartin* (wheel-turning) rulers, and even took on names suggesting they identified with Śakyamuni's clan. Around the time of unification, however, explicit Buddhist explanations of kingship were relegated to the background, as the official representation of kings was molded more along Chinese patterns. Yet Unified Silla kings continued to venerate Buddhism, using the relic cult to pray for good reincarnation, and staging elaborate rituals to rally popular support for the dynasty.

Buddhism, in so far as it was a practice shared by all three kingdoms, also facilitated the integration of the three kingdoms into Unified Silla. Whereas the bone-rank system

discriminated against the conquered nobility by favoring the hereditary Silla elites based in the capital Kyōngju, Buddhism was more decentralized. The establishment of local temples and cultic sites represented Kyōngju in the provinces, and they had the potential to become spiritual centers in their own right. Thus Buddhism, though intended to serve the dynasty's needs and under the supervision of the court, internally managed its own affairs and was not completely subordinated to that court.

Among the most explicit examples of state-protective rites are the exploits of the esoteric monk Myōngnang (fl. ca. 670), who is said to have convened a special rite ca. 670 to defeat the Chinese navy, which was about to launch an attack on Korea. Myōngnang is regarded as the founder of the esoteric school in Korea, but very little is known about the school. The popularity of *dhāraṇī* sūtras and other Buddhist spells from the late seventh century onward is usually seen as evidence for the widespread influence of esoteric Buddhism, but more likely the use of these texts was simply part of mainstream Buddhist devotional practice (McBride 2008). One of the most popular of these texts is the *Dhāraṇī Sūtra of Undefined Pure Light* (*Mugu chōnggwang taedaranikyōng*). It was placed inside many Silla stūpas, based on its promise to transform a stūpa site into a place where the Tathāgatas were present. The earliest known copy of such text was recovered from the Śakyamuni pagoda at Pulguk-sa (Kyōngju) in 1966, and is now widely regarded as the oldest printed text, probably dating from before 750. Stūpas containing the *Dhāraṇī Sūtra of Undefined Pure Light* were mostly sponsored by members of the royal family. Ordinary people and monks circumambulated these stūpas according to instructions in the *dhāraṇī*, which specified specific benefits according to the number of circumambulations, or the number of times the *dhāraṇī*s were copied or chanted.

In terms of personal devotion, the worship of particular Buddhist deities was widespread. As in China, one of the most popular bodhisattvas was Avalokiteśvara (Kor. Kwanseum), who was invoked when people wanted succor from distress or wanted to obtain children (see Nathasha Heller's chapter in this volume). Although already present in Paekche times, Ŭisang did much to relocate the Avalokiteśvara cult to Silla by identifying a place in Kangwŏn province as the abode of this bodhisattva, which is still known as Naksan-sa, a Korean rendering of Potalaka. Worship of Avalokiteśvara was also closely connected with the Pure Land cult, which became popular after it was introduced from Tang China. As the attendant of Amitabha, Avalokiteśvara guided souls to the pure land.

As was noted above, in the Three Kingdoms period Maitreya played an important role in the *hwarang* tradition; some *hwarang* were even seen as reincarnations of Maitreya, indicating the imminence of the Buddha land in Silla. Indeed, there were many legends associating Silla with an ancient Buddha land; thus the religion was no longer regarded as "foreign." In Unified Silla the cults of Maitreya and Amitabha were often mixed up, as both presided over paradises to which the faithful hoped to be reborn. Another interesting aspect of Maitreya (and other deities) was that monks practiced the expiation of sins to induce a vision of him. The monk Chinp'yo (ca. 714–752, or ca. 734–766), for example, practiced severe austerities to induce a vision of Maitreya; only when he had seen Maitreya and received the precepts from him did he consider himself worthy of becoming a monk.

Introduction of Sŏn Buddhism

In 821, the monk Toŭi (d. 825) returned from China. Unlike previous Silla monks who had traveled to China, however, he had not studied a textual tradition in a metropolitan area, but had traveled first to Wutaishan (where he had an experience of Mañjuśrī) and then to Caoxi to visit the mausoleum of Huineng (638–713), the sixth patriarch of the Chan (Kor. Sŏn, Jp. Zen) school. Then he traveled to Hongzhou in Jiangxi province to study with Xitang Zhizang (735–814), a disciple of the prominent Chan master Mazu Daoyi (709–788). Having received the mind seal from him, he then returned to Silla to spread the Chan school there.

Silla of course had knowledge about Chan Buddhism before that; already in the seventh century there is evidence of the influence of East Mountain teachings. Moreover, the Silla monk Musang (d. 762) founded an important branch school of Chan in Sichuan. But he never returned to Silla, and the true hallmarks of Chan—its insistence on orthodox lineages and the use of master-discipline exchanges to induce “sudden enlightenment”—were likely not accepted in Silla. Indeed, Toŭi seems to have met with little enthusiasm upon his return, and it is only his third-generation disciple, Ch’ejing (804–880) who managed to gain widespread recognition. In 858 he was granted a temple on Mt. Kaji by the king, and thus the lineage established by Toŭi became known as the Kaji-san school.

Other Silla monks followed suit and traveled to China, where they received transmission, mostly in Mazu’s Hongzhou school, and upon their return they founded “mountain temples.” Eventually these became known as the “Nine Mountains of Sŏn” (*Kusan sŏnmun*), but this is an idealized number, as there is evidence that more than nine actually existed. Some inscriptions of the period liken Toŭi to Bodhidharma: just as Bodhidharma had brought Chan from the west and became China’s first patriarch, Toŭi brought it to Silla. Today Toŭi is celebrated as the first patriarch of Korean Sŏn by the Jogye Order, but in fact during the late Silla period there were rival claims: some inscriptions mention Hongch’ŏk as the first Korean patriarch, some Toŭi and Hongch’ŏk together; and there are other Sŏn monks too who returned around the same time (Vermeersch 2008: 49–62).

Korean monks had always been in touch with the very latest developments in Chinese Buddhism, so in this sense it is not surprising that they turned toward the new Hongzhou school. It also confirms recent research arguing that the Hongzhou school was not so otherworldly as once thought, and already enjoyed the support of not only local but also central officials after the end of the eighth century (Poceski 2007: 110–11).

However, after introducing the school’s new ideas and methods to Silla, monks like Toŭi seem to have found little recognition. There is evidence of rivalry with the doctrinal Hwaŏm school, with one later source attributing to Toŭi a barbed criticism of Hwaŏm’s indulgence in conceptual speculation. Therefore, most early Sŏn patriarchs seem to have found refuge initially in remote regions. There they enjoyed the support of local elites, which were estranged from the central seat of power. It is highly likely that these local elites welcomed Chan ideology, which criticized rigid doctrinal speculation and

lavish patronage in search of merit, and emphasized the importance of finding enlightenment within one's own mind. The local elites may thus have identified with Chan's ideology of resistance in their quest for emancipation from the rigid Silla bone-rank system. However, by the mid-ninth century the tide began to change, and late Silla kings started to recognize Sŏn masters by granting them temples and stele inscriptions. This was partly due to the growing recognition that Sŏn was an unavoidable force; it was also an attempt to use it to bridge the growing gaps between center and periphery.

Buddhism in Koryŏ

The founder of the Koryŏ dynasty (918–1392), T'aejo Wang Kŏn (r. 918–943), was an avid supporter of the Sŏn schools. This tradition had started at least from his grandfather, who supported a Sŏn school near his powerbase in Song'ak, which would eventually become the capital of Koryŏ (modern Kaesŏng). After unification in 936, Wang Kŏn erected no less than eight stelae inscriptions for Sŏn monks of various mountain schools. The inscriptions show that the Sŏn schools played an important part in establishing the authority of the new kingdom in the remote regions where they were located. They celebrate the munificence of the new king, in addition to recording his encounters with the monks from whom he took religious instructions.

The inscriptions also tell us about the development of a new administrative system for monks. During the Koryŏ dynasty, monks were treated very much as civil servants, taking an examination akin to the civil service examinations, and receiving ranks in the monastic bureaucracy. As they rose in rank, they were qualified to take up appointments at ever more prestigious temples, and ultimately to the highest honors a Koryŏ monk could attain: the positions of royal preceptor (*wangsa*) and state preceptor (*kuksa*). The preceptors symbolized the dynasty's reliance on Buddhism: a proper ruler needed to be validated by a suitably eminent preceptor, who wielded considerable ritual but no political power.

While the Sŏn monks, many of whom hailed from illustrious Silla lineages, initially held sway over the religious life of the new capital Kaesŏng, by the end of the tenth century there was a marked resurgence among the doctrinal schools. But even before that resurgence, two remarkable figures, whose works have been preserved, show the continued vitality of doctrinal schools. Kyunyŏ (923–973) is one of the very few eminent monks from the pre-modern period who was from a humble background. Moreover, his biography states that he was "incomparably ugly," and had to study secretly since he was given only menial tasks in his monastery (Buzo and Prince 1993: 25–28). It is thus a testament to his remarkable talent that despite all the odds he managed to become the most influential authority on Hwaŏm Buddhism of his day. His interpretations were adopted as orthodoxy for the doctrinal school's Buddhist examinations and he left behind an impressive range of works, including a commentary on Ŭisang's *Diagram*, many of which still exist. But he is most famous for a series of poems entitled *Songs of Samantabhadra's Ten Vows*, written in the vernacular, that express the devotion and bliss derived from faith in Mahāyāna.

Much as Kyunyŏ's works reveal his synthetic and creative grasp of the whole range of Hwaŏm doctrine, Ch'egwan's (d. 971) do in very much the same way for Tiantai. By the end of the Tang dynasty and during the Five Dynasties period, Chinese Tiantai monks had become increasingly vexed by the lack of key texts associated with their tradition. Consequently, they sent out embassies to neighboring countries to search for lost Tiantai texts. King Kwangjong (r. 949–975) received such a mission, and decided to dispatch the monk Ch'egwan, giving him some texts to take to China. Ch'egwan did more than just re-introduce some texts, however; he also wrote the *Tiantai sijiao yijizhu* (An Outline of the Fourfold Teachings), a succinct overview of the essentials of Tiantai doctrine. Although it is now thought not to be an accurate reflection of the teachings of the main Tiantai patriarch Zhiyi (538–597), this text remained one of the most authoritative introductions to the school's tenets up until the modern period (Chappell 1976).

While the activities of these monks illustrate how doctrinal Buddhist traditions flourished in the transition from Silla to Koryŏ, it was only by the late tenth century that Yogācāra and Hwaŏm, as the main doctrinal schools, regained their public prominence. In fact, many prominent Koryŏ families, including the royal family, had at least one son ordain. In many cases, these scions of prominent families became abbots of big temples affiliated with the doctrinal schools in the capital, and they used these temples as additional power bases. Accordingly, for the royal family, which patronized mainly the Hwaŏm school, Hŭngwang-sa became an important refuge. In contrast, the influential Inju Yi family had its scions ordain as Yogācāra monks, and during the coup d'états by Yi Chaŭi (in 1095) and Yi Chagyŏm (in 1126) they used the temples controlled by their family as a basis to control other denominations as well.

At the same time, animosity between the doctrinal and the now much less influential Sŏn schools continued during the eleventh century. To resolve some of the contradictions riddling the Buddhist community of his time, the monk Ŭich'ŏn (1055–1101), a son of King Munjong, decided to establish the Chŏnt'ae (Tiantai) school in Korea. That was meant to serve as an umbrella to integrate the various Sŏn schools and reconcile them with doctrinal study. He spent a year in China to gather advice on what the best approach would be, and upon his return in 1086 he set about laying the foundations of the new school at the newly founded Kukch'ŏng-sa in the capital. The name of the new temple recalls Guoqingsi, the main Tiantai temple on its namesake mountain, where Ŭich'ŏn had vowed before Zhiyi's stele to establish the school in Koryŏ. Although we know little of Ŭich'ŏn's concrete strategy for drawing in the various mountain schools, doctrinally he justified it through the principle of *kyogwan pyŏngsu*, or “joint practice of doctrinal study and contemplation.” “Contemplation” here stands for the Tiantai school's style of contemplative practice (see Haiyan Shen's chapter in this volume).

Ŭich'ŏn seems to have had a complete disregard for the Sŏn meditation methods of using “encounter dialogues” or investigation of cases (*gong'an*). Moreover, in his masterful compilation of East Asian scholastic texts—the *Comprehensive Catalogue of the Doctrinal Texts of the Various Schools* (*Sinp'yŏn chejong kyojang ch'ongnok*)—he did not include a single Chan work. It is therefore hardly surprising that his endeavor failed. The only Sŏn lineages that seem to have joined the new Ch'ŏnt'ae order were those of the so-called Pŏb'an (Dharma-eye) school, which already had an affinity with Tiantai.

It is remarkable that despite his stated ecumenicalism, Ŭich'ŏn seems to have ignored not only Sŏn's distinct identity, but also the extant Ch'ŏnt'aek tradition of Korea. He himself remained a Hwaŏm monk throughout his life, and thus he exemplifies a sectarian rather than an ecumenical spirit. His greatest contribution to Buddhism was thus not his reform project, but his compilation of all doctrinal commentaries written in East Asia. Excluded from the standard canon (which favored Indian works), they were at risk of becoming irretrievably lost. Therefore, he set about bringing together all texts he could find not only in Korea but also in Japan, Liao, and Song China. He had all 1,010 texts carved and published, and the titles compiled in a catalogue. The catalogue survives, but unfortunately neither the printing blocks nor most of the texts have come down to us.

It was thus left to the monk Chinul (1158–1210) to provide a model of practice that could overcome the contradictions that plagued the Koryŏ Buddhist world. According to Chinul's testimony, nobody in his time lived up to the standards of self-discipline and compassion a monk should possess. Although he passed the monastic examination in 1182, rather than waiting to be appointed to a temple, he founded his own practice community with like-minded monks. It was known as the "Samādhi and Prajñā community" (Chŏnghye-sa). While the monastic examination system may have bred complacency and favored routine learning over deep spiritual insight, it is also possible that the system had become affected by the military coup of 1170. Thus rather than its inherent flaws, it may be that as the normal systems of oversight broke down, corruption and favoritism took over, leading Chinul to seek an alternative.

While his movement steadily grew in popularity, we know little of its practices and participants. Chinul's biography only stresses his own spiritual development during this period, structuring it through a process of three awakening experiences. His first awakening came sometime between 1182 and 1185. According to his account, while engaged in solitary practice, he came across this line in the *Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch*: "Even though the six sense faculties see, hear, sense, and know, [the self-nature] is not tainted by those sensory impressions. The true nature is constantly free and self-reliant" (after Buswell 1991: 23). This supposedly did not constitute full awakening, but his first realization of the numinous Buddha-nature within himself. Afterward he would always emphasize in his teaching the importance of such an initial insight. It is this light emanating from one's Buddha-nature that has to be traced back to full enlightenment.

His second awakening had more to do with external factors than his own inner development. While accepting the Sŏn premise that "Mind is Buddha," he was stumped by the apparent contradiction with doctrinal teachings, which focused more on external phenomena. But after reading a passage in Li Tongxuan's (635–730) commentary on the *Avatamsaka sūtra*, he realized that this distinction between inner and outer reality was only apparent, rather than actual. He concluded that:

What the world honored one said with his mouth are the teachings. What the patriarchs transmitted with their minds is Sŏn. The mouth of the Buddha and the minds of the patriarchs are certainly not contradictory (Buswell 1991: 25).

With this obstacle cleared, he set out to achieve full enlightenment.

Before achieving that, Chinul was waylaid by the process of finding a new temple to accommodate the growing number of followers in his community. But by 1197 the search for a site was nearly concluded, and he took some time off for solitary meditation high up in a hermitage on Mt. Chiri. There he was inspired by reading a passage from one of Dahui Zonggao's (1089–1163) works concerning the practice of Chan, which removed his last doubts and paved the way for achieving true understanding. Henceforth he would also uphold Dahui's method of focusing attention on one key part of the *gong'an* (Kor. *kong'an*, Jp. *kōan*), the *huatou* (Kor. *hwadu*), as the supreme or "short-cut" method for attaining enlightenment.

Chinul thus became the first to introduce the *hwadu* practice method (*kanhwa sŏn*) to Korea. He was keen to represent it as just one way of practice among many—for example, he also regarded invocation of the Buddha's name (*yŏmbul*) as a valid practice—but toward the end of his life he clearly came to regard *kanhwa sŏn* as the supreme way. While it could lead to sudden enlightenment, he emphasized that this path was only suitable for the most dedicated practitioners, certainly not for everybody. He also emphasized that after enlightenment, one needs to keep practicing (*tono chŏmsu*: sudden enlightenment and gradual cultivation) in order to get rid of residual karmic habits. Here he essentially followed the Heze doctrine, as systematized by Zongmi (780–841).

Chinul's enthusiastic embrace of *hwadu* meditation, as systematized by Dahui, has traditionally been represented as a complete break with the past. The "encounter dialogue" between master and disciple as an essential part of meditative training had been introduced to Korea through the Nine Mountain schools. Systematic practice of "cases" (*gong'an*), examples of how previous masters achieved enlightenment, was also known in Korea well before Chinul's time. But unfortunately we have very little information on how Korean Sŏn monks practiced before Chinul. Looking at his practice, it is striking that his enlightenment experiences were triggered not through interaction with a teacher, as it is supposed to happen according to Chan ideology, but through reading. Thus the first well-documented case of the application of *hwadu* meditation is the training of his successor, Hyesim (1178–1234). Yet even here Hyesim's responses to the challenges Chinul puts before him are very much in line with what we find in the traditional "encounter dialogue" model (Buswell 1991: 31–32), so that Chinul's project should perhaps better be seen as a revitalization of Sŏn practice rather than a revolution.

Hyesim succeeded Chinul as leader of the flourishing community established at Songgwang-sa (where Chinul had moved in 1197), which has been regarded as a center of Korean Sŏn practice ever since. It is regarded as the so-called "Saṅgha-jewel" temple of Korea (with Haein-sa representing the Dharma and T'ongdo-sa the Buddha). The state honored Chinul with the title of state preceptor, and until the end of the Koryŏ dynasty (1392) all abbots of Songgwang-sa were honored with this title, indicating that the state recognized Chinul and his tradition as the leading transmitters of Buddhist orthodoxy. Through his writings and the community he established, Chinul's legacy continues to influence Korean Buddhism.

During the last decades of the Koryŏ dynasty, however, many Sŏn monks took the opportunity presented by the establishment of *pax mongolica* to travel to China, where

they received the dharma seal (*inka*) from Chinese Chan masters in the Linji line. Most prominent among these were T'aego Pou (1301–1382) and Naong Hyegŭn (1320–1376). Although Chinul belonged to the Sagul-san mountain school, which traces its lineage to the Hongzhou school of Mazu, the lack of evidence that his enlightenment was authenticated by a lineage master means that, at least in an institutional sense, for the later history of Korean Buddhism T'aego and Naong are more important. Since they were seen as genuine members of an orthodox Chan lineage, most monks since the second half of the Chosŏn dynasty have traced their lineage to them rather than Chinul. In terms of the actual approach to Buddhist training, however, Chinul's influence remained undiminished.

Buddhism in Chosŏn

By the late Koryŏ period, criticisms of Buddhist excesses and the privileged position Buddhism enjoyed in the state system were becoming louder. While there were undoubtedly many abuses taking place, a group of Neo-Confucian scholars also used Buddhism as a foil to promote their own agenda of Neo-Confucian reform. While initially focusing only on the economic privileges and ritual excesses of Buddhism, gradually they also started to attack the basic ideas and practices of the religion. This culminated in the essay "Various Arguments against Buddhism" (*Pulssi chappyŏn*), written by Chŏng Tojŏn (1342–1398), who is widely regarded as the ideological architect of the new Chosŏn dynasty.

He and other literati who sought to implement the social program of the famous Neo-Confucian thinker and systematizer Zhu Xi (1130–1200) formed an alliance with the military leader Yi Sŏnggye (1335–1408), a devout Buddhist, to overthrow Koryŏ and establish the new Chosŏn dynasty in 1392. While Yi, posthumously styled T'aejo, sought to continue the Koryŏ system of privileging Buddhism, Chŏng and others vehemently opposed this, sending in numerous memorials denouncing any move sympathetic to Buddhism. The "Various Arguments" was therefore most likely an attempt to convince the ruler and his entourage of the corrupting influence of Buddhism on the political and social order. While T'aejo resisted the anti-Buddhist tide, his son and successor, styled T'aejong (r. 1400–1418), started to implement the anti-Buddhist policies, notably by confiscating monastic lands and slaves. Under King Sejong (r. 1418–1450), the process was accelerated through the forced merger of Buddhist schools and drastic reduction in the number of temples.

Buddhism was basically defenseless. While the monk Kihwa (1376–1433) penned a convincing riposte to Chŏng's arguments, titled the "Exposition of the Right" (*Hyŏnjŏngnon*), the Confucians do not seem to have been interested in a reasoned debate. The staunchest defenders of Buddhism thus remained the kings. Despite his anti-Buddhist measures at the beginning of his reign, in his later years King Sejong used the newly created alphabet (now known as Han'gŭl) to translate Buddhist texts from classical Chinese into the vernacular. One of the first works written with the new alphabet was the "Songs of the Moon Reflected in a Thousand Rivers" (*Wŏrin ch'ŏn'gang chi kok*, 1449), a panegyric of the Buddha's life, probably composed by Sejong himself. His son,

King Sejo (r. 1455–1468), continued to support Buddhism, but when Sǒngjong (r. 1469–1494) came to the throne, the king again threw his weight behind the anti-Buddhist agenda, and it became almost impossible for Buddhism to maintain its existence.

In 1592, however, the situation changed when the Japanese invaded Korea. With Confucian officials proving useless in organizing the defense, King Sǒnjo (r. 1567–1608) personally appealed to the monk Hyujǒng (1520–1604) for help. Hyujǒng, though already in his seventies, responded by sending a detachment of monks. Although their numbers were too small to change the military situation significantly, their sacrifice left a deep impression on the government. Moreover, after the end of the war one of Hyujǒng's disciples traveled to Japan in order to negotiate the release of war hostages. It was fundamentally thanks to these efforts that Buddhism was allowed to exist following the end of the invasions in 1598. Officially, government policy had not changed, and temples had to contribute often crippling taxes; for example, many temples were forced to produce large quantities of paper for the state. However, there were no persecutions or large-scale confiscations, and Buddhist lay practice was also tolerated. More importantly, many Confucian officials fostered amicable relations with monks.

Hyujǒng, also known under his penname Sǒsan, was a prolific writer, who argued for the fundamental unity of Daoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism. He was also very much concerned about Sǒn practice, emphasizing the importance of distinguishing between the “dead words” of doctrinal (*kyo*) understanding and the “live words” of Sǒn understanding. For later Korean Sǒn Buddhism, however, his prime importance lies in the fact that he is seen as the last authentic patriarch in the Linji lineage. Accordingly, all modern Korean Buddhist masters trace their lineage back through him, and then further back to T'aego Pou. While Sǒsan's place is undisputed, the link to T'aego was first declared by one of his disciples. While it is now the orthodox interpretation among most modern Sǒn schools in Korea, the actual historical link is very tenuous.

By Sejong's reign, only two denominations, Sǒn and Kyo, were allowed to exist. Then by the sixteenth century even those institutions were abolished. Without any supporting structures above the level of individual temples, Sǒn lineages provided the most tangible organizing structure for the late Chosǒn Buddhist world. Many temples also had lecture halls to expound doctrinal texts, so the study of such texts was never discontinued. And despite the government's attempts to prevent people from practicing Buddhism, many still sought solace in Buddhism. Lay societies were formed to pray for deliverance in the Pure Land, while rituals for the deceased were frequently held in temples. Although it has long been thought that Buddhism went into terminal decline during the Chosǒn period, in fact there was a strong revival in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when many temples were rebuilt. The publication of Buddhist texts and the production of votive paintings also show that the social base of Buddhism remained strong until the beginning of the modern period (Walraven 2007).

Buddhism in the Modern Period

As was noted at the beginning of this chapter, Japanese colonization forced Korean Buddhism to reflect on its own identity. More seriously, the colonial authorities also

strictly supervised the Korean temples through the Temple Ordinance Law. Temples were grouped under 36 main temples (*ponsa*), while the remaining temples were designated branch temples (*malsa*) of a main temple. Abbots loyal to the colonial administration were appointed, and every year they were called to Seoul to pledge loyalty to the Japanese emperor. One of the most significant areas of Japanese influence was the rise of the number of married monks. Following the Meiji restoration, Japanese monks could officially marry, and this custom was now seeping into Korea. By the end of the colonial period more than 90 per cent of Korean clerics were married.

A small group of monks resisted this influence strongly, arguing that marrying was incompatible with the Korean tradition of *kanhwa* meditation. The chief representatives of this group were Pang Hanam (1876–1951) and Song Man'gong (1871–1946), both disciples of Kyŏnghŏ (1849–1912), undoubtedly the most famous monk of the late Chosŏn period. Man'gong's character can be glimpsed from the anecdote that, during the annual banquet for the abbots of the main temples hosted by the governor-general, he got so fed up by the words of praise that he shouted "Terauchi [the previous governor-general] will burn in hell for allowing Korean Buddhist monks to marry, eat meat and drink liquor." (Evon 2001: 29)

It is therefore hardly surprising that after liberation, the issue of married vs. celibate monks became a major concern. An early attempt at reviving the orthodox tradition was the community established at Pongam-sa, which was however interrupted by the Korean War (1950–1953). After the War, with the support of President Syngman Rhee, a purification drive got underway, aiming to dislodge married clerics from temples. This resulted in often violent clashes, and since the celibate monks were a minority, they tried to boost their numbers by ordaining monks who were often ill-prepared for monastic life. In an attempt at reconciliation, in 1962 the Jogye order was established as an overarching organization for all monks. However, the married clergy felt that it did not really address their concerns, and in 1970 established the T'aego order. Jogye and T'aego thus represent the largest Buddhist organizations in Korea today, although there are many other Buddhist schools and organizations. The vast majority of temples and monks, though, belong to the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism (for more on the modern history of Korean Buddhism, see Pori Park's chapter in this volume).

The figure best symbolizing the polarized atmosphere of the second half of the twentieth century was Sŏngch'ŏl (1912–1993). He had taken part in the Pongam-sa revival community, and in 1967 became abbot of Haein-sa. By that time his fame had spread sufficiently to be recognized as one of the leading monks of his day, attracting many students and followers (who had to perform 3,000 prostrations before being granted an interview). He exemplifies a very radical, uncompromising strand in Sŏn Buddhism. Both fundamentalist and idealist, his principle is summarized in the *tono tonsu* (sudden awakening and sudden practice) doctrine: enlightenment is sudden, total, and indivisible. While this is a traditional position, he went very far in rejecting anything deemed heterodox: any kind of compromise, such as skillful means (e.g. chanting Amitābha's name, or an intellectual understanding of enlightenment), is completely rejected. Thus he also criticized Chinul, whose teachings he regards as heretical, both for its contents—as seen, Chinul advocated *tono chŏmsu*, or “sudden

enlightenment and gradual practice”—and also for the fact that he was not properly enlightened through a patriarch (Mueller 1992).

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Korean Buddhism has shed much of the austere image presented by Sŏngch'öl. It is also reaching a global audience: by attracting many foreign monks, and through a temple stay program launched in 2002, which has given many foreign tourists, as well as Koreans, a taste of temple life. It is also reaching out to society through many welfare programs and through the activities of a number of charismatic younger monks, who bring a Buddhist perspective to various social problems. Yet without doubt the firm adherence to *kanhwa* practice as the sole source of religious authority remains the defining characteristic of the Jogye order, which continues to function as the representative Buddhist organization of South Korea.

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CHAPTER 4

Buddhism in Japanese History

Heather Blair

This chapter is about both history and historiography: it provides a basic chronological survey of Japanese Buddhism, as well as comments on how that history has been and continues to be written. Before moving into the narrative portion of this essay, it is worth considering our object of inquiry. Whether we look at Buddhism in terms of philosophy and doctrine, monasticism and devotion, or economy and society, it is clear that for the most of its history, Buddhism in Japan has been inclusive in orientation and practice. This means that it is difficult, if not impossible, to isolate a “pure” Buddhism in Japanese history, and that the boundaries of the category “Buddhism” have always been elastic and permeable.

For much of Japanese history, Mahāyāna Buddhism has been the dominant, but far from the only, member of a religious polyculture in which mutual interaction and influence are the norm. For instance, Buddhism entwined with the worship of indigenous deities known as *kami* to such an extent that many scholars now maintain there was no such thing as an independent entity recognizable as Shintō in pre-modern Japan, especially before the fifteenth century. The corollary is that *kami* worship—and, by extension, Daoist and Confucian ideas and practices—was part of Buddhist culture and practice for centuries. This in turn begs the question of how “Buddhist” Japanese Buddhism has been.

The simple answer is “very Buddhist indeed,” provided that we take seriously two key points. The first is self-identification: historically, Japanese people unequivocally identified themselves as good Buddhists at the same time that they engaged in what we today see as combinatory practices. The second is the doctrinal axiom that phenomena are empty of inherent essence. That is, by Buddhism’s own account, the Dharma cannot be essentialized. Therefore it is not only historically normal but also doctrinally acceptable that in every society where Buddhism has flourished, including Japan, it has responded to local causes and conditions, in many cases by forming complex and interdependent connections with local religious cultures.

Let us consider several examples of how the interdependence—or perhaps better, the non-duality—of Buddhism and indigenous religions has worked out in Japan. The most famous is a set of interpretive strategies known as *honji suijaku*, a phrase that has its roots in Tiantai exegesis of the *Lotus Sūtra* and that translates as “original grounds and manifest traces.” This body of interpretation, which was prevalent from the eleventh century onward, maintains that the *kami* are the manifest traces of Buddhas and bodhisattvas, who in turn are the original grounds of the *kami*. Obviously, Buddhas occupy a higher position in this pairing, but *honji suijaku* theory has it that *kami* and Buddhas share a fundamental identity, even though they appear in different guises. Thus, for example, the well-respected Kamakura-period Zen master Mujū Ichien (1227–1312) could write with confidence in his narrative collection *Sand and Pebbles* (*Shasekishū*) that Amaterasu, the sun goddess whom royal myth casts as the ancestor of the imperial family, and Dainichi (Mahāvairocana), the cosmic Buddha of Japan’s esoteric tradition, are one and the same. Dainichi literally means “Great Sun.” In Mujū’s interpretive schema, the fact that the Buddha and the goddess are both related to the sun simultaneously mediates and proves their mutual identity. To Mujū it was clear: *kami* and Buddhas appear to be different but are actually the same.

The amalgamation of *kami* and Buddhas seen in *honji suijaku* thought had practical and institutional correlates. For instance, patrons gave copies of the Buddhist canon to shrines as gifts for the *kami*. On an institutional level, the interdependence of *kami*-worship and Buddhism played out in the formation of complexes that included both temples and shrines. In these institutional conglomerates, temples and shrines overlapped and combined in terms of place, institution, cult, and personnel. *Kami* were routinely enshrined and worshipped within Buddhist temples, and shrines to *kami* could and did house Buddhas, bodhisattvas, nuns, and monks.

Today matters are rather different. Japanese and foreigners alike tend to view Shintō and Buddhism as separate religions. There are very specific, modern reasons for this, as we shall see below. Nonetheless, Japan remains a society in which multiple religious affiliations are the norm. One can perfectly well “believe in” Shintō and also be Buddhist. Similarly, engagement in nominally Daoist divination in no way precludes sincere Buddhist devotion, while Confucian values continue to fuse with Buddhist mores. Many Japanese engage with religious belief and practice in context-specific ways: they use Buddhism for particular purposes (most famously, for funerary rituals), and turn to other traditions as and when and where they feel the need.

In the following pages, the words Buddhism and Buddhist are used freely and without further explanation. However, as I hope this initial discussion shows, these terms refer to inclusive, flexible, and permeable categories that are heuristically useful but not ontologically fixed.

Buddhist Beginnings (c. 550–700)

Buddhism entered Japan from the continent in the sixth century as part of long-term cultural flows in which immigrants, traders, and diplomats brought new technologies and ideas to the Japanese archipelago from the Korean and Chinese cultural spheres.

During the fifth and sixth centuries, a polity that would eventually develop into the royal court based itself in the region known as Yamato, which is centered in the Nara Basin just east of present-day Osaka (Piggott 1997). As one might imagine, Buddhism's acceptance and integration into Japanese culture was a lengthy and varied process, but classical narratives present it as a comparatively uncomplicated matter of court politics and royal support. Because these stories continue to exert tremendous influence on historical imagination, here we will briefly consider the most famous, which appears in the *Nihon shoki*, an annalistic court history that was presented to the throne in the year 720.

This story runs as follows. In 552, official envoys from the Korean kingdom of Paekche, which had formed an alliance with Japan's kings, presented sūtras and a Buddha-image to the throne. The court's response was ambivalent. On the one hand, the aristocratic, priestly Mononobe and Nakatomi families argued that Buddhism should be rejected, for the *kami* might be angered at the worship of a foreign deity. The Soga, a particularly powerful noble family, disagreed. Although the Mononobe won out in the public sphere, the Soga accepted and enshrined the Buddha-image in their private hall. When a plague struck, the anti-Buddhist faction claimed that it was evidence of the wrath of the *kami*. Officials thereupon seized the Buddha-image, cast it into water near contemporary Osaka, and burned the Soga hall. Later entries in the *Nihon shoki* report that a generation later virtually the same pattern played out. The message is clear: when Buddhism arrived in Japan, it met with stiff opposition from cultural conservatives, and the throne only gradually came to support the new religion.

When the antagonism between the Soga and the Mononobe came to a head, say classical sources, a royal prince named Umayado sided with the Soga. Tradition identifies this man as Shōtoku (574?–622?), a brilliant and ardently Buddhist royal prince. Shōtoku is said to have annihilated the Mononobe with the help of the four *deva* kings, and to have authored the “Eighteen-Article Constitution,” a classic of Japanese statecraft that harmonizes the ideals of Buddhism, *kami*-worship, and Confucianism. At last Buddhism had found its great patron.

For centuries, this narrative was accepted more or less at face value, from the arrival of Buddhism in the hands of Paekche envoys to its promulgation by Prince Shōtoku. Since the 1980s, however, this vision has been subjected to considerable historical criticism (see Yoshida Kazuhiko's chapter in Swanson and Chilson 2006). Most fundamentally, there are serious issues with the written sources that supposedly document the first 150-odd years of Buddhism's history in the archipelago. These materials date to the eighth century—a long time after the events they narrate. They also refract rather than simply reflect historical “fact.” Like other documents, they were produced by compilers and authors who were themselves stakeholders in the interpretation of history.

Today it is widely recognized that early accounts of Buddhism's arrival in Japan include substantial and creative re-interpretation, and even outright fabrication. The centrality of the throne is a key area for embroidery in these early sources. Resident immigrant groups who hailed from the Korean peninsula and influential families like the Soga were almost certainly more important in promulgating Buddhism than the royal house (see Como 2008). Many researchers also now distinguish between the persona of Prince Shōtoku and the obscure historical figure of Umayado. Their position has yet to become widely accepted by non-specialists, but they argue convincingly that

eighth-century and later writers projected legends of Shōtoku into the past to create a kingly hero who would direct attention away from the dominance of the non-royal Soga family (Como 2008). This effort was a resounding success: Shōtoku has long been an object of both respect and devotion. He is regarded as a cultural hero and exemplary Buddhist, and across Japan he is enshrined and worshipped in his own right.

In the sixth century, then, immigrants and powerful noble lineages helped to establish Buddhism on Japanese soil at the same time that a monarchic polity was developing. In the seventh century, against a background of considerable violence that included wars of succession and conflict between and among great families, rulership developed in several ways that impacted Buddhism. First, the crown and the court came to sponsor major Buddhist projects, and this is clear even if we allow for rhetorical excess in the historical record. (Meanwhile, great families continued to be extremely important both to the political center and to the patronage of Buddhism.) Second, Buddhist institutions entered the space and time of everyday life. In the last quarter of the seventh century, a Chinese-style capital was built at the southern end of the Nara Basin, and in 694, the court formally moved to the new city, Fujiwara-kyō. Tellingly, three great temples were located within the city limits. These were Asukadera, Yakushiji, and Daikandaiji; another, Kawaradera, was located just south of the city. Third, the court used a new series of civil and criminal codes known as the *ritsuryō* to exert control over Buddhist specialists. Based on Tang legal models, these codes defined rank, office, and duty, and provided a template for a complex bureaucratic administration. That they also included a “Code for Monks and Nuns” shows that the state saw itself as the ultimate arbiter of proper Buddhist behavior.

Public and private patronage, integration into the capital, and legislative controls all point to a major trend toward growth for Buddhism in the seventh century. Even though it cannot be counted upon as a transparent reflection of actual circumstances, the Heian-period annal *Fusō ryakki* reports that by 692, there were 545 temples in Japan. Archaeological evidence suggests that this number is fairly accurate. From this point on, Buddhist activity only increased and diversified.

Nara (710–784) and Heian (794–1185) Periods

In 710, the court moved to a new capital called Heijō-kyō, which is located within the limits of the present-day city of Nara. This shift inaugurated the Nara period, a short century popularly known as a golden age for Japanese Buddhism. One reason for this reputation is that the Buddhist culture of the new capital is well represented today in a comparatively large number of extant temples, manuscripts, and sculptures.

As it had in the old capital, Buddhism enjoyed a significant institutional presence in Heijō-kyō. Some of the older temples moved from Fujiwara-kyō to the new city: Daikandaiji, for instance, re-located and was re-named Daianji. New temples, of which Kōfukuji is a good example, were built as well. The aristocratic Fujiwara family founded Kōfukuji as their *ujidera*, or lineage-group temple. *Ujidera* have been important throughout Japanese history because such institutions provided great families with sites for ritual protection and integration, that is, with distinct cultic identities.

The most famous attribute of Buddhist history during the Nara period is undoubtedly the development of so-called “state Buddhism.” In fact, just how much control the government actually exercised over Buddhist institutions, specialists, and practices is a matter of debate among historians, but it is clear that the Nara-period state did assert itself as an arbiter of Buddhist norms. For instance, the government placed limits on the number of men and women who could be officially ordained in any given year. The government also sought to prescribe who and what a professional Buddhist should be. It set up the *sōgō*, the Office of Monastic Affairs, staffed by eminent monks who were charged with oversight of all clerical behavior. The “Code for Monks and Nuns,” which is extant today in a version from the 700s, laid out legally binding norms and ideals. These rules addressed not only specific infractions against secular law and monastic precepts, but also aimed to regulate what ordained Buddhists did. The thirteenth article, for instance, plainly states, “Monks and nuns are to meditate and practice the Way. Their hearts rejoice in quiescence (i.e. Nirvana); they are not to mix with the laity.” The same article goes on to stipulate that clerics must receive official permission to beg for alms or go into retreat in the mountains. The government saw these traditional monastic activities as the source of potential problems: beggars might upset the economic and social balance, and mountain practitioners might gain special powers that could potentially be deployed against state interests.

On the face of it, these regulations suggest that the state exerted considerable control over the activities of ordained men and women. However, historical and narrative sources show that the codes were often observed in the breach. For instance, the *Miraculous Tales of Japan* (*Nihon ryōiki*), a collection of orally derived short stories known as *setsuwa* compiled at the beginning of the 800s, indicates that privately ordained and un-ordained Buddhist specialists abounded during the Nara period, even though they were legally proscribed. Similarly, some monks and nuns patently *did* interact with lay people, and also engaged in activities well beyond the scope of officially sanctioned *sūtra* study and state-protecting ritual. The career of the famous monk Gyōgi (668–749) is a classic case in point. Gyōgi is reputed to have engaged in widespread and large-scale public works projects, and to have gained an enthusiastic following among lay people and privately ordained (that is, unofficial) monks and nuns. In fact, he was so popular that he came to be called “the bodhisattva Gyōgi.”

Dedicated religious professionals, be they monks, nuns, or unordained specialists, were far from the only Nara-period Buddhists, however. Buddhism spread through the provinces at this time, and the number of lay adherents grew significantly. Lay believers of moderate means cooperated in sponsoring major merit-making and devotional projects, such as *sūtra*-copying. At the upper end of the social order, aristocrats and royals employed monks and nuns as members of their households, sponsored the reproduction of Buddhist texts, and underwrote the construction of temples and icons. Throughout this period, immigrant monks and artisans continued to disseminate continental technology and knowledge. Their know-how and sophistication helped their patrons to develop their own prestige.

The other side of Buddhism’s popularization was its prominent integration into royal ritual, ideology, and administration. The careers of Emperor Shōmu (r. 720–749) and his consort Kōmyō (701–760) illustrate the increased scope of royal involvement in

Buddhism and its political relevance. In the first half of the 700s, Kōmyō and Shōmu founded a network of official temples (Piggott 1997). These institutions were designed to extend the influence of the new metropole, the monarchs, and Buddhist teachings throughout the land. Specifically, the sovereigns mandated the construction of two temples per province, one for monks and one for nuns, and charged these institutions with the protection and care of the people and the state. The network was never fully completed, but it contributed to the regional spread of Buddhism, as well as to the establishment of Buddhist ritual as a technology of state-protection.

In addition, the monarchs founded a magnificent temple known as Tōdaiji, the Great Eastern Temple, in the capital, where they headquartered the provincial temple network (Piggott 1997). Within the main hall of Tōdaiji, they installed a monumental image of Vairocana, the cosmic sun Buddha who features prominently in the *Avatamsaka sūtra*. Vairocana was particularly fitting as a royal symbol, for the *Avatamsaka* repeatedly describes visions of interpenetrating worlds through which the presence of the Buddha (or the ruler) is refracted and reflected throughout the universe (or his realm). In the medieval period, Tōdaiji flourished as an independent religious institution with significant landholdings, but it is still fused in cultural memory with the state-making projects of eighth-century sovereigns. In part because of this, it has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and is a popular destination in domestic and international heritage tourism.

In an unprecedented (and un-repeated) fusion of royal and religious identity, the last Nara-period sovereign, Kōmyō and Shōmu's daughter, Shōtoku (r. 749–758, 764–770), ruled as a nun. (Note that in Japanese Empress Shōtoku's name is written differently from that of the Prince Shōtoku and that she had ruled earlier under a different name, Kōken.) With her death, the succession shifted to a different lineage within the royal house; within a generation, the capital moved again, this time to Heian-kyō (present-day Kyōto). Traditionally, modern historians interpreted this as an effort on the part of the monarchy to escape the overweening influence of the Nara Buddhist establishment and the politically involved clerics who had flourished under Empress Shōtoku. It is now generally accepted, however, that the move was directly related to a shift in the patriline: a different branch of the ruling house needed a different capital. After a brief stint in Nagaoka (784–794), the court established itself in Heian-kyō.

Among many other significant changes to religious culture, the Heian period (794–1185) saw a marked decline in women's ordinations. Traditional histories assert that the first people to be ordained in Japan were three women who were sponsored by the Soga family. Furthermore, the careers of Shōtoku and Kōmyō demonstrate that women of the highest status enjoyed extremely visible careers as Buddhist nuns and patrons during the Nara period. And yet, despite the early efflorescence of women's participation in the public sphere as Buddhists, beginning in the ninth century, the official, Vinaya-based ordination of nuns fell off sharply. The reasons for this shift are the subject of considerable research and debate. The most commonly cited reasons are the growing authority of continental learning (especially Confucianism), which made Japanese ideology increasingly patriarchal, and economic changes that reduced women's social and economic autonomy. The outcome, however, is clear: while Heian women could be—and often were—devout Buddhists, the sphere of their activities became much more

limited. This shift is epitomized by the figure of the household nun, a woman who entered the novitiate, but continued to live at home instead of entering a convent (as convents effectively disappeared during the Heian era).¹ Thus, Buddhist practice and identity became strongly gendered: those who officiated at public rites, who held state-sanctioned offices in the Office for Monastic Affairs, and who became eminent clerics were all men. On the other hand, women—especially high-ranking women—tended to carry out their religious practices in their residences and among their family members. They might go on pilgrimage, an activity that became more and more common as the Heian period wore on, but for many women the beginning and ending of their journeys was the domestic sphere.

Within the male monastic world, scholastic and doctrinal study became an increasingly important part of Buddhist identity. Often survey-style treatments characterize Nara-period Buddhism in terms of the establishment of “the six schools,” that is, the Sanron, Hossō, Kegon, Ritsu, Kusha, and Jōjitsu.² There are two problematic issues with this model. First, the term “school” is somewhat misleading. These were more academic specialties in scriptural study and exegesis than sectarian institutions, and schools were not distinguished by mutually exclusive membership or affiliation. Secondly, despite their stereotypical association with the Nara period, these schools did not even coalesce as discrete bodies of doctrine until the 800s. It was at that time that the old permission system for officially sponsored ordinands began to differentiate among—and therefore to recognize—discrete “schools.” In other words, doctrinal formalization in the early Heian period gave rise to the concept of the six schools. Tellingly, the Shingon and Tendai movements emerged at precisely this time; by the middle of the ninth century, they too had become part of the doctrinal and institutional orthodoxy.³

In 804, Kūkai (774–835) and Saichō (767–822), commonly revered as the founders of the Shingon and Tendai traditions, both sailed for China, hoping to bring back new and authentic teachings to Japan (Abe 1999; Groner 1984). Even before his departure for China, Saichō had begun to establish monastic facilities on Mt. Hiei, which rises to an elevation of 848 meters just northeast of Kyoto. In China, he sought out instructions in Tendai (Ch. Tiantai) teachings, and upon his return, he promoted his new transmission, focusing on meditative practices and exegesis of the *Lotus Sūtra*. Saichō actively sought out official recognition and patronage. In 806, Tendai was allowed several annual ordinands, which is to say that it took its place alongside the “six schools.” However, considerable friction developed between Tendai and the older clerical establishment, for Saichō wanted to construct an ordination platform at Enryakuji, his monastery on Mt. Hiei (Groner 1984). This was scandalous on two fronts. Not only would a new platform remove ordination from the well-established control of Nara institutions, but Saichō also proposed to use the bodhisattva precepts from the Chinese *Sūtra of Brahma’s Net* (*Fanwan jing*) in lieu of the standard monastic ordination through the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya. Scandalous or not, shortly after Saichō’s death, the court granted permission for Tendai monks to build the ordination platform requested by Saichō. This new institutional independence both foreshadowed and subtended Tendai’s later development. The school grew to be extremely powerful (Groner 2002), and Tendai remains influential down to the present day.

When Kūkai returned from China in 806, he too began to promote new teachings, though he saw himself not as the founder of a school, but rather as a promoter of a comprehensive linguistic and ritual system of esoteric teachings (*mikkyō*) (Abe 1999). In Kūkai's view, the esoteric teachings complemented and completed the exoteric doctrine and practice that had heretofore been the norm in Japan. Unlike Saichō, Kūkai seems to have made no efforts to change the ordination system per se, though he did advocate study of the Sarvāstivādin Vinaya, an alternative to the mainstream Dharmaguptaka version. Kūkai was extremely successful in promoting ritual initiation as a way to introduce both lay people and clerics to the esoteric teachings. In 835, the government allocated three annual ordinands to the Shingon school, thus sealing the new movement as orthodox. Also, just before his death, Kūkai was granted permission to found a monastery called Kongōbuji at Mt. Kōya. Together with Tōji, an influential temple in the Heian capital, Kongōbuji became a flagship institution for Shingon study and practice.

Wide acceptance of esotericism had serious ramifications. According to a theory advanced by the historian Kuroda Toshio (1926–1993), with Shingon's inclusion as the eighth, governmentally recognized school, and with the esotericization of Tendai under Saichō's successors, a new, mainstream orthodoxy was established. Borrowing a term that occurs commonly in Heian and other pre-modern sources, Kuroda referred to this orthodoxy as *kenmitsu*, "exotericism plus esotericism." Kuroda's argument that *kenmitsu* thought provided the framework for all religious and political ideology in Japan up until the sixteenth century has been extremely influential (Dobbins 1996).

Within the *kenmitsu* synthesis, exoteric rites, many of which took the format of lecture assemblies, continued to be an integral part of ritual culture, both at court and in the great temples. At the same time, esotericism contributed a new system of ritual technologies. Mudrā and mantras became part of rites conducted to safeguard the court, and observances known as "altar rites" proliferated. Nobles commissioned altar rites dedicated to specific esoteric deities like Fudō (Skt. Acalaṇātha) for a range of aims, from subjugating their enemies to ensuring safe childbirth. One classic way of reading this development and application of ritual is as a shift toward an aristocratic Buddhism centered on external display and worldly gain. It is true that many aristocrats *did* flaunt their status as great Buddhist patrons, but this does not mean that they were insincere or impious. Since its inception in India, Buddhism has consistently offered a wide range of benefits to its followers through a variety of ritual means. Moreover, like their co-religionists in other regions, Buddhists in Japan, both high and low, have sought a good life in this world and a good rebirth in the next.

From the tenth century onward, Pure Land devotion became more and more popular at all levels of society. Monks like Kūya (903–972), who lived in the capital and took to the streets to proselytize, helped to spread Pure Land practices among commoners. Some historians have analyzed the rise of Pure Land devotion as a corollary of growing social and political disorder: the more difficult life in this world, this theory says, the more appealing birth in Amitābha's pure land. Doubtless for some this formula did hold true, but many others were quite optimistic about their soteriological options, and combined devotion to Amitābha with other activities. For instance, the famous politician Fujiwara no Michinaga (926–1027) copied the *Lotus Sūtra*, chanted Amitābha's

name, sponsored esoteric rituals, made numerous pilgrimages, and acknowledged the mutual identity of the *kami* and the Buddhas. He also took Buddhist orders, using both the bodhisattva precepts and the Vinaya, constructed several temples, and sponsored rituals at many more. Whether one views his activities as eclectic or synthetic, his life and career speak to the variety and flexibility that characterized most Buddhist belief and practice in pre-modern Japan.

The Problem of the “Middle Ages”

The question of the temporal range of “the middle ages” (*chūsei*) is a matter of debate and disagreement among historians, which has a significant bearing on the study of Buddhism. The basic issue is whether or not it makes sense to periodize religious history on the same lines as political history. Conventional political history identifies 1185 as the beginning of both the Kamakura period (1185–1333) and a new, medieval order. This year marked the end of the Genpei War, which convulsed Japan for five years, eventually resulting in the establishment of a military government (*bakufu*) in Kamakura in 1192. Thus, the Kamakura period brought several major shifts. For the first time, the capital was located in the eastern half of Honshu, Japan’s main island. Although the aristocratic court and the emperor continued to operate in Kyoto, military houses led by a “grand general” (*shōgun*) now controlled most functions of executive government. Over the ensuing four centuries, regimes rose and fell, but control of government affairs remained in the hands of the military. Historians writing after World War II often referred to these as feudal regimes, in part because their relationships of vassalage bore some resemblance to those of medieval Europe. In addition, Marxian interpretation was (and remains) quite popular among postwar Japanese historians, and it has been easy to cast medieval society as the feudal predecessor to the industrial capitalism of the Meiji period.

Beginning in the 1970s, Kuroda Toshio, the historian mentioned above, who himself held Marxian views, proposed a re-imagination of the middle ages. Kuroda suggested that the hallmark of this period was an interdependent system in which three types of power-bloc—the court (that is, royals and aristocrats), religious institutions (including both temples and shrines), and the military houses—shared power. In Kuroda’s view, a power-bloc boasted an independent and privatized administration, through which the head of the bloc could issue direct orders to all its component members. Moreover, each bloc enjoyed sovereign rights over its properties and their residents, amounting to political, economic, and judicial control of human and natural resources. Nonetheless, no given bloc was fully able to dominate the others. Therefore, contingent alliances and shared rulership became the norm for the middle ages.

With this re-definition of what made the medieval world medieval, many historians, including Kuroda himself, have suggested that the middle ages began considerably earlier, in the mid-Heian period. The medieval economy was structured in large part around landed estates (*shōen*), which were first developed during the Heian period as privately held domains exempt from public taxes. In some cases, religious institutions developed their own estates; in others, estates came as gifts or commendations. As

powerful temples acquired holdings in what had been the hinterlands, and as more estates were created, Buddhism came to truly permeate the provinces. Some religious institutions amassed tremendous landholdings; in Kuroda's parlance, these great landlords became power-blocs (Adolphson 2000). The most famous religious power-blocs were headed by Enryakuji, the Tendai seat northeast of Kyoto, and Kōfukuji, the Fujiwara family's old lineage temple, which now commanded tremendous influence. Monks at both temples actually combined esoteric and exoteric doctrinal studies, but Enryakuji had a reputation for esotericism, whereas Kōfukuji was stereotyped as exoteric. Thus, the *kenmitsu* orthodoxy had a very powerful institutional life.

Great institutions, however, are prone to internal friction, and from the mid-Heian period onward, trends toward factionalization became apparent across the board. In Buddhist institutions, these fissures occurred along lines of class, property ownership, and lineage (Adolphson 2000 and Groner 2002). One might imagine, for instance, that the Tendai school would present a united front, but this was not the case. Enryakuji chronically fought with another major Tendai temple, Onjōji, and each temple was burned—only to be reconstructed—in recurrent battles with the other. Within Enryakuji itself, the sons of wealthy aristocrats headed semi-independent cloisters and amassed great wealth, which they passed on to their Dharma heirs, who were also often their blood relatives. More generally, scholar-monks enjoyed considerable privilege within the monastery, while “hall monks” formed a lower monastic class. And as power-bloc institutions began to engage in armed conflict, especially from the twelfth century on, low-ranking monks and servants doubled as fighting men.

In sum, religious institutions—both temples and shrines—were major players in the political, economic, and even military life of medieval Japan. This is not to say that all Buddhist activity was circumscribed by major institutions, or that traditional renunciant ideals were no longer relevant. It does, however, call attention to the fact that Buddhists of all stripes were part of a broader social life that extended far beyond the stereotypically “Buddhist” spheres of doctrinal study and meditative practice.

The Kamakura (1185–1333) and Muromachi (1333–1493) Periods

One of the most pressing tasks facing the Buddhist community at the end of the twelfth century was reconstruction after the traumatic Genpei War. Tōdaiji and many other temples had been destroyed, and fundraising holy men (*kanjin hijiri*) fanned out through the archipelago to gather resources for rebuilding. This marked a shift in patronage: some temples now came to rely at least in part on in-kind and cash donations from mid-level patrons, rather than income from estates and powerful nobles (Goodwin 1994). In addition, some itinerants advocated specific ideas and practices. For instance, Ippen (1239–1289), the peripatetic founder of the Timely School (Jishū) of Pure Land Buddhism, taught his followers to recite Amitābha's name in order to be reborn in the Land of Bliss. Travel per se was not new—during the Heian period, pilgrimage had become common among elites. But now a wider range of people began to take to the road, often for religious reasons. As the medieval period wore on, economic growth and

increases in literacy coupled with comparative mobility to support the diversification and ongoing spread of Buddhism.

Although the establishment of the Kamakura *bakufu* in 1192 was an important political event, it did not destabilize the Buddhist establishment. The power-bloc temples continued to enjoy prestige, authority, and wealth. And yet, change did come in the form of revivals and innovations spearheaded by members of Nara institutions and Tendai communities.

The movements collectively known as the Nara revival were characterized by congregational and vernacular ritual, as well as renewed study of classic sūtras like the *Avataṃsaka*. One of the most visible aspects of the Nara revival was the Ritsu movement, which had its most famous proponent in Eison (1201–1290), who advocated strict adherence to the Vinaya and the *Brahma's Net* precepts for monks and nuns. In addition to providing social services and lay ordinations, the Ritsu movement played a key role in revitalizing the ordination of nuns; consequently, women's monasticism re-emerged and flourished in the Kamakura period (Meeks 2010). Eison also developed a nationwide network of hundreds of temples headquartered at Saidaiji in Nara, and he himself ordained (and re-ordained) thousands upon thousands of people. Thus, the impact of the Nara revival was far-reaching.

Ferment was also occurring within the Tendai school, where scholiasts articulated the extremely influential doctrine that sentient beings are originally enlightened (Stone 1999). Tendai monks also looked to the continent for inspiration. For instance, Eisai (alt. Yōsai, 1141–1215), famous as the founder of the Rinzaï school of Zen, traveled twice to China, where he studied with a Chan masters at Mt. Tiantai. Upon his second return, he sought to promote Chan, which is to say Zen, practice and monastic rules, though he met with little success until he made his way to Kamakura. There he attracted the patronage of the formidable Hōjō Masako (1157–1225), widow of the first *shōgun* and mother of the second. As Masako and other members of the Kamakura elite began to endow temples and to invite Chinese monks to Japan, a loose system known as the Five Mountains (*gozan*) emerged (Collcutt 1981). Five Mountains temples were stereotypically but not entirely dominated by Rinzaï lineages. Among them, Kenchōji was pre-eminent and still has an important presence in Kamakura today. When the capital shifted back to Kyoto with the establishment of the Ashikaga Shogunate in 1336, the Five Mountains system developed there as well, and it continued to flourish until it was disrupted by civil war in the mid-fifteenth century.

Sōtō, a second stream of Zen, was introduced by Dōgen (1200–1253), another Tendai monk, who travelled to China in 1223. Unlike Eisai, Dōgen did not enjoy the patronage of central elites upon his return. Rather, he ended up moving to the province of Echizen, where, with the patronage of regional warrior gentry, he founded what was to become his school's flagship temple, Eihei-ji. Today, Dōgen is famous for promoting an uncompromising vision of practice in which “just sitting” manifests the “unity of practice and enlightenment.” The spread of his school, however, seems to have had more to do with the willingness of later generations of Sōtō priests to adapt to established paradigms. As the medieval period wore on, Sōtō spread dramatically in the provinces, where clerics integrated themselves into local life by taking over the administration of regional chapels and temples, adopting elements of *kenmitsu* practice and

doctrine, and providing funerary services (Bodiford 1993). Nevertheless, some portions of Dōgen's oeuvre are sharply critical of his contemporaries. In this respect, he is like several other monks who rejected the inclusive attitude of mainstream Buddhism.

Hōnen (1133–1212), Shinran (1173–1263), and Nichiren (1222–1282), today revered as the founders of the Pure Land, True Pure Land, and Lotus schools, all maintained that their particular versions of Buddhism were uniquely effective. This exclusivist rhetoric was offensive to the *kenmitsu* establishment, which found it perfectly acceptable to argue that one form of Buddhism was better than another, but heretical to claim that *only* one mode of practice was effective. Not surprisingly, all three exclusivists experienced persecution at the hands of established religious institutions and the government.

Hōnen, Shinran, and Nichiren all felt that the End of the Dharma, the period when the teachings of the historical Buddha have become so attenuated that they are nearly lost, had arrived. They concluded that the effectiveness of most sūtras and traditional practices had therefore been obviated. Hōnen, and later Shinran, maintained that it is only through Pure Land practice—specifically, calling on Amitābha through the recitation of his name (*nenbutsu*)—that one has any hope of salvation. Shinran added an emphasis on faith in Amitābha, but most revolutionary was his position on issues of lifestyle. Shinran expressly rejected clerical norms by asserting that monks and nuns could and should marry (Dobbins 1989). For centuries, some clerics had maintained families, but this was essentially a back-door practice, and the Vinaya vision of monastic celibacy remained in force as a normative ideal. Shinran was thus questioning a fundamental component of professional Buddhist identity, and many of his contemporaries were appalled. For his part, Nichiren asserted that it was only through the *Lotus Sūtra* that one had any hope of salvation. The End of the Dharma, he maintained, necessitated a simple practice. For Nichiren and his followers, this was recitation of the *daimoku*, that is, the formula, “Hail to the Wondrous Lotus Sūtra” (*namu myōhō renge kyō*) (see Jacqueline Stone's chapter in Payne 1998).

Today the Pure Land, True Pure Land, and Lotus schools boast numerous and vocal followings, and their importance on the contemporary scene has helped to ensure that their histories have received significant attention. In fact, Kamakura movements have been viewed as a reformation, and today they continue to be referred to as a “new Buddhism.” In the early twentieth century, the Japanese historian Hara Katsurō proposed an analogy between the Protestant reformation and “Kamakura Buddhism,” and by extension, between Catholicism and the eight schools of “old Buddhism.” In this view, the new Buddhism typified by Hōnen, Shinran, and Nichiren offered accessible doctrines and simple practices aimed at the salvation of the individual, in contrast to an ossified ritualism perpetuated for worldly gain by an out-of-touch Buddhist establishment. In the wake of World War II, the Kamakura “reformation” was also celebrated for its supposedly democratic and egalitarian qualities.

These interpretations of Japanese Buddhist history are demonstrably presentist: they interpret Kamakura movements in terms that are politically attractive and useful for present-day apologetics. They are not, on the other hand, terribly useful for developing a nuanced understanding of pre-modern historical circumstances. For this reason, specialists on medieval history have launched sustained critiques of the reformation

model and of the notion that “Kamakura Buddhism” is co-extensive with the Pure Land, True Pure Land, Zen, and Lotus movements. Rather, critics have shown that Kamakura Buddhist culture as a whole exhibited as many continuities as ruptures with that of the earlier Heian period (Payne 1998).

In 1333, armies led by the Ashikaga family defeated Kamakura forces. In the very short Kenmu Restoration, Emperor Go-Daigo (r. 1318–1339) sought to reassert the imperial court as the center of executive governance. Go-Daigo marshaled Buddhist symbols and personnel to his cause, but his restoration ultimately failed. Meanwhile, warriors from the Ashikaga family established a shogunate in Kyoto. As rulers during the Muromachi period (1333–1493), the Ashikaga took on the role of Buddhist patrons, continuing to support Zen monasteries associated with the Five Mountains system, while developing new, private temples. For instance, Kinkakuji and Ginkakuji in Kyoto, the famous temples of the Silver and Golden Pavilions, once belonged to the Ashikaga. The martial elite also favored Buddhist-inflected visual and performing arts. It was during the Muromachi period that Noh theater developed out of folk performance, integrating Buddhist ideas and narratives into its plotlines and esthetics. In the realm of visual arts, ink painting transformed in the hands of monks working under continental influence. For example, Sesshū (1420–1506), a monk educated in a Kyoto Zen temple, traveled to China with the support of a powerful lord, and upon his return taught Chinese-style landscape design and painting.

The Muromachi cultural efflorescence notwithstanding, toward the end of the fifteenth century, political conditions deteriorated steeply. The epic Ōnin War (1467–1477) marked the unraveling of Ashikaga rule and fundamentally altered Japanese religion and society. The widespread upheaval and destruction seriously destabilized old religious patterns and made room for newer movements to flourish, facilitating the development of new networks and structures. At this time, the True Pure Land movement, with its congregational organization and married clerics, grew significantly (Dobbins 1989). It drew its following from merchants, artisans, and low-level warriors, as well as gentleman farmers and peasants. Honganji became pre-eminent among the True Pure Land temples, but the movement was primarily based in small, fairly autonomous communities. On a local level, True Pure Land organizations became nuclei for temple-towns (*jinaichō*), which functioned as economic, political, and social units. Meanwhile, in the old capital, where a power vacuum left governance to the townspeople, the Lotus school provided municipal and social organization. When their interests, religious or otherwise, were threatened, Kyoto’s Lotus adherents, temple-town True Pure Land followers, and other groups formed leagues (*ikki*). Swearing an oath of loyalty to each other and a particular cause—such as the defense of a temple-town’s rights to tax immunity—these groups would take up arms, often very effectively.

Ikki were just one element in a broader context of factionalization and general conflict. Aptly, the period from the late fifteenth to the late sixteenth centuries is known as the Warring States period. War was endemic, but toward the end of the 1560s, the brilliant strategist Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582) gradually began to unify the archipelago. As his hegemony grew, Nobunaga made it clear that he would brook no opposition, whether from rival warlords or religious institutions. True to his word, when Enryakuji ranged itself against him in 1571, Nobunaga waged a brutal campaign,

during which his men burned the halls and settlements on Mt. Hiei, slaughtered thousands, and seized and redistributed the temple's lands. This was a stunning defeat: Enryakuji had been one of *the* major forces in military, political, and religious life for centuries. And yet, however much of an object lesson the razing of Enryakuji may have been, other religious organizations still sought to retain their autonomy. Nobunaga treated them in the same way. Thus, for instance, he prosecuted a stubborn campaign against Honganji and True Pure Land *ikki* leagues. Although the True Pure Land partisans enjoyed some victories, Nobunaga eventually pummeled them into submission in a series of bloody sieges and battles between 1570 and 1580. Although Nobunaga was betrayed into a deadly ambush in 1582, the destruction of the ancient power-blocs and the Muromachi order continued at the hands of his successor, Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–1598). In 1585, for instance, Hideyoshi razed Negoroji, a great Shingon temple with a formidable army in Wakayama Prefecture, as well as Kokawadera, a large Tendai temple nearby.

By the end of the 1500s the age of the power-blocs was over. Hideyoshi, however, was aware that Buddhist institutions were capable of providing him with cultural palladia and ideological legitimation. Thus, he not only confiscated temple lands, but also gave property to religious institutions. Through his reallocations, Hideyoshi charted out a new order, in which the government (be it military or civil) exerted control over religious organizations. That is, temples and shrines were now divested of their political suzerainty, and enjoyed economic power at the pleasure of the state.

The Edo Period (1603–1868)

Into the breach created by the demise of the medieval order stepped the Tokugawa, a warrior house headed by Hideyoshi's former vassal, Ieyasu (1542–1616). The Tokugawa established a new shogunate and located their capital in Edo (present-day Tokyo). By allocating provinces to great lords (*daimyō*) on a hierarchical basis, and by requiring those lords to spend much of their time in Edo, the Tokugawa weakened potential opponents and constructed a stable, centralized government. The peace established by the Tokugawa regime laid a foundation for increased production and commerce, and between 1600 and 1700 the population of Japan doubled, rising to 20–30 million. Edo urbanized rapidly, too. By 1720, it was home to over one million residents, making it one of the most populous cities in the world.

Under the new regime, the roles and forms of religious institutions changed significantly; in this respect the government's parishioner (*danka*) system was particularly important. The parishioner system was first established as a surveillance measure, in which every family in every province was required to register with a local Buddhist temple. Some of the impetus for this policy came from the Tokugawa proscription of Christianity. Although Nobunaga and Hideyoshi had tolerated the Jesuit missionaries who had brought Christianity to Japan in the second half of the 1500s, the Tokugawa worried that Christians were prone to *lèse majesté*: in their loyalties, Christians might put their God, their religion, and their priests (many of whom were foreign) before the shogunate. The parishioner system helped to identify Christians; it also established a

social-cum-religious order through a nationwide organization overseen by the central government. The shogunate now had unprecedented access to information about the populace. Births, deaths, and marriages all had to be reported to the parish temple, and limits were placed on personal mobility.

By virtue of its old roots in local culture and its newly formalized ties to family units, during the Edo period Buddhism pervaded everyday life, across the social scale and around the country. Parish temples handled death rituals for all of their registrants, and thus funerals and ancestor worship took on strongly Buddhist qualities. This is not to say, however, that practices, beliefs, and institutions became homogeneous. A tremendous amount of archival source material remains on the Edo period, and recent surveys and publishing projects have made much of it available to scholars. This has fueled a boom in local histories, which provide detailed views of the roles Buddhism played in local contexts (Williams 2005).

Together with shifts in the relationship between Buddhism, the government, and localized social groups, the Edo period also brought changes to Buddhism's internal institutional structures. In the early 1600s, the government issued a set of laws mandating that every temple be associated with one particular school. Furthermore, each school was to have a rationalized hierarchy in which one main temple (*honzan*) oversaw the administration of branch temples (*matsuji*). This mirrored the secular hierarchy of *shōgun*, lords, and retainers, and it maximized government oversight by providing clear lines of control and responsibility. It also provided a strong impetus toward sectarianism. With the re-invention and reification of sectarian identity, many scholastics turned to the histories of their own lineages and traditions. In a number of cases, they re-discovered texts written by (or attributed to) their founders. For example, it was during the Edo period that Dōgen's writings, most of which had never circulated widely, came to assume central importance for Sōtō Zen identity and practice (Bielefeldt 1985).

Precisely because government policy so profoundly structured the institutional landscape—and also because there was no proliferation of new Buddhist schools—the Edo period has sometimes been seen as a low point in the history of Japanese Buddhism. In the early twentieth century, Tsuji Zennosuke, a prolific and well-respected historian, popularized the thesis that Edo Buddhism was jejune and even degenerate. This point of view remains influential, but a number of contemporary scholars roundly contest it. As mentioned above, local histories have shown that Buddhism was, in fact, an important and vibrant part of grass-roots culture. Moreover, the Edo period also saw surges in pilgrimage (for more on pilgrimage, see Henny van der Veere's chapter in this volume), and numerous temples supported themselves with donations from visitors, not parishioners. Some institutions, like Sensōji (also known as Asakusa Kannon), a temple in Tokyo's old downtown district, combined broad local support with pilgrimage appeal. The result was dramatic growth and success. Such cases illustrate the vivacity of urban religiosity and Buddhist activity outside the parishioner system (Hur 2000).

Meanwhile, at the elite level, members of the court and the imperial family, which were still headquartered in Kyoto, continued to receive ordinations, to endow and enter monasteries and convents, and to act as influential Buddhist patrons. Finally, it is demonstrably not the case that there was no innovation in Edo Buddhism. Not only did Buddhist scholars produce new knowledge in the field of sectarian studies, but Chinese

masters also established Ōbaku, a new school of Zen. Ōbaku viewed itself as a legitimate form of Rinzai, with contributions to make in the reform of monastic practice. But it also included Pure Land elements, and this combinatory approach drew criticism from outsiders, especially in the new sectarian climate. Despite hostility from other schools, shogunal and then royal support helped Ōbaku develop a significant following, and the school still survives as an institutional presence today (Baroni 2000).

Meanwhile, Buddhists were also participating in and responding to nativist intellectual movements. Nativism began to emerge in the late 1600s, growing out of study of ancient texts such as the *Man'yōshū* and *Kojiki*. At the same time that they pioneered scholarship in several fields, including history and philology, many nativist thinkers envisioned a pure and trans-historical Japanese heritage, which they contrasted with continental imports, including Confucianism and Buddhism. Some nativist scholars were virulently anti-Buddhist and advocated fundamentalist versions of Shintō, seeking a return to ancient, pre-Buddhist ways. Others, like the scholar-monk Keichū (1640–1701), were ordained Buddhists themselves, but had strong interests in the study of Japanese language and literature.

Toward the end of the Edo period, economic and political stresses mounted, and nativist ideology fed into political ferment. By the 1700s, Japan's intensive agriculture had reached a limit. Growth faltered, and scarcity became a major issue. Popular unrest increased markedly, and in the mid- to late 1800s, as Europe and the United States sought to colonize East and Southeast Asia, Japan began to feel the external threats of military invasion and economic subordination. In 1853, the American naval commander Matthew Perry (1794–1858) anchored warships in Uraga Bay and later negotiated the opening of Japanese ports to foreign ships. Other Western powers soon pressed for more concessions, and domestic criticism of shogunal policy ran rampant. Disaffection eventually led to outright revolt, and in 1868 rebel forces effected the Meiji Restoration. The late nineteenth century brought political, economic, and social changes that were to exert a profound effect on Buddhism, and on religious culture more generally.

Modern (1868–1945) and Postwar (1945–) Developments

Anxious to compete with and protect itself against the West, Japan industrialized, militarized, and modernized as swiftly as it could. With rapid change came cultural trauma, and this is particularly apparent in the realm of religion. Nativist ideologues had a prominent place in the early Meiji government, and helped to initiate a series of policies that brought about wrenching religious changes in the 1860s and 1870s. First, the new government dis-established Buddhism, summarily ending the parishioner system. It also ordered the restructuring of Shintō institutions and the re-imagination of Shintō doctrine, in order to produce a set of rituals and dogmas amenable to a new, imperial identity. The result was what is known as State Shintō. Finally, the government ordered that Buddhism and Shintō become mutually exclusive. In 1868 the government issued edicts known as the “orders on the separation of *kami* and Buddhas” (Ketelaar 1990). In many cases the enforcement of these policies was deeply traumatic. Deities with

ambivalent identities were to be made into either Buddhas or *kami*, for they could no longer be both. Temples and shrines were to be physically separated—no mean feat given that many of them shared land and functioned as integrated institutions. Ordained Buddhists could no longer administer or serve in shrines, and Buddhist images, texts, and ritual implements were to be removed from the sanctuaries of *kami*. In the wake of other edicts, both temples and shrines became subject to debilitating land reform and expropriation.

As a result of the separation edicts and related policies, many smaller temples and shrines, especially those without resident priests, were amalgamated with other institutions or simply shut down. Laicization was rampant, and temples were razed, especially in areas where anti-Buddhist sentiment ran high. Across Japan, many icons and ritual implements were destroyed, while others were stolen or sold. These began to enter the antique, and later the art, market, a development that contributed to the inclusion of Buddhist material culture in the new, modern categories of national patrimony and art.

During the period when the separation edicts were being enforced, the government also passed laws on monastic behavior and observance of the Vinaya rules. Specifically, clerics were now free to eat meat, marry, and grow their hair; they were also permitted to wear normal, lay clothing when they were not engaged in ritual or other specialized activities. Together with relaxation of the Vinaya ban on the consumption of alcohol, these changes were all subject to vigorous debate; however, over time, they became widely accepted (Jaffe 2001). Clerical marriage for men is now the norm in Japan, and many temples function in part as family businesses, in which the position of priest (or head priest) is passed down from father to son (and sometimes now to daughter) (Covell 2005). The open presence and hard work of temple wives has also highlighted pervasive gender inequities in monastic institutions, and women's roles in both lay and ordained life are now the subject of considerable discussion (Arai 1999).

Accommodations to new norms occurred not only in temples, but also in the sphere of education. During the first years of the Meiji period, many Buddhist denominations founded colleges or converted older seminaries into new, Western-style universities. These institutions have proven very successful and continue to flourish today, offering baccalaureate and graduate degree programs, as well as specialized training for male and female clerics. Examples include the True Pure Land Ryūkoku University, the Tendai Taishō University, the Sōtō Komazawa University, and the Shingon Kōyasan University. Because these universities often provide training or research opportunities to foreigners who come to Japan as graduate students, they exert a definite influence on global research on Japanese Buddhism. Part of this influence is the ongoing importance of denominational and sectarian categories and identities, which shapes historical and doctrinal inquiry into various aspects of Japanese Buddhism.

Together with the educational infrastructure, twentieth-century publishing projects have profoundly shaped the production of knowledge by, for, and about Buddhists and Buddhism. The most important example in this area is the monumental *Taishō canon*, published by a team of researchers between 1924 and 1934. By this time, Japan already controlled Taiwan, Korea, and Manchuria, and was pursuing aggressive colonial policies. The *Taishō* was produced with manuscripts from Japan and the continent,

and the very fact that it has become the standard Buddhist canon in modern East Asia testifies to the long legacy of colonialism and its impact on Buddhist studies.

During the 1930s and 1940s, as with every other sphere in Japanese culture, Buddhist thought and practice became increasingly nationalistic, but the end of World War II (known in Japan as the Pacific War), wrought a sea change. Freedom of religion was enshrined in the postwar constitution, and peace became a cardinal value for most religious organizations. Since the 1940s, religious life has become more privatized than at any other point in Japanese history, and many people, Japanese and foreign alike, now view Japan as a deeply secular society. On the other hand, many Japanese regularly engage in apparently religious activities. They may pray to Mañjuśrī for success in school, carry an amulet from a local temple for general protection, and get their car blessed by a Buddhist or Shintō priest to ensure safety in traffic.

In addition to ad hoc engagement in religious activity, intensive Buddhist practices also continue to draw interest. Buddhist monasticism survives as an alternative to standard contemporary life, for women as well as men (Arai 1999). Short retreats and field-trips to religious sites are often integrated into curricula for students in primary and secondary school. Moreover, for lay and ordained, old and young alike, transportation networks now make pilgrimage much quicker and more accessible. Among the new leisure classes—students, retirees, and the unemployed—pilgrimage enjoys an enthusiastic following. For instance, the pilgrimage around the island of Shikoku, which focuses on Kūkai in his guise as Kōbō Daishi, has experienced considerable growth and development in the last several decades (Reader 2005).

Just as pilgrims combine leisure and religious effort in their journeys, other combinations also testify to the ongoing ability of religious culture to adapt to everyday life. New religious movements that draw on Buddhist beliefs and practices continue to emerge. Toward the end of the Edo period, “new religions” (*shinshūkyō*), and in the postwar period “new new religions” (*shinshinshūkyō*), have proliferated. These movements have gained ground among those disenfranchised and troubled by socioeconomic change, and are often characterized by congregational organization, lay participation, and charismatic founders, while their doctrine and ritual tend to draw from multiple traditions. Successful Buddhist new religions include the lay movements Reiyūkai and Sōka Gakkai, both of which grew out of the Lotus school (Hardacre 1984). Founded in 1930, Sōka Gakkai is probably the most famous of Japan’s new religious movements. Though it remains controversial in Japan due to its reputation for heavy-handed proselytizing and involvement in politics, it has had tremendous missionary success in the West under the aegis of Sōka Gakkai International (SGI).

Together with conversion, emigration and globalization, innovation and adaptability have also fueled the growing presence of historically Japanese forms of Buddhism around the world. Ethnically Japanese communities flourish in Hawai’i, Brazil, and North America, and Japanese religions have taken root in all of these regions. Zen, and to a lesser extent Pure Land and new religious movements, have accrued many converts in the Americas, Europe, and Australia (for Europe, see Inken Prohl’s chapter in this volume). In the process, they have adapted to local conditions, much as they did in Japan.

This chapter began with an assertion that the boundaries of Buddhism are permeable. This also holds true for Japan, as notions of what it means to be Japanese grow

and stretch. In the future, Japanese Buddhism will surely continue to change, both within Japan and around the world.

Notes

- 1 See Chapter 12 of Groner 2002, and Meeks 2010.
- 2 These schools should not be taken as the equivalents of continental schools, but for reference, the correlations are as follows. Sanron (Ch. Sanlun) refers to the “Three Treatises,” and thus focuses on Madhyāmaka doctrine, while Hossō (Ch. Faxiang) developed out of Yogācāra. Kegon (Ch. Huayan) treats the *Avatamsaka sūtra* as its most important text, while Ritsu (Ch. Lü) focuses on the Vinaya, and Kusha (Ch. Jushe) on the *Abhidharma kośa*. Finally, Jōjitsu (Ch. Chengshi), which was actually treated as a branch of Sanron, focused on the *Satyasiddhi śāstra*.
- 3 For more on the eight schools, see Jacqueline Stone’s chapter in Swanson and Chilson 2006, and Abe 1999: 34–41.

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CHAPTER 5

Buddhism in Tibetan History

James B. Apple

The Beginnings of Buddhism in Tibet during the Imperial Age (c. 610–910)

According to indigenous tradition, Buddhism (*sangs rgyas kyi chos*) first appeared in Tibet around the fourth century CE, during the reign of the twenty-eighth ruler of the Yar-lung principality, Lha-tho-tho-ri-gnyan-bstan. A number of traditional legends hold that Buddhist scriptures and other holy items miraculously fell onto the roof of Lha-tho-tho-ri's palace, the Yum-bu bla-sgang. The scriptures and artifacts were incomprehensible due to the Tibetan's lack of writing at the time, and so the king preserved the items in a sanctuary naming them the "fierce secret" (*gnyan po gsang ba*). The king had a dream foretelling that someone able to decipher the objects would appear after five royal generations. Other stories relate that the scriptures and holy items were brought by several monks from Central Asia or were brought by an Indian monk passing through on his way to China (Sørensen 1994: 137, 150; Sørensen, Hazod, and Tsering 2005: 44–45; Wangdu, Diemberger, and Sørensen 2000: 24n8, 25). Although these stories are considered legends, they indicate a plausible situation where some knowledge of Buddhism came to Tibet in the latter phases of its prehistory, as Buddhism was already well established in all the surrounding lands, including China to the east, India and Nepal to the south, and in Central Asian city-states to the north.

Tibet enters recorded history during the reign of the Emperor (*btsan-po*) Srong-btsan sgam-po (c. 605–649), the thirty-third ruler of Yar-lung, who is considered by traditional Tibetan historians as the first *chos-rgyal*, "ruler of the [Buddha]dharma." As Kapstein (2000: 54) notes, traditional scholars associated Srong-bstan sgam-po with introducing a system of writing, the systemization of a law code, and the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet. Although there is not much non-legendary or historical evidence to support the claim that Srong-btsan sgam-po actively promulgated Buddhism, he at least granted some degree of toleration for the foreign system of beliefs and

practices. Srong-btsan sgam-po's interest in developing writing, law, and religion may have been related to his efforts toward politically unifying the Tibetan plateau through military expansion and maintaining foreign relations through marriage politics. He moved the capital of his kingdom to Lhasa and annexed the kingdom of Zhang-zhung. Srong-btsan sgam-po also established alliances with China and Nepal through marriage. His marriage to the Chinese Buddhist princess of Wencheng brought about the consecration of the holy Jo-bo image of Śākyamuni Buddha, the first image of its kind in Tibet, within the Jo-khang temple of Lhasa (known as the 'Phrul-snang of Ra-sa at the time). He also married a Nepalese Buddhist princess, Khri-btsun, or Bhṛkuṭī, who is represented by later tradition as bringing with her an image of Akṣobhya Buddha that was housed in the Ra-mo-che temple of Lhasa.

Legendary accounts describe how the emperor sent his minister Thon-mi-saṃ-bho-ta to Kashmir in order to develop a script for the Tibetan language, ostensibly for the translation of Buddhist scriptures (Wangdu, Diemberger, and Sørensen 2000: 26–27; Sørensen 1994: 167–176). Current scholarship has not reached consensus regarding the exact origins of the Tibetan script and documents from Dunhuang indicate that writing was in use by 655 for legal and economic purposes. Later accounts will also associate Srong-btsan sgam-po with building 108 Buddhist chapels and temples to subjugate the land of Tibet, which was described as a she-demon (*srin-mo*) lying on her back. The most recent research indicates that some of these temples, such as Khra-'brug and Ka-tshal, may have been built in the later tenure of Srong-btsan sgam-po's reign (c. 646–649) (Sørensen, Hazod, and Tsering 2005: 171ff). Near the end of his reign in 649, Srong-bstan sgam-po received the title of *Baowang* from the Chinese Tang emperor Gaozong (r. 650–683), a devoted Buddhist. *Baowang* ("king of jewels") is an epithet associated with the Buddha Amitābha and the West (from a Chinese standpoint) (Beckwith 1987: 25–26). Among the Chinese, Buddha Amitābha was thought to be connected with the bodhisattva of compassion Avalokiteśvara. The granting of this title to Srong-btsan sgam-po may be an early instance of his being identified with Amitābha or Avalokiteśvara, a connection that develops and solidifies in later Tibetan chronicles.

The immediate successors of Srong-btsan sgam-po, Khri Mang-slon Mang-rtzan (c. 643–676) and Khri 'Dus-srong (676–704), were mainly interested in the expansion and administration of the Tibetan empire, as there are no records, even legendary ones, that these emperors had a sustained interest in Buddhism. Ninth-century Tibetan documents represent Khri 'Dus-srong as the founder of a Buddhist temple in the far eastern Tibetan region of Gling (Wangdu, Diemberger, and Sørensen 2000: 33), but this may well be a memorial to the Tibetan imperial expansion over the Buddhist kingdom of Nanzhao (in modern Yunnan) (Kapstein 2006: 62–63). Imperial expansion continued in the reign of Khri-lde gtsug-btsan (alias Mes Ag-tshom, 704–c. 754) as Zhang-zhung, Bru-zha (Gilgit), Gog/jog (Wakhan), and Baltistan formed alliances with Tibet (Beckwith 1987). Buddhism received some support during this emperor's reign, particularly from his Chinese princess, Jincheng Gongzhu (d. 739), known in Tibet as Gyim-shang Ong-co, or, simply, Kim-sheng or Kong-co, who was sent to Tibet in 710. According to most sources, she married Khri-lde gtsug-btsan, who would have been only six or seven years old at the time. A devout Buddhist, she built five Buddhist temples at 'Ching-bu

nam-ra, Kwa-chu in Brag-dmar, 'Gran-bzang, 'Khar-brag, and Smas-gong (Wangdu, Diemberger, and Sørensen 2000: 33–35, 34n56).

Around the year 737, the Chinese princess is reported to have invited Buddhist monks from Khotan (Li), who were fleeing the persecutions of an anti-Buddhist king, which led to the forming of the first Buddhist monastic community in Tibet (Kapstein 2006: 65). The story of these Khotanese monks is recorded in the *Li-yul lung-btsan-pa* ("Prophecy of the Li Country"), a Buddhist history of Khotan. Kim-sheng died during an outbreak of smallpox in 739, which led to the rise of anti-Buddhist factions in Tibet that began to blame the epidemic on the support of Buddhism by the king and the queen (Richardson and Aris 1998: 212–13). Khri-lde gtsug-bstan was considered to be favorable toward Buddhism. An inscription on the Skar-cung pillar, erected during the reign of Khri-lde srong-btsan (reigned c. 804–815), states that, during his reign, "shrines of the Three Jewels were established by building the temples at Kwa-cu and Mching-phu in Brag-mar and so on" (Richardson 1985: 74–75). The final years of Khri-lde gtsug-btsan's reign were marked by ministerial rebellion, which ultimately resulted in the assassination of the monarch and led to the prohibition of Buddhism.

The hostility toward Buddhism was present among several ministers when Khri-lde gtsug-bstan's thirteen-year-old son Khri-srong lde-bstan (742–c. 800) was installed as emperor in 756. Buddhism would become firmly established in Tibet during the reign of Khri-srong lde-bstan and for this reason later Tibetan historians considered him the second *chos-rgyal* among the early Tibetan monarchs. At the beginning of his reign, by 755, Tibetan military forces had expanded the empire into Bengal, and they even briefly occupied the Chinese capital of Chang'an in 763. During this period, as the young emperor was coming of age, a debate between the followers of the indigenous Bon tradition and the Buddhists took place in 759 (Sørensen 1994: 366–67, 601–06), with the Bon clergy giving some concessions related to funerary practices. The defeat of Bon priests as well as imperial territorial expansion in these years coincided with the young emperor's conversion to Buddhism at the age of twenty (762) (Kapstein 2006: 67–68). The emperor then made the decision to build Bsam-yas ("inconceivable"), Tibet's first Buddhist monastery, in consultation with the erudite Indian monk Śāntarakṣita (723–787), a Mahāyāna scholar from the land of Za-hor. Khri-srong lde-bstan had previously met and received teachings on the basic principles of Buddhism from Śāntarakṣita several times, but anti-Buddhist forces had impeded the initial importation of Buddhism by this teacher.

In order to subdue and convert forces hostile to Buddhism, the emperor also invited, through consultation with Śāntarakṣita, the renowned Tantric master Padmasambhava from the northern Indian land of Oḍḍiyāna. The initial construction of the monastic structures of Bsam-yas began in 762/763 and the complex was built over twelve years. The structures of Bsam-yas were modeled on the Indian monastery of Oḍaṇṭapuri (Sørensen 1994: 376n1244), consisting of a *maṇḍala*-like array of smaller buildings centered around one central main temple (*dbu-rtse-chen-po*) (Richardson and Aris 1998: 316). The central deity on the middle floor of the main building was Buddha Vairocana, an important icon connected with imperial power in Buddhist Asia at this time (Richardson 1998: 177–81; Kapstein 2000: 63–64). Slightly before the final consecration of Bsam-yas in 779, seven "most awakened" men (*sad-mi-mi-bdun*) were

chosen for ordination as the first monks (*dge-slong*) in Tibet. At the time of Bsam-yas's final consecration, several hundred people, including female nobles, took monastic vows (Wangdu, Diemberger, and Sørensen 2000: 73). From this point forward in Tibetan Buddhist history, monastic communities within Tibet followed the monastic code (*vinaya*) of the Indian Mūlasarvāstivāda order.

With the establishment of monastic communities, early translation teams and study units were formed for the translation of Buddhist scriptures from Sanskrit and Chinese (Wangdu, Diemberger, and Sørensen 2000: 69–71), and probably Central Asia languages such as Khotanese as well. Translation procedures mostly likely were initiated by Śāntarakṣita and his translators around 763, based on terminological lists drafted from the translation of Mahāyāna sūtras such as the *Ratnamegha* and *Lankāvatāra*. The emperor established a Buddhist council at his court and a committee for the translation of dharma (*dar ma bsgyur ba'i lo cha pa'i sgra*) (Scherrer-Schaub 2002). At the time of Bsam-yas's consecration (779), the emperor issued an edict (*bka'-gtsigs*) and authoritative statement (*bka'-mchid*) regarding the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet. The edict is summarized by an inscription, the earliest in Tibet related to Buddhism, on the *rdo-ring* pillar in front of the main temple of Bsam-yas (Richardson and Aris 1998: 89–99). The edict describes the extent of Buddhism throughout the Tibetan empire, from Gilgit to the borders of China.

In the 780s, Tibetan military expansion extended into northwest China up into the Ordos region (Beckwith 1987: 148–56), including the major Buddhist oasis-state of Dunhuang. These martial activities prompted an exchange between various currents of Buddhism in central Tibet and Dunhuang. Khri-srong lde-bstan requested an arrangement with China (781) to send two Buddhist monks, replaced every two years, for teaching Buddhism (Demiéville 1952: 184n2). After the conquest of the Dunhuang region in 787, Khri-srong lde-bstan brought a Chinese Chan master known as *heshang* (monk) Moheyan, or *hva shang* Mahāyāna in Tibetan, to central Tibet. Moheyan taught a system of *dhyāna* (meditation) that was current in the Dunhuang region at this time and gained as many as five thousand Tibetan followers (Demiéville 1952: 25, 154), including noble ladies from prominent clans residing at the royal court (Wangdu, Diemberger, and Sørensen 2000: 76–77). Moheyan's teachings were controversial in that he advocated a spontaneous path to Buddhahood (*cig car pa* or *ston mun pa*; Ch. *dunmen*) involving sudden awakening (*dunwu*). These teachings and the patronage they generated troubled Indian scholar-monks residing at Bsam-yas who taught a path of gradual attainment (*rimś gyis pa* or *btseñ min pa*; Ch. *jianmen*).

As a result of these ostensive doctrinal differences, along with underlying factional sociopolitical factors (Richardson and Aris 1998: 198–215), Moheyan and his followers became involved in a discussion or debate (ca. 792–794) with Śāntarakṣita's disciple Kamalaśīla, who had been invited by the emperor to settle the disputes. In the later literature associated with this debate, Kamalaśīla is represented as advocating the teachings of mind-only (*cittamātra*) as a stepping-stone to the Middle Way (*madhyamaka*) philosopher's goal of realizing the lack of essence, or emptiness (*śūnyatā*), of all factors of existence, including the mind itself. Kamalaśīla indicated that this realization occurs through a sequence of discerning scripture and proofs of reasoning, in conjunction with study, reflection, and meditative cultivation. Chinese and Tibetan sources

differ as to which faction emerged victorious, while modern scholars have questioned the historicity of the debate. Whatever may be the exact historical events that occurred at this debate in Tibet, if the debate even happened at all, Kamalaśīla's elucidation of a path of progressive meditative realization through synchronizing quiescence of mind (*śamatha*) and cognitive insight (*vipaśyanā*) became a model emulated by a number of later Tibetan scholars. Moheyan's teachings on sudden awakening, although reviled by later Tibetan scholars, influenced traditions within Tibetan Buddhism as well. Future research, including recent manuscript finds in Ta-bo and continued research with Dunhuang materials, will clarify doctrines and events purported to have occurred at Bsam-yas.

Khri-srong lde-bstan's support of Buddhism spread widely among the educated classes and was continued by his successors Mu-ne btsan-po, Khri-lde srong-btsan, alias Sad-na-legs (r. 804–815), and Khri-gtsug-lde-btsan, alias Ral-pa-can (r. 815–838) (Sørensen 1994: 404–27). Translation activity that had begun under Khri-srong lde-bstan expanded with increased royal support. Teams of Indian paṇḍitas and Tibetan translators (*lo-tsa-ba*) worked together to translate hundreds of Buddhist texts. These teams included Indian scholars such as Jinamitra, Dānaśīla, and Prajñāvarman, as well as Tibetan master translators such as Cog-ro Klu'i-rgyal-mtshan, Ska-ba Dpal-brtseg, and Ye-shes-sde (Jñānasena). The extensive translation activity included works from the Mūlasarvāstivādin Vinaya, texts of Abhidharma, commentaries on Cittamātra and Madhyamaka thought, as well as Mahāyāna sūtras and Buddhist tantras. During the reign of Sad-na-legs in 814, a culminating authoritative decision (*bkaś bcad*) was issued that certified the standardization of “dharma-language” (*chos kyi skad*), regulated the rules and principles for the translation of Buddhist texts, and provided guidelines for the coining of new words. The decisions of the emperor are preserved in the lexicographical commentary of the *Sgra-sbyor bam-po gnyis-pa* (“Two Fascicle Lexicon”) and the accompanying register (*dkar-chag*) of over nine thousand Sanskrit terms with Tibetan equivalents known as the *Mahāvvyupatti* (*bye-brag-tu rtogs-pa chen-po*). In 812 Dpal-brtseg and Gnubs Nam-mkha'i snying-po compiled an authoritative catalogue (*dkar-chag*) of Buddhist text translations in the palace of Lhan-kar-ma in Stong-thang. The inventory of 736 translations provided an early prototype for what would become the massive collections of the Tibetan translation canon of the Bka'-'gyur and Btsan-'gyur (see below). Tibetan emperors sponsored three such catalogues of Buddhist texts, the *Lhan-kar-ma*, the *Mchims-phu-ma*, and the *'Phang-thang-ma*. While the *Mchims-phu-ma* catalogue is still missing, the *'Phang-thang-ma Catalogue*, long considered lost, has recently come to light and has 960 titles (see Herrmann-Pfandt 2008). These catalogues provide testimony to the extensive translation work conducted in Tibet during the decades of the late eight and early ninth century.

Ral-pa-can was considered the last of the great dharma-kings of Tibet. He modified the structures of government positions by granting the *saṃgha* power to administrate affairs of state, at the expense of the nobility. Tibetan histories state that Ral-pa-can decreed for seven households to provide sustenance for one monk and that he provided lavish support to the Buddhist monastic community (*saṃgha*). He sponsored the construction or refurbishment of thirty Buddhist temples throughout the empire. Ral-pa-can also established the Mūlasarvāstivāda as the only Vinaya to be translated in Tibet,

prohibited the translation of tantra, and instituted an Indian standardization to weights and measures (Davidson 2005: 64). Ral-pa-can signed an important peace treaty in 821–822 with the emperor of the Tang dynasty that is still preserved on a pillar in Lhasa (Kapstein 2006: 78–79; Richardson 1985: 106–43). The Tibetan-Chinese inscription establishes peace between the two countries and mentions Buddhist symbols, but it also ratifies the treaty with oath statements and animal sacrifice (Richardson 1985: 127). The pillar demonstrates the presence of indigenous beliefs and practices even after Buddhism had been firmly established in Tibet.

The fall of the Tibetan empire is attributed to the reign of U'i-dum-btsan, more commonly known as Glang Dar-ma (r. 838–842), who plotted with factions upset about the lavish support of the Buddhist saṃgha and eliminated his brother Ral-pa-can in 838. Tibetan religious histories emphasize the persecution of Buddhist monks and the closing of monasteries by Glang-Dar-ma, leading up to his assassination in 842 by the Buddhist monk Lha-lung dpal-gyi rdo-rje. However, a number of recent scholars have demonstrated that Glang Dar-ma was initially a Buddhist king who later reduced state sponsorship of the saṃgha for fiscal reasons (see, for example, Yamaguchi 1996).

With the fall of Glang Dar-ma, the Tibetan empire gradually imploded over the next half-century. A series of uprisings beginning in 869 (Kapstein 2006: 82) disintegrated central authority and led to the dominance of clans with ministerial affiliation in localized areas of the country. This phase, beginning in the middle of the ninth century and lasting for several hundred years, is what later Tibetan Buddhist historians call the “age of fragmentation” (*sil-bu'i dus*), a period where the central state's support of monastic Buddhism totally disappeared. Although textual sources are few, it is highly probable that Buddhist traditions of study and practice, as well as some form of literary Buddhist culture, were carried out domestically, with familial lineages of tantric adherents prospering, while splinters of monasticism were preserved on the peripheries of the Tibetan empire (Kapstein 2000: 10–12; Davidson 2005: 73–83).

The Resurgence of Buddhism after the Tibetan Empire

As Stoddard (2004: 55) notes, the “splintering” period was a “dark age” in that many Buddhist centers of learning were closed, Buddhist scholar-monks went into hiding or died, and a great number of texts were hidden. Traditional historians describe the flight of “three learned men of Tibet” (*bod-kyi mkhas-pa mi-gsum*) during the persecution of Buddhism in 841, into the extreme north of Amdo on the Yellow River (Stoddard 2004: 61). The histories recount that a young boy from Rma-chu-kha came to visit the monks there and became ordained by the learned men as Bla-chen Dgongs-pa rab-gsal (832–915). Bla-chen Dgongs-pa rab-gsal then established a Buddhist center in Dan-thig, Amdo. Multiple generations of monks were ordained at this center. Over the years groups of men, known as the “Six Sog-mo of Khams” and the “Ten Men of Dbus Gtsang,” took ordination and brought about the re-establishment of the Vinaya and saṃgha in Tibet in the second half of the tenth century. Among these groups were direct descendants of the two rival sons of Glang Dar-ma, 'Od-srung and Yum-brtan. Known as the “Eastern Vinaya Monks,” figures such as Klu-mes shes-rab tshul-khrims

and Lo-ston rdo-rje dbang-phyug returned to the central Tibetan provinces of Dbu and Gtsang and rejuvenated the lineage of Vinaya, as well as the study of Abhidharma and Prajñāpāramitā (Davidson 2005: 92–107). The arrival of these men in central Tibet ca. 978 marks for most Tibetan historians the “Rekindling the Flame” (*me ro 'bar*) of the Buddha’s teaching, in what is called the Later Diffusion (*bstan-pa phyir-dar*) of Buddhism in Tibet, in contrast to the “early diffusion” (*snga-dar*) from the seventh to mid-ninth centuries.

A significant characteristic of the Later Diffusion was the gathering of Indian Buddhist texts and teachings, the oral and textual transmission of these texts and teachings to Tibet, and their subsequent translation into Tibetan. An extraordinary cultural enterprise took place from the late tenth century onward with the gathering of large amounts of knowledge through the interchange of Tibetans traveling to India to obtain written and oral teachings, and Indian paṇḍitas invited to translate and disseminate their knowledge in Tibet. In this cultural enterprise the importation of Indian Buddhist knowledge and literature into Tibet intertwined with a number of economic, social, and political factors to create great prestige, power, and capital for those who could transmit and receive this knowledge (See Davidson 2005: 117–60). These cultural forces contributed to a phase of expansive translation of Buddhist texts, particularly scholastic commentaries on Prajñāpāramitā, Madhyamaka, and Pramāṇa, along with the massive literature related to Tantric consecrations, blessings, and ritual praxis that flourished under the South Asian Pāla dynasty (750–1150).

In the western Tibetan kingdoms of Gu-ge Pu-hrang at this time, Lha Bla-ma ye-shes 'od (959–1036), a sixth-generation descendent of 'Od-srung, sought to revitalize Buddhist teachings and began to send young scholars to India and Kashmir seeking Buddhist scriptures and teachings. Ye-shes 'od also sought to bring Indian scholars such as Smṛtijñānakīrti (Dran-pa ye-shes, fl. in Tibet late tenth century) to western Tibet, but the scholar wound up in the eastern province of Khams teaching Abhidharma and grammar. Returning to Tibet in 985, the great translator Rin-chen bzang-po (958–1055) emerged as the most successful among those sent to India. Ye-shes 'od established a translation academy for Rin-chen bzang-po and his disciples to work with Indian scholars in the translation of Buddhist scriptures, particularly Tantric texts. Ye-shes 'od also issued an edict, the “bka'-shog chen-mo,” in ca. 985, in which certain tantric texts and teachings were suppressed and new translations and teachings were promoted.

The extensive translations that took place at this time are called by Tibetan scholars the “new translations” (*gsar 'gyur*) in contrast to the earlier translations (*snga 'gyur*) that were considered by a number of groups to be apocryphal. Besides the patronage of translation, the construction of temples such as Tho-ling, Ta-po, Snyar-ma, and others took place in western Tibet from 996 onward (Vitali 1996: 147–49). Ye-shes 'od's nephew and successor, Byang-chub 'od, invited the famous paṇḍita Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna, better known as Atiśa (982–1054), to teach in Mtho-liding. Atiśa arrived in west Tibet from Nepal in 1042; after three years, he journeyed within central Tibet as a charismatic guest lecturer in various monasteries, until his death at Snye-thang in 1054. Although Atiśa did not establish a monastic lineage in Tibet, due to his adherence to the Mahāsaṃghika vinaya code, he challenged Tibetans to rethink their

understanding of Vajrayāna Buddhism. He greatly contributed to the development of Tibetan Buddhism through his translations, teachings, and compositions.

Atiśa taught a systemized mixture of Mahāyāna Buddhist doctrine combined with Vajrayāna ritual and yogic practice that exemplified for Tibetans the lifestyle of being a celibate scholar-monk and a tantric yogin. His *Bodhipathapradīpa*, “Lamp for the Path to Awakening,” composed in Tibet at the request of his disciples, became famous for illustrating this model of practice and scholarship. Atiśa’s successors came to be known as Bka’-gdams-pa, “adherents of the [Buddha’s] word,” which was the first Tibetan Buddhist school to arise during this period. Atiśa’s most devoted disciple, ‘Brom-ston rgyal-ba’i ‘byung-gnas (1004–1064), founded the main center of the order in 1057 at the monastery of Rwa-sgreng, north of Lhasa. Rngog legs-pa’i shes-rab, another of Atiśa’s students, founded the important monastic center of Gsang-phu ne’u-thog in 1073, which established the curricular scholastic model of debate and study for monastic education in Tibet.

An Age of Translation and Assimilation

After the time of Rin-chen bzang-po and Atiśa, the assimilation of Buddhist teachings and translation activities continued throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The focus of this activity centered upon the transmission and translation of Indian Buddhist Tantric teachings, particularly the *anuttarayoga* class of tantras. Translators such as ‘Brog-mi Śākya ye-shes, Khyung-po Rnal-’byor (b. 990), Rwa Lo-tsā-ba Rdo-rje grags (b. 1016) (Davidson 2005: 129–39), Rong-zom Chos-kyi bzang-po (11th century), Gnyan Lo-tsā-ba (fl. late 11th century), ‘Gos Khug-pa Lhas-btsas (last half of 11th century), and Mal-gyo Lo-tsā-ba Blo-gros grags-pa (11th century) were some of the seminal figures of the era (Snellgrove 2004: 490–506).

One of the more influential among such translators was ‘Brog-mi Śākya ye-shes (992–1077?) (Stearns 2001: 83–101). This traveling translator went to India and studied for thirteen years with several teachers, including those at the monastic university of Vikramaśīla, as well as with the master of the Hevajra tantric system, Prajñendraruci. ‘Brog-mi returned to Tibet and established his own monastic center at Myu-gu-lung, eventually working with the lay Indian Tantric adept Gayādhara, and attracted many students.

Among these students was Dkon-mchog rgyal-po (1034–1102), from the influential and prominent ‘Khon family of Sa-skya. Dkon-mchog rgyal-po received from ‘Brog-mi the transmission of the Hevajra Tantric system, which developed into the Sa-skyapa path-with-result (*lam ‘bras*) tradition. In 1073 he went on to establish the great monastic center of Sa-skya. The Sa-skya monastic center prospered with wealth and political influence, and generated a succession of important masters in the history of Tibetan Buddhism. The Sa-skya scholar-adepts who succeeded Dkon-mchog rgyal-po came to be known as the “five forefathers” (*gong ma lnga*); they were based on a model of uncle-nephew succession (Kapstein 2006: 101–02). The first of the five was Sa-chen kundga’ snying-po (1092–1158), who maintained the traditions coming from ‘Brog-mi and had four sons. Two of these sons, Bsod-nams rtse-mo (1142–1182) and Rje-btsun

grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (1147–1216) were prolific scholars, producing a great number of writings on history and tantra. Rje-btsun grags-pa rgyal-mtshan would serve as tutor to his nephew, the fourth, and perhaps most influential of the five, Sa-skya Paṇḍita Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan (1182–1251). Sa-skya Paṇḍita and the fifth forefather, Chos rgyal 'phags pa (1235–1280), are discussed below.

Another student who reportedly studied with 'Brog-mi was the rebellious and ram-bunctious Mar-pa chos-kyi blo-gros (1012–1096). After initial study under 'Brog-mi, Mar-pa set out for India to study under Indian tantric adepts who were on the margins of Indic Buddhist culture. Mar-pa returned to Tibet with esoteric instructions on the teachings of *mahāmudrā* (Tib. *phyag-rgya chen-po*, “great seal”) that he received from *mahāsiddha* masters such as Nāropa and Maitrīpa. Mar-pa established a religious center as a seat of power (*gdan-sa*) attracting disciples from prominent local clans. His most famous disciple was Mi-la ras-pa (1040–1123), a destitute yet devoted student who endured numerous trials and hardships under Mar-pa in order to receive precious tantric transmissions and empowerments. Mi-la-ras-pa would become a wandering yogin perfecting the practice of “inner heat” (*gtum-mo*), a tantric technique of increasing bodily warmth. Composing songs reflecting his spiritual accomplishments, Mi-la-ras-pa would become revered as the greatest of Tibet's mystical poets. Among Mi-la-ras-pa's disciples was Sgam-po-pa bsod-nams rin-chen (1079–1153), a former lay doctor who had become a monk of the Bka'-gdams-pa order. Sgam-po-pa synthesized the monastic practices of the Bka'-gdams-pa with the esoteric teachings transmitted by Mi-la-ras-pa. The monastic and lay disciple successors of Sgam-po-pa came to be known as the Bka'-brgyud-pa (“ones [following] the oral lineage”); they would form numerous subgroups and monastic orders that would play important roles in later Tibetan Buddhist history.

Concurrent with developments in central Tibet, the king of Mnga'-ris in western Tibet, Mnga'-bdag rtse-lde, organized a religious council (*chos-'khor*) in 1076 at Mtho-lding that brought together a number of Tibetan translators and Indian paṇḍitas to discuss, refine, and revise translations of Indic scholastic commentaries and discourses related to Pramāṇa, Madhyamaka, and Vinaya. As a result of the council, young translators were sent to India and Kashmir to gain authentic knowledge of Sanskrit, and monastic establishments related to the Bka'-gdams flourished. A prince monk of the royal family of Pu-hrangs, Pho-brang Zhi-ba-'od, issued an edict (*bka'-shog*) in 1092 providing guidelines for tantras that should be followed by Bka'-gdams-pas (Karmay 1998: 17–40). Emerging from these developments, the nephew of Rngog Legs-pa'i shes-rab, Rngog lo-tsā-ba blo-lan shes-rab (1059–1109), became abbot of Gsang-phu and a leading figure for the transmission of Buddhist texts into Tibet. A translator of over fifty Indian Buddhist texts into Tibetan, Rngog lo-tsā-ba was the second Tibetan translator to receive the title “Great Translator” (*lo-chen*) after Rin-chen bzang-po. He became the father of Tibetan Buddhist scholasticism, writing and translating commentaries on Pramāṇa, Madhyamaka, and the Abhisamayālaṃkāra, among other works. The standards set by Rngog lo-tsā-ba at Gsang-phu produced generations of prolific scholars, including 'Bre shes-rab 'bar (b. 11th century), Ar byang-chub ye-shes (b. 11th century), Gro lung-pa blo-gros 'byung-gnas (b. 11th century), and Phya-pa chos-kyi seng-ge (1109–1169). Spa-tshab lo-tsā-ba nyi-ma-grags (1055–1142?), a

contemporary of Rngog lo-tsā-ba, was also influential in that he translated and introduced Tibetans to the study of Madhyamaka based on the works of Candrakīrti. With the recent publication of the ninety-volume Bka'-gdams-pa collection (Bka'-gdams gsung-'bum phyog-bgrigs, Lhasa, 2006–2009), future researchers will be able to understand the scholarship that these scholars and their successors brought to Tibetan Buddhism up through the fourteenth century.

The emergence of “new translations” (*gsar-'gyur*) of Indian Buddhist tantras from the tenth to twelfth centuries, along with their advocates, the “new schools” (*gsar-ma*), fostered the oppositional formation of the Rnying-ma-pas, the “Ancient Ones,” who followed the “ancient tantras.” The “ancient tantras” were thought to be introduced into Tibet during the imperial period and transmitted in an unbroken lineage of “transmitted precepts” (*bka'-ma*) through such figures as Padmasambhava, Buddhaguhya, and Vimalamitra. Early proponents of these teachings included Gnubs-chen sangs-rgyas ye-shes (10th century, Karmay 1988: 99–103) and Rong-zom chos-kyi bzang-po (mid-11th century). The “ancient tantras” were also rediscovered in the form of “treasures” (*gter-ma*), religious texts and objects thought to be concealed by famous teachers during the “early diffusion” (*snga-dar*). The treasure texts and objects were later considered recovered by “treasure finders” (*gter-ston*) such as the historian-mystic Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer (1124–1192). The teachings within the “transmitted precepts” and “treasures” centered on awareness (*rig-pa*) and gnosis (*ye-shes*) through the method of the Great Perfection (*rdzogs-chen*) (Karmay 1988; Davidson 2005: 210–43). The treasure texts also brought together a great amount of oral tradition ascribed to the imperial period, glorifying Padmasambhava as a national folk hero, and elevating the role of Avalokiteśvara in Tibetan history. Other movements and practices developed at this time as well. The lineages of the tantric ritual practices of *zhi-byed*, “pacification,” and *gcod*, “cutting through,” developed from the Indian yogin Pha-dam-pa sangs-rgyas (11th–12th century) and his Tibetan female disciple, the yoginī Ma-gcig lab-sgron-ma (1055–1149). Byang-sems zla-ba rgyal-mtshan (fl. first half of 12th century) brought to Tibet a practice related to Avalokiteśava known as *bsnyung-gnas*, “fasting.”

In the twelfth century, the Bka'-brgyud-pa proliferated into several branches stemming from the religious center founded by Sgam-po-pa, the “doctor from dwags-po” (*dwag-po lha-rje*). Immediate disciples of Sgam-po-pa became known as the “Holders of the [Dwags-po] Lineage” (*brgyud pa 'dzin pa*). Among Sgam-po-pa's immediate disciples, Phag-mo gru-pa rDo-rje rgyal-po (1110–1170) founded the monastery of Phag-gru'i gDan-sa thel in 1158. Numerous subsects of the Bka'-brgyud tradition would develop among Phag-mo gru-pa's disciples. The first Kar-ma-pa, Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa (1110–1193), founded Tshur-phu dgon-pa in 1189. Another prominent early disciple, Zhang Sna-nam brtson-'grus grags-pa, alias Bla-ma Zhang (1123–1193), became a notorious, charismatic yet contentious yogi and warlord who founded Tshal yang-dgon grva-tshang in 1175. Bla-ma Zhang ruled over central Tibet for a time with a retinue of monks organized into a small military force (Sørensen, Hazod, and Tsering 2007). Subsects of the Bka'-brgyud also began to expand their presence at the Buddhist court of the Western Xia kingdom, the Mi-nyag empire (1038–1227) or Tangut, where Buddhist monarchs patronized Tibetan hierarchs for their religious guidance and apotropaic services (Sørensen, Hazod, and Tsering 2007: 363–66, 371–74). The political

and religious exchange relations between the Tangut rulers and their Tibetan Buddhist teachers are considered to be the beginnings of the religious-cum-diplomatic bonds between lay ruler-donors (*yon bdag*) and Tibetan Buddhist preceptor-officiates (*mchod gnas*) that would come to shape Tibetan relations with Mongol khans, as well as Ming and Qing dynasty emperors (Kapstein 2006: 107).

Sa-skyapa Dominance under Mongol Influence

In the late twelfth century, Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan (1182–1251) came to be heir to the Sa-skyapa 'Khon family and developed a mastery of Indian Buddhist scholarship. Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan was inspired, in part, by the visit of the Kashmiri Buddhist scholar Śākyaśribhadra and his entourage of Indian scholars who came to Sa-skyapa monastery and stayed there for several years in the early 1200s. Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan gained proficiency in Sanskrit grammar and received full monastic ordination under Śākyaśribhadra, as a result of which he became known as Sa-skyapa Paṇḍita, “the master scholar of Sa-skyapa.” During this time, the Mongols emerged as a disruptive political force throughout Asia, establishing an empire under Chinggis Khan (d. 1227). When the Mongols invaded central Tibet in 1240 and demanded a Tibetan representative for the newly conquered territory, Sa-skyapa Paṇḍita was chosen to represent the Tibetan people. Sa-skyapa Paṇḍita was ordered by Köden Khan to the royal Mongol court in Liangzhou in 1244. Sa-skyapa Paṇḍita arrived in Liangzhou in 1246 with his two young nephews, the nine-year-old 'Phags-pa blo-gros rgyal-mtshan (1235–1280) and the six-year-old Phyag-na rdo-rje (1239–1267), who were future heirs to the Sa-skyapa legacy.

The familial transmission of Sa-skyapa ruling power provided the Mongols with a means of ensuring continuous submission from Tibet. Tibet became a tributary to the Mongol empire, and Köden Khan invested Sa-skyapa Paṇḍita with temporal authority over all of Tibet, with Sa-skyapas becoming administrators of Tibetan districts. This relationship was reinforced when, after the passing of Sa-skyapa Paṇḍita and Köden Khan in 1251, 'Phags-pa blo-gros rgyal-mtshan created a preceptor-patron (*mchod gnas dang yon bdag*) relation with Khubilai Khan (1215–1294) in 1253. 'Phags-pa bestowed upon Khubilai Khan the Hevajra tantra consecration, for which in return 'Phags-pa received the designation “imperial preceptor” (*ti-shrī*, Ch. *dishi*) and temporal authority over Tibet. 'Phags-pa also created a new script of the Mongolian language for the Khan at this time, based on the Tibetan script, but the script fell out of use over time. The Sa-skyapa's would rule over Tibet as hierocratic regents up until 1350, during the waning years of the Mongol Yuan Dynasty (1271–1367) in China.

The Sa-skyapa, however, were not the only school to receive patronage from the Mongols. Sa-skyapa rivals, such as the Karma-bka'-brgyud and the 'Bri-gung-pa bka'-brgyud, also received attention and support. The second Karma-pa, Karma pakši (1204–1283), traveled to the imperial site of Möngke Khan in 1256 to take part in debates with Nestorian Christians and Chinese Daoists (Kapstein 2006: 113), and the third Karma-pa, Rang-byung rdo-rje (1284–1339), also established relations. At this time, the Karma branch of the Bka'-brgyud-pa and some Bka'-gdams-pa groups began

to formulate the uniquely Tibetan Buddhist system of monastic succession wherein a child is identified “as the reborn emanational embodiment (*sprul-sku*) and legal heir of a deceased master” (Kapstein 2006: 109). Such emanational embodiments, or incarnates, would come to have great political power and religious prestige in Tibetan Buddhist culture.

The Mongols established a Bureau for Tibetan and Buddhist Affairs in 1264 (van der Kuijp 2004: 8) and increased their patronage of Tibetan Buddhism. This support led to the increase of the monastic population, the construction of new temples and monasteries, as well as the increased production of Tibetan Buddhist texts and scholarship. As a consequence of Mongol patronage, multiple collections of Buddhist *sūtras* and *śāstras* that had been translated into Tibetan during the preceding centuries were copied and compiled among various Sa-skyā, Bka'-brgyud, Rnying-ma, and Bka'-gdams monastic centers. Scribal production of handwritten Buddhist scriptures preserved in Tibetan increased during the 1270s and 1280s. *Sūtras*, *tantras*, and *vinaya* were classified as the sacred word (*bka'*) of the Buddha, while the *śāstras*, technical Indian scholastic texts and commentaries, were classified as *bstan-bcos* (“the treatises”), based on preceding registrars of texts in the imperial period such as the *Lhan-kar-ma* and *'Phang-tha-ma*.

The collections of Buddhist scriptures housed in various regional monastic centers were gradually acquired; they were open collections, subject to the interests of the compilers and cataloguers. Early catalogue lists of compiled texts developed at Sa-skyā and at the Bka'-gdams-pa monastery of Snar-thang. An early catalogue list, most likely composed in the 1270s, was made by the Bka'-gdam-pa master Dar-ma rgyal-mtshan, alias Bcom-dan ral-gri (1227–1305) (Schaeffer and van der Kuijp 2009). By the fourteenth century the largest collections of Tibetan translated scriptures were bifurcated into the Bka'-gyur, “translations of the teachings,” and Btsan-gyur, “translations of the treatises,” with a major revision of these collections carried out by the master of Zhwa-lu monastery, Bu-ston rin-chen-grub (abbreviated to bu ston) (1290–1364). Concurrent with canonical organization, this period also witnessed the flourishing of Tibetan scholasticism, with many luminaries developing systems of textual exegesis (*gzhung lugs*) on points of Buddhist doctrine. The Bka'-gdam masters Mchims Nam-kha' grags-pa (1210–1285), abbot of Snar-thang monastery for thirty-six years, and Rgyal-sras thogs-med bzang-po (1295–1369), the Jo-nang-pa Kālacakra masters and proponents of “extrinsic emptiness” (*gzhang stong*), Dol-po-pa shes-rab rgyal-mtshan (1292–1361) and Nya-dbon kun-dga' dpal (1285–1379), the Great Perfection (*rdzogs-chen*) scholar and visionary Klong-chen rab-'byams-pa (1308–1363) of the Rnying-ma-pa tradition, and the Sa-skyā-pa revered master Bla-ma dam-pa bsod-nams rgyal-mtshan (1312–1375) were some of the notable figures during this period.

The decline and eventual end of the Mongol Yuan dynasty occurred in the middle of the fourteenth century and brought to an end the one-hundred-year period of Sa-skyā-pa hegemony over Tibet. In 1350 Tibet broke free of Sa-skyā-pa-Mongol hegemony under the dynamic leadership of Ta'i-si-tu (Ch. *daisitu*, “grand-instructor”) Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan (1302–1364), who was of the Phag-mo-gru-pa branch of the Bka'-brgyud-pa, but who had studied under Sa-skyā-pa teachers. The vacuum left by the diminished power of the Sa-skyā-pa created a fluid environment where practitioners

could receive Buddhist teachings and tantric consecrations from masters belonging to different lineages, with patronage given by a variety of donors having various religious and political loyalties.

Tibetan Buddhist Scholasticism during Shifting Hegemonies

During the time of political realignment that followed the end of Mongol domination, an administrative civil-military system of families governed with nominal affiliation to Phag-mo-gru-pa rule. Itinerant monks could study at monasteries affiliated with various tantric lineages and teaching systems. In this fluid environment, the period of the fourteenth to fifteenth centuries became “the high point of Tibetan textual exegesis, philosophical penetration, and systematic hermeneutics” (Ruegg 2000: 5). Red mda'-ba gzhon-nu blo-gros (1348–1412), a scholar trained at Sa-skya, refined the study of epistemology (*tshad-ma*) and the perfections (*phar-phyin*), and revived the study of Madhayamaka based on Candrakīrti. Red mda'-ba became a teacher and colleague to the brilliant scholar Tsong-kha-pa Blo-bzang grags-pa (1357–1419). Tsong-kha-pa, who was born in the Tibetan province of Amdo, had established a reputation as a vigorous scholar while studying under a variety of Bka'-gdams, Bka'-brgyud, Sa-skya, Zhwa-lu, and Jo-nang masters, and he would become renowned as one of Tibet's greatest philosophers. Tsong-kha-pa's emphasis on strict monastic discipline and Buddhist morality combined with scholastic philosophical study received support from the political leadership of the Phag-mo-grup-pa. Tsong-kha-pa refurbished the Maitreya image at 'Dzing-ji (1395) and taught monastic discipline (*vinaya*) at Gnam-rtse-lde (1402). With patronage from the Phag-mo-grup-pa, he established the annual Great Prayer Festival (*smo-n-lam chen-mo*) in Lhasa (1409). In that same year Tsong-kha-pa founded Dga'-ldan monastery, where he attracted a number of talented disciples who became known as Dga'-ldan-pa, “those from [the monastery of] Dga'-ldan.” In 1416 Tsong-kha-pa's disciple 'Jam-dbyangs chos-rje (1379–1449) founded 'Bras-spungs monastery and another disciple, Byams-chen chos-rje shā-kya ye-shes (1354–1435), founded Se-ra monastery in 1419. Dga'-ldan, 'Bras-spungs, and Se-ra were unprecedented in their proximity to Lhasa, with its wealth of economic and spiritual resources, and became known as the “three great seats” (*gdan sa gsum*). After Tsong-kha-pa's passing in 1419, his close disciple, Rgyal-tshab rje dar-ma rin-chen (1364–1432), became the first throne holder of Dga'-ldan monastery (*dga' ldan khri pa*).

At this time, the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) in China did not actively intervene in Tibetan affairs, but it did establish relations with Bka'-brgyud, Sa-skya, and Dga'-ldan-pa teachers. From 1403 to 1424, the Yongle Emperor, the third monarch of the Ming Dynasty, was a patron of Tibetan Buddhist art and literature, sponsoring the first printed edition of the Tibetan kangyur in 1410. After 1430, a dispute between the Phag-mo-grup-pa and the Rin-spungs family faction created antagonism between rival groups in central Tibet. The leading disciples of Tsong-kha-pa also became more polemical and orthodox in their writings at this time. Mkhas-grub rje dge-legs dpal-bzang (1385–1438), the throne holder of Dga'-ldan after Rgyal-tshab, demanded close adherence to Tsong-kha-pa's teachings, and Dge-'dun grub-pa (1391–1474), later

recognized as the First Dalai Lama, founded Bkra-shis lhun-po dgon-pa at Gzhis-ka-rtse in 1447 within a region dominated by Sa-skya and Bka'-brgyud monasteries. The Dga'-ldan-pa were becoming known as the Dge-lugs-pa, "virtuous ones," and it is perhaps at this point that the differentiation of Tibetan philosophical orders (*chos lugs*) began to take shape.

Intensive debates between Dge-lugs-pa, Bka'-brgyud-pa, and Sa-skya-pa scholars took place throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Among the Sa-skya-pa, Ngor-chen kun-dga' bzang-po (1382–1456) founded Ngor evam chos-ldan in 1430, and Rong-ston shes-bya kun-rig (1367–1449) founded 'Phan-po na-lend-dra monastery in 1436. Their main disciples, Gser-mdog pañ-chen shā-kya mchog-ldan (1428–1507) and Go-rams-pa bsod-nams seng-ge (1429–1489), became well-known scholars as well. Other figures during this time included Vanaratna (1385–1468), the last of the Indian *paṇḍitas* to travel to Tibet, Bo-dong phyogs-las rnam-rgyal (1375–1451), an eclectic polymath who wrote over 130 volumes, and Thang-stong rgyal-po (1361–1485), a famous scholar-yogi who built bridges and supported the arts and drama. A female disciple of these teachers, Chos-kyi sgron-ma (1422–1455), set in motion the first and most famous line of female incarnations in Tibet. Among the Rnying-ma-pa, Rat-na gling-pa (1403–1479), a treasure finder (*gter ston*), put together an initial collection of Rnying-ma tantras, and Pad-ma gling-pa (1450–1521) also revealed a number of concealed teachings at this time.

The Rise of the Dge-lugs-pa and the Age of Dalai Lamas

The disciples of Tsong-kha-pa continued to gather support and establish new monasteries. Bkra-shis lhun-po became one of the foremost Dge-lugs-pa religious centers with a young incarnate *sprul-sku*, Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho (1476–1542), chosen as the successor to Dge-'dun grub. Dge-lugs-pa orthodoxy became consolidated with the writing of monastic training manuals (*yig cha*), by Se-ra rje-btsun chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan (1469–1544) for Se-ra monastery, and by Pan-chen bsod-nams grags-pa (1478–1554), who served at both 'Bras-spungs and Dga'-ldan. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, after the expansion of the Rin-spungs family's influence, politico-religious groups began to support particular traditions, with the Dge-lugs-pa receiving support from forces in central Tibet, and forces in the western region of Gtsang supporting the Bka'-brgyud-pa, Jo-nang-pa, and other traditions. During this time fierce competition developed between the Karma Bka'-brgyud-pa and Dge-lugs-pa, with Karma Bka'-brgyud-pa forces controlling Lhasa itself from 1498–1517. In this period each side expanded the recognition of instituted incarnates and developed a corporate hereditary land tenure system of each incarnate's personal estate (*bla-brang*). Wealth and power gradually shifted from the aristocracy to monasteries and incarnates who were recipients of such estates.

During the mid-sixteenth century, Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho (1543–1588) was recognized as the incarnate successor of Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho. He then conducted missionary work in the north and northwest to gain adherents for the Dge-lugs-pa. At this time, for reasons that are not clear, Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho accepted an invitation to meet

with the chief of the Tümed Mongols, Altan Khan (1507–1582). In a manner reminiscent of previous preceptor-patron relations in Tibetan history, Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho won the support of Altan Khan and his people, and he received the Mongolian title Dalai Lama (Tib. *ta-la'i bla-ma*, “oceanic teacher”). Thereafter, Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho became the third in the line, as his two predecessors were retroactively called the First and Second Dalai Lamas.

The Third Dalai Lama developed an alliance with the Mongols, which became further strengthened in the following generation by the recognition of Altan Khan's great-grandson, Yon-tan rgya-mtsho (1589–1617), as the Fourth Dalai Lama when Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho died in 1588. In the sixteenth century the Rin-spungs family was replaced by the regency of Gtsang as the most powerful group in west Tibet. Tensions between Dge-lugs-pas and Gtsang royalty increased during the seventeenth century. At that time the Fifth Dalai Lama, Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1617–1682), was recognized and educated in the context of regional factions and conflict. Previous connections between the Mongols and the line of Dalai Lama incarnates enabled the Fifth Dalai Lama to gain control over and rule Tibet, when Gushi Khan (1582–1654) ceded the administration of Tibet to the Dge-lugs-pa leader in 1642.

The government of the Fifth Dalai Lama consolidated the religious authority of the Dge-lugs-pa and diminished the wealth and political power of other groups. In particular, the Jo-nang-pa, including the works of the historian Tāranātha Kun-dga' snying-po (1575–1634), were banned in central Tibet and their main monastery was converted to a Dge-lugs-pa one. Through rituals for the general public, the unifying Tibetan ethos that the Dalai Lamas were emanations of Avalokiteśvara was disseminated during the reign of the Fifth Dalai Lama, in the period from 1642 to 1653. The development of wood-block print technology allowed the writings of the Fifth Dalai Lama to become widely distributed. The rule of the Fifth Dalai Lama supported cenobitic mass monasticism and the installment of ecclesiastical abbots instead of lay abbots (McCleary and van der Kuip 2007: 15). The Fifth Dalai Lama also developed a system of ecclesiastical dominion (*chos kyi rgyal srid*), in which monastic officials were actively involved in government offices. He established a centralized location for his government offices by constructing the famous Potala Palace in Lhasa. The reign of the Fifth Dalai Lama put in place the structures that allowed Dge-lugs-pa-based authorities to rule Tibet until the mid-twentieth century. Despite the rise of Dge-lugs-pa dominance under the Fifth Dalai Lama, the Rnying-ma-pa benefited as well with the founding of four of their important monasteries. These included Kaḥ-thog rdo-rje-gdan (1656) and Dpal-yul (1665) in Khams, Smin-grol-gling (1656) in central Tibet, and Rdzogs-chen (1685) in an area between Khams and central Tibet (Smith and Schaeffer 2001: 17–20).

At this time Blo-bzang chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan (1567–1662), a well-known scholar of Bkra-shis lhun-po monastery with connections to the Fourth Dalai Lama, who also served as tutor to the Fifth, was recognized by the Dalai Lama as the incarnation of Buddha Amitābha. Blo-bzang chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan became the fourth Panchen Lama, with three previous lamas being posthumously identified as the first through third incarnates. The successive line of Panchen Lama incarnates would gain political power second only to the line of Dalai Lamas.

During the Chinese Qing dynasty (1644–1911), Tibet became involved in a complex interplay of individuals and events as Manchus and various Mongol factions fought for control in Central Asia. The sociopolitical turbulence that developed in central Tibet during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries brought about the development of Tibetan Buddhist cultural activity in the eastern Tibetan provinces of Amdo and Khams. Important Dge-lugs-pa monasteries were established in eastern Tibet, particularly in Amdo. These included Sku-'bum, located near the location of Tsong-kha-pa's birthplace, and the monastic center of Bla-brang Bkra-shis 'khyil, founded by 'Jam-dbyang bzhad-pa (1648–1721). The Sixth Dalai Lama, Tshangs-dbyang rgya-mtsho (1683–1706), did not fulfill his duties as a monk and became famous for his poetry and fondness for worldly pleasures as a lay person, eventually dying while traveling to the Chinese capital, after having been removed from office. The Seventh Dalai Lama, Skal-bzang rgya-mtsho (1708–1757), born in Li-thang, was forced to be educated at Sku-'bum due to turmoil in central Tibet. He would assume authority only in 1751, ruling with a cabinet (*bka'-shag*) of four ministers. A generation of scholars from the Amdo region who were Dge-lugs-pa in sectarian affiliation, but who had allegiances to the Qing rulers, were active at this time as well. These included the polymath historian Sum-pa mkhan-po ye-shes dpal-'byor (1704–1787), as well as the doxographers Lcang-skya rol-pa'i rdo-rje (1717–1786) and the third Thu'u bkwan (Ch. *tuguan*) hutuqtu Blo-bzang chos-kyi nyi-ma (1737–1802).

In the eastern province of Khams, the kingdom of Sde-dge became a center of culture for Karma Bka'-brgyud, Sa-skyapa, and Rnying-ma-pa teachers. A number of teachers propagated various views of "extrinsic emptiness" (*gzhan stong*) after the suppression of Jo-nang-pa texts during the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama. Prominent among them were Si-tu paṇ-chen chos-kyi 'byung-gnas (1700–1774) and Kaḥ-thog tshe-dbang nor-bu (1698–1755). Si-tu paṇ-chen Chos-kyi 'byung-gnas (1700–1774) revived the study of Sanskrit and patronized the development of Tibetan art while serving at the royal court of Sde-dge. King Bstan-pa tshe-ring (1678–1738) of Sde-dge reigned during the opening of the large print house of Sde-dge (sde-sge par-khang) at the Sa-skyapa Dgon-chen monastery. The Sde-dge version of the Tengyur canon would be published under the editorship of the famed Sa-skyapa scholar Zhu-chen tshul-khrims rin-chen (1697–1744). The eighteenth century would witness the carving and printing of a number of Kangyur and Tengyur versions of the canon, including Sde-dge (Kangyur in 1733, Tengyur 1744) in the southeast, Co-ne (Kangyur 1731, Tengyur 1773) in the northeast, and Shel-dkar (Kangyur 1732, Tengyur 1742) in the southwest. A Sde-dge queen, Tshe-dbang lha-mo, would later sponsor between 1794 and 1798 the printing of the important treasure finder Jigs-med gling-pa's (1729–1798) edition of the *Rnying ma rgyud'bum*. At the end of the eighteenth century, Tibetan institutions had developed bureaucratic and conservative structures that preserved and increased economic wealth and power among the aristocracy and the monastic corporations of estates. The ninth through twelfth Dalai Lama incarnations all died at an early age and Tibet was ruled by Dge-lugs-based regents throughout the nineteenth century.

The royal capital of Sde-dge became the center of the nineteenth-century ecumenical movement known as Ris-med ("universalist"). The Ris-med movement, influenced

by the visionary teachings of Jigs-med gling-pa, emphasized the scholastic study of original Indian Sanskrit texts and visionary religious experiences, bringing together a range of Tantric elements from diverse lineages. A number of noteworthy scholars became involved with the movement, including 'Jam-mgon kong-strul blo-gros mtha'-yas (1813–1899), author of the enormous encyclopedia of Buddhist philosophy and culture, the *Shes-bya kun-khyab*, the encyclopedic writer 'Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse'i dbang-po (1820–1892), and the treasure finder Mchog 'gyur gling-pa (1829–1870). Other important teachers included O-rgyan 'jig-med chos-kyi dbang-po (1808–1887), alias Rdza dpal-sprul rin-po-che, the great Rnying-ma-pa scholiast 'Jam-mgon mi-pham rgya-mtsho (1846–1912), and the seminary master Gzhan-phan chos-kyi snang-ba (1871–1927).

Traditional Tibet comes to an End

The Thirteenth Dalai Lama (1876–1933), Thub-bstan rgya-mtsho, ascended to office in 1895 during a time of Tibetan encounters with the forces of British, Russian, and Han Chinese imperialism. The “Great Thirteenth,” as later Tibetan historians would describe him, displayed remarkable political and diplomatic skills as he guided Tibet through surrounding geopolitical instability. The Thirteenth Dalai tried to implement modernization measures after 1913, but ran up against the conservative patriarchal land-owning aristocracy and the religiously conservative leadership of the three major Dge-lugs-pa monasteries. Adherence to and maintenance of Buddhist monastic tradition led to the cessation of modernization efforts in the mid-1920s and the reinforcement of conservative monastic values dominated by Dge-lugs-pa interests.

After the death of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, Tibet remained isolated from the developments of modernity and from the European-based colonial forces that influenced the formations of modern Buddhism. At the same time, Tibet suffered through internal dissension and weak leadership. Dge-lugs-pa orthodoxy sought to reassert its hegemony, particular in reaction to the Ris-med movement in Kham. A charismatic Dge-lugs-pa teacher during this period was Byams-pa bstan-'dzin 'phrin-las, alias Phabong-kha-pa bde-chen snying-po (1878–1941), who promoted Dge-lugs-pa exclusivism. At the same time, two incarnate monks, Rwa-sgreng rin-po-che and Stag-brag rin-po-che (1874–1952), fought over power and control during the regency period leading up to succession of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. Dge-'dun chos-'phel (1905–1951), an innovative and controversial author who was critical of Dge-lugs-pa authorities, traveled throughout South Asia, and was imprisoned in Lhasa upon his return in 1946 due to political reasons.

The Fourteenth Dalai Lama, Bstan-'dzin rgya-mtsho (b. 1935), became the head of state on November 17, 1950. The young incarnate was immediately confronted with Communist China, as its armies had invaded eastern Tibet in October of 1950. Some Tibetans saw the upheavals brought by the occupation as a time for modernization and reform. A leading example of such tendencies was the well-known scholar Rdo-bis shes-rab rgya-mtsho (1884–1968), who became the first Chairman of the Chinese Buddhist Association in 1952 (Kapstein 2006: 283). Advocates for change among the

Tibetan educated monastic classes sought some form of middle ground between conservative Tibetan Buddhism and Chinese Communist policies. This included even the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama, who for a period tried to integrate Maoist ideals with the practices of Mahāyāna Buddhism. However, by 1956 monasteries in eastern Tibet were attacked by military forces, leading to the resettlement of thousands of Tibetan refugees from Amdo and Kham into central Tibet. Not long after, relations between Tibetan Buddhist authorities and Chinese Communists totally deteriorated. The Dalai Lama fled to India in 1959, followed by thousands of Tibetan refugees.

Buddhism in traditional Tibet was decimated, beginning in the 1960s. This process culminated during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), when thousands of Tibetan monasteries and temples were destroyed, and hundreds of libraries and collections of Buddhist art were ravaged. The period witnessed massive loss of life through famine and political repression, as well as violent destruction of Tibetan Buddhist culture. The Fourteenth Dalai Lama established a community in exile in Dharamsala, India, and groups of monks and lay people established monasteries in the southern Indian state of Karnataka. As a result of the Tibetan diaspora of hundreds of scholar-monks and adepts as well as thousands of devoted lay people, Tibetan Buddhism emerged as a religion with an international following and became established in many areas outside of traditional Tibetan cultural regions. Several well-known Tibetan Buddhist teachers during this period include Dudjom rinpoche (1904–1987) and Dilgo khyentse (1910–1991) among the Rnying-ma-pa, the well-known Bka'-rgyud-pa teachers Chögyam Trungpa (1940–1987) and Kalu Rinpoche (1905–1989), and the Sa-skya-pa master Dezhung Rinpoche (1906–1987). Dge-lugs-pa teachers gathered international followers as well, including Geshe Rabten (1920–1986) and the charismatic Lama Thubten Yeshe (1935–1984). The Dalai Lama brought international attention to the Tibetan cause and Tibetan Buddhism when he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1989.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Buddhism in the Tibetan Autonomous Region is constrained by restrictions on religious livelihood, education, and economic opportunity. In spite of these constraints, some groups, particularly non-Dge-lugs-pa ones, have prospered, with a great number of texts that were previously banned or hidden away being recovered and published. Outside of traditional Tibetan cultural regions, the Dalai Lama and eminent Tibetan spiritual teachers continue to teach and publish, with Tibetan Buddhist religious centers established in India, Europe, and North America.

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PART II

Traditions and Doctrines

CHAPTER 6

Tiantai Integrations of Doctrine and Practice

Haiyan Shen

When looking at the general history of Buddhism in China, the Tiantai school is often characterized as the first Buddhist school to clearly mark the developmental transition from Indian to Chinese versions of Buddhism. The Tiantai school emerged within the historical and religious contexts of sixth-century China, an important transitional period that was marked by the end to political division and return to unified imperial rule under the Sui dynasty (581–618). That was also a time of great flourishing of Buddhism, which by then was firmly established as a major religious tradition (see Mario Poceski's chapter in this volume). The Tiantai school's complex systematization of medieval Chinese Buddhism, which included closely related systems of doctrine, doctrinal classification, and methods of practice, laid the theoretical and practical foundation for mature forms of Chinese Buddhism. The growth of Tiantai Buddhism, which was distinctively influenced by traditional Chinese epistemology, also helped pave the way for the development of other important schools that came to characterize Chinese Buddhism, including Chan and Huayan.

The key figure in the Tiantai school's incipient growth was Zhiyi (538–597). Traditionally considered to be the school's actual founder, Zhiyi was one of the greatest Buddhist masters in the history of East Asian Buddhism, and his thought and writings contributed greatly to the multifaceted Sinification of Buddhism. Zhiyi incorporated a vast array of Buddhist concepts and theories, originally scattered throughout various Buddhist scriptures and treatises, into a unique and creative system of doctrinal interpretation. He accomplished that by reasserting and redefining numerous canonical concepts and doctrines, so that they came to form a coherent whole, which was supposed to represent the totality of the Buddha's teaching. That came to include all branches of Buddhist learning that existed at the time of Zhiyi, which he integrated into an overarching system that is rightly recognized as one of the crowning intellectual and religious achievements in the history of Chinese Buddhism.

Zhiyi's philosophy is traditionally characterized as "perfect and harmonizing," and is said to be in accordance with the essential purport of the *Lotus Scripture*. Among the

main themes of this scripture is the convergence of various types of skillful means, represented by the teachings of the “three vehicles” (of *śrāvakas*, *pratyekabuddhas*, and *bodhisattvas*), and their integration into the ultimate teaching of the “one Buddha vehicle.” The scripture is also well known for its promotion of the notion of universal salvation, which encompasses all sentient beings in the cosmos. The *Lotus Scripture* was believed to embrace the essential purport and vital spirit of Mahāyāna Buddhism, and from the medieval period onward it became one of the most popular and influential scriptures in East Asia. Zhiyi’s peculiar interpretation of the *Lotus Scripture*, along with his idiosyncratic theories, built the essential foundations for Tiantai Buddhism, in terms of the basic conception of ultimate truth (*shixiang*), as well as the practical methods for attaining the ultimate truth. Accordingly, both doctrine and practice were of primary concern in Tiantai Buddhism, and one of the tradition’s key features, at least in its classical formulation, is the seamless integration of the two.

Because of Zhiyi’s great historical importance, in this chapter the main focus is on some of his basic formulations of Tiantai doctrine and practice. After Zhiyi, the Tiantai school had a long history and a rich heritage, and many of its key elements are still present in contemporary forms of East Asian Buddhism. Some of the high points of Tiantai doctrine are exemplified by the writings of Zhanran (711–782), who during the Tang dynasty successfully revived the Tiantai tradition. They are also reflected in the philosophical debates of important Song masters such as Zhili (960–1028), who once again revitalized the philosophical and institutional foundations of Tiantai teachings (see Chan 1999).

The texts and teachings of the Tiantai tradition were also transmitted into Japan by Saicho (767–822), one of the key figures in the history of Japanese Buddhism (see Heather Blair’s chapter in this volume). Under the name of Tendai, they came to exert enormous influence on the subsequent development of Japanese Buddhism, even though the Tendai sect also incorporated key elements from other traditions, especially esoteric Buddhism, and moved in new directions that were probably not at all envisaged by Zhiyi and other founding figures in China. While these later developments are important and interesting, Zhiyi’s system represents a basic foundation and a primary reference point for understanding Tiantai Buddhism. In light of that, and due to space constraints, in what follows I only survey several key elements of the classical philosophical and soteriological models established by Zhiyi.

Zhiyi’s Conception of Threefold Truth

Zhiyi’s perfect and harmonizing philosophy of all-embracing nature postulates that there is no conflict among different things (or phenomena); the same principle also applies to various Buddhist theories about reality. All existing things are complementary to each other, whereas doctrine and practice are integrated together as a whole. They are not separate entities and do not exclude one another. Confirming one thing and negating another can only result in partiality. Within this conceptual scheme, it is possible to postulate not only that nothing is separate or existing independently, but also that all entities are ultimately identified with each other. They are merged into one

reality, but at the same time, each of them represents different facets or characteristics of ultimate truth.

This philosophy is incorporated in the Tiantai doctrine of “the middle way as ultimate truth.” It consists of three main elements or facets of truth, which are integrated aspects of a single reality: emptiness, the provisional, and the middle way. Known as the theory of threefold truth (*sandi*), this represents one of the most important and innovative parts of Zhiyi’s comprehensive system of Tiantai philosophy (see Swanson 1989). The threefold truth paradigm represents an elaboration and reinterpretation of the two truths doctrine of traditional Madhyamaka philosophy, which postulates a distinction between two basic levels of truth: conventional (provisions) and ultimate (absolute). This kind of ingenious adaptation of elements of Madhyamaka philosophy reflects the close doctrinal connections between the Tiantai and Madhyamaka traditions, although the Tiantai school is also known for its distinctive integration of the Buddha-nature theory.

Emptiness (*kong*), the first element of the threefold truth, is spoken of in terms of the illusory nature of existence. It explains how all things are empty of self-nature and are originated dependently, on the basis of a variety of causes and conditions. The provisional (*jia*), the second element or level of truth, conveys the characteristic of things from the perspective of conventional existence. Although things are illusory or empty, they do bear certain names and temporarily exist: that is the meaning of the middle way (*zhongdao*), the third element of the threefold truth. The middle way identifies emptiness with the provisional, and vice versa. It transcends both of them, but at the same time it embraces them. This middle way philosophy implies a perfect perception of comprehensiveness, which is meant not to be limited by any viewpoint, and not to dwell on any definite conception of reality. Any rigid or fixed form of thinking is doomed to be extreme and partial, as it prevents the individual from realizing the ultimate truth.

In his writings Zhiyi discusses five types of middle way, in the context of the five categories of threefold truth (see T 33.704c–05a). The five categories of threefold truth are explained in reference to the basic concepts of “outflow of defilements” (representing the viewpoint of worldly truth) and “no-outflow of defilements” (representing the viewpoint of absolute truth). These two concepts are then linked with the concept of “neither with outflows nor without outflows,” which implies the comprehensive perspective of the middle way. Each of the five types of middle way entails different implications.

In the first type of middle way, identified as the “threefold truth of the separate teaching entering the common teaching,” the term “outflow of defilements” refers to the level of worldly or mundane truth, and “no-outflow of defilements” (i.e. the attainment of emptiness) refers to the level of absolute truth. Within this context, the double negation of these two aspects, “neither with outflows nor without outflows,” is identified as the middle way. According to Zhiyi, this type of the middle way is only used as a means to prevent the practicing adept from being attached to the notion or view of emptiness. Consequently, here the middle way serves as an aid to a better understanding of emptiness: the view of emptiness should not be attached to since, according to the doctrine of dependent origination, this view is also empty. Moreover, in reference to the bodhisattva who enters the mundane world in order to save others, Zhiyi uses the term “embrace

all dharmas,” which implies that the function of the middle way is to initiate a dynamic force with soteriological implications, namely the salvation of living beings.

In the second type of middle way, “threefold truth of the perfect teaching entering the common teaching,” the two truths (provisional/conventional and ultimate/absolute) are the same as those in the first type of middle way described above, but the understanding of the middle way progresses and becomes more refined. Within the doctrine of the perfect teaching, here applied to an understanding of the middle way, Zhiyi explains that this type of middle way embraces all things (dharmas), which means that provisional existence is perceived as no-emptiness. With the realization of no-emptiness, at this level the bodhisattva carries out the activity of saving others within the mundane world.

In the third type of middle way, the “threefold truth of the separate teaching,” the two truths are derived from an understanding of provisional existence as existence and emptiness, or as neither existence nor emptiness. Zhiyi explains that the perception of these two aspects as a duality (i.e. existence and emptiness) is identified with the worldly truth; the perception of these two as non-duality (i.e. neither emptiness nor existence) is identified with the absolute truth. This interpretation of the absolute truth implies a specific view of the middle way, which helps the practitioner not to be attached to either the view of emptiness or the view of existence. Zhiyi explains that this type of middle way merely serves as a principle, but does not have a functional aspect.

In the fourth type of middle way, “threefold truth of the perfect teaching entering the separate teaching,” the two truths are the same as in the third type of middle way, with provisional existence understood as existence and emptiness, or neither existence nor emptiness. The difference from the third type of the middle way, which serves as a means to transcend the views of either existence or emptiness, is that this type of middle way affirms the validity of the views of emptiness and existence. In Zhiyi’s terminology, this type of middle way, which embraces both emptiness and existence, is characterized as “being endowed with the Buddha-dharma.” With it, the bodhisattva is motivated to enter the mundane world to fulfill his or her task of liberating living beings.

The fifth type of middle way, “threefold truth of the perfect teaching,” denotes an integration of all three aspects of reality. This means that it is not just the middle way that embraces the Buddha-dharma, but the worldly and the absolute truths also embrace the Buddha-dharma. These three aspects are merged as one reality, and are thus referred to as “three in one”; by extension, the one reality that incorporates these three aspects is referred to as “one in three.” Accordingly, the threefold truth, understood as an integrated unity of three in one and one in three, belongs to the category of the perfect teaching. This implies that all three truths (the worldly, the absolute, and the middle way) are fully endowed with the Buddha-dharma.

Ultimate Truth and the Nature of Reality

In Tiantai discussions of the nature of reality, the basic notion of ultimate truth is often equated with other key terms such as Dharma-nature, that is, true nature of phenomena (*faxing*), or the Dharma-realm, that is, the realm of ultimate or true reality (*fajie*),

a term that also plays a very important role in Huayan philosophy (see Imre Hamar's chapter in this volume). Ultimate truth represents the essential principle (*li*), another important term that often appears in Huayan writings, as well as in the writings of other Chinese religious traditions. This principle denotes the essential reality of all things, as they truly are, namely their true or original nature, or their real aspect. In Tiantai writings it is described as being unchanging, indestructible, immanent, and permanent.

Within Tiantai philosophy, the immanent nature of ultimate truth is construed as the basic "substance" of reality: the underlying principle of all things. The principle embraces all existing things, diminishing their differences and affirming their existence. It represents a comprehensive and affirmative view of reality, which is understood in terms of the middle way doctrine. It also exemplifies Tiantai's adherence to the conception of the One Buddha-vehicle as supreme reality and highest teaching of the Buddha. In Zhiyi's writings the unchanging, indestructible, and permanent nature of ultimate truth is also understood as the Buddha-nature inherent in all sentient beings.

Ultimate truth, or the realm of true reality, is also explained by Zhiyi in terms of the "ten suchnesses" (*shi rushi*) and the "ten Dharma-realms" (*shi fajie*). The ten suchnesses, said to characterize the ultimate truth, are: the suchness of appearance, nature, substance, power, function, causes, conditions, effects, retributions, and beginning-and-end-ultimately-alike. These ten suchnesses are in turn regarded as the essential features or characteristics of each of the ten Dharma-realms: the realms of hell-dwellers, hungry ghosts, animals, *asuras*, humans, heavenly beings, *śrāvakas* (hearers), *pratyekabuddhas* (solitary Buddhas), bodhisattvas, and Buddhas.

Zhiyi took the basic notion of the ten Dharma-realms and developed it into an ingenious theory about the nature of reality, according to which each of the ten realms embraces each other, thus forming one hundred Dharma-realms. Since each of the ten realms embraces not only every other realm, but also the ten suchnesses, this leads to the concept of "one hundred Dharma-realms and one thousand suchnesses." That is meant to evoke a state of vastness and infinity, depicted in the *Lotus Scripture* as the inconceivable state of Buddhahood. The very notion of ultimate truth is immensely rich and subtle, and has multiple connotations. It represents a core concept in Zhiyi's thought: everything can be understood as an expression or revelation of the ultimate truth, and the ultimate truth is the essential substance or basic principle behind all things.

According to tradition, Zhiyi's interpretation of the *Lotus Scripture* was based on his contemplative insight into the scripture's essential teachings. On the basis of such intuitive realization, he was supposedly able to look at the whole Buddhist canon systematically, and see how the various teachings attributed to the Buddha are inherently consistent and coherent. That was further developed in Zhiyi's system of doctrinal classification (*panjiao*), as discussed below. At the same time, Zhiyi also wrote in great detail about Tiantai practice, at the core of which is his comprehensive and systematic exegesis of "concentration and contemplation" (*zhiguan*; Skt. *śamatha-vipaśyanā*). From a Tiantai perspective, the cultivation of concentration and contemplation represents the most comprehensive and effective model of religious practice for approaching the attainment of Buddhahood. It is therefore closely linked with the basic Tiantai

discourse about truth and reality. Zhiyi regarded the issue of truth to be central, because truth is the foundation on which the essential teachings about the cause and effect of Buddhahood are based.

According to Zhiyi, one's basic conception of truth determines the nature of one's practice, which represents an effort to realize that truth. By extension, the realization of certain type or level of truth reflects the attainment of an analogous level of enlightenment. Truth, according to Zhiyi, is concerned with objective reality. The realization of ultimate truth is the real aim of religious practice, through which the practitioner actualizes the final goal of enlightenment. At the same time, the attainment of enlightenment enables the individual to accomplish the task of liberating others. In Zhiyi's view, Buddhahood is realized through, or in reference to, the fundamental mission of helping others. Enlightenment for oneself and for others, the cause and effect of Buddhahood, is thus inextricably connected with the basic issue of truth.

Doctrinal Classification: The Five Periods

The creation of doctrinal taxonomies or classifications was an important feature of medieval Chinese Buddhism. By classifying the various types of teaching attributed to the Buddha, Zhiyi attempted to show how all teachings are related to each other and are organically integrated into a larger whole. At the same time, he also created a hierarchical ranking of the various teachings, which reflected his peculiar perspective on Buddhism. Zhiyi systematically arranged the various types of Buddhist teaching in terms of three basic classificatory schemes: four methods of instruction (sudden, gradual, secret, and indeterminate), four categories of content (three baskets, common, separate, and perfect teachings), and five periods (the Huayan period, the Deer Park period, the Great and Broad period, the Perfection of Wisdom period, and the Lotus and Nirvana period). Each of these distinctive classificatory schemes was deemed to be valid in its own right, and they were all regarded as shedding light on different elements of the varied and subtle body of teachings associated with the Buddha.

To begin with, in his writings Zhiyi classifies the Buddha's teaching into five periods, which corresponds to five distinct phases in the Buddha's teaching career. While this kind of chronology has no actual historical basis, as far as scholarly understanding of the Buddha's life and teaching is concerned, it represents a notable effort to arrange the various Buddhist teachings in terms of a putative development of the those teachings, which unfolded in the course of the Buddha's active ministry. The five periods are also compared to the flavors of five types of dairy products, which from the basic to the most refined are: milk, cream, curdled milk, butter, and ghee.

The first of the five periods is defined as "sudden" and is associated with the *Huayan Scripture*, which is said to have been preached just after the Buddha's enlightenment. Its significance is elucidated in terms of a metaphor of sunrise derived from the *Huayan Scripture*, according to which "when the sun rises, it first shines on the highest mountains."¹ In terms of the simile of five flavors, it is analogous to the flavor of milk. It is called "sudden" because the teaching communicated by the Buddha during this period conveyed directly the most profound truth, as it was perceived by the Buddha upon his

enlightenment under the *bodhi* tree. This is identified as an exclusive teaching of Mahāyāna (Greater Vehicle), only meant for advanced bodhisattvas. That is the case because only bodhisattvas with higher spiritual faculties can immediately grasp the sublime truth, without having to go through preparatory stages. Although disciples belonging to the category of “hearers” were supposedly also present when Buddha delivered this subtle and profound teaching, they were unable to comprehend it. Since this teaching was not heard by the hearers, and thus did not have an effect on them, it is referred to as sudden.

The next three periods are all defined as “gradual.” The term “gradual” is here used in reference to teaching presented by the Buddha that conveyed partial truths. These teachings were directed to hearers and followers of Mahāyāna, for the purpose of preparing them for the final disclosure of the ultimate truth. That includes the so-called three stages of the teaching, a formulation that implies a gradual ascent from elementary to increasingly profound doctrines. These three periods are identified as the Agama period, said to have been taught at the Deer Park, Great and Broad (*vāipulya*) period, and Perfection of Wisdom period.

The second Agama period is compared to the time when “the sun shines into deep valleys,” and is analogous to the flavor of cream. Due to the fact that during the first period the hearers were unable to comprehend the profound truth revealed by the Buddha, being like deaf and dumb persons, in the second period the Buddha taught them the doctrine of the “three baskets” (*tripiṭaka*), a form of gradual teaching that was suitable for them. Although followers of Mahāyāna were also present at the time, they were not recognized by the hearers. Since the Buddha has not yet explained the non-distinction between Śrāvakayāna (Vehicle of Hearers, or Lesser Vehicle) and Mahāyāna, the followers of Mahāyāna set themselves apart from the hearers, and did not yet appreciate the value of the Vehicle of Hearers. This teaching was exclusively Śrāvakayāna in nature, and was gradual.

The third period of teaching, called Great and Broad, is compared to the time when “the sun shines on level ground,” and is analogous to the flavor of curdled milk. While superior to the teaching revealed during the previous period, it is still defined as gradual, because it contains only partial truth. The purpose of this period is to break away from the teaching of the Vehicle of Hearers, which is relative, and move in the direction of the superior Mahāyāna teaching. In that sense, it can be understood as an elementary Mahāyāna teaching.

The fourth period, associated with the Perfection of Wisdom scriptures, is compared with the time of day that is close to noon, when the sunlight is getting stronger. This is the time when “adults benefit from the light, while infants [who are seven days old] lose their eyesight [if they look at the sun].”² The teaching associated with this period is also defined as gradual, since the Buddha has not yet announced the ultimate truth regarding the universal liberation of all living beings, and is analogous to the flavor of butter. The significance of this period is to emphasize the essential non-distinction between the teaching of Mahāyāna and the teaching of the Vehicle of Hearers. According to Zhiyi, it “elucidates the teaching of Mahāyāna, while also encompassing the teaching of Śrāvakayāna.” The two are not contradictory, but are complementary to each other.

The fifth period of the Buddha's teaching is compared with the time of noon, when "the sun shines equally on all levels of terrain" (T 10.226b). This period is defined as "gradual and perfect," and is analogous to the flavor of ghee, the purest and most refined kind of dairy product. Perfect refers to the teaching of the Buddha that conveys the ultimate truth of the One Buddha-vehicle, as revealed by the *Lotus Scripture*. In terms of specific scriptures, this teaching is associated solely with the *Lotus* and *Nirvana* scriptures. The superior teaching of this period integrates Śrāvakayāna with Mahāyāna—namely, the gradual teaching is incorporated into the perfect teaching—and is thus referred to as "gradual and perfect." As a result of this integration, there is no distinction between the sudden and the gradual teachings; the two are unified, as the real intention of the Buddha is revealed. That is, both sudden and gradual are instrumental in leading living beings to the final attainment of Buddhahood.

The Four Methods of Instruction

In addition to the five periods described above, Zhiyi also introduced the taxonomic scheme of classifying the Buddha's teaching in terms of the four methods of instruction. The four methods, purportedly deployed by the Buddha at different occasions in the course of his preaching to a range of different audiences, are the sudden, gradual, secret, and indeterminate methods. If the sudden and the gradual methods are looked at separately, they are characterized by Zhiyi as "exoteric," with the implication that they have different functions. The method used in the sudden teaching is only meant for bodhisattvas with sharp spiritual faculties, for they can grasp the profound truth instantly. The method used in the gradual teaching is meant to gradually enhance the level of understanding of followers of the Three Vehicles, so that they can eventually become ready to receive the supreme teaching that reveals the ultimate truth.

The third method of instruction is called "secret" (or esoteric). In this case the Buddha is said to simultaneously bestow the sudden and the gradual teachings upon different audiences in the ten directions. They might be esoteric for an audience in one place, but exoteric to others in another place. Being receptive to either the sudden or the gradual method, various listeners do not realize that they actually hear different teachings. This teaching is also sacred in the sense that it might be received only by a particular individual or a group, even if others are also present in the audience. In addition, when the sudden and the gradual methods are deployed in relation to each other, it can be said that the gradual is contained within the sudden, and the sudden within the gradual. Zhiyi identifies this method as exoteric and terms it "indeterminate." When this method is utilized, the audience might receive the gradual teaching when the sudden method is employed, or the sudden teaching when the gradual method is employed.

By organizing the teaching of the Buddha in terms of the five periods and four methods of instruction, Zhiyi was able to depict the *Lotus Scripture* as the final teaching of the Buddha, and to assert its superiority over other scriptures. When the two taxonomic schemes are brought together, the teachings of the five periods can also be classified as sudden, gradual, and indeterminate. Only when there is no more distinction

between sudden and gradual can a given teaching be considered to be perfect teaching. The teaching of the *Lotus Scripture* bears the characteristic of “gradual and perfect,” which indicates perfection, because it unifies the Three Vehicles under the One Buddha-vehicle (i.e. sudden and gradual are unified).

Zhiyi concludes that only the *Lotus Scripture* can be characterized as a consistent teaching. While other types of teaching designate the beginning of the Buddha’s teaching, the *Lotus Scripture* designates the final teaching of the Buddha, with its assertion that all living beings are able to eventually attain Buddhahood. By extension, the *Lotus Scripture* also automatically includes the beginning of the Buddha’s teaching. Zhiyi emphasizes that other scriptures do not contain the final or perfect teaching. In contrast, the *Lotus Scripture* declares that the Buddha’s purpose for manifesting in the world and using various types of teaching is to enhance the capability of living beings to receive the ultimate truth, and eventually to lead them to final salvation. In that sense, the perfect teaching is present from beginning to end. Namely, the beginning teaching of the Buddha is explained as containing the ultimate goal of leading beings to attain Buddhahood, while the final teaching enables beings to actually realize Buddhahood.

The Four Teachings

The organization of the whole range of Buddhist doctrine in terms of the four teachings is another important part of Zhiyi’s system of doctrinal classification. The whole spectrum of teachings attributed to the Buddha, as presented in the Buddhist canon, is classified into four types in terms of its doctrinal contents. The four teachings are: the teaching of the three baskets, the common teaching, the separate teaching, and the perfect teaching.

The teaching of the three baskets refers to Śrāvakayāna Buddhism, which includes the teachings incorporated in the three parts of the canon: *sūtra* (teachings of the Buddha), *vinaya* (texts about monastic discipline), and *abhidharma* (doctrinal treatises). The common teaching receives its name because it is common to both Śrāvakayāna and elementary Mahāyāna, and it caters to the spiritual needs of *śrāvakas*, *pratyekabuddhas*, and bodhisattvas with mediocre spiritual faculties. The separate teaching is meant for bodhisattvas only, and is separate from the previous two teachings. It is also separate from the perfect teaching, for the doctrine of the separate teaching does not yet enable the practitioner to perceive the integrated nature of reality. Finally, the perfect teaching incorporates the Three Vehicles, and expounds the middle way doctrine of mutual identification, which reveals the fundamental identity of all things.

The four teachings are meant to incorporate all teachings of the Buddha in an ascending order, with the first three teachings leading to the perfect teaching, which represents the final attainment of Buddhahood. The four teachings scheme serves to link together Zhiyi’s theories about Buddhism, and to make the various doctrines of Śrāvakayāna and Mahāyāna appear coherent and complete. Even as, like other doctrinal taxonomies, it unifies the various teachings attributed to the Buddha, it also serves as an instrument for judging the subtleness or coarseness of specific doctrines, and for making distinctions between the relative and the ultimate truth. While there are

different teachings, in the end they all converge into the perfect teaching, in which an integrated vision of reality is presented as the ultimate truth. When viewed separately, the teachings can be categorized as either coarse or subtle, either relative or ultimate. But when they are viewed from the perspective of ultimate truth, there are no distinctions, as they are identified with each other and merge into the same subtle reality.

The perfect teaching is deemed to be most superior, being an expression of the ultimate truth. Nevertheless, from the perspective of a person engaged in religious practice, who is making gradual progresses toward liberation, the other three teachings are also valid and relevant. Each of the three lower teachings serves as a necessary tool or a stepping stone, facilitating gradual progress toward an increasingly subtle understanding of the perfect teaching. Accordingly, besides serving as standards for classifying various conceptions of truth, the four teachings also represent a path of practice, which encompasses various stages of religious progress. These correspond to particular levels of spiritual attainment, which mark specific points on the way to Buddhahood. But even as Zhiyi's taxonomic scheme distinguishes various types of teachings and different levels of attainment, it also stresses that the realization of Buddhahood is the ultimate goal that everyone should strive for. Accordingly, the *Lotus Scripture* is associated with the fifth and final period, as well as with the ultimate or perfect teaching of the Buddha.

Tiantai Practice: Concentration and Contemplation

Zhiyi's thorough and nuanced systematization of Tiantai doctrine is often praised as one of the crowning intellectual achievements of Chinese Buddhism, but he is also well known for his compressive exposition of Buddhist practice. That is especially the case with his systematization of Buddhist meditation (*chan*, originally used to translate the Sanskrit term *dhyāna*), which revolves around the basic rubric of concentration and contemplation (also referred to as calmness and insight). For reasons of space, I cannot cover the whole scope of Tiantai meditation, which includes important components such as Zhiyi's comprehensive discussions of the four kinds of *samādhi* (see Stevenson 1986). Nonetheless, in what follows I sketch a basic outline of the Tiantai conception of meditation practice.

In the preface to Zhiyi's *Great Concentration and Contemplation*, written by his foremost disciple Guanding (561–632), the essentials features and principles of Tiantai meditation are described in these terms:

The perfect and sudden calming (concentration) and contemplation from the very beginning takes ultimate reality (*shixiang*) as its object. No matter what the object of contemplation might be, it is seen to be identical to the middle. There is nothing that is not true reality (*zhenshi*). When one fixes [the mind] on the dharmadhātu (Dharma-realm) [as abject] and unifies one's mindfulness with the dharmadhātu [as is], then there is not a single sight nor smell that is not the middle way. The same goes for the realm of self, the realm of Buddha, and the realm of living beings. . . . A single, unalloyed reality is all there is—no entities whatsoever exist outside of it. That all entities are by nature quiescent is called "calming"

(zhi); that, though quiescent, this nature is ever luminous is called contemplation. (Donner and Stevenson 1993: 112–13)

In its purest form, the dual practice of concentration and contemplation has ultimate reality as the true or essential object of meditation. Reality is all-pervasive and is revealed in terms of the middle way. In his writings Zhiyi describes a variety of meditative techniques and advocates different approaches to practice, from elementary ritual procedures that revolve around popular cultic practices to advanced types of formless contemplation. However, in essence they are all based on the same understanding of reality, which is indivisible, all-pervasive, and ineffable.

In accord with the theoretical postulates described in the previous sections, the realization of Buddhahood is the main soteriological goal within the Tiantai system of spiritual practice. Since all beings possess Buddha-nature, they are all endowed with the potential to attain Buddhahood. In light of the universal and altruistic spirit of Mahāyāna Buddhism, the bodhisattva also enters the mundane world in order to work for the salvation of others. Accordingly, self-liberation is combined with the liberation of others; when taken together, they render the attainment of Buddhahood meaningful.

According to Zhiyi's understanding, truth, knowledge, and practice are closely linked with each other, being three indivisible components that constitute Buddhism. Zhiyi emphasizes that genuine knowledge is obtained by means of diligent practice, practice must be guided by true knowledge, and knowledge is correct only when it leads to truth. Only when knowledge serves as eyes and practice as feet can one realize the truth and reach enlightenment. Practice and knowledge are both indispensable, and when cultivated together they allow a person to gain true spiritual insight. Without practice, there is no enlightenment; without knowledge, practice cannot accomplish anything.

In his analysis of practice, Zhiyi distinguishes between three types or levels of concentration and contemplation: gradual, indeterminate, and sudden. According to him, the sudden type of concentration and contemplation represents the highest level of practice, and is the perfect approach to the realization of the ultimate truth. Consequently, he uses the term "sudden and perfect" concentration and contemplation, which denotes a supreme practice directed toward the attainment of spiritual liberation. It is this type of meditative practice that best characterizes the Tiantai systematization of meditation, but it is important to keep in mind that Zhiyi was also mindful of the need to have a variety of practices, in order to respond to a broad range of individuals with distinctive spiritual needs and abilities.

The gradual approach is represented in Zhiyi's writing by his basic theory of meditation, which incorporates a whole range of contemplative practices that were known in China during his lifetime. This type of meditative practice is characterized by a gradual progression from shallow to deep levels of practice, until one finally reaches liberation. In this context, the basic meaning and scope of meditation, which is discussed in terms of the fundamental rubric of concentration and contemplation, is defined fairly broadly. It includes the three fundamental disciplines that, according to canonical formulations, cover the whole range of Buddhist practices: morality (*śīla*), meditation (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*prajñā*).

The indeterminate approach is explained by Zhiyi in terms of the teaching about six wondrous methods of practice: counting the breath, following the breath, stillness of mind, discernment of mind, returning to the origin of mind, and purity of mind. The unique characteristic of this kind of practice lies in the fact that the practitioner can attain liberation by using any one of these six methods.

The perfect and sudden approach of practice is laid out in great detail in Zhiyi's major work *Mohe zhiguan* (Great Concentration and Contemplation), the main Tiantai treatise on the subject of meditation practice (for this text, see Donner and Stevenson 1993). For Zhiyi, the perfect and sudden approach is the supreme mode of practice, and it belongs to the perfect teaching. Zhiyi explains that the designation "perfect and sudden" is used in the sense that there is no distinction between the initial and the final level of practice. All practice is replete with an understanding of the middle way as the ultimate truth, and nothing is excluded from true reality. In his words, "there is not a single form or fragrance that is not the middle way" (T 46.1c). In the context of meditative praxis, Zhiyi refers to this perfect understanding of truth as the inconceivable state.

This kind of practice involves direct contemplation of mind as a means to gain insight into the ultimate truth. Since mental activity is constituted of many individual thoughts, the whole mind can be deduced in each instant of thought. In Zhiyi's view, to unravel the truth is to decipher the essential content of one instant of thought, which implies realizing that the truth permeates everything and is present everywhere. Based on such insight, Zhiyi developed the theory of "one instant thought embracing three thousand dharmas." The most effective way to realize reality, as explained by the three-fold truth, is to engage in direct contemplation of mind, which involves subtle awareness of every thought as it arises from the mind. Every thought is inclusive of the three thousand dharmas, and thus functions as an access point for direct insight into the true nature or reality.

The three thousand dharmas are composed of the aforementioned ten Dharma-realms, ten suchnesses, and three divisions of the world. Zhiyi explains that the mind of a single sentient being contains the ten Dharma-realms. Each realm is inclusive of the other nine realms, forming one hundred realms. Furthermore, each realm contains ten different characteristics (i.e. ten suchnesses), thus rendering one thousand worlds in all. Each of these thousand worlds has three divisions—sentient beings, the five aggregates (form, feeling, conception, impulse, and consciousness), and the space we live in. In total, this accounts for a total of three thousand dharmas. The three thousand dharmas are Zhiyi's way of describing true reality, signifying the universe as a whole.

According to the Buddha-nature theory, sentient beings originally possess true reality. The three thousand dharmas, as manifestations of true reality, are present everywhere, which also means that they are contained in the minds of all beings. As Zhiyi states:

The mind traverses the Dharma-realm, contemplating the [six] cognitive faculties and their objects. An instant of thought in one's mind arises from the ten Dharma-realms, and belongs to one of the ten realms. If one thought belongs to one realm, and this one realm contains hundreds of realms and thousands of suchnesses, this indicates that one thought contains all dharmas. (T 33.696a)

On the one hand, one instant of thought includes the whole universe, and one dharma is identical to all dharmas. On the other hand, the whole universe exists in every single thought, and all dharmas are identical to one dharma.

The notion of “three thousand dharmas” was used by Zhiyi to represent the ultimate truth, as manifested in the phenomenal world and in relation to the contemplation of mind. Every thought embraces the three thousand dharmas, and can be explained in terms of the three truths of emptiness, provisionality, and the middle way. The truth of emptiness refers to the wisdom of understanding the empty nature of all dharmas. The truth of provisional existence refocuses attention to the everyday world and functions as a motivation, by which the bodhisattva enters the mundane world to save beings. The truth of the middle way incorporates the essential principle that underlies all dharmas, which implicates both emptiness and provisionality, and neither emptiness nor provisionality.

Threefold Contemplation

A potent method of spiritual cultivation that purportedly leads to a realization of reality, as expressed by the threefold truth, is the practice of threefold contemplation. By contemplating the three truths, the practitioner becomes able to attain the “threefold contemplation in one mind” (*yixin sanguan*). In Zhiyi’s system of meditation the threefold truth is closely related to the threefold contemplation. This is indicative of his emphasis on the close connection between theory and praxis, as well as of his persistent efforts toward a seamless integration of doctrine and practice.

Within a Tiantai context, the threefold contemplation in one mind is not only a method of practice, but also an effect of practice. This implies that the perfection of threefold contemplation brings about the attainment of three types of wisdom (or knowledge): all-knowledge (or omniscience), which is concerned with the emptiness of all phenomena and is realized by hearers and *pratyekabuddhas*, knowledge of the path, which is concerned with provisional existence and is realized by bodhisattvas, and universal knowledge (or omniscience in all modes), the Buddha’s knowledge that involves realization of the middle way as encompassing all aspects of reality.

In Zhiyi’s view, it is advisable to focus on contemplating the mind because that is the most direct or accessible way to approach the ultimate truth. Contemplating the mind, as noted above, involves discernment of the threefold truth. It is the ultimate approach to penetrating the ultimate truth. The all-embracing nature of the mind, and the essential unity of the mind of the ordinary person and the mind of Buddha, is pointed out in the often-cited quotation from the *Huayan Scripture*: “The mind, Buddha, and sentient beings: there is no distinction among them” (T 9.478c). In his description of mind contemplation Zhiyi also cites another passage from the *Huayan Scripture*: “When one’s mind traverses the Dharma-realm, taking it as if it is empty space, then one will know the objective realm of all Buddhas” (T 9.409c). Zhiyi uses this quotation about the mind traversing the Dharma-realm to establish a link between the mind and the threefold truth. He then goes on to suggest that contemplation of the mind can function as a means for the realization of the threefold truth.

Zhiyi explains: "The Dharma-realm is identical to the middle way. Empty space is identical to emptiness. The mind and the Buddha are identical to provisional existence. Taken together, the three are identical to the objective realm of all Buddhas. This means that if one contemplates one's mind, one can be endowed with all Buddha-dharmas" (T 33.696a). Zhiyi also explains how contemplating the mind can lead to a realization that one thought can embrace reality as a whole: "In the case of one's mind traversing the Dharma-realm, when contemplating the mutual opposition of a sensation and its object, one thought arises in the mind, which must belong to one of the ten realms. Even if [one thought] belongs to one realm, it at once embraces one hundred realms and one thousand dharmas. One thought is replete with all [aspects of reality]" (T 33.696a).

If the characteristics of reality are contained within the arising of one thought, then contemplation of the mind represents the most direct method to reaching the truth. A realization of ultimate truth requires radical alteration of one's perspectives and ways of conceiving the world. In a basic sense, Zhiyi's system of mental training aims to make the mind flexible, innovative, and multi-dimensional, and to prevent thinking from becoming narrow, rigid, and dogmatic.

In the context of Zhiyi's classification of the Buddha's teachings, the threefold contemplation in one mind belongs to the perfect teaching. Nevertheless, there is also a gradual model of three contemplations, which bears the characteristics of the separate teaching. Within this model, which involves a sense of sequential progression, meditation begins with the hearers' practice of "entering emptiness from provisionality." At the second stage there is the bodhisattvas' practice of "entering provisionality from emptiness." Finally, at the ultimate stage, there is the "supreme contemplation of the middle way."

First, the contemplation of "entering emptiness from provisionality" is meant for ordinary persons, who misconstrue mundane existence as being real. Therefore, the practitioner contemplates all forms or modes of existence as being dependently originated and lacking self-nature. Knowing that existence is provisional, the practitioner realizes the truth of emptiness, severs the delusions that bind to transmigration, and perfects the power of concentration. Next, the contemplation of "entering provisionality from emptiness" is introduced in order to overcome an attachment to emptiness and bring about a focus on provisional existence. That kind of insight is also meant to provide a motivation for the bodhisattva to work tirelessly toward the salvation of all sentient beings, who remain stuck in the mundane world. This view of provisionality involves an understanding that although things are empty, they do have names and exist temporarily. This kind of contemplation confirms the validity of provisional existence, even as it is based on an understanding of emptiness. Accordingly, a bodhisattva can focus on fulfilling the task of liberating oneself and others, and his or her wisdom is perfected gradually. Finally, at the last stage, the "supreme contemplation of the middle way" embraces both emptiness and provisionality, while transcending all dualistic extremes and being grounded in the middle way. By realizing the truth of the middle way, the advanced practitioner is able to penetrate deeply into the nature of things and perceive the Buddha-nature.

The highest of the three contemplations, the "supreme contemplation of the middle way," is closely related to the "threefold contemplation in one mind." While Zhiyi does not consider the gradual and sequential types of contemplation to be ultimate,

nonetheless they perform important functions as expedient methods of spiritual cultivation for individuals with certain abilities and predilections. The ultimate aim of practicing the three contemplations is to achieve the type of effective insight that is implicit in the “threefold contemplation in one mind.” At that point the practitioner intuitively understands that all phenomena are simultaneously empty, provisional, and middle. The three truths are essentially three aspects of the same ultimate reality; all three partake of the same unified, unadulterated, and all-pervasive nature of reality. Moreover, one can also contemplate each of the three truths individually as representing the whole of reality. As Zhiyi explains, “three is one, and one is three.”

A peculiar feature of the threefold contemplation in one mind is that it makes it possible to instantly perceive the essential identity of the three truths. The all-embracing nature of reality is said to manifest in the contemplation of each aspect, which is inter-fused with all other aspects. The contemplation of emptiness includes all three perspectives on reality, inasmuch as provisionality and the middle are identical to emptiness. Similarly, the contemplation of provisionality includes the other two elements, since emptiness and the middle can be identified with provisionality. The contemplation of the middle also includes all perspectives on reality, given that emptiness and provisionality are nothing but the middle. Therefore, the ultimate truth can be explained in terms of the middle way, which is why Zhiyi coined the term “middle way as ultimate truth.” This ultimate truth can be equated with the state of Buddhahood. Since everyone is endowed with the Buddha-nature, each person possesses an innate capacity for the attainment of Buddhahood. The attainment of Buddhahood, in turn, is based on a realization of the middle way as ultimate truth, which is inconceivable.

Realization of Reality

By postulating that ultimate truth is all-pervasive and encompasses all phenomena in the cosmos, Zhiyi was able to articulate a positive view toward the empirical world of everyday reality. The mundane world, traditionally described in terms of impermanence and imperfection that characterize a *samsaric* circle of birth and death, is thereby identified with the ineffable realm of enlightenment. Moreover, in addition to his rarefied philosophical reflections on the nature of the ultimate truth, Zhiyi also elucidated a range of methods by which one can realize the truth and attain liberation. His discussion of ultimate truth is subtle and flexible, providing a variety of perspectives and allowing for different angles of view. In the final analysis, truth cannot be grasped via any mode of thought. Being beyond all conceptual constructs, it is inexpressible. Ordinary thinking patterns tend to be rigid and biased, and there is an ingrained human tendency to view the world in dualistic terms. While Zhiyi pointed out the serious limitation of ordinary ways of thinking and cognizing, he also suggested alternative methods of approaching the truth, which culminate with the perfect teaching.

As the negative outlook of the mundane world was transformed into a positive affirmation of everyday reality, Zhiyi also developed a critical theory about good and evil, which was based on the principle of ultimate truth. If the nature of reality is all-pervasive and, at a deep level, the Dharma-realm is within distinctions, then both good and evil partake of the same reality. In a sense, good contains evil, and evil contains

good, even if they are distinct at the level of conventional reality. Both good and evil are relative; they should not be reified, since at the absolute level there is no distinction between them. When one realizes the essential identity of good and evil, one also reaches toward the absoluteness of ultimate truth. In light of this way of thinking about truth and reality, Zhiyi was able to assert that “afflictions are identical to the wisdom of awakening” and that “by treading a heretical path, one can arrive at the Buddha’s path” (T 33.744b).

By means of the Tiantai methods of practice, one purportedly comes to understand that every thought is a representation of the ultimate truth. That applies to both evil and good thoughts, and the practitioner is advised to consciously implement this kind of understanding in the course of his or her daily life. One’s practice need not include conscious and self-centered efforts to sever defilements, for in their essential nature defilements are not different from awakening. By transcending conceptual boundaries and limitations, one naturally comes closer to a state of liberation, as the mind thus freed attains “severance (of defilement) without severing anything.”

Conclusions

This chapter has explored Zhiyi’s ingenious integration of Tiantai doctrine and practice. The aspect of doctrine has been primarily addressed in terms of Zhiyi’s conception of truth and his system of doctrinal classification, while the aspect of practice has been elaborated in terms of his intricate theory of concentration and contemplation. Both aspects are very significant and are central to understanding Zhiyi’s Tiantai philosophy. The system of doctrinal classification legitimizes diverse Buddhist doctrines as being valid and consistent. It also explains their development in terms of the practical need to respond to different spiritual faculties, and in terms of their specific contents, methods, and periods of teaching. The teaching about concentration and contemplation provides guidance for practice, charting a path of practice and realization for the dedicated practitioner, as he or she pursues realization of the ultimate enlightenment of Buddhahood.

Zhiyi’s monumental achievement, namely his systematization and integration of Buddhist doctrine and practice, left an indelible mark on the subsequent development of Chinese Buddhism, and by extension the development of East Asian Buddhism. It helped set a basic theoretical framework and a general course that, to varying degrees, was followed by all later Buddhist schools. The essential features of the major schools of Chinese Buddhism came to be shaped by Zhiyi’s philosophical notions and religious values. The syncretic and systematic nature of his philosophy thus set the tone for essential ways of thinking that came to characterize Chinese Buddhism.

Notes

- 1 The analogy of the sun’s non-discrimination, according to which the sun shines upon different places on earth in accord with their distinctive topographical shapes and the different times of day, is drawn from the passage in the *Huayan Scripture*; see T 9.616b.

- 2 This expression is derived from a passage in the *Nirvana Scripture*; see T 12.449a. “Adults” refers to bodhisattvas, who benefit from the light of the perfection of wisdom teaching; “infants” refers to the followers of the Two Vehicles (*śrāvaka* and *pratyekabuddha*), who cannot make use of these teachings, because they cannot understand their meaning, being only able to comprehend an inferior doctrine. Hence the idea that they are blind-sighted by the strong sun.

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CHAPTER 7

Huayan Explorations of the Realm of Reality

Imre Hamar

The Huayan School and its Place in East Asian Buddhism

The Huayan school is a distinctly East Asian form of Buddhism that reflects unique East Asian understanding and interpretation of Indian Buddhism. It took its name from the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* (or *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*), an important scripture of encyclopedic scope that was translated into Chinese under the title of *Huayan jing*. This school is famous for its elaborate metaphysical and ontological system of thought, which exerted great influences on later developments in Chinese Buddhism and Chinese philosophy. Even Chan Buddhism, known for its emphasis on meditation and practice, is indebted to the profound philosophy of Huayan Buddhism, which purportedly entails a special insight into the world of phenomena from the perspective of an enlightened being. The masters of this school were also prominent figures in society who served as teachers of rulers and aristocrats, and thus played important roles in the social and religious worlds of East Asia.

The Huayan school had its greatest period of flourishing in China during the Tang dynasty (618–907), when the renowned “five patriarchs” of the school were active, although the lineage of five patriarchs was retroactively established only during the Song period (960–1279). The five patriarchs were Du Shun (557–640), Zhiyan (602–668), Fazang (643–712), Chengguan (738–839), and Zongmi (780–841). Du Shun and Zhiyan represent the early period of development, when the basic ideas and concepts of Huayan philosophy were formulated. In the classical period, Fazang further elaborated and systematized the innovations of the early period. Then, during the late period, starting with Chengguan, indigenous Chinese thought and Chan Buddhism also came to exert considerable impact on Huayan philosophy.

Du Shun is traditionally regarded as the first patriarch of the Huayan school, although according to his biographies he did not focus on the study and exegesis of scriptures, including the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, but became famous as a miracle-worker.

When Zhiyan was twelve years old, Du Shun accepted him as his disciple. Zhiyan also studied under various masters associated with the Dilun and Shelun schools. After receiving a broad education in Buddhist doctrine and literature, by chance he selected the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* as his major text for study. Dissatisfied with earlier interpretations, he formulated his own explanations of the scripture's essential teachings, which included such innovative features as the ten mysteries (see below). Fazang, the third patriarch of the Huayan school, who was the recipient of generous patronage from Empress Wu Zetian (r. 690–705), was able to increase the influence of the Huayan school in Chinese society. Fazang was not only a prominent philosopher, but he also played an important role in the political and religious struggles of his age, and was involved in various kinds of religious activities (Chen 2007). Having studied under various Buddhist masters, Chengguan accumulated a vast knowledge of Buddhist doctrine and practice, which in his voluminous commentaries he adeptly used to interpret the teaching of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* (Hamar 2002). Zongmi, the last of the five patriarchs, was not only a patriarch of the Huayan school, but also of the Chan school. Accordingly, he created a synthesis of these two prominent schools.

Another famous master of the Huayan school was Huiyuan (673–743), a learned disciple of Fazang, who was severely criticized by Chengguan because he had modified Fazang's system too radically. It was presumably because of this criticism that he could not be accepted as a member of the orthodox Huayan lineage. An additional eminent figure closely associated with Huayan Buddhism is Li Tongxuan (635–730), a lay hermit who gave an original explanation of the *sūtra*. Li Tongxuan emphasized meditation on the lights emanating from the Buddha, a theme that is prominently featured in the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, and his writings exerted a considerable impact on Song Buddhism (Gimello 1983). During the Song dynasty there was a revival of Huayan studies, spearheaded by the so-called “four masters” (Daoting, Shihui, Xidi, Guanfu), although their main contributions consisted of writing commentaries on the works of famous Tang masters.

The Huayan school also spread to Korea and Japan (Poceski 2004). Ŭisang (625–702), a prominent Korean monk who lived during the Unified Silla period (668–935), went to China and studied the doctrinal system of Huayan under Zhiyan. He kept up his friendship with his fellow disciple Fazang after his return to Korea, as can be seen from their surviving correspondence (Forte 2000). Ŭisang is recognized as the founder of the Hwaŏm (Huayan) school in Korea. During the later part of his monastic career, he established several monasteries in order to spread the Hwaŏm teachings. His most famous work is the *Diagram of the Dharma-dhātu according to the One Vehicle of Hwaŏm*. Another eminent Korean scholar from the same era was Wŏnhyo (617–686), who did not formally join the Hwaŏm school, but was strongly influenced by its ideas. His commentary on the *Awakening of Faith* became a very influential work in East Asian Buddhism. Later, during the Koryŏ dynasty (918–1392), Chinul (1158–1210) created a synthesis of Hwaŏm theory and Sŏn (Chan) practice, which became normative in Korean Buddhism. As a result, Hwaŏm philosophy still plays an important role in Korean Buddhism.

Huayan (or *Kegon* in Japanese) teachings were initially introduced into Japan by the Korean monk Simsang, who in 740 gave a lecture on the *Huayan jing* to Emperor

Shōmu (724–749). Soon after that Rōben (689–773) is said to have established the Kegon school as one of the “eight schools” of Nara Buddhism. Under the influence of Huayan teachings, Emperor Shōmu ordered the casting of a statue of Vairocana Buddha, the principal Buddha of Huayan Buddhism, which was consecrated at Tōdaiji temple in 752. Subsequently, the temple became the main center and the symbol of Kegon Buddhism in Japan. Two famous Kegon monks of the Kamakura period (1185–1333) were Myōe Kōben (1173–1232) and Gyōnen (1240–1321). Li Tongxuan’s writings on meditation on the Buddha’s lights strongly influenced Myōe, who was initially trained as a Shingon monk. His temple, Kōzanji, on the outskirts of Kyoto, became an important center of Kegon Buddhism. Gyōnen was a Kegon monk of great erudition; he was also well-versed in the teachings of other Buddhist schools. His *Outline of the Eight Schools*, which provides a summary of the doctrines of the major Japanese Buddhist schools, remains a popular book to the present day.

The Central Concept: Dependent Arising of the *Dharma-dhātu*

One of the best-known concepts of Huayan Buddhism is “dependent arising of the *dharma-dhātu*.” (The term *dharma-dhātu* by itself is often translated as “realm of reality”). According to tradition, the Buddha originally taught the doctrine of dependent arising (*pratītyasamutpāda*) in order to elucidate the cause of human suffering, which can be traced back to ignorance, and to explain how to eliminate it. In Abhidharma philosophy, dependent arising became the law that coordinates the existence of dharmas, while in Madhyamika philosophy, which denied the real existence of dharmas, it served as a proof for their emptiness. According to Fazang, the third Huayan patriarch, the doctrine of dependent arising became increasingly more refined and perfected. The four main stages of its development, which encompass progression from Small Vehicle to Huayan formulations, are:

1. karma causation (*yegan yuanqi*);
2. *ālayavijñāna* causation (*laiye yuanqi*);
3. *tathagātagarbha* causation (*rulaizang yuanqi*);
4. dependent arising of the *dharma-dhātu* (*fajie yuanqi*) (Lai 1977: 248–59).

The best-known metaphor that illustrates the doctrine of the dependent arising of the *dharma-dhātu* is Indra’s net. Based on a passage in the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, the Indra’s net is described by Francis Cook as follows:

Far away in the heavenly abode of the great god Indra, there is a wonderful net which has been hung by some cunning artificer in such a manner that it stretches out infinitely in all directions. In accordance with the extravagant tastes of deities, the artificer has hung a single glittering jewel in each “eye” of the net, and since the net itself is infinite in dimension, the jewels are infinite in number. There hang the jewels, glittering like stars in the first magnitude, a wonderful sight to behold. If we now arbitrarily select one of these jewels for inspection and look closely at it, we will discover that in its polished surface there are

reflected *all* the other jewels in the net, infinite in number. Not only that, but each of the jewels reflected in this one jewel is also reflecting all the other jewels, so that there is an infinite reflecting process occurring (Cook 1977: 2).

The doctrine of dependent arising of the *dharma-dhātu* is a peculiar Sinitic understanding of the Buddhist theory of causation, which cannot be found in Indian Buddhism. However, the main scripture of the Huayan school, the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, includes passages that express similar ideas, which were interpreted by the Chinese Huayan masters as teachings about the dependent arising of the *dharma-dhātu*. The Huayan masters meticulously explained these passages, and created their own descriptions of the numinous realm of Buddhas and bodhisattvas, which can be attained by practitioners through spiritual cultivation. They formulated a variety of tenets, such as the ten mysteries, the identity and interpenetration of all phenomena, nature origination, and the four *dharma-dhātus*, in order to reveal the hidden relationship among phenomena and to show their ultimate origin. These theoretical constructs were not only intended to provide explanations about the true nature of the phenomenal world, but they also had profound consequences for spiritual cultivation, which ultimately led to the realization of enlightenment. The final goal of these kinds of doctrinal elaborations, we are told, is to trace back the pure source of all phenomena; that is, to achieve a pure mind through Buddhist practice. From a Huayan perspective, once this enlightened state is attained by the practitioner, he or she spontaneously gains an insight into the *dharma-dhātu*, the true way in which all phenomena exist.

Scriptural Basis

The *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*—typically abbreviated to the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, and often translated as the *Flower Adornment Scripture* (or a similar variation)—is one of the most voluminous Mahāyāna scriptures. In its English translation, it is about 1,500 pages long (see Cleary 1993). Customarily this scripture is regarded as the most perfect exposition of the ultimate truth, as realized by Buddha when he attained enlightenment under the *bodhi* tree. The first scene of the sūtra depicts the very moment when Buddha reached enlightenment. With flowers and jewels raining from the sky, innumerable bodhisattvas, spirits, and other creatures arrive at the site of enlightenment to praise the Buddha's supernatural ability to appear in the world, so that in all kinds of ways he can teach the Dharma for the benefit of all beings. Next, the Buddha, without leaving his original place under the *bodhi* tree, is able to manifest himself in a second location, after which, without moving from the first two locations, he appears in a third place. This is repeated until he manifests in seven locations.

In all, in the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, the Buddha preaches at three human locales (the original place of enlightenment, the Hall of Universal Light, and the Anātha-piṇḍa-dasyārāmaḥ) and at four heavenly realms (the heavenly realm of thirty-three gods on the top of Mt. Sumeru, the palace of the god Suyāma, Tuṣita heaven, and the palace of Paranirmita-vaśavartin). This multiplication of the Buddha might be reflected in the title of the sūtra. As Ōtake Susumu has suggested, the term *buddhāvataṃsaka* refers to

the miracle that the Buddha performed in his contest with heretic teachers, namely the miraculous multiplication of his body (Ôtake 2007). This title underlines the profoundly visual and imaginative nature of the text. In the sūtra the Buddha preaches at these seven locations, but in fact he teaches through various bodhisattvas, who gain empowerment through lights emitted from the Buddha's body.

Today there are three major versions of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*. The first Chinese translation, which is usually called the sixty-fascicle *Huayan jing*, was made by Buddhahadra (359–429) in 421. The second Chinese version, the eighty-fascicle *Huayan jing*, was translated by Śikṣānanda (652–710) in 699 (Hamar 2007a). The Tibetan translation, completed in the first quarter of the ninth century, was done by two Indian masters, Jinamitra and Surendrabodhi, and the Tibetan master Ye-shes-sde. The texts of these three major versions are not identical, as new chapters were added to the later translations, and the divisions of chapters also differ.

Several chapters of this major sūtra circulated independently before the appearance of the earliest whole translation, while some chapters, probably due to their popularity, were translated again as independent sūtras even after the translation of the whole sūtra. Regarding the origins of the original text, in Chinese tradition there is a legend about the famous Buddhist philosopher Nāgārjuna bringing the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* to the human realm from the nāgās' palace. Most scholars assume that the sūtra was compiled in Central Asia, probably in Khotan; however, Ôtake Susumu has argued for its Indian origins. Even if we cannot be sure where the sūtra originated, Sakamoto Yukio's and Jan Nattier's arguments that the whole sūtra evolved out of a smaller text, or a proto-*Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, seem very plausible (Nattier 2007). The first recension of this smaller version of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* was translated by the famous translator Lokakṣema (b. 147) in the latter part of the second century CE, under the title of *Dousha jing*, while the second recension, titled *Basic Activity of the Bodhisattvas*, was translated by the layman Zhi Qian (fl. 222–252).

All chapters of the sūtra revolve around two central topics: eulogy of the Buddha's unique abilities and his appearance in the world as a teacher, and description of the bodhisattva's career. The two most famous chapters of the sūtra—preserved in Sanskrit as independent texts, titled the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* and the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra*—are concerned with the second theme. The *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* describes the bodhisattva path, from the initial vow to liberate all living beings from suffering to the final attachment of enlightenment, in terms of ten distinct stages. These ten stages are named: (1) happiness, (2) detachment from defilements, (3) emitting light, (4) radiant wisdom, (5) difficult to overcome, (6) presence, (7) distant journey, (8) not moving, (9) excellent wisdom, (10) Dharma-cloud. The *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra* depicts the spiritual quest of a young boy named Sudhana, who visits fifty-three spiritual friends that come from all walks of life. Finally he enters the tower of Maitreya, the future Buddha, where he has an insight into the realm of reality.

Another important chapter of the sūtra describes the Lotus-womb realm, which is the pure land of Vairocana Buddha. Like the earth in Buddhist cosmology, the ocean of this pure land depends for its support on wind-circles. A giant lotus flower that includes this pure land grows out of the ocean, which is why it is called Lotus-womb realm. This world is described as square, flat, surrounded by diamond mountains, and

inhabited by living beings. The whole realm includes innumerable Buddha-lands, and the sūtra lists the names of some of its lands, oceans, and Buddhas. In this way, the Lotus-womb realm itself reaches cosmic dimensions. This chapter played a key role in establishing Huayan practice, as groups of believers took a vow to be reborn in the Lotus-womb realm.

Another notable chapter from the scripture, “Manifestation of Tathāgata,” is remarkable in terms of its Buddhology. The chapter clearly states that the main reason why Buddha appeared in the world was to benefit all living beings. In order to accomplish this aim, he had recourse to all kinds of skillful methods or expedient means (*upāya*). The chapter describes ten aspects of the Tathāgata (Buddha) and his presence in the world: (1) the characteristics of the manifestation of *Tathāgata*; (2) the body of *Tathāgata*; (3) the voice of *Tathāgata*; (4) the mind of *Tathāgata*; (5) the realm of *Tathāgata*; (6) the deeds of *Tathāgata*; (7) the perfect enlightenment of *Tathāgata*; (8) the turning of the *Dharma* wheel by *Tathāgata*; (9) the *parinirvāṇa* of *Tathāgata*; and (10) the merits originating from seeing, hearing, and being associated with *Tathāgata*. Takasaki Jikido has proposed that this section of the sūtra is a precursor of the influential *tathāgatagarbha* theory, which posits the notion that all living beings are endowed with a capacity for Buddhahood (Takasaki 1958). Although the term *tathāgatagarbha* does not appear in this chapter, the text stresses that all living beings have the wisdom of the Buddha, but due to their defilements they are not able to see it. The Buddha’s main mission is to reveal this fact to living beings, and thus help them recover their true nature.

Further, children of the Buddha, there is no place where the wisdom of the Tathāgata does not reach. Wherefore? There is not a single sentient being that is not fully possessed of the wisdom of Tathāgata. It is only due to their false thinking, fallacies, and attachments that beings fail to realize this. If they could only abandon their false thoughts, then the all-encompassing wisdom, the spontaneous wisdom, and the unobstructed wisdom will clearly manifest themselves.

Children of the Buddha, just as if there was a great sūtra, as extensive as the great universe, in which are written down all phenomena in the great universe. That is to say, in it is written about the phenomena in the great enclosing iron mountains, as extensively as the great enclosing iron mountains; it is written about the phenomena on earth, as extensively as the earth; it is written about the phenomena in the small universe, as extensively as the small universe. In the same vein, all phenomena—be they of the four continents, or the great oceans, Sumeru mountains, the palaces of the gods on earth, the palaces of the gods in the heavens of the realm of desire, the palaces in the realm of form, and the palaces of the formless realm—are written down to an equal length. Even though this sūtra is as extensive as the great universe, it can be fully comprised within a single particle of dust. As it is with one particle of dust, so it is with all particles of dust.

Then a person with perfect wisdom, who has perfected the pure heavenly eye, seeing that great sūtra inside a particle of dust, without being of even the slightest benefit to all sentient beings, thinks, “I should exert myself to break that particle of dust and take out the sūtra so that it would be of benefit to sentient beings.” Having thought thus, he contrives an expedient method to break the particle of dust and take out the great sūtra, thus enabling all sentient beings to obtain benefits. As he does with one particle of dust, it should be known that he does so with all particles of dust (Cheng Chien 1993: 105–06).

Pure and Impure Dependent Arising of the Dharma-dhātu

The study and exegesis of the *Daśabhūmika* chapter of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* were very popular in sixth-century China, especially among scholars associated with the Dilun school, who studied Vasubandhu's commentary on this scripture. The Dilun and Shelun schools, which flourished at the time, formulated early Chinese interpretations of central Yogācāra doctrines. They were especially concerned with explaining the relationship between the *ālayavijñāna* (storehouse consciousness), understood as the source of all phenomena that are manifested in the world, and the *tathagatagarbha*, the Buddha-nature that is inherent in all living beings. The main issue at stake was whether, in the final analysis, reality is pure or impure.

One passage from the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* was interpreted in Vasubandhu's commentary as a clear statement in favor of the Yogācāra notion that the outside world evolves out of the mind: "The three realms are illusion, created only by the mind; the twelve links of the chain of dependent arising rely on the mind" (T 9.558c). Even if it is dubious that the original meaning of the *sūtra* had anything to do with Yogācāra teachings, thanks to Vasubandhu's interpretation this has become an influential view within Chinese Buddhism (Hamar 2010b). Jingying Huiyuan (523–592), the famous Dilun master, wrote a controversial explanation of this passage. At one point, he states that the mind mentioned in the *sūtra* refers to the deluded mind, as the twelve links of the chain of dependent arising are set into motion by the mind, and this process results in all kinds of suffering experienced by living beings.

The *sūtra* says that the twelve links of the chain of dependent arising are created by only one mind. "Created by only mind" means that all forms and objects arise depending on the deluded mind. It is just like all objects in a dream, which arise dependent on the dreaming mind (T 44.550a).

However, in another place, Huiyuan also stresses the absolute nature of the mind, when defining the absolute aspect of dependent arising:

The absolute is the essence of the previous dependent arising based on deluded thinking. Reaching the limit of the original nature, everything is collected only by the absolute aspect of dependent arising. Eventually, there is no delusion outside the absolute that could be attained. This is the principle of the absolute aspect of dependent arising. As the [*Daśa*]-*bhūmika-sūtra* says: "All twelve links of the chain of dependent arising are created by one mind." "All is created by mind" means that all is created by the absolute mind (T 44.551a).

Huayan exegetes were indebted to early masters associated with Chinese offshoots of the Yogācāra tradition, as these kinds of speculations about the nature of ultimate reality became foundations of their philosophy. Zhiyan, the second Huayan patriarch, defended these early Chinese forms of Yogācāra doctrine against the challenge posed by the new Yogācāra teachings that were introduced by Xuanzang (600–664), the famous pilgrim and translator, who did not recognize any pure entity behind the world of phenomena, and who also denied the universality of Buddhahood (Hamar 2010b).

While Zhiyan inherited some aspects of earlier views about the nature of the mind, as expressed by Dilun interpretations of the famous canonical statement “three realms are mind-only,” he attributed both pure and impure qualities to the mind. In addition to the earlier understanding of this statement, he also added a discussion of the dependent arising of the *dharma-dhātu*, which became a central tenet of Huayan Buddhism. Consequently, all Huayan exegetes came to regard this doctrine as the most important topic expounded in the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*. In his writings Zhiyan summarizes this kind of dependent arising from two points of view. The first is an explanation of dependent arising from the perspective of ordinary and defiled phenomena (*dharma*), while the second is a treatment of dependent arising from the perspective of pure enlightenment (*bodhi*). This interpretation seems to be in harmony with the early doctrine of dependent arising, which describes how suffering originates from ignorance, and how liberation from the chain of *samsāra* can be attained through the elimination of ignorance.

Within Zhiyan’s scheme, defiled dependent arising has two aspects: the dependent arising of one mind (*yuanqi yixin*), and the support of one mind (*yichi yixin*). The dependent arising of one mind is further divided into three aspects. The first aspect, dependent arising of the absolute and the false (*zhenwang yuanqi*), indicates the lack of distinction between the absolute and the false when the *ālayavijñāna* creates the phenomenal world. The second aspect, inclusion of the fundamental into the derivative (*sheben congmo*), emphasizes the process through which the *ālayavijñāna* creates the phenomenal world, while the third aspect, inclusion of the derivative into the fundamental (*shemo congben*), underlines the existence of the absolute mind behind the phenomenal world. The meaning of the second aspect of defiled dependent arising, the support of one mind, is that the six and the seventh consciousnesses (within the Yogācāra typology of eight consciousnesses) are formed on basis of the *ālayavijñāna*.

While the impure dependent arising of the *dharma-dhātu* elaborates the manifestation of the phenomenal world from the pure mind, the pure dependent arising of the *dharma-dhātu* describes how one can realize the pure source that created all phenomena. Pure dependent arising has four aspects: (1) innate (*benyou*); (2) innate and generated by cultivation (*benyou xiusheng*); (3) generated by cultivation (*xiusheng*); and (4) generated by cultivation and innate (*xiusheng benyou*) (Gimello 1976a: 437–40). From the perspective of early Buddhism, pure dependent arising is a reversal of the twelve links that form the chain of dependent arising, namely the cessation of suffering through awakening.

The first aspect, innate awakening, means that the essence of pure dependent arising is ineffable. All living beings are endowed with Buddha-nature; therefore, they all have a capacity to become Buddhas. The second aspect shows that pure dharmas (qualities) are not only innate, but they can also be generated by spiritual cultivation. Even if practice is based on various conditions, and thus cannot be absolute like the innate Buddha-nature, the wisdom realized through practice is closely associated with the absolute nature; in that sense, we cannot say that there is something new born out of cultivation. The third aspect refers to all pure dharmas, like faith, that are generated by means of spiritual cultivation. In contrast with the previous aspect, where the goal of practice (i.e. the realization of wisdom) and its relationship with original enlightenment

are discussed, here the pure dharmas generated before the attainment of enlightenment are emphasized. The fourth aspect reveals that even if living beings are endowed with the *tathāgatagarbha*, they are not aware of their great capacities. In that sense, the Buddha-nature is so well hidden that it seems to be not existent. Only when non-discriminating wisdom is realized, after a process of spiritual cultivation, does this hidden and absolute nature become manifested.

As we saw above, Zhiyan meticulously studied various aspects of the innate Buddha-nature and of enlightenment realized by cultivation. He writes that in the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* only the two aspects of “generated by cultivation” and “generated by cultivation and innate” are introduced, while the other two aspects, which underscore that the Buddha-nature is innate and the wisdom realized through practice is not different from the Buddha-nature, are represented in the “Nature-origination of the Tathāgata” (i.e. “Manifestation of Tathāgata”) chapter. Here Zhiyan touches upon a very important Mahāyāna topic that is often discussed in Chinese Buddhism. If all living beings are endowed with Buddha-nature, in other words if they are all enlightened from the beginning, why should they bother with any kind of spiritual cultivation? Even if Buddhahood is attained, nothing has been really attained, so there is no real need for any kind of spiritual cultivation. This kind of rhetoric might have been common at times within some parts of the Chan movement, but the scholastically oriented Huayan school took a clear stance on this issue. Spiritual cultivation is necessary: it cannot be given up because of the inherent Buddha-nature. Zhiyan makes it clear that the *tathāgatagarbha* is only latent, and spiritual cultivation is the way to make it visible and efficacious. The other issue raised by Zhiyan is the relationship between the inherent Buddha-nature and the wisdom that is realized through cultivation. Even if Zhiyan seems to assign original enlightenment to a higher position, he argues that the wisdom that grows out of the phenomenal world in fact shares the same nature with original enlightenment.

Phenomena and Principle

Du Shun’s main philosophical contributions to Huayan Buddhism are elaborated in a work entitled *Discernments of the Dharma-dhātu according to the Avatamsaka* (*Huayan fajie guanmen*). This treatise is divided into three sections: (1) Discernment of true emptiness (*zhenkong guanfa*); (2) Discernment of the mutual non-obstruction of principle and phenomena (*lishi wuai guan*); and (3) Discernment of total pervasion and accommodation (*zhoubian hanrong guan*) (Gimello 1976b). The first discernment clarifies the important Mahāyāna tenet that all dharmas do not have essential existence, being empty of self-nature. Here Du Shun refutes three erroneous views regarding the identity of form and emptiness. He explains that emptiness is not identical with annihilation, it does not exist as a quality of a thing, and it is not an entity apart from form. Du Shun’s final conclusion is that form and emptiness are “non-obstructive.” Finally, Du Shun encourages his readers to practice meditation in order to realize the identity of form and emptiness. This opening discussion remains within the conceptual framework of Indian Buddhism.

However, the second section of the text introduces a new nomenclature, which revolves around two key terms: phenomena (*shi*) and principle (*li*). Du Shun explains the relationship between the two in terms of ten different aspects:

1. principle pervades phenomena;
2. each phenomenon pervades principle;
3. phenomena are formed by principle;
4. phenomena can reveal principle;
5. phenomena are sublated by principle;
6. phenomena can conceal principle;
7. true principle is identical with phenomena;
8. each phenomenon is identical with principle;
9. true principle is not a phenomenon;
10. phenomena are not principle.

By using these new terms, Du Shun's treatise was able to introduce new perspectives and nuances into the discussion of Mahāyāna doctrine. First of all, the term "principle" lacks some of the negative connotations associated with the notion of emptiness, which can cause problems during religious practice. Hence, it provides a more affirmative view of the reality that the practitioner is supposed to perceive or experience. In early Buddhism the theory of dharmas served as a useful method that refuted the notion that there is a substantial ego. This theory asserted that the various dharmas constitute reality, and no substantial ego is to be found. However, Mahāyāna Buddhism went one step further, as it also refuted the existence of dharmas. The substitution of the term form (*rūpa*), which refers to one of the dharmas, with the term phenomena, reflects a clear shift in Mahāyāna philosophy. Not only are the basic terms redefined, but the relationship between them is also reassessed. In addition to the identity of the two terms, phenomena and principle, we learn that they also simultaneously pervade, constitute, reveal, conceal, and abolish each other.

The third section of Du Shun's treatise, "Discernment of Total Pervasion and Accommodation," is divided into ten specific discernments:

1. principle as phenomena;
2. phenomena as principle;
3. each phenomenon subsumes the mutual non-obstruction of principle and phenomena;
4. the diffuse and the local are mutually non-obstructive;
5. the broad and the narrow are mutually non-obstructive;
6. pervading and including are mutually non-obstructive;
7. containing and entering are mutually non-obstructive;
8. interpenetration is without obstruction;
9. coexistence is without obstruction;
10. universal interfusion is without obstruction.

From the third discernment onward, the term principle is dropped and only phenomena are discussed. This shift underlines the essential idea that phenomena inherently

include principle. In addition, the third discernment also explains the relationship between phenomena by showing that all phenomena mutually interpenetrate with each other.

Six Aspects and Ten Mysteries

There is a story about Zhiyan meeting a strange monk, who advised him to meditate in seclusion on the six aspects (*liu xiang*) of the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*. Zhiyan allegedly accepted this advice; as a result, he was eventually able to understand all teachings (Gimello 1976a: 46–56, 130–212). The six aspects, which are one of the best-known Huayan doctrines, describe the dependent arising of the *dharma-dhātu*. They explain how each phenomenon can contain (*zong*) all others, while remaining distinct (*bie*); can be similar (*tong*) to all others, while being different (*yi*); and can establish (*cheng*) the whole, as well as destroy (*huai*) the whole. This shows how, in these six ways, each phenomenon is simultaneously related to every other phenomenon.

Another notable example of the Huayan school's comprehensive and creative systematization of Buddhist teachings is the doctrine of "ten mysterious gates," which was introduced by Zhiyan in his work *Ten Mysterious Gates of the Unitary Vehicle of the Huayan* (Cleary 1983: 125–46). The foundation of this doctrine seems to be based on the aforementioned ten principles presented in the "Discernment of Total Pervasion and Accommodation" section of Du Shun's treatise; the doctrine was further developed by Fazang.

The ten mysteries are meant to explicate the relationship that obtains among various dharmas (or phenomena). The last chapter of Fazang's seminal treatise on the Five Teachings (Liu 1979: 431–44; Cook 1970: 494–527), which discusses this topic, starts by establishing ten pairs of dharmas:

1. teaching and meaning;
2. principle and phenomena;
3. understanding and practice;
4. cause and result;
5. person and dharmas;
6. differences among objects and religious practices;
7. dharma and wisdom, master and disciple;
8. two kinds of karmic reward of the primary (Buddha) and the attendants (bodhisattvas);
9. capacity (of living beings) and manifestation (of Buddhas and bodhisattvas in accord with capacities);
10. direct and indirect methods of teaching, essence, and function.

These ten pairs of dharmas are said to totally include infinite dharmas. Next, Fazang explains the relationship of these pairs from ten different perspectives, which he calls the "ten mysterious gates":

1. simultaneous inclusion and correspondence;
2. one and many are mutually inclusive and different;

3. all dharmas are mutually identical freely;
4. the realm of Indra's net;
5. subtle dharmas include others through their establishment;
6. hidden and manifested are accomplished simultaneously;
7. all dharmas have the qualities of pure and impure;
8. the separated dharmas of the ten times are completed variously;
9. excellent establishment of all dharmas through the transformation of consciousness-only;
10. reaching understanding about the truth manifested through phenomena.

The first aspect, simultaneous inclusion and correspondence, is a general feature of the dharmas, while the other nine aspects are all particular descriptions. The first aspect shows that all dharmas simultaneously correspond to and include each other, without any confusion. The meaning of the second aspect is that the one and many mutually contain each other, yet they are different. As the second aspect emphasizes that the dharmas can penetrate each other (*xiangru*), the third aspect underscores the mutual identity of all dharmas (*xiangji*). The fourth aspect, the realm of Indra's net, serves as a symbol of the infinite causal relations among dharmas. This aspect does not really add any new content to the first three aspects, but instead clarifies them by using a well-known symbol derived from Buddhist literature. The fifth aspect indicates that subtle and tiny dharmas can contain all other dharmas, just as a single thought-instant can include all dharmas, or the tip of a single hair can include all Buddha-lands; moreover, they all play an important role in establishing all other dharmas.

The sixth aspect reveals that a dharma can be manifested and hidden simultaneously; depending on whether it is viewed from the aspect of determining other dharmas, or being determined by other dharmas, it can be manifested or hidden. The seventh aspect defines the relationship among dharmas in terms of their pure or mixed nature. As dharmas both contain and are contained, they are called "storehouse" (*zang*). When a dharma determines other dharmas with its essence, it is called pure, and when it is determined by other dharmas, it is called mixed. The eighth aspect extends the principle of mutual interpenetration and identity to the ten times. Past, present, and future are each divided into past, present, and future, thus we have nine times. The tenth time is their totality. As all dharmas are located within the ten times, the principles of identity and interpenetration also apply to the ten times.

The ninth aspect underscores the origin of all dharmas, which are established through the transformation of consciousness-only. The use of the word "excellent" is meant to confirm the final purity of all dharmas, as their existence can be traced back to the absolute mind. Here, Fazang explicitly relates Huayan doctrine to the teachings of the old school of Yogācāra in China, which argued for the universal existence of immaculate consciousness. The final aspect points out that the practitioner can gain insight into ultimate reality by understanding that all dharmas originate from the absolute mind.

The ten aspects explained above are sometimes called the "old ten mysteries" (*gu shixuan*). Fazang later made some alterations in regard to the names and the ordering of the mysterious gates, and the revised nomenclature came to be known as the "new

ten mysteries" (*xin shixuan*). Basically he dropped the seventh and the ninth mysteries from the initial list. Instead, he introduced two new mysteries: the freedom and non-obstruction of breadth and narrowness, and the primary and secondary are perfectly bright and embody all qualities. The former is parallel with the eighth mystery in the old scheme; while the earlier version emphasizes time, space becomes the main focus in the newer version. The latter clarifies how we can select any one dharma in the universe and regard it as primary (which makes other dharmas secondary). All dharmas can also change their roles, and thus can have all qualities.

Nature Origination

As we saw above, the ten mysterious gates doctrine described the basic pattern of relationships among all dharmas. While the ninth gate of the "old ten mysteries" showed how all dharmas ultimately originate from the absolute mind, this aspect was not emphasized in the "new ten mysteries." This purportedly important feature of phenomenal existence, however, was addressed by the doctrine of nature origination (*xingqi*). The term "nature origination" was adopted from the title of the thirty-second chapter of the sixty-fascicle version of *Huayan jing*, which relates the Buddha's manifestation in the world.

In explaining the essential meaning of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, Huayan exegetes provided well-defined interpretations of this term (Hamar 2007c). In his commentary on the sūtra, Zhiyan gives this terse definition of nature origination: "In the compound *xingqi*, *xing* means substance, while *qi* means appearance [of the substance] on the ground of the mind" (Gimello 1976a: 443). Later Zhiyan further elaborated on the definition of this important concept:

Nature origination clarifies the limit of the *dharmadhātu* of dependent arising of the one vehicle. It is originally the ultimate, and it is detached from cultivation and production. Why? Because it is detached from (all) marks. It originates from great understanding and great practice. It is in the *bodhi* mind, which is detached from discrimination. Thus it is called origination. As this is the nature of dependent origination, it is spoken of as origination. Origination is non-origination, and non-origination is nature origination (T 45.580c).

Here Zhiyan explains that this kind of origination is different from the dependent arising of the *dharmadhātu*, which was described by the ten mysteries. This kind of dependent arising does not depend on external conditions. It is also not realized by means of the usual forms of spiritual cultivation that are based on discriminative knowledge, which determines what to do (and not do) along the Buddhist path. It has a direct association with the enlightened mind, and it is ineffable. It is not realized as a goal that can be reached at the level of cultivation, but becomes manifested spontaneously due to previous practice and understanding. When all obstacles are cleared, this nature becomes manifested. Here we are essentially dealing with a definition of the *tathāgatagarbha*, the inherently existent Buddha-nature that is present in all living beings. Since this nature does not come into being as something that has not existed

before, we cannot really define it as a real origination; in fact, it should be regarded as non-origination.

In his explanations of nature origination, Fazang does not simply claim, like some scriptures that deal with the *tathāgatagarbha*, that the causal aspect of the Buddha-nature is inherent in all living beings, while the result aspect is to be realized through cultivation. He emphasizes that the result aspect is also manifested. This kind of interpretation has its scriptural basis in the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, which teaches the essential sameness or unity of mind, Buddha, and living beings:

As is the mind, so is the Buddha;
As the Buddha, so living beings;
Know that Buddha and mind
Are in essence inexhaustible (Cleary 1993: 452).

Traditionally, Mahāyāna Buddhism teaches that all living beings are endowed with Buddha-nature, but inanimate objects are excluded. However, Fazang states that the meaning of Buddha-nature and nature origination is extended to also include inanimate objects. Since all phenomena can eventually be traced back to the absolute mind, all phenomena, animate and inanimate, share the same basic features.

In the teachings of three vehicles, there is only the causal aspect of the [Buddha] nature in the minds of living beings; there is no feature of resulting function. According to the perfect [Huayan] teaching, the resulting dharma of Vairocana includes the realm of living beings. Therefore, there are also resulting features in the bodies of living beings. . . . According to the teachings of three vehicles, the absolute nature pervades animate beings and does not pervade inanimate objects, since the enlightened Buddha-nature is limited only to animate beings . . . According to the perfect [Huayan] teaching, the Buddha-nature and nature origination pervade both animate beings and inanimate objects (T 35.405c-406a).

The fundamental principle that all phenomena originate from the absolute mind is an important prerequisite for establishing the mutual identity and interpenetration of all dharmas, which is described by the ten mysteries. The reason why a tiny thing (or phenomenon) can include the whole universe is that this tiny thing is endowed with the absolute nature.

The absolute nature includes and pervades everything. That which is originated [by this nature] also contains everything. The part and the whole are unlimited, all partial places are complete. There is not one thing that does not include the infinite *dharmadhātu*. Therefore, [the absolute nature] pervades all times, all places, all dharmas, etc. It is like Indra's net: there is nothing that is not included in it (T 35.406a).

The Four Dharma-dhātus

As we saw above, Fazang explained phenomenal existence from two points of view. First, he elucidated the harmonious coexistence of phenomena by the doctrine of ten mysteries. Second, via the doctrine of nature origination, he explained the identity and

interpenetration of all phenomena in terms of their common origination from the absolute mind. The fourth Huayan patriarch, Chengguan, formulated a synthesis of these two theories, which is his famous theory of four *dharmadhātus*.

The four *dharmadhātus* are: (1) the *dharmadhātu* of phenomena; (2) the *dharmadhātu* of principle; (3) the *dharmadhātu* of non-obstruction of phenomena and principle; and (4) the *dharmadhātu* of non-obstruction of phenomena. Chengguan explains the four *dharmadhātus* in terms of the various meanings of the term *dhātu*. He states that *dhātu* has two basic meanings: first it refers to something that is divided, and second it refers to its nature. By means of a philological analysis of the term, he relates the *dharmadhātu* to phenomena, because they are divided, as well as to principle, which he equates with the Buddha-nature or the absolute nature. As this one term includes both meanings, the two meanings intermingle, which is the *dharmadhātu* of phenomena and principle. Chengguan also emphasizes that these two aspects, phenomenal existence and absolute nature, cannot be separated: they cannot exist without each other. Finally, Chengguan affirms that the *dharmadhātu* of non-obstruction of phenomena can be established because all phenomena are endowed with the absolute nature.

Dharma means upholding the law. *Dhātu* has two meanings. From the perspective of phenomena, it refers to something that is divided (*fen*), because phenomena are divided and different. On the other hand, it denotes the nature (*xing*), from the perspective of the *dharmadhātu* of principle, because the nature of all dharmas is immutable. These two [meanings] intermingle, and thus the *dharmadhātu* of phenomena and principle comes into being. Phenomena are produced as they are attached to the principle, while the principle is manifested through phenomena. If phenomena and principle cease to exist together, then both phenomena and principle perish. If phenomena and principle arise together, then they are permanent phenomena and permanent principle. The fourth [*dharmadhātu*] is the *dharmadhātu* of non-obstruction of phenomena, which means that the principle includes phenomena (T 36.707c).

By Chengguan's lifetime, Chan Buddhism had come to exert considerable influence on Chinese social and religious life. Chengguan himself studied under several Chan masters, and Chan influences are reflected in his writings. These influences help explain the modification of the *dharmadhātu* theory that we find in later Huayan thought. While Fazang emphasized the mutual identity and interpenetration of all phenomena, Chengguan and his disciple Zongmi, who was not only the fifth Huayan patriarch but also a Chan master, emphasized the origin of all phenomena, namely the absolute pure source, and its importance in establishing the harmonious coexistence of all phenomena. As meditation was an essential practice in Chan Buddhism, Chengguan also formulated a special form of Huayan meditation, the Huayan samādhi, by establishing ten levels of discernment and relating them to the four *dharmadhātus*.

1. marks return to reality;
2. realization of reality by extinction of marks;
3. non-obstruction of marks and reality;
4. marks include things originated;
5. conditionally originated things are mutually interfused;

6. contents of tiny things;
7. mutual identity of one and many;
8. interrelatedness of Indra's net
9. perfect interfusion of host and guests;
10. equality of the result-ocean (T 36.271a).

Chengguan explains that these ten levels of discernment contain the four *dharma-dhātu*s. The first and second discernments correlate with the *dharma-dhātu* of principle; the third discernment is equated with the *dharma-dhātu* of non-obstruction of phenomena and principle; the fourth discernment is equated with the *dharma-dhātu* of phenomena; the fifth to ninth discernments correlate with the *dharma-dhātu* of non-obstruction of phenomena and phenomena; finally, the tenth discernment links together the four *dharma-dhātu*s.

Impact of Indigenous Chinese Thought

Notable changes were also introduced in Huayan philosophy under the influence of indigenous Chinese thought, especially during the later part of the Tang era. Many citations from Chinese classics—such as *Laozi*, *Zhuangzi*, *Lunyu* (Analects of Confucius), and *Yijing* (Book of Change)—can be found in Chengguan's sub-commentary on the *Huayan jing*. Notwithstanding the presence of copious citations, Chengguan negates any kind of parallelism between Buddhist and indigenous Chinese thought, declaring that he borrows only the words of the Chinese classics, but not their meanings (Hamar 1999). He regards the five constant virtues (*wuchang*)—benevolence, righteousness, propriety, knowledge, and sincerity—as the cardinal principle of Confucianism, while spontaneity (*ziran*) and causality (*yinyuan*) play analogous functions in Daoism and Buddhism, respectively. According to Chengguan, only Buddhism provides a correct explanation about the origination of phenomena. The *Laozi* suggests an erroneous causality (*xieyin*), by claiming that the Dao originates the One. The *Yijing* also makes a similar mistake, when it proposes that *yin* and *yang* create the myriad things. The *Zhuangzi*, on the other hand, commits the error of acausality (*wuyin*), when it claims that phenomena come into being spontaneously.

Despite such criticisms, the influence of *Laozi* is obvious in this definition of the *dharma-dhātu*, which comes from one of Chengguan's commentaries:

The *dharma-dhātu* is not a *dhātu* (realm) and not a non-*dhātu*; it is not a dharma and not a non-dharma. It is unnameable, but as it is necessary to give it a name, it is called the "non-obstructed *dharma-dhātu*." It is quiescent, void, and vast. It is profound, and it includes all forms of existence (*wanyou*). It is the essence of One Mind (*yixin ti*), transcending existence and non-existence. It is not born and it does not perish. If its beginning and end cannot be sought, how can its inside and outside be found? (XZJ 7.498a)

The importance of the term *dharma-dhātu* in Chengguan's thought is indicated by another explanation of the term, which is given at the very beginning of his two

seminal works, his commentary and sub-commentary on the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*. “Going and returning have no limits; movement and quiescence have one source. It includes all subtleties, and yet it has surplus; it transcends speech and thinking, and thus it is outstanding. This is the *dharma-dhātu*!” (T 35.503a).

It is not difficult to recognize similarities between this passage and the first section of *Laozi*. Chengguan even cites the term “all subtleties.” However, the subject of that sentence is not the Dao, but the *dharma-dhātu*. This sentence is painstakingly explained by Chengguan in a long section that appears in his sub-commentary, the length of which comes to almost two pages in the Taishō edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon (see T 36.1b-2c). It is perhaps worth reading some relevant portions, as they shed light on the ways in which Daoist expressions absorbed Buddhist meanings or connotations.

In explaining this sentence, Chengguan employs three key rubrics that are featured in the *Awakening of Faith in Mahāyāna*, an apocryphal Chinese text that had great impact on the development of Chinese Buddhism. These are essence (*ti*), feature (*xiang*), and function (*yong*); collectively they are called the “three kinds of greatness” (*sanda*). Each of them illustrates one aspect of the *dharma-dhātu*. The first aspect is the function of the *dharma-dhātu*, which is the destiny of living beings, determined by their knowledge or ignorance of the *dharma-dhātu*. If somebody is deluded about the meaning of the *dharma-dhātu*, he or she will be reborn in one of the six destinies (god, demigod, human, animal, hungry ghost, or denizen of hell). However, if a person can realize the real meaning of the *dharma-dhātu*, he or she can return to the One Mind. This first aspect resembles the original meaning of dependent arising, in the sense that it has two directions. First, it shows how living beings are reborn in the cycle of birth and death due to their ignorance. Second, it also shows the reverse process, the way living beings can eliminate suffering and break the chain of transmigration.

Going and returning have no limits . . . It has three aspects. . . . The first aspect is explained from the perspective of both delusion and enlightenment. . . . If somebody is deluded concerning the dharma-dhātu, he goes in the direction of the six destinies. This is going and movement. If somebody becomes enlightened concerning the dharma-dhātu, he returns to the One Mind. This is coming and quiescence. These are the functions (yong) of the dharma-dhātu. . . . The second aspect is explained from the perspective of delusion (wang). It has two meanings. When going and coming are discussed vertically, the past has no beginning, while the future has no end. There is no former or later. When they are discussed horizontally, the basis of delusion is great and limitless. . . . The third aspect is explained from the perspective of returning to the source (T 36.1b-c).

The second of the three aspects explained in the above passage establishes that the two kinds of directions ultimately share the same essence. Even though delusion and enlightenment represent two distinct gates, their source is the same. On the other hand, while phenomenal existence is regarded as moving, the essence of phenomena, their emptiness, is understood as quiescence. Ultimately, the discernible features of all phenomena and their emptiness can be traced back to one source.

Movement and quiescence have one source. This is the essence of the *dharma-dhātu*. The first aspect is explained from the perspective of both delusion and enlightenment. Movement is equated with going, while quiescence is equated with returning. Although delusion/moving and enlightenment/returning are two distinct gates, the objects of delusion and the real nature have one source, not two. The nondual source is the essence. Second, there is the aspect of delusion. Here movement is equated with going and returning, as only the directions are different. Quiescence is the essence, i.e. emptiness, as the [nature of all] mutually originated [dharmas] is stillness. . . . Within every movement, quiescence is to be sought, so that although there is movement, it is eternal quiescence. Therefore, movement and quiescence have different names, but their sources are not two. This nondual source is the one essence. Third, there is the aspect of returning to the source. To benefit oneself is quiescence, and to benefit others is movement. The two kinds of benefits lead together to converting and non-converting, so that the one source that is the essence of the *dharma-dhātu* is not lost. . . . Movement and quiescence are non-obstructed. This is the one source (T36.2a).

Next, we learn that the original source of all qualities of the true nature is the *dharma-dhātu*. Within the Huayan school's best-known doctrinal taxonomy, the "common teaching" refers to *tathāgatarbha* doctrine, according to which the *tathāgatarbha* is endowed with various positive qualities. That represents an essential modification of the basic Mahāyāna notion that everything is empty. However, the "distinct teaching," namely the highest teaching that is unique to the Huayan tradition, emphasizes the interrelatedness of all phenomena.

It includes all subtleties and yet it has surplus. It is the greatness of the various characteristics of the *dharma-dhātu*. Inside the darkness, all kind of wonders can be found. The pure *dharma-dhātu* is dark, and yet able to contain the immeasurable qualities of the nature. The greatness of the subtle characteristic is to be found in that which is contained. The characteristics are dependent on the nature, and there is nothing that the nature does not include. Thus the expression "to contain" is used. There is nothing outside of the nature-essence, even as the feature-qualities have various names. A category that has a name cannot pervade an essence that does not have anything outside. That is why the expression "it has surplus" is used. . . . The greatness of the characteristics has two aspects. From the perspective of non-emptiness, it refers to the immeasurable qualities of the nature. This is an interpretation according to the common teaching (*tongjiao*). From the perspective of the non-obstruction of all phenomena, it refers to the self-completeness of the characteristics of the ten mysterious gates (*shixuan*). This is an interpretation according to the distinct teaching (*biejiao*) (T 36.2a-b).

At this point, Chengguan goes on to cite the first section of *Laozi*, as he introduces the term "one true *dharma-dhātu*," which according to him refers to the source of all phenomena.

Explanation: according to this meaning, voidness and spontaneity (*xuwu ziran*) are profound subtleties. In addition, when all traces are erased, it is called "mystery upon mystery." This is desirelessness on the top of desirelessness (*wuyu yu wuyu*). The myriad

things originate from this. Thus, the text says “the gate of all subtleties.” Here we borrow the words, but not the meaning. According to our interpretation, the one true *dharmadhātu* (*yi zhen fajie*) is the essence of all subtleties. The characteristics that are identical with the essence are referred to as “all subtleties” (T 36.2b).

From this we can see that, in the course of explicating the metaphysical and ontological aspects of the *dharmadhātu* theory, Chengguan borrowed words and concepts from Chinese texts such as *Laozi*. We can perhaps even surmise that indigenous Chinese thinking had considerable impact on his interpretation of the concept of *dharmadhātu*.

Cosmogonic Map for Buddhist Practice

As a disciple of Chengguan, Zongmi was indebted to his master in many respects. However, he also made his own contributions to the development of Huayan Buddhism. First of all, he included non-Buddhist teachings, namely Confucianism and Daoism, in his taxonomy of teachings (*panjiao*), thereby acknowledging their relative merits (Gregory 1995). In addition, as a Chan patriarch, he highlighted the role of practice in Huayan Buddhism. To that end, he elaborated on the concept of *dharmadhātu* from the perspective of Buddhist practice.

By combining Chengguan’s concept of one true *dharmadhātu* with the teachings of the *Awakening of Faith*, Zongmi proposed a five-stage theory of phenomenal evolution (Gregory 1991: 173–87). This theory explains how the world of defilements, as it is experienced by ordinary people, evolves out of an intrinsically pure and enlightened ontological source. Despite its theoretical orientation, Zongmi’s cosmogonic map, which reveals the ontological basis of all phenomena, serves an important soteriological purpose. Buddha taught the twelve-linked chain of dependent arising in order to provide a method for practitioners to break free from the bondage of *samsāra*. Zongmi presumably formulated his five-stage cosmological process to reach the same aim.

According to Zongmi, the first stage of phenomenal evolution is the ultimate source of all phenomena: the One Mind. This mind is also called the wondrous mind of perfect enlightenment, as well as the one true *dharmadhātu*. Besides being the ontological source of all phenomena, this is the source to which the practitioner returns via the attainment of enlightenment. At the second stage, the originally pure mind is divided into two aspects: the mind as suchness (*xin zheru*) and the mind as subject to birth-and-death (*xin shengmie*). The first aspect is unchanging, while the second aspect has the capacity to conditionally originate, and thus it is able to manifest itself in the phenomenal world. This type of analysis reveals an important doctrinal difference between the newer Yogācāra teachings propounded by Xuanzang and the teachings of the Huayan school, which were based on the old Yogācāra schools (Dilun and Shelun). The new Yogācāra school did not accept the tenet that the absolute, or *tathatā*, has anything to do with *samsāra*. If that is the case, it raises a key philosophical question: how does the intrinsically pure mind become defiled? If ignorance is the cause for that, then where does ignorance come from? Does it have

a separate ontological source, apart from the intrinsically pure mind? According to the Huayan tradition, it does not have a separate basis, but is manifested from the same pure ontological source (Gregory 1986).

The third stage in Zongmi's theoretical model describes the two basic modes of the *ālayavijñāna*: enlightened and unenlightened. Pure dharmas originate from the enlightened mode, while impure dharmas are produced from the unenlightened mode. The fourth stage consists of the three subtle phenomenal appearances, namely the activation or activity of ignorance, the perceiving subject, and the perceived object. The activity of ignorance denotes the first thought that is based on the unenlightened mode of *ālayavijñāna*, which results in the manifestation of consciousness as both subject and object. The fifth stage entails the six coarse phenomenal appearances, namely discrimination, continuation, attachment, conceptual elaboration, generating karma, and the suffering of karmic bondage. This final stage shows how the emergence of subject-object dualism leads to attachment to dharmas, and that eventually leads to all kinds of suffering.

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CHAPTER 8

Chan/Zen Conceptions of Orthodoxy

Albert Welter

Introduction: On the Use of the Term *Orthodoxy*

Orthodoxy is an important concept found throughout religious traditions that is used for determining correct (*ortho*) doctrine (*dox*), a consolidation of normative teachings to guide practitioners in the proper application of ritual activities and beliefs. As in other religious and intellectual movements, notions of orthodoxy in Chan/Zen Buddhism are rooted in those who are defining it and the social and political conditions shaping their interpretations. And as is the case in other traditions as well, orthodoxy in Chan/Zen functions as a contested terrain struggled over by competing groups in their quest for authority. The aim of orthodoxy is to posit itself as a single timeless truth but, in fact, multiple orthodoxies exist in the Chan/Zen tradition, rooted in the socio-political and religio-spiritual concerns of contending groups and their historical circumstances.

Before we launch into a discussion of the orthodoxies that have had lasting influences on the subsequent development of Chan-inspired traditions throughout East Asia—Sŏn in Korea, Zen in Japan, and Thiền in Vietnam—a few preliminary concerns must be addressed. First of all, some will question the applicability of the term orthodoxy itself to the Chan/Zen context. As a Latin term whose provenance derives from the Christian West, orthodoxy may have limited utility in describing Chan or Zen traditions. Chan/Zen is better suited to the rubric of *orthopraxis* rather than *orthodoxy*. Unlike creeds formed on monotheistic suppositions, Chan and Zen do not aspire to salvation based on unwavering beliefs. As with other religious traditions in East Asia, Chan and Zen are focused on what one does, a series of defining cultural habits, rather than on one's beliefs. Concerns about orthodoxy recede into the background for practitioners of traditions that engage in activities as part of ritualized social conventions and have little understanding or interest in the beliefs they derive from. While such concerns are valid, one must not overlook the powerful role exerted by concerns over

orthodoxy throughout the history of Chan and Zen traditions. Controversies over orthodoxy in Chan, for example, rarely concerned strictly internal issues of doctrinal interpretation or spiritual cultivation. The focus was on the public, political role of Chan in society, on debates about how to secure prestige, patronage, and privilege. What distinguishes Chan orthodoxies is not the assumption of a “correct doctrine” deemed as universally valid, a ubiquitous characteristic of all belief systems, but the protocols that shape them and give them their unique formulation.

What is revealing about any orthodoxy, in other words, is not so much what it stipulates as “correct,” but the climate and context that produce it. Any orthodoxy, properly understood, establishes a mental regime with defined patterns of ideological inclusion and exclusion, administrative jurisdictions of the intellect that determine parameters of tolerance. Once established, orthodoxies regulate the habits of conformity through which a tradition operates. To cite a well-known example from the Chan tradition, the determination of Huineng (638–713) as the “sixth patriarch,” though highly controversial at its inception, established a new regime of orthodoxy demanding that all Chan factions link themselves to Huineng, genealogically and otherwise.

Not only is it appropriate to discuss Chan and Zen in terms of orthodoxy, it would be impossible to talk about the public posture that Chan and Zen assumed without recourse to the term or something like it. In addition to the authenticating and legitimating function that orthodoxy provides by establishing parameters of correct belief and doctrine, it is the political dimension that merits special attention. In the case of Chan, one must further underscore the role played by secular political actors in the implementation of orthodoxy, and the leading roles played by administrative organs of government in establishing regimes of orthodoxy.

My comments here focus on the subject of Chan orthodoxy in early Chan through the Song dynasty. Before discussing that, however, it is necessary to consider the influence of twentieth-century Zen orthodoxy over contemporary understandings of Chan and Zen.

D.T. Suzuki: Zen Orthodoxy as *Nihonjin ron* (Japanism)

The formation of modern Zen orthodoxy is a complicated process rooted in Japan’s reaction and adaptation to modernization and Westernization. The figure often identified with Zen’s twentieth-century renaissance is Suzuki Daisetsu (1870–1966), commonly known by the Western rendering of his name as D.T. Suzuki. Suzuki’s interpretation was so ubiquitous in the twentieth century that virtually every Zen movement fell under its spell. As Robert Sharf has pointed out, the amazing thing about Suzuki is not his apologetic, proselytizing tone or its success, but the uncritical way it was accepted by Western scholars (Sharf 1993). Future generations of scholars will be left to ponder over the reasons why Western academics, espoused champions of critical enquiry based on a tradition of skepticism, fell under the spell of the proselytizing rhetoric of Suzuki.

In addition to adopting a critical attitude toward Suzuki, it is useful to recall the role Suzuki’s interpretation of Zen played in challenging assumptions of Buddhist Studies

in the West prevalent in the early twentieth century: the assumed authority of Indian Buddhism and the Pali canon, the prejudice against Mahāyāna as a degraded form of “original” Buddhism, and the power and arrogance of the Western Buddhist academic establishment to exclude Asian Buddhist voices. Gregory Schopen coined the phrase “Protestant presuppositions” for the assumptions that governed the study of Indian Buddhism in the West: a preference for text and doctrine, especially the texts and doctrines of religious founders, as providing unmediated access to Buddhism in its original and truest form (Schopen 1991). Protestant presuppositions served to substantiate the authority of Western scholars, who, with scientifically enshrined philological tools, assumed themselves privy to the direct “revelations” of the Pali scriptures in the original language. The imperialist and orientalist assumptions associated with such claims are now well acknowledged. Suzuki’s polemics were aimed, in part, at breaking these hegemonic assumptions held by Western Buddhist scholars.

Japan faced a similar imperialist, hegemonic threat from the West, and Suzuki’s interpretation must also be framed within the context of Japan’s response to the crises, especially the threat it posed to Japan’s cultural autonomy. Suzuki, who lived in the West and had intimate knowledge of Western intellectual life, projected Japan’s cultural reach on a broad canvas with far-reaching implications. Suzuki envisioned Zen not only as an expression of Japan’s basic or deep culture, the enduring spirit of Japan’s spirituality, but also as a spirituality of the highest order, the culmination and crystallization of the philosophies and religions of East Asia. Beyond this, Suzuki projected Zen as unique and superior to all the world’s philosophies and religions. Suzuki rejected the very notions of philosophy and religion, and carved out a special place for Zen as a meta-philosophy or religion, a “philosophy of no-philosophy” or “religion of no-religion.” For Suzuki, philosophy represented a system of thought founded on logic and analysis, characterized by a dualistic mode of thinking that relies on the rational ability of the mind to conceptualize and organize, analyze and categorize, activities that he deemed to be anathema to Zen. Likewise, Zen could not be counted as a religion, as it has no God, no ceremonial rites, no heaven, no soul, and is “free from all dogmatic and religious encumbrances.”

Seen in a broader context, Suzuki’s claims were not unique, but part of a pattern of defense employed by Japanese intellectuals faced with issues of Japan’s cultural integrity. Suzuki’s description of the role Zen plays in the life of Japanese people in *Nihonteki reisei* (“Japan’s Unique Spiritual Nature” or “Japanese Spirituality”), for example, is highly reminiscent of folklorist Yanagita Kunio’s descriptions of Japanese folk culture:

The fact that Zen manifestly encompasses the uniquely Japanese spiritual nature does not just mean that Zen has thrust roots deeply into the life of the Japanese people. Even more than this, it is preferable to describe the life of the Japanese people as uniquely Zen (or “Zen-like”) (*Nihonteki reisei*, 22).

The notion of Japan as possessing an inherent culture beneath its surface expressions was expounded by the Edo-period Shinto revivalist, Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801), who emphasized the special role of Shinto as Japan’s true spiritual heritage. For Motoori, Japan’s ancient tradition conveyed a unique legacy among the world’s nations.

The “true way” may have been revealed in every country, but according to Motoori, it has been correctly transmitted only in Japan.

Just as Zen awakening was promoted as the core, ground-breaking experience that opened a new world of spontaneity and mystery, infusing mundane reality with an inherent sacredness, so was Zen tied explicitly to various aspects of Japan’s traditional culture, from tea ceremony, flower arrangement, pottery, painting, and poetry, to archery, swordsmanship, and the martial arts. As a result, Zen offered a way to experience Japan’s sacred inheritance, not only through its traditional meditative disciplines of *zazen* and *kōan* investigation, but also through the esthetic appreciation cultivated through cultural pursuits common to ordinary people in everyday life, the kinds of folk activities promoted by Yanagita as emblematic of Japan’s enduring cultural values.

In this way, Zen escaped its foreign origins to become the very essence of Japanese culture. It did so by borrowing tactics from Motoori’s strategy book—a critique of rationalism, promotion of an emotional esthetic as the underlying essence of Japanese-ness, an amoral or transmoral understanding of human existence, an appreciation of primitiveness and the sacredness of nature, etc.—and applying them to current circumstances. Suzuki was not the only member of the Japanese literati to recommend Zen in this manner. Watsuji Tetsurō and Nishida Kitarō, philosophers of the Kyoto school, also promoted Zen as an unequivocally unique feature of Japanese culture. Secular members of the cultural establishment played leading roles in establishing Zen as a principle component of Japan’s cultural autonomy in modern Japan. Through the efforts of people like Suzuki, Watsuji, and Nishida, Zen was elevated to a new status as a unique cultural treasure. Suzuki exported Japan’s Zen heritage as a gem of world culture emanating from Japan’s rich spiritual soil. The important thing for Suzuki was its utter uniqueness—it was not of the same category of any of the rest of the world’s (especially Western) religions or philosophy. It transcended the inadequacies of logical thinking upon which the Western scientific tradition (and by implication, Western culture) was based. It offered a new opportunity for the world to understand the errors of its ways by accepting Zen as a solution to the ills of modernity. This was the cauldron from which Suzuki’s interpretation of Zen emerged.

According to Suzuki’s interpretation of Zen, Zen is timeless and absolute, and cannot be reduced to historical or societal forces. Like all good orthodoxies, Suzuki’s Zen reconfigures the entire tradition in its own image and likeness—every aspect of Zen history becomes recast in a revelatory progression in the unfolding of timeless Zen truth. Orthodoxies are teleological by nature, culminating at the precise point where authority is assumed. They are suppositions of power translated into standard practices and conventional understanding.

The circumstances of modernity and westernization, the role of Zen presumed by Suzuki to counter these forces and preserve Japan’s cultural autonomy—these are circumstances unique to contemporary Zen orthodoxy that provide its unique flavor. But aside from this unique set of conditions, what can be conveyed here is a sense of the role that political and cultural factors play in determining Chan and Zen orthodoxies. When these are taken into account, the supposed uniqueness of Suzuki’s interpretation of Zen fades into a pattern suggesting how orthodoxy is created in the Chan and Zen tradition.

The Zen mythology that Suzuki and his contemporaries drew on was not new, but based on strong precedents in the Chan tradition. The invention of a “golden age,” for example, was not a modern convenience, but served the interests of a previous age of Chan proponents who used the technique to validate the Chan tradition, and themselves, at a time when Chan was first coming into its own.

The First Public Crisis in Chan Orthodoxy: Shenxiu and Shenhui

Chan first emerged on the stage of history in a major capacity at the outset of the early eighth century, when its principle protagonist, Shenxiu (606?–706), was invited to the capital by Empress Wu Zetian (r. 690–705), where he was feted lavishly and granted court privileges. Prior to this, the East Mountain group of his Chan predecessors, Daoxin (580–651) and Hongren (601–674), was a local phenomenon that did not command national attention. Shenxiu changed all that. In the words of Bernard Faure, the imperial support received by Shenxiu from Empress Wu Zetian “sealed the destiny of the young Chan school,” transforming it “into a triumphant orthodoxy—in peril of turning into a court religion, a courtly doctrine” (Faure 1997: 21). Shenxiu’s triumph was relatively short-lived. Within decades, Shenxiu’s reputation was tarnished by the claims of an upstart Chan monk by the name of Shenhui (684–758), who claimed that orthodox Chan transmission had passed not to Shenxiu, as Shenxiu’s illustrious disciple Puji (651–739) claimed, but through Shenhui’s own reclusive master, Huineng. Chan would never be the same. Almost instantly, the myth of the secluded Chan master was born and elevated to heroic status.

Rather than a doctrinal struggle involving the so-called Northern and Southern factions, the real story of Shenxiu’s relation to Huineng is about the political triumph of Chan in gaining support and recognition by the government and members of the cultural elite. From a historical perspective, Chan’s success at this critical juncture was determined more by the external circumstances of official acceptance and support for Chan than by the hotly contested nature of true Chan teaching. As distinct from Chan myth, Shenxiu was the real hero who presided over the birth of Chan as a nationally recognized movement.

As the first “power struggle” in recorded Chan history, the factional controversy suggested patterns for deciding the vexed problem of orthodoxy in Chan. Aside from the alleged basis for orthodoxy as “correct principles” or “valid transmission,” mainstays of Chan orthodoxy predicated on doctrine and lineage, what emerged from the controversy was a strategy for how to promote one’s cause against the allegations of competitors. In this competition, who supported you was more important than your alleged claim to religious authenticity. Shenxiu and Shenhui both had powerful patrons, and it is impossible to view this first instance of Chan’s success and the inter-factional struggle that ensued without simultaneously considering the webs of patronage that supported the main protagonists on each side.

Among Shenxiu’s official supporters were two reigning emperors (or empresses), Empress Wu and Emperor Zhongzong (r. 705–710), and two future emperors, Emperor Ruizong (r. 710–712) and Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712–756). Other members of the

imperial family closely associated with Shenxiu were Prince Li Fan, the fourth son of Emperor Ruizong and half-brother of Emperor Xuanzong, and the monk Jingjue, brother of Empress Wei, the consort of Emperor Zhongzong. Numerous high-ranking officials were also among Shenxiu's government supporters. Most of Shenhui's supporters, on the other hand, were literati who had risen through the exam system during the reign of Empress Wu and played an important role in helping Xuanzong's assumption of power; they were interested in Shenhui's protest movement as a means to support their own cause. In 745, Shenhui was invited to Luoyang by Song Ding, president of the Ministry of War. Influenced by the power of Shenhui's charisma and by his rising status as a leading Chan representative, many Chan adepts began to heed Shenhui's call and switch their allegiance.

The "Northern School," however, continued to have supporters among high-ranking officials. One of these, the Imperial Censor Lu Yi, accused Shenhui of causing disturbance and had him sent into exile in 753. Had events not taken the turn that they eventually did, Shenhui might have easily passed his remaining years in disgrace. The rebellion of An Lushan (d. 757) changed the fortunes of many at the time. It resulted in Lu Yi's death and the recall of Shenhui to the capital in 757 to assist the new emperor, Suzong (r. 756–764), in raising funds for his government by selling ordination certificates, a practice that had been forbidden by the former emperor, Xuanzong (Faure 1997: 32–36 and 89–90).

The Heze and Hongzhou Factions: The Political Implications of Chan Success

In the ninth century, questions regarding Chan orthodoxy emerged in the rivalry between the Heze and Hongzhou factions. The rivalry was made explicit in the writings of Heze faction representative Zongmi (780–841), who served as a leading Buddhist official in the capital. According to Zongmi's *Zhonghua chuanxindi chanmen shizi chengxi tu* (Chart of the master-disciple succession of the Chan gate that transmits the mind-ground in China, hereafter referred to as "Chan Chart"), the Chan tradition was divisible into five factions: Ox Head (Niutou), Northern, Southern, Heze, and Hongzhou factions. The first three, the Ox Head, Northern, and Southern factions, were all regarded as descending from Bodhidharma, the Indian monk who came to be regarded as the first Chan patriarch in China, but according to Zongmi only the Southern faction represented the correct interpretation of Chan. In Zongmi's day, the Heze and Hongzhou factions represented differing interpretations of Southern school teaching. Zongmi argued for the superiority of Heze Chan, with which he affiliated himself.

Zongmi's understanding of Chan exerted a large influence over future generations. In spite of this, it is probably correct to suggest that even as Zongmi wrote, the glory of Heze Chan was on the wane and in the process of being supplanted by the Hongzhou faction. The progenitor of the Hongzhou faction, Mazu Daoyi (709–788), had passed away by the time Zongmi wrote. He was succeeded by Baizhang Huaihai (749–814), and then by Baizhang's two disciples, Guishan Lingyou (771–853) and Huangbo Xiyun (d. 850). It is from the location of Mazu's monastery in the prefectural capital of

Hongzhou (present-day Nanchang, the capital of Jiangxi province) that the name of the faction derives (Poceski 2007). It is ironic that Zongmi, who assumed the leadership of Shenhui's Heze faction, would be cast in a role more akin to that of Shenhui, as representative of "orthodox" Chan at the imperial court and defender of this interpretation against the rising tide of a regional Chan movement. While the competition between Heze and Hongzhou Chan was not as intense as in the case of the Northern and Southern factions, the rivalry between them was keen.

By training and inclination, Zongmi was a member of the literati. Prior to his conversion to Buddhism, Zongmi received the basic Confucian education common to members of the literati class. His early training in Buddhism was in the philosophically sophisticated teachings of Huayan, which profoundly influenced Tang intellectual life. Zongmi was invited to the imperial court through an edict issued in 828, and was granted a purple robe and the honorific title "great worthy" by Emperor Wenzong (r. 827–840). This invitation propelled Zongmi to the role of leading spokesperson for Buddhism at the court. As a result, one sees a change in Zongmi's writings from primarily exegetical works aimed at Buddhist scholars to works of a broader intellectual scope aimed at influencing the literati and members of the court, evident in his two works on Chan, the *Chan Chart* and *Chan Preface* (*Chanyuan zhuquanji duxu*; Preface to the Collection of Chan Sources), and in his essay *Yuanren lun* (Inquiry into the Origin of Humanity).

Peter Gregory has discussed in detail Zongmi's connections with leading literati and scholar-officials (Gregory 1991). The most prominent literary figure with whom Zongmi was associated was the famous poet Bo Juyi (772–846). In a poem composed for Zongmi, Bo supports Zongmi's interpretation of Chan in which the "mouth treasury," the Buddhist canonical tradition, and the "mind tower," the Chan transmission, whose passing on from generation to generation is likened to lighting one lamp from another, represent two facets of a single tradition. Bo's critique of those who "abandon the written word," and "forever abide in empty vacuity," likewise parallels Zongmi's criticism of Hongzhou Chan. As was the case in the debate between the Northern and Southern factions, literati and government officials played prominent roles in determining the interpretation of Chan accepted in official circles.

Zongmi's closest associate among the scholar-officials at the court was clearly Pei Xiu (787?–860). Pei Xiu held a number of positions within the Secretariat, the branch of the administration with broad policy-formulating responsibilities, charged with promulgating imperial orders. He wrote prefaces to many of Zongmi's works, and wrote Zongmi's epitaph. The *Chan Chart*, Zongmi's strongest critique of Hongzhou Chan, was written at Pei Xiu's request, indicating further the strong interest the literati had in determining the correct interpretation of Chan.

Ultimately, Zongmi left a complicated legacy for Chan. On the one hand, he brought recognition for Chan to new levels in official circles by achieving a reputation among the literati that few Buddhists in China ever matched. On the other hand, this same success brought Buddhism and Zongmi to the center of public debate. Zongmi argued for the superiority of Buddhist teaching over Confucianism and Daoism in the context of heated rivalry among the three teachings. In the contentious decades of the ninth century leading up to the Huichang suppression of Buddhism (ca. 841–846), where economic and political crises challenged the status quo and questioned Buddhism's role

in Chinese society, Zongmi's brand of Chan teaching was open to anti-Buddhist polemics. At the same time, Zongmi became personally implicated in a major government scandal when he offered protection for the powerful literatus Li Xun (d. 835), who was involved in an attempt to oust the eunuchs from power in what is known as the "Sweet Dew Incident." These events in the life of Zongmi demonstrate how far away the realities of patronage and political associations may lead Chan monks from the oft-repeated rhetorical claims of monastic aloofness and lack of concern with secular authority.

One of the implications of the Huichang era suppression and the rising of anti-Buddhist sentiments at the time is suggested in the transformation of Pei Xiu. During this period, Pei was transferred to a series of provincial posts, during which he had the opportunity to meet Huangbo Xiyun, Zongmi's adversary in the Hongzhou faction. As a result of these meetings, Pei Xiu "converted" to Huangbo's Chan teaching. Pei Xiu's switch represented a trend among officials toward support for a style of Chan Buddhism that was not implicated in the events and circumstances leading to the Huichang suppression. Even initiators of the Confucian revival supported this new style of Chan.

The Importance of the Study of Early Song Chan

Less well known than some of the key developments in Tang Chan is the power struggle that occurred in the early Song era, and the legacy it left on notions of Chan and Zen orthodoxy. Many scholars, following the lead of T. Griffith Foulk (1987, 1999), now agree that Chan's "classical" age would be better assigned to the Song dynasty than the Tang, as previously supposed. This in itself represents a shift away from the assumptions of modern Zen orthodoxy. Until recently, the Tang dynasty was regarded as Chan's "golden age," and lavished with unreserved praise. This was because it was the era of allegedly the greatest patriarchs Chan had seen, who heroically forged the timeless truths upon which Zen was built. Whatever came after, beginning with the Song, was unremarkable and derivative, and bore the unmistakable mark of decline.

The undermining of modern Zen orthodoxy revolved around the reading of Chan sources. Everyone agrees on what the sources are: Chan's transmission records (*denglu*); records of sayings texts (*yulu*); *kōan* (*gongan*) anthologies; and collections of monastic rules (*qinggui*). At issue is how to understand their contents. Modern Zen orthodoxy adopted a literal approach, treating the material as a true reflection of the episodes recorded, presuming them to be a kind of journalistic record of the activities of prominent Tang Chan masters. This approach has been out of favor in academic circles for decades. The critical approach that has replaced it treats the material in accordance with the historical-critical methods of modern scholarship, as being embedded with various layers, but ultimately reflecting the presumptions of Chan orthodoxies current among the Song compilers of the texts. The effect that the two approaches have over the interpretation of sources is obvious. Literal understanding of popular Chan stories treats them as actual conversations between noted historical actors that actually occurred, and presumes the transmission of orthodox Zen principles. The critical approach understands these stories not in terms of their contents, but in terms of the

contexts that produced them, as parts of rhetorical strategies employed by various Chan monks that affirmed their understanding of Chan as orthodox.

Aside from the Dunhuang Chan manuscripts, which transformed our understanding of early Chan history, almost all of our information about Tang Chan derives from texts compiled in the Song dynasty. Jia and Poceski have called attention to Tang tomb-inscriptions and texts (or portions thereof) with a Tang provenance as reliable sources for the reconstruction of Tang Chan (Jia 2006 and Poceski 2007). The Dunhuang manuscripts forced scholars to move beyond the conceit of Rinzai orthodoxy—the story of Zen as told from a highly biased Linji Chan/Rinzai Zen perspective—in the interpretation of early Chan sources, and modern scholarship has now relinquished this conceit over studies devoted to Tang Chan and beyond. For the Song dynasty, however, the situation remains complex, given that Linji Chan orthodoxy is the product of this period, and our whole view of the Chan tradition prior to the Song is, in large measure, the result of Song revisionism. The unfolding story of Song Chan dynamism now being told is by and large one dominated by Linji Chan's success. In order to combat Linji exclusivism, one needs to recognize the contested nature of the Linji faction's rise to supremacy in the Song. The "classical" Chan consensus that emerged in the Song was far from assured, but resulted from continued struggles over Chan orthodoxy.

The Crises over Chan Orthodoxy in the Early Song

While it is well known that Linji masters came to dominate Song Chan, it is not well known that their dominance was far from evident at the outset of the Song era. During the tenth century, a number of Chan factions were active, the legacy of regional autonomy that had characterized China politically and culturally for some two hundred years. This regionalism spawned a number of vibrant Buddhist movements, loosely organized under the name of Chan. There was disagreement over what Chan stood for, and while Chan institutional practices deviated little from established Chinese Buddhist monastic practice, sharp differences emerged regarding Chan's public identity. Adding to the identity crises was a changing political climate. As Song unification proceeded to absorb previously independent territories, the legacy of Chan regionalism became passé and there was a growing need for Chan to present an integrated front. Regional Chan movements remained tenable only to the extent that they participated in the sanctioned activity that such integration promised. To achieve their goal, Chan factions needed to show what they held in common, how they contributed to the overall structure of Chan, and how they fitted into the general organization of Chinese Buddhist schools. And most importantly, whatsoever consensus was reached had to receive the sanction of the secular establishment—whatever success Chan achieved could only come through imperial approval. While the new Song government was anxious to harness Chan and the support it inspired, it would grant approval only to interpretations deemed to coincide with imperial motives.

Individual Chan factions had much to gain or lose in the ensuing struggle over Chan identity. The first efforts to unite Chan in this fashion occurred not in the Song dynasty,

but in politically autonomous regions in the south prior to the Song. Two of these regions were particularly important for the roles they played in promoting a Chan consensus. One was the region straddling both sides of the lower reaches of the Yangzi river, known as Nan, or Southern, Tang (937–975). In addition, Southern Tang acquired a large portion of the former territory of Min (909–945), which covered roughly the area of contemporary Fujian province. The other region, Wuyue (895–978), covered roughly the area of contemporary Zhejiang province plus an annexed northern portion of the former state of Min, and was even more politically stable and economically strong than Nan Tang. The role that Buddhism played in the revival of regional culture was unparalleled elsewhere in China at this time.

The Chan movements in both Nan Tang and Wuyue claimed descent through a common patriarch, Xuefeng Yicun (822–908), allegedly a sixth-generation descendent of Huineng. After Xuefeng, the movement bifurcated into two prosperous factions, one that dominated in Min, and later Nan Tang, the other that dominated in Wuyue. While surviving records document the aspirations of later descendants of Xuefeng, there is evidence that he and his immediate disciples also coveted the Chan legacy. Around the time of Xuefeng's death or shortly after, that is, sometime during the *kaiping* era (907–911), Xuefeng's disciple Nanyue Weijing compiled a text called the *Xu Baolin zhuan* (Continued Transmission of the Treasure Grove). While the text is no longer extant and its contents are unknown, it is easy to surmise that the *Xu Baolin zhuan* was conceived as a successor to the *Baolin zhuan* (Transmission of the Treasure Grove), compiled over one hundred years before (ca. 800). The "treasure grove" (*baolin*) is the alleged name of Huineng's monastery on Mount Caoqi. The *Baolin zhuan* promoted the aspirations of the Hongzhou faction that prospered in the wake of its dynamic founder, Mazu Daoyi, and his illustrious disciples. As the name *Baolin zhuan* indicates, Hongzhou faction members claimed the sixth patriarch's legacy as orthodox representatives of Chan. The *Xu Baolin zhuan* acknowledged the Hongzhou faction's claim, and appropriated it for Xuefeng and his disciples.

The Chan movement in Nan Tang was memorialized by disciples of the faction's leader, Zhaoqing Wendeng (884–972), a second-generation descendant of Xuefeng, in a work called the *Zutang ji* (Patriarch's Hall Anthology), originally compiled in 952, with later additions. The *Zutang ji* incorporated Weijing's implicit claim in the *Xu Baolin zhuan*. A few years before (ca. 945), Zhaoqing Wendeng wrote verses memorializing Chan patriarchs, contained in the Dunhuang manuscript *Quanzhou qianfo xinzhu zhu zushi song* (Praises for the Patriarchs and Masters, Newly Composed at Qianfo Monastery in Quanzhou; hereafter abbreviated as *Qianfo song*). The *Qianfo song* provides an important link between the *Baolin zhuan* and the *Zutang ji*. The preface by Huiguan (d.u.) mentions specifically "the patriarchs of the treasure grove" (*baolin zu*), a clear reference to the *Baolin zhuan*. The patriarchs memorialized in the *Qianfo song* follow explicitly the succession documented in the *Baolin zhuan*—the twenty-eight patriarchs in India, the six Chinese patriarchs through Huineng, and the three generations of patriarchs from Huineng to Mazu Daoyi. Wendeng's *Qianfo song* verses, moreover, were incorporated directly in the *Zutang ji*; the *Zutang ji* undoubtedly represented an updated version of the claim made in the *Xu Baolin zhuan* that descendants of Xuefeng Yicun had inherited the mantle of Chan orthodoxy.

The fact that a document like the *Zutang ji* advocating Chan consensus was issued prior to the Song indicates the great sense of opportunity promised to whoever could harness the movement's forces. Faction leaders who succeeded in establishing their interpretation over Chan could look to a bright and promising future, all the more so given that large and powerful states like Nan Tang harbored their own imperial ambitions. For local rulers with grand plans, support for Chan was a means to consolidate a key base of support. The *Zutang ji* provides a view of the gathering consensus forming around Chan in the middle of the tenth century. While it is a "regional" interpretation, it would be unwarranted to dismiss it too easily, since Nan Tang was one of the most powerful regions of China at this time, a military, economic, and diplomatic power that also served as an enclave for Buddhist monks from across China. Unlike northern dynasties during this period, southern regimes were relatively stable and prosperous. And whereas northern courts harbored latent suspicions about Buddhism inherited from the late Tang, rulers of southern regimes were often strong supporters of Buddhism and encouraged the growth of the religion as part of regional policy.

The collection of Chan monks from across China that assembled in southern regions undoubtedly contributed to the growing need to conceive a collective identity. This was an innovation inspired by the pan-factional approach to Chan initiated by Zongmi. The *Zutang ji* capitalized on this by conceiving Chan not in terms of the uni-lineal model, typical of previous Chan transmission records and erasing other factions from the public record, but by incorporating a multilineal model acknowledging numerous factions. The *Zutang ji* was also the first known Chan record to incorporate interactive "encounter dialogues" as the distinguishing approach to Chan teaching, marking the beginning of the "classical" Chan style.

As inclusive as the *Zutang ji* was, it did not value all Chan factions equally. Like Zongmi before, the *Zutang ji*'s strategy of inclusiveness masked claims to orthodoxy by Zhaoqing Wendeng and his disciples. While a number of important Chan factions were represented in the *Zutang ji*, the implication was that not all lineages were equal, that some were more orthodox than others. Wendeng's faction clearly headed the group of orthodox representatives of Chan.

Given Chan's insistence upon lineage affiliation as the basis for legitimacy, it was impossible for Chan to escape factionalism and regionalism in public representations of its teaching. This was also true of Chan in the Wuyue region, which bore unmistakable characteristics of regional and factional identity projected onto the national scene. The scope of Wuyue Chan was such that its national ambitions even outpaced those of its Min/Nan Tang-based counterpart. What Wuyue Chan brought to the table was a different model for Chan integration, one that would become the basis for an alternate Chan future, based on a notion of assimilation with doctrinal Buddhism rather than independence from it. This provided the basis for controversy within Chan that bubbled to the surface in the early Song as Chan sought to determine how to represent itself. While the debate was less charged, it is reminiscent of the Northern/Southern school controversy that occurred centuries earlier, and was arguably more important for deciding crucial issues pertaining to Chan orthodoxy.

The Chan movement in Wuyue was instigated by descendants of Fayen Wenyi (885–958) and is usually designated under the Fayen faction name. Fayen was a prominent

master in Nan Tang whose students assumed leading roles in Nan Tang and even as far away as Korea, in addition to their influence in Wuyue. Fayán's approach to Chan established a framework that became characteristic of his faction's interpretation. Acknowledging phenomenal growth in the Chan movement, particularly in the south, Fayán disparaged the overall quality of Chan teachers. He is especially critical of approaches reminiscent of those memorialized in the *Zutang ji* and associated with the Hongzhou school.

Fayán's student Tiantai Deshao (891–972) was responsible for the faction's success in the Wuyue region. Designated as Preceptor of State in Wuyue in 949, Deshao became the chief architect of a Buddhist revival in the region. Through Deshao's influence and the ardent support of local rulers, Buddhism became state ideology and a massive building campaign was mounted to restore Buddhist institutions throughout the region. Particular efforts were made to revitalize temple complexes on Mount Tiantai, the spiritual center of the region. The Chan façade constructed over the Tiantai legacy there is a fitting analogy for the amalgamation of Chan and doctrinal Buddhism, which prevailed in Wuyue. Sermon excerpts attributed to Deshao indicate his general agreement with Fayán's approach to Chan, and his implicit criticism of the approach attributed to the Hongzhou faction (see Welter 2006).

One of Deshao's sermons is essentially a commentary on a famous exchange, allegedly between the sixth patriarch and two monks debating over whether the wind or a banner was moving. The episode was later memorialized as a famous *kōan* in the *Wumen guan* (Gateless Barrier), compiled by Wumen Huikai (1183–1260) in 1229. According to Linji orthodoxy, this episode illustrates the ineffability of Chan truth. Instead, Deshao here uses it as a pretext for discussing the method of expedient means, emphasizing compassion as the principle concern of the Chan teacher. In the Chan orthodoxy that was later established, based on rhetoric attributed to the Hongzhou and Linji factions, an emphasis on expedient means was an anathema, an unconscionable compromise of Chan truth, a "slippery slope" leading to rationalized explanations of truth, doctrinal formulations, liturgical practices, patterned rituals, etc.

The most famous advocate of the Wuyue Chan perspective, however, was neither Fayán Wenyi nor Tiantai Deshao, but Deshao's alleged disciple, Yongming Yanshou (904–975). Yanshou is famous for his scholastic, doctrinal approach to Chan. This approach is contained in Yanshou's *magnum opus*, the *Zongjing lu* (Records of the Source-Mirror), a work extolling the interpretation of Chan as harmonious with doctrinal Buddhist teachings (*jiao*). Yanshou was thoroughly opposed to treating Chan as an independent patriarchal tradition, separate from the words and teachings of Buddhas and bodhisattvas. Although Yanshou validated the Chan tradition of patriarchal transmission, he insisted that the Chan tradition transmitted to Mahākāśyapa and passed down through the patriarchs in India and China stems from the words and teachings of the original master, Śākyamuni. The implicit truth of Buddhism (*zong*) is only known through reading and following his statements. The Buddha is the true measure; all of the patriarchs, without exception, follow his model. There is no point in pitting one patriarch against others; "all of them perfectly awakened to their own minds through knowledge of the scriptures and treatises." Even Hongzhou Chan, according to Yanshou, represents this tradition and does not defy it (see Welter 2011).

Chan Orthodoxy at the Song Court

Although Deshao and Yanshou were both active during the initial years of Song rule, Wuyue maintained its autonomous status and was not absorbed into the new dynasty until after both had passed away. The Buddhist literatus Zanning (919–1001) brought the legacy of Wuyue Buddhism to the Song court. In keeping with the positions that Zanning served in as a sangha administrator, both in Wuyue and at the Song court, Zanning was counted as a Vinaya (*lu*) specialist, and not a Chan master. Given the interpretation of Chan prevalent in Wuyue, however, the distinction was probably not important. There is every indication that Zanning accepted Wuyue-style Chan as a valid, even superior, expression of Buddhism, compatible with orthodox Buddhist teaching. And while Zanning's representation of Buddhism at the Song court went far beyond concerns relating to Chan and ranged over the full gamut of Buddhism in China, it did not prevent him from weighing in on the Chan debate. Not surprisingly, Zanning sided with the Fayen lineage interpretation of Chan prevalent in Wuyue. Zanning insisted that the scriptures of Śākyamuni represented the fundamental teaching; the words of Bodhidharma are supplemental. The true legacy of *chan* meditation in Buddhism, according to Zanning, is that it is practiced alongside the study of Buddhist doctrine, and not independently. Like Fayen, Deshao, and Yanshou before him, Zanning was highly critical of Chan autonomy, either from an institutional or doctrinal standpoint.

Zanning brought this understanding of Chan to the Song dynasty, where it was promulgated as official government policy through Zanning's position as the leading Buddhist official of the Song court and through his imperially sanctioned writings. This view of Chan prevailed until Zanning's death. No official attack was launched on the Fayen faction's interpretation of Chan, but a change emerged after Zanning's passing. The situation was reminiscent of what had happened previously with Shenxiu and his disciples at the Tang court. Shenxiu was highly feted at court and his interpretation of Chan was officially acknowledged. After Shenxiu's death, Shenhui launched his famous attack on Shenxiu's disciples and through a combination of shrewd rhetoric and serendipitous circumstances, wrested the mantle of orthodoxy away from them. A similar set of conditions conspired against the Wuyue-based, Fayen faction-inspired interpretation of Chan, in favor of a resurgent Linji faction.

A key transitional document in this regard is the *Jingde Chuandeng lu* (Record of the Transmission of the Lamp compiled in the Jingde era, abbreviated as *Chuandeng lu*). This was originally compiled by Daoyuan (d.u.), a member of the Fayen faction from Wuyue, in 1004, but survived only through the version edited under the supervision of the leading court literatus, Yang Yi (974–1020), issued in 1009. The *Chuandeng lu* followed the pattern of the *Zutang ji*, organizing numerous Chan factions around a multilineal model, but bore the stamp of official imperial sanction with the addition of the current reign epithet, *jingde*, in its title. As there is no evidence that Fayen faction members in Wuyue used a model like that employed in the *Zutang ji*, it is likely that the *Chuandeng lu* represents a concession by Fayen lineage representatives at the Song court toward the formation of Chan as an independent movement. The *Chuandeng lu*

continues to maintain the Fayen factional dominance, within a multilineal Chan framework. It also incorporates aspects of standard Fayen faction teaching by acknowledging the Chan contributions of masters associated with the Tiantai school.

While we have no access to Daoyuan's original compilation, a surviving preface by Yang Yi indicates that he intended the work to fall within the framework of Fayen faction interpretation. Among the indicators for this are Daoyuan's original title of the work, *Fozu tongcan ji* (Anthology of the Uniform Practice of Buddhas and Patriarchs), suggesting harmony between the teachings of the Buddhas and Chan patriarchs. The preface also explicitly invoked Zongmi's *Chan Preface*, and the precedent he established for assimilating the various interpretations of Chan and harmonizing different Chan factions into a unified tradition. Following Fayen Chan fashion, Chan teaching represented myriad Buddhist practices employed according to differences among practitioners, and an unequivocal emphasis on expedient means as the primary method of instruction. In contrast to this, Yang Yi conceived the work in diametrically opposed terms, as "a special practice outside the teaching" (*jiaowai biexing*), and an explicit testament to the status of Chan as an independent tradition. There is no way to determine what effect Yang Yi's editorial efforts had over the contents of Daoyuan's text. We know, however, that it was reconceived in terms of an interpretation of Chan quite different from Daoyuan's.

Yang Yi was among the leading literati of his day. As a devout Buddhist, he was exposed to numerous members of the Chan clergy. While his early Chan training was carried out under Fayen faction masters, he was eventually converted to the Linji faction by Guanghai Yuanlian (951–1036) and counted himself as a member of the Linji lineage (Welter 2006). His reinterpretation of Daoyuan's *Fozu tongcan ji* in terms of the *Jingde Chuandeng lu* reflects the influence of Linji faction explanations over Yang Yi's understanding of Chan. Guanghai Yuanlian provides interesting links to the change in interpretation. He hailed from the south and was initially a student of Zhaoqing Wendeng, whose disciples compiled the *Zutang ji*. After an exhaustive search, he allegedly experienced enlightenment in Ruzhou in the north under Shoushan Shengnian (926–993), the Song dynasty "founder" of the Linji faction. Ruzhou (present day-Henan province) became the center of Linji faction revival.

Guanghai Yuanlian's experience under Zhaoqing Wendeng familiarized him with the lineage scheme presented in the *Zutang ji* and Wendeng's recognition of Mazu Daoyi's Chan orthodoxy. After Guanghai Yuanlian succeeded Shoushan Shengnian, he came into contact with the high-ranking official Wang Shu, who had been sent to Ruzhou as administrator. Wang Shu was one of Yang Yi's chief assistants in reediting the *Fozu tongcan ji* into the *Jingde Chuandeng lu*. Later, Yang Yi was commissioned to Ruzhou, where he also fell under Guanghai Yuanlian's sway. Another literati affiliate of Yang Yi, Liu Yan (971–1031), was an intimate associate of Chan master Guyin Yuncong (965–1032), also a disciple of Shoushan Shengnian. These connections exerted profound influence over the reinterpretation of Chan at the Song court from Fayen to Linji faction notions of orthodoxy.

An unambiguous case for Linji faction supremacy was made by the literati figure Li Zunxu (988–1038)—son-in-law of one emperor (Taizong, r. 976–997), brother-in-law of another (Zhenzong, r. 997–1022), and elder relative of still another (Renzong, r. 1023–1063)—in the *Tiansheng Guangdeng lu* (Expanded Lamp Record compiled in the

Tiansheng era, abbreviated as *Guangdeng lu*). Li Zunxu was also closely connected to contemporary Linji faction masters. In an epitaph written for Guyin Yuncong, Li Zunxu admitted openly that the *Guangdeng lu* was compiled expressly to document the achievements of Shoushan Shengnian and his disciples, that is, the contemporary Linji faction. The *Guangdeng lu* was the vehicle for the assertion of a new Chan orthodoxy at the Song court. Like the *Chuandeng lu* before it, the *Guangdeng lu* was issued bearing the stamp of official imperial approval, marked by the appearance of the current reign epithet, *tiansheng*, in its title.

While the *Guangdeng lu* was cast in the form of a *denglü*, or “lamp” record, predicated on the notion of mind-to-mind transmission, it highlighted *yulu* or “records of sayings” as the distinguishing feature of the new Chan style. Both Daoyuan and Yang Yi acknowledged the use of *yulu* materials in the *Chuandeng lu* and it is commonly accepted that the contents of the *Chuandeng lu* were culled from *yulu* sources. It is obvious that the *Zutang ji* was compiled from *yulu* or *yulu*-type documents as well. What the *Guangdeng lu* did was not only to single out *yulu* as Chan’s distinguishing feature, but to do so in such a way that highlighted most prominently the accomplishments of the Linji faction. In other words, it helped create the association of the Linji faction with the *yulu* phenomena.

The *Guangdeng lu* documented, for the first time, the records of sayings of four masters—Mazu Daoyi, Baizhang Huaihai, Huangbo Xiyun, and Linji Yixuan—creating claims to a new Chan orthodoxy. It linked Linji and his descendants to the legacy of Mazu and Hongzhou Chan, usurping the previous claims of Zhaoqing Wendeng’s faction in the *Zutang ji*. It legitimized the claims of the contemporary Linji faction by establishing Linji as a major Chan patriarch, and disputed the claims of the *Chuandeng lu* regarding Fayen faction supremacy.

Above all, the *Guangdeng lu* espoused a new Chan orthodoxy, by establishing Chan as “a special transmission outside the teaching,” and enshrining this slogan as a cardinal Chan principle. It was a direct assault on the Fayen faction’s notion of Chan orthodoxy: the proposition that Chan principles and Buddhist teachings were harmonious and compatible, that Chan embraced the principle of expedient means and acknowledged the validity of multiple practices and approaches. Linji Chan orthodoxy asserted the independence and superiority of Chan, denigrating Buddhist teaching as superficial and inferior.

A key proposal of the new orthodoxy was Chan’s vaunted silent, secret transmission, allegedly instigated by Śākyamuni himself when he passed the dharma to Mahākāśyapa (Welter 2000). According to Fayen faction protagonists like Yanshou, the content of this transmission did not differ from, but confirmed, the status and authority of the Buddha’s oral instructions written down in the scriptures. In the *Guangdeng lu*, the content of the “treasury of the true Dharma eye” (*zheng fayen zang*), the essence of Buddhist teaching purportedly transmitted by Śākyamuni, was not explicitly tied to the Chan’s contention as “a special transmission outside the teaching,” but the basis for connecting the two was readily evident. In the *Guangdeng lu*, the dharma-transmission from Śākyamuni to Mahākāśyapa is distinguished from the Buddha’s exoteric preaching, characterized in terms of the three vehicles. The implication is that the secretly transmitted Chan dharma is superior to the exoteric message of the three vehicles, particularly as expressed in the *Lotus Sūtra*. The inclusion of this story in the *Guangdeng lu*

about how Chan's independent tradition originated affirms the image of Chan that Song masters were projecting, which highlighted the unique and superior nature of their teaching as a "special transmission outside the teaching."

What was implied in the *Guangdeng lu* was soon made explicit in, ironically, a scriptural account. The *Da fantian wang wen fo jueyi jing* (Scripture in which Brahman Asks Buddha to Resolve his Doubts), an apocryphal scripture whose existence is unknown prior to the Song era, conclusively linked Chan as "a special transmission outside the teaching" to the content of Śākyamuni's alleged proclamation to Mahākāśyapa. Subsequently, the *Da fantian wang wen fo jueyi jing* account began to appear in Chan records. The *Liandeng huiyao*, compiled by Wuming in 1189, recounts the *Da fantian wang wen fo jueyi jing* version. Most famously, the story was enshrined in the Song *kōan* collection, *Wumen guan*, from where it has been passed down through countless generations of Chan and Zen students. It also appears, understandably, in a Ming dynasty collection of Chan biographies called *Jiaowai biechuan*, a work organizing the entire Chan tradition, subsumed under the lineages of the "five houses," in terms of the theme suggested by the designation of its title: "A Special Transmission Outside the Teaching."

Concluding Remarks

This focus on developments in Chan/Zen orthodoxy is not exhaustive, but suggestive of the kinds of struggles that classical Chan and modern Zen have encountered in their quest to remain valid and authoritative. While developments on Chan through the early Song dynasty are relevant to the style of Chan and Chan-inspired movements that developed in China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam, there is not enough space here to do justice to the struggles over orthodoxy that ensued throughout the history of all these traditions. Recent work by Morten Schlütter discusses controversies that developed later in the Song dynasty between the Caodong faction, headed by Zhengjue Hongzhi (1091–1157), and the Linji faction, headed by Dahui Zonggao (1089–1163), over the proper method of Chan cultivation: "silent illumination" (*mozhao*) or "examining the critical phrase" (*kanhua*), otherwise known as *kōan* introspection (Schlütter 2008). Jiang Wu, likewise, has revealed the controversies over enlightenment that developed in late Ming and early Qing dynasty Chan (Wu 2008). Needless to say, struggles relating to orthodoxy are ongoing, and tend to erupt whenever an avowed consensus is called into question.

In spite of qualifications within Buddhism that Buddhist teaching is merely an aide to spiritual progress that can either be accepted or rejected, "right" or "correct views" stand as a requisite to Buddhist realization, a sanctioning for orthodoxy, and doctrine therefore formed an integral part of Buddhist teaching. On the subject of orthodoxy in the Chan and Zen traditions, there are three aspects I would like to briefly comment on: the nature of orthodoxy vis-à-vis Mahāyāna teaching, the function of orthodoxy as a response to crises, and the role of literati in shaping orthodoxy.

As Chan entered the Song, two factions dominated: Linji and Fayan. In broad terms, the approaches to Chan that these factions represented mimicked the general agenda of Mahāyāna Buddhism: wisdom and compassion. The Linji faction was defined by the

quest for wisdom. It attempted to apply the message contained in the perfection of wisdom literature (at least rhetorically) to actual situations. Its teachings and methods purported to aim exclusively at awakening. As expedient means were nothing more than trivial impediments, it dismissed liturgical exercises and practices as detrimental.

In contrast, the Fayan faction, based on the teaching of the *Lotus Sūtra*, was firmly committed to the Mahāyāna notion of compassion. It viewed the exoteric message of the *Lotus* and other scriptures as legitimate expressions of Buddhist teaching. The doctrines and practices espoused in them were manifestations of Buddhist truth, to be cherished and admired. As a result, the Fayan faction adopted an inclusive approach to Chan orthodoxy that embraced the message embodied in conventional Buddhist teaching. Hence, the slogans attributed to each faction, “a separate transmission outside the teachings” (*jiaowai biechuan*) for Linji, and “harmony between Chan and the teachings” (*chanjiao yizhi*) for Fayan, are indicative of their broader claims regarding Chan orthodoxy.

Issues regarding the definition of Chan and Zen orthodoxy are most pronounced during times of crises. Crisis periods present new challenges and opportunities, and require that prevailing assumptions be reconsidered to ensure survival. The need for redefinition to meet the demands of new circumstances is a prominent facet of all religious traditions, including Chan. Each of the periods that I have touched on here—the advent of Empress Wu Zetian’s rule in the Tang, but especially the circumstances leading to Song reunification—were times of great crisis. The late Tang, Five Dynasties, and early Song, as is often pointed out, was a time of great upheaval in China, from which Chan emerged as a leading school of Chinese Buddhism. It is hardly surprising that struggles over orthodoxy occurred throughout this period. Likewise, Suzuki’s affirmation of a new Zen orthodoxy in the twentieth century cannot be understood outside the context of the cultural crises presented by modernization and westernization in Japan. These transition periods must be studied very closely, as the parameters of the new orthodoxy are established by conditions and challenges that emerged during those periods.

The roles played by literati in shaping Chan and Zen orthodoxy are especially interesting. Seen in the framework of the current study, Suzuki (as well as Watsuji or Nishida) appears as a modern-day counterpart to Pei Xiu, Yang Yi, or Li Zunxu, all of them literati sympathetic to Zen and whose interests are tied to the aims and aspirations of a broader political and cultural regime. This leads to further questions regarding the roles played by such figures in the construction of Chan and Zen histories. The way we understand Chan and Zen is altered when their roles are considered, and the influence of the literati throughout the history of tradition is something that needs close attention.

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CHAPTER 9

Tibetan Formulations of the Tantric Path

David B. Gray

The Indian Background

An important event in the history of Buddhism is the rise of the esoteric Buddhist traditions. These traditions, known as “esoteric Buddhism” in East Asia (Ch. *mijiao*, Jp. *mikkyō*) and the “Adamantine Vehicle” (*vajrayāna*) in South Asia, represent the final flowering of Buddhism in India prior to its disappearance from the subcontinent during the medieval period. Formally, the esoteric Buddhist traditions are offshoots of the greater Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition. As such, they inherited the cosmology, philosophy, ethical teachings, and many of the contemplative and ritual practices of South Asian Mahāyāna Buddhism. The esoteric Buddhist traditions claimed to possess a secret methodology that enabled one to achieve the ultimate goal of Mahāyāna Buddhism—the genuine and complete awakening (*saṃyaksambodhi*) of a Buddha—within a much shorter time span, in as little as one lifetime. Tantric traditions thus posit a path designed to achieve this lofty goal, and present various stages of practice that must be mastered by the practitioner who traverses this path.

Recent scholarship has pointed to the seventh century as the decisive period that saw the rise of esoteric Buddhist traditions in India. The study of the translations of Buddhist works into Chinese during the first millennium of the Common Era has indicated that there was a gradual development of esoteric Buddhism. Key features of esoteric ritual praxis, such as the initiatory rite of consecration (*abhiṣeka*) and the use of *maṇḍalas*, are found with increasing frequency in this literature, particularly from the fifth century CE onward (Matsunaga 1977). However, recent scholarship has shown that tantric or esoteric Buddhism did not emerge in India as a distinct “vehicle” of Buddhism, with a distinctive path of praxis, until the latter half of the seventh century (Davidson 2002: 25; Kapstein 2001: 236).

Following this emergence, Indian Buddhist communities composed a large number of esoteric Buddhist scriptures, generally known as *tantras*; they also developed

sophisticated systems of exegesis and practice. These developments were well underway by the early eighth century, as evidenced by the systems of tantric practice brought to China by Śubhākarasimha (Ch. Shanwuwei, 637–735 CE) and Vajrabodhi (Ch. Jin'gangzhi, 671–741 CE) at that time (see Chou 1945), and they continued until at least the thirteenth century.

Formation of the Tibetan Traditions

The Tibetans inherited the legacy of these South Asian developments, which they in turn organized and systematized in new ways. The dissemination of Buddhism to Tibet began during the imperial period of Tibetan history, from the seventh to ninth centuries (see Walter 2009 and Kapstein 2000), a period later known as the “early dissemination” (*snga dar*) of Buddhism into Tibet. The dissemination of Buddhism to Tibet was dramatically slowed by the collapse of the Tibetan empire in 842 CE, but resumed in the late tenth century, when the “later dissemination” (*phyi dar*) period began (see James Apple's chapter in this volume; there it is referred to as “later diffusion”). It continued until the fourteenth century, when the flow of Buddhist texts from India slowed to a trickle due to the destruction of the major Buddhist monastic centers in north India.

The Tibetan reception of Buddhist texts and traditions was not passive, but was in fact quite creative, while maintaining an appearance of conservative fidelity to received Indian Buddhist traditions. But since the traditions received were often incomplete and contradictory, Tibetans dedicated significant intellectual activity to the systematization and elucidation of these materials (see Davidson 2005). In addition, a considerable amount of this intellectual activity was pragmatically oriented, focused on the presentation of a coherent path of practice that would culminate, as quickly as possible, in the awakening of a Buddha.

It is common to approach Tibetan Buddhism via the four major traditions that have survived and prospered up to the present day. The four include the “Ancient” Nying-ma (*rnying ma*) tradition, which traces its origin back to transmissions of Buddhist teaching and practice that occurred during the imperial period of Tibetan history (the seventh through ninth centuries), focusing particularly on the figure of the great Indian saint Padmasambhava and his Tibetan disciple Yeshe Tsogyal (*ye shes mtsho rgyal*).

The remaining traditions are classified as the “new” (*gsar ma*) traditions, which originated in transmissions of Buddhist teachings brought into Tibet after the revival of Buddhism in the late tenth century. These include the Kagyü (*bka' brgyud*) tradition, which traces its origins to the teachings of Marpa the Translator (c. 1012–1097) and his famous disciple, the great saint Milarepa (c. 1052–1135). The Sakya (*sa skya*) tradition was founded in the later eleventh century by the translator Drogmi (*'brog mi*) and his aristocratic patron and disciple Khön Könchog Gyalpo (*'khon dkon mchog rgyal po*, 1034–1102). Another important tradition developed during this time as well, namely the Kadam (*bka' gdams*) tradition, which was founded by Dromtönpa (*'brom ston pa*, 1005–1064), a disciple of the great Indian master Atiśa Dīpaṅkaraśrījñāna (980–1054). The Kadam tradition is usually omitted from the list of four main traditions, since it was largely absorbed by the Geluk (*dge lugs*) tradition, which was founded in the

fifteenth century by Tsong-kha-pa Blo-bzang grags-pa (1357–1419) and his successors. The list also omits another influential school, the Jonang (*jo nang*) tradition. This tradition was established by the twelfth-century Tibetan master Yumo Mikyo Dorje (*yu mo mi bskyod rdo rje*). It was suppressed in central Tibet by the Fifth Dalai Lama, Lozang Gyatso (*blo bzang rgya mtsho*, 1617–1682), which is the reason for its omission from the standard list of four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism. It survived, however, in eastern Tibet (Kapstein 2006: 95–109, 233–37).

The consolidation of Tibetan Buddhist traditions largely occurred during the first half of the second millennium CE. During this period, from approximately 1000 to 1500 CE, the transmission of teachings from India ended, and all of the major traditions of Tibetan Buddhism were taking shape. Moreover, these traditions developed in dialogue with one another. Accordingly, they developed paths of practice that were very similar, even as they differed in respect to the particular practice systems that they emphasized. Tibetan Buddhism as it is now constituted is largely the product of the creative scholarship and the inspirations of Tibetan scholars and practitioners that were active during this period. Moreover, the major traditions are not particularly relevant when it comes to the actual *practice* of Tibetan Buddhism. This is because the actual practice traditions of Tibetan Buddhism are lineage based, and the practice lineages are very rarely monopolized by a single established tradition. The most popular practice lineages, such as the Mahāmudrā and Great Perfection (Dzogchen) systems of practice, are typically preserved and practiced in most, if not all, traditions of Tibetan Buddhism (Kapstein 1996).

The Mahāyāna Path

The Mahāyāna background of tantric practice

The Vajrayāna or tantric traditions of Buddhist practice arose in India in a Mahāyāna Buddhist framework, and as such they inherited the rich tradition of Mahāyāna speculation on the path to awakening. Indeed, tantric practice was often portrayed as simply a shortcut on this path, which dramatically accelerated the long course of practice as conceived by Mahāyāna theoreticians, shortening an uncountable series of lifetimes of practice on the bodhisattva path into as little as one lifetime. Some advocates of tantric Buddhism further claimed that tantric initiation was a requisite for those who seek to become completely awakened Buddhas.

By the mid-first millennium CE Indian Mahāyāna Buddhists developed sophisticated outlines of the path to awakening. These include, most notably, the five paths and the ten bodhisattva stages. These are outlined in Mahāyāna sūtras such as the *Scripture on the Ten Stages* (*Daśabhūmika Sūtra*) and the section on the Bodhisattva stages (*Bodhisattvabhūmi*) in a large Yogācāra work, the *Stages of Yogic Practice* or *Yogācārabhūmi* (Williams 1989: 204–07). Another influential Indian path outline is Kamalaśīla's eighth-century work *The Process of Cultivation* (*Bhāvanākrama*), which was a major influence on Tibetan Buddhist traditions and which remains a popular topic for Tibetan teachers (see for example Tenzin Gyatso 2001 and Trangu Rinpoche 2002).

The transmission of Buddhism to Tibet began in earnest during the late eighth century, under the patronage of the Tibetan emperor Tri Songdetsen (ruled ca. 755–797 CE), who according to Tibetan tradition, was responsible for the construction of the first monastery in Tibet, and to assist with this he invited to Tibet first the great Mahāyāna scholar Śāntarakṣita, and, when the deities of Tibet obstructed the construction of the monastery, the tantric adept Padmasambhava, who subdued the deities of Tibet and bound them with oaths to protect Buddhism. During this time Tibet was relatively open to its neighbors, and was visited by both Indian and Chinese teachers of Buddhism. This apparently led to conflict, as the Indian Buddhist faction generally supported the conventional Mahāyāna “gradual” path to awakening, while another faction, led by the Baotang Chan master Heshang Moheyan, advocated a “sudden” and arguably antinomian approach to awakening which ignored the conventional gradual cultivation (Adamek 2007: 288–89).

The *Testament of Ba (dba' bzhed)*, an early account of the events occurring during Tri Songdetsen's reign, reports that the king convened a debate between advocates of the Indian and Chinese Chan approaches to Buddhist practice. This debate, which took place at some point during the 790s, featured the Indian master Kamalaśīla advocating the gradual approach to practice, and Heshang Moheyan advocating the sudden approach. The king is reputed to have sided with the former (Pasang Wangdu and Diemberger 2000: 76–88; Kapstein 2000: 212–14, n. 11). This accurately reflects the trajectory later taken by Tibetan Buddhism, which became steadfastly focused on India, and wholeheartedly adopted the path schemas advanced by the Indian Mahāyāna tradition that Kamalaśīla represented.

The Mahāyāna path of practice

While there were various Mahāyāna conceptualizations of the path, particularly with respect to the ten Stages of the Bodhisattva path (see Dayal 1932), probably the most influential presentation of the Mahāyāna path in Tibet is Atiśa's *Lamp for the Path to Awakening (Bodhipathapradīpa)*; which he composed in the mid-eleventh century in Tibet at the request of the king of western Tibet, Changchup Ö (*byang chub 'od*). Not only was it the definitive presentation of the path for the Kadam school and the Geluk school that succeeded it, but it also was an influential model for authors from other schools, such as Gampopa, who frequently refers to it in his presentation of the path, *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation* (e.g. see Guenther 1959: 232). A very similar structure is also found in another early Tibetan presentation of the path, the *Stages of the Path of Illusion*, a work composed by the eleventh-century Tibetan yogī Kyungpo Naljor (*khyung po rnal 'byor*), on the basis of teachings he claimed to have received by the Indian yoginī Niguma (Harding 2010: 37–133).

Mahāyāna Buddhists inherited from early Buddhist traditions the basic division of Buddhist practice into the “Three Trainings” (*triśikṣā*), namely morality (*śīla*), meditative concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*prajñā*), to which the eightfold noble path was traditionally correlated, with right speech, right action and right livelihood corresponding to moral training, and with right effort, right mindfulness and right

concentration corresponding to meditative concentration, while right view and right thought corresponds to the training in wisdom. Atiśa, in the autocommentary to his *Lamp for the Path to Awakening*, correlates the more complex Mahāyāna path schema to this older structure (Sherburne 2000: 1).

One of the most popular Mahāyāna outlines for the path of practice is the well-known “five paths” (*pañcamārga*) scheme. The first is the “Path of Accumulation” (*saṃbhāramārga*), which is basically a preliminary stage in which one devotes oneself to moral training, cultivating new good habits of thought, speech, and action, while eliminating bad habits. One also engages in basic meditation practice. According to Atiśa, the aspiring bodhisattva enters this stage when he or she gives rise to the Spirit of Awakening (*bodhicitta*), the aspiration to achieve awakening for the sake of all beings (Sherburne 2000: 79; Williams 1989: 205). But one is technically not a bodhisattva yet; one is merely an aspirant for this lofty status.

The second stage of the Mahāyāna path of practice is the “Path of Preparation” (*prayogamārga*). In Atiśa’s presentation of the path, here the aspiring bodhisattva undertakes the practice of the Six Perfections of a Bodhisattva. These are the perfections of generosity, morality, patience, effort, meditation, and wisdom. Through the practice of the perfections, one will eventually gain a direct realization of emptiness, which will lead to the attainment of the first bodhisattva stage, the “Joyous” stage (Sherburne 2000: 265). This attainment also places one on the third stage of the Mahāyāna path of practice, the “Path of Vision” (*darśanamārga*). In this stage, the bodhisattva masters the perfection of generosity (Williams 1989: 205–07).

The fourth stage of the Mahāyāna path of practice is the “Path of Cultivation” (*bhāvanāmārga*). During this stage, the bodhisattva ascends through the remaining nine bodhisattva stages by mastering the remaining perfections (Williams 1989: 209). By the end of this stage one is a tenth stage bodhisattva on the verge of attaining complete awakening. According to some advocates of tantric practice, one cannot become a buddha without first achieving tantric initiation. Accordingly, this led advocates of tantric Buddhism to claim that Gautama Siddhartha was initiated in the Akaniṣṭha heaven just before he achieved awakening (Lessing and Wayman 1968: 27). Atiśa claims that tantric practice dramatically accelerates the bodhisattva’s accumulation of the stores of wisdom and merit, the main requisites for awakening (Sherburne 2000, 281). The actual attainment of a complete Buddha is the ultimate stage of the Mahāyāna path of practice, the “Path of No More Learning” (*āśaikṣamārga*).

The Path of Tantric Practice

Preliminary practices

Tibetan Buddhists who are interested in seriously undertaking spiritual practice are typically instructed to first engage in “preliminary practices” (*sngon ‘gro*). These are usually divided into two types, namely “ordinary preliminary practices” (*thun mong gi sngon ‘gro*), which are designed to provide one with a good moral and intellectual foundation, and which more or less correspond to the classical Mahāyāna Path of

Accumulation, and “extraordinary preliminary practices” (*thun mong ma yin gi sngon 'gro*), typically also recommended by Tibetan authors, which provide the basis for more advanced tantric practices.

The ordinary preliminaries, or the early phase of tantric training in the Tibetan tradition, are usually articulated in terms of the “three trainings” (*bslab gsum*) of Buddhist practice: moral discipline (*tshul khrims*), wisdom (*shes rab*), and meditative concentration (*ting 'dzin*). Novice practitioners in Tibetan Buddhism are exhorted to find a qualified teacher, under whose guidance they can begin their training. The early phases of spiritual training typically involve an introduction to Buddhist teachings, in order to help the novice generate a correct understanding of the religion, establishing a firm moral basis, and engendering a strong motivation for spiritual practice, all of which are seen as essential foundations for proper spiritual development. Students are encouraged to attend instructions given by qualified teachers, to listen well to their teachings, and to reflect upon them and contemplate them.

An extremely important and popular preliminary practice is the technique of “mind training” (*blo sbyong*), which was introduced to Tibet by Atiśa. It was a signature teaching of the Kadam tradition, and it is currently practiced in all of the major Tibetan Buddhist traditions. It involves reflection upon a set of fifty-nine aphorisms, which are designed to cause one to reflect upon the key teachings of Buddhism. This kind of reflection also is meant to help develop greater self-awareness, enabling one to uproot negative patterns of thought and behavior, and to replace them with virtuous patterns (see Thupten Jinpa 2006).

The extraordinary preliminaries include taking refuge in the Three Jewels—the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Saṅgha—and generation of the spirit of awakening (Skt. *bodhicitta*, Tib. *byang sems*), as well as several contemplative and ritual exercises. These exercises include a purification practice that entails focusing on the deity Vajrasattva (who is associated with spiritual purification and the overcoming of mental obstacles). That involves a relatively simple visualization of Vajrasattva, performed while reciting a liturgy that includes the repetition of Vajrasattva's 100-syllable mantra. They also include the *maṇḍala* ritual, a simple ritual in which one makes an offering of rice or barley, which is visualized as an extensive offering made to a vast host of Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and the gurus of one's practice lineage. Another important preliminary is the practice of Guru Yoga, a contemplative exercise in which one visualizes one's guru above one's head in the form of an awakened being. One takes refuge in one's guru and the guru lineage that he or she represents, and recites prayers to one's gurus. These practices are taught as stand-alone practices for novices who aspire to undertake advanced forms of tantric contemplative practices. They are also commonly included in the liturgical manuals (Skt. *sādhana*, Tib. *sgrub thabs*), as preliminaries conducted prior to the actual meditative practice (see Beyer 1973: 434–42, and Khetsun Sangpo 1996: 113–82).

Tibetan Buddhists of all the major traditions developed a genre of literature that consists of formalized written versions of the lectures, which are typically provided to novice students. These lectures, and the written works based on them, typically cover a wide range of topics designed to provide novice students of Buddhism, both lay and monastic, with a thorough grounding in the Buddhist worldview, as well as to motivate

them to undertake practice. These include reflections on the nature of cyclic existence (*saṃsāra*), the doctrine of karma, impermanence, suffering, selflessness, emptiness, and the preciousness of the human state, which are undertaken in order to accomplish the training of wisdom (Beyer 1973: 25–29). The topic of the training in morality is also typically covered, with reflections on the importance of renouncing negative patterns of thought, various forms of harmful conduct, and unwholesome modes of livelihood. Often other key topics, such as the need for compassion and the six perfections of a bodhisattva, are also covered. The training of meditative concentration is typically addressed by introducing students to the basic modes of Buddhist meditation practice, namely the quiescence (Skt. *śamatha*, Tib. *zhi gnas*) and insight practices (Skt. *vipaśyanā*, Tib. *lhag mthong*).

There are many examples of written works that record the teachings of great masters (see Levinson 1996). The work *A Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life*, attributed to the eighth-century Indian scholar and saint Śāntideva, remains an extremely popular and influential work in Tibet (Wallace and Wallace 1997). As noted above, Atiśa's *Lamp for the Path to Awakening* was an extremely influential presentation of the path of practice (Shelburne 2000). Milarepa's disciple Gampopa (*sgam po pa*, 1079–1153) produced another prominent work in this genre, *The Ornament for Precious Liberation* (Guenther 1959; Konchok Gyaltzen 1998). Likewise, *The Great Stages of the Path*, composed by Tsong-kha-pa, is the premier work on the preliminary stages of practice in the Geluk tradition (Cutler 2000, 2002, 2004). The work *The Words of My Perfect Teacher*, by Patrul Rinpoche (*dpal sprul rin po che*, 1808–1887), is a beloved example of this genre in the Nying-ma tradition (Patrul Rinpoche 1994). These kinds of topics are also addressed in many works by Tibetan masters composed for general audiences (for example, see Khetsun Sangpo 1996).

In addition to attending teachings, Tibetan Buddhists are generally encouraged to seek to produce good karma, or “merit,” via compassionate activities in general, and generosity to the monastic Saṅgha in particular. Many Tibetan Buddhists further seek to generate merit via the repetition of mantras; the mantras of the great bodhisattvas Avalokiteśvara and Tārā, and the great saint Padmasambhava, are among the most popular. The practices of pilgrimage and prostrations are also very popular devotional activities (Kapstein 1998; Huber 1999). Many Tibetan Buddhists never proceed to advanced tantric practices, and engage in the so-called “preliminaries” throughout their lives. This is because the advanced forms of tantric contemplative practices typically require years of intensive practice in order to be mastered, a commitment that very few laymen and women, and relatively few monks or nuns, are able or willing to make.

Creation stage practices

In the tantric system one enters the advanced stage of practice when one receives an initiation from one's guru. The rite of initiation, or empowerment (*abhiṣeka*, *dbang bskur*), is an important ritual that takes one to three days to perform. In the ceremony, one is introduced to the deity *maṇḍala* of the practice tradition into which one is being

initiated, which empowers one to undertake the advanced contemplative practices associated with that tradition (see Berzin 1997). Typically, newly initiated students must make a vow to practice daily according to one of the liturgical manuals associated with the tradition into which they have been initiated.

This practice entails what the Tibetan traditions call the “creation” or “generation” stage practice (Skt. *utpattikrama*, Tib. *bskyed rim*). This stage involves the very complex visualization practices known as “deity yoga” (*lha'i rnal 'byor*). These visualization practices entail a transformation of one's identity, dissolution of one's ordinary sense of identity, and a re-generation of oneself as a deity, surrounded by the other deities of the pertinent *maṇḍala*. To be perfected, one needs to generate extremely clear and vivid visualizations of oneself as a particular deity, and of one's environment as the enlightened world of the deity's “court,” or *maṇḍala*. This, in turn, requires very strong powers of mental concentration; for most people, that would require years of practice of quiescence meditation. Moreover, to undertake the practice properly, one also needs to have a direct realization of the fundamental Buddhist doctrines of selflessness and emptiness. Only then can one successfully dissolve one's ordinary self-identity and develop the “divine pride” (*lha'i nga rgyal*) of oneself as an awakened being. This requires a thorough grounding in insight meditation practice (Hopkins 1977: 117–28; Harding 1996: 7–12; Cozort 1986: 41–58).

At this stage the practice is conducted by using liturgical manuals that are recited, and contain a basic outline for the contemplative practice. These works are traditionally considered to be secret, only open to those who have received the appropriate empowerment. Following the initiation ceremony, students are typically instructed in the meditative practices associated with the manual that they are required to practice (Beyer 1973: 442–52; English 2002). The mastery of visualization practice is very challenging for most people, and typically requires a serious commitment on the part of the practitioner. The Tibetan Buddhist practice of going into meditative retreat, ideally for three or more years, is designed to enable this kind of accomplishment (Ngawang Zangpo 1990).

Creation stage visualization practices are a standard element of Tibetan Buddhism, and are found in all of the major traditions. They are a major distinguishing feature of the diverse practice traditions we find in Tibetan Buddhism. Moreover, they serve as a prerequisite for the various systems of “highest” practice, which are advocated by different practice traditions.

Highest stages of practice

Each of the major practice traditions in Tibetan Buddhism also preserves traditions of contemplative practice that they claim to be the ultimate practice, capable of effecting the achievement of the awakening of a perfect Buddha. These advanced practices usually require a significant amount of training in the preliminaries, as well as either preliminary or concurrent practice of creation stage visualization practices. Among these, one of the best known is the “Great Perfection” (*rdzogs chen*) system, which is a

signature teaching of the Nying-ma tradition, but is widely practiced by other traditions as well.

The Nying-ma tradition claims that the Great Perfection teachings were introduced to Tibet during the eighth century in three distinct “instructional classes.” These are the “mental class” (*sems sde*) and “spatial class” (*klong sge*), which were introduced by the Indian master Vairocana, and the “esoteric class” (*man ngag sde*), which was introduced by Padmasambhava and another Indian master, Vimalamitra (Dudjom Rinpoche 1991: 538–40, 554–55). These teachings, also called “ultimate yoga” (*atīyoga*), are designed to lead the practitioner to realize the “great perfection,” which is the true and primordial nature of the mind, characterized by natural purity and spontaneity, also known as intrinsic awareness (*rang rig*; see Gyurme Dorje 2006: 480, and Khetsun Sangpo 1996: 186–87). In terms of practice, following the completion of preliminary practices, one typically embarks upon the two practices that are taught in the “esoteric class,” namely the “Cutting Through” (*khregs chod*) and the “Direct Approach” (*thod rgal*).

The practice of Cutting Through, also known as “Cutting Through to Primordial Purity” (*ka dag khregs chod*), is an advanced contemplative technique that involves careful observation of one’s stream of mental activity. The practitioner undertakes this inward observation in order to identify the gaps in the flow of thoughts, and in order to break through to the underlying primordial state of mind, which is none other than the Buddha-nature, also identified as the body of reality (Skt. *dharmakāya*, Tib. *chos sku*) of a Buddha. In the even more advanced practices of the Direct Approach, or “Direct Approach to Spontaneity” (*lhun grub thod rgal*), one seeks to give rise naturally to the physical body (Skt. *rūpakāya*, Tib. *gzugs sku*) of a Buddha. One does this not through visualization, as in the creation stage practices. Rather, the “Direct Approach” involves gazing at the sunlit sky in order to give rise to spontaneous visions of colored light. Perfection of these practices can supposedly lead to complete awakening, a sign of which is the attainment of “rainbow body” (*“ja” lus*), which also involves the dissolution of the material body into colored light (Karmay 1988: 190–96).

The “new” (*gsar ma*) traditions of Tibetan Buddhism all inherited “highest” systems of contemplative practice, identified with the “perfection” or “completion” stage (Skt. *niṣpannakrama*, Tib. *rdzogs rim*) of practice. These systems, attributed to the great saints (Skt. *mahāsiddha*, Tib. *grub chen*) of India, involved the visualization and manipulation of the subtle body via advanced yogic techniques. A number of such systems of practice associated with the perfection stage were developed. The perfection stage purports to perfect the divine vision created in the former creation stage of tantric practice. Cozort described these stages as follows:

Highest Yoga Tantra comprises two stages, the stage of generation and the stage of completion. Both are concerned with the transformation of one’s mind and body into the mind and body of a Buddha. On the stage of generation, one generates a vivid imaginative visualization of one’s transformation into a deity; then, the stage of completion “completes” the transformation by actually bringing about a new physical structure, that is, by transforming into an actual deity, a Buddha (Cozort 1986: 27).

One of the best known perfection stage systems is the system of six stages associated with the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*, one of the main scriptures of esoteric Buddhism, and other related tantras. The first stage, called “body isolation,” is a refinement of the creation stage, as it involves visualization of the *maṇḍala* in a subtle drop located at the base of the central channel of the subtle body, located in the genital region. The intense concentration required for this exercise causes the “winds” of mental energy to withdraw from the sense objects, and concentrate at the base of the central channel.

The second stage, “speech isolation,” involves a practice of intense yogic breathing (*prāṇāyāma*), designed to force the winds into the central channel. The extremely stable concentration afforded by these practices, effected by intense concentration on the navel center coupled with the deep “vase breathing” technique, allows one to open the central channel and focus the flow of the winds into it. That purportedly leads to awakening the subtle “Fury Fire” (Skt. *caṇḍālī*, Tib. *gtum mo*), which travels up the channel and melts the subtle “drop” of the brain center, whose molten descent down the channel awakens increasingly intense levels of bliss (Cozort 1986: 68–88).

The stage of speech isolation has the aim of unraveling the heart center, which opens up the third stage of mind isolation, so-called because it focuses on the dissolution of the winds in the ultimate basis of mind, the “very subtle mind” embedded within the heart center. This practice is understood to be a simulation of a process that occurs naturally when dying, falling asleep, or during sexual orgasm. It requires either sexual union with an actual consort (Skt. *karmamudrā*, Tib. *las kyi phyag rgya*), or a visualized union with an imagined gnosis consort (Skt. *jñānamudrā*, Tib. *ye shes kyi phyag rgya*; Cozort 1986: 91). In the perfection stage, the adept’s practice focuses on the dissolution process, which purportedly occurs at death. This process involves the eightfold progressive dissolution of the elements and the consciousnesses associated with them into increasingly subtle levels, culminating in the experience of clear light (see Thurman 1994: 42).

The fourth stage, known as the “impure magic body” or “self-consecration” stage, involves the visualization of oneself arising as a deity through these stages in reverse order. This is seen as a generation of the physical body of a Buddha, which is motivated by compassion. At the fifth stage, called “clear light,” there is focus on immersion in clear light; that is the true nature of mind, which is none other than emptiness. The final stage, “integration,” fully unifies the experiences of clear light and magic body, emptiness and compassion; it is equated with the final achievement of awakening (Cozort 1986: 94–114; Thurman 1994: 78–81).

While the system associated with the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* was particularly well known and influential in Tibet, there were also other systems associated with different practice traditions of “highest yoga tantra.” The practice tradition associated with the *Kālacakra Tantra* advocated a somewhat different system involving six stages, known as the “six-limbed yoga” (*ṣaḍaṅgayoga*), which nonetheless overlaps considerably with the *Guhyasamāja* system (see Cozort 1986: 119–31). There is also considerable overlap with the famous “Six Teachings of Nāropa” (*na ro’i chos drug*), a system of practice associated with the Mother or Yoginī tantras that the great saint Nāropa taught to Marpa the Translator. The first stage in Nāropa’s system, “Fury Fire” or yoga of inner heat, corresponds more or less to the body and speech isolation stages of the *Guhyasamāja*

system (see Cozort 1986: 72), while the second and third stages, the yogas of the magic body and clear light, correspond to the fourth and fifth stages of the Guhyasamāja system. The fourth and fifth yogas, dream yoga and the yoga of the intermediate state, are exercises designed to open the heart center, like the “mind isolation” practice in the Guhyasamāja scheme. The final yoga in Nāropa’s system, “consciousness transference” (*‘pho ba*), is an exercise that purports to effect the transference of one’s consciousness to a Buddha field at the moment of death (see Mullin 1996).

Closely related to Nāropa’s Six Teachings are the Six Teachings of Niguma, a female yoginī who is reported to have been Nāropa’s “sister” *lcam mo/sring mo* (Harding 2010: 4–5), a term that could designate either biological or spiritual relation, by being, for example, students of the same guru. Niguma’s system differs only slightly from Nāropa’s, and was particularly renowned for its focus on Dream Yoga. Niguma, in fact, reputedly transmitted this system to Kyungpo Naljor while he was dreaming (Harding 2010: 17–18).

An alternate scheme of tantric practice is the “Path and Fruit” (*lam ‘bras*) system, which is a signature teaching of the Sakya tradition. It is based upon the *Hevajra Tantra*, and is attributed to the great Indian saint Virūpa. As the name suggests, this system draws upon Nāgārjuna’s famous assertion that cyclic existence (*saṃsāra*) is non-different from liberation (*nirvāṇa*). It seeks to achieve a direct realization of the nature of mind, the root of both cyclic existence and liberation, which is equated with the union of emptiness and clear light.

The “Path and Fruit” is a comprehensive system, including a distinct set of preliminary practices. It also incorporates a system of “outer” and “inner” creation stage practices, the latter of which transfers creation stage visualizations onto the subtle body, as is the case in the early stages of practice in the Guhyasamāja and the six yogas of Nāropa systems (see Stearns 2006: 529–37). The “Path and Fruit” system also includes advanced yogic practices that involve yogas focusing on the clear light, as well as on the dream and intermediate states, much like what we find in the six yogas of Nāropa system (Stearns 2006: 539–72).

Last but certainly not least is the “Great Seal” or Mahāmudrā (*phyag chen*) system of meditation, which focuses on the direct realization of the nature of mind, an essential step for the attainment of awakening. Several Mahāmudrā systems developed in India; the basic division is between the so-called “tantra” and “sūtra” systems of Mahāmudrā. The former is basically equivalent to perfection stage practices, such as the six yogas of Nāropa, which culminate in the direct experience of mind and reality (Jackson 2005: 5596).

The Mahāmudrā as a distinct formulation of the path of practice usually refers to the “sūtra” system, which, unlike the standard tantric approach, eschews the complex ritual and meditative practices that are typically associated with the tantras. That said, the “sūtra” approach was apparently developed by several of the great saints (*mahāsiddha*) in India, notably Nāropa, Virūpa, Saraha, and Maitrīpa, who were also closely involved with the transmission of the tantric systems (see Jackson 2005: 5597, and Mathes 2006). Thus, the sharp distinction between sūtra and tantra here appears to be largely rhetorical, as many of the advanced tantric systems, such as the various Perfection Stage systems, claim to abandon the complexity of the “lower” systems of

practice. Indeed, one of the early advocates of the sūtra Mahāmudrā system, Milarepa's disciple Gampopa, describes *mahāmudrā* as

an “essential vehicle” beyond sūtra or tantra, a realization that seals all phenomena and leads to enlightenment, either gradually through four yogas—one-pointedness, simplicity, single taste, and non-meditation—or suddenly, in an insight given such names as the “thunder-strike” (*thog babs*) and the “white medicinal simple” (*dkar po gcig thub*) (Jackson 2005: 5597).

The sūtra Mahāmudrā practice focuses on the basic Buddhist practice of sitting meditation, with an initial focus on calming the mind, by focusing on the breath as well as by sitting quietly with no focus. This kind of meditation then proceeds to insight (Skt. *vipaśyanā*, Tib. *lhag stong*) practice, which involves examining the nature of thoughts and feelings in a state of meditative concentration, so as to establish the identity of mind with thoughts and feelings (Dakpo Tashi Namgyal 2001: 17–39). This practice culminates in the “pointing-out instruction” or “direct introduction” (*ngo sprod pa*) to the nature of one's mind, in which the master, in a private encounter, attempts to directly introduce the student to the nature of his or her mind (Dakpo Tashi Namgyal 2001: 40–52). This practice bears similarities to the master-student encounters found in the East Asian Chan/Zen traditions, a fact that led to considerable controversy in Tibet regarding the origin of this practice tradition (Jackson 2005: 5599; see also Jackson 1994).

Concluding Remarks

As this summary of main Tibetan formulations of the tantric path of practice and realization has indicated, the Tibetans inherited from India a complex array of tantric meditative and ritual practices, which they in turn systematized. That led to the development of a number of influential formulations of the tantric path, which are central elements of Tibetan Buddhism. These systems did not develop independently, so there is naturally a considerable amount of overlap among them. While advocates of one system or another often claim that their system is the “highest,” or that it represents the ultimate teaching of Buddhism, over the centuries generations of Tibetan Buddhists preserved all of them, perhaps out of the belief that different systems are particularly suitable for different types of individuals.

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PART III

Popular Practices

CHAPTER 10

Pure Land Devotion in East Asia

Jimmy Yu

The modern academic study of “Pure Land Buddhism”—which is often noted for its focus on devotional practice—amounts to a substantial number of studies within East Asian Buddhist scholarship. However, many contemporary scholars are uncomfortable with this category because there was never an independent “Pure Land” school within Chinese Buddhism, complete with its own centrally organized canon, system of doctrine and practice, and historical lineage. In China the teachings and practices related to the Pure Land of Amitābha Buddha only reached intermittent and minimal institutional organization that centered on certain historical figures. These institutional centers were regional and short-lived, lasting no longer than a few generations. Yet, despite its lack of institutional and social structure in China, Pure Land sentiments and practices—specifically those related to rebirth in Sukhāvati, the Western Paradise of Amitābha—were pervasive among ordinary people. Throughout Chinese history these teachings were transmitted very effectively without any social structure.

In contrast to the situation that obtained in China, in Japan Pure Land Buddhism has been an independent school since the Kamakura period (1185–1333). There independent movements such as the Jōdōshū and Jōdō Shinshū achieved fully developed institutional structures that were sectarian in nature. Problems only arise when Japanese Pure Land sectarian concerns are anachronistically graphed onto their Chinese counterpart. Historiography that stems from this perspective often prevents a more nuanced understanding of Pure Land discourses and practices.

This chapter addresses the narrow perspectivism of traditional approaches and highlights some of the current problems in Pure Land studies. At the same time, it suggests new areas of research. Specifically, it challenges the historiographical description of Pure Land Buddhism as a coherent and integrated system of practices, doctrines, and other related phenomena. It also stresses the manifold, messy, and not necessarily representative aspects of Pure Land phenomena, presented from a single point of view. The chapter also focuses on representative patterns of Chinese and

Japanese Pure Land traditions. Interested readers are encouraged to use the leads provided in this chapter to get a broader sense of the scope of Pure Land studies in the whole of East Asia.

Historiography on the Pure Land “School”

The terms Pure Land Buddhism or Pure Land devotion have been part of the analytic repertoire of scholars of East Asian religions since at least the end of the nineteenth century. Even though Pure Land Buddhism in pre-modern times was not an independent school of Chinese Buddhism and there was no historical lineage of Pure Land patriarchs, the enduring perception of it as a school is due largely to two prominent factors. First, there is the genesis of nineteenth-century Buddhist studies as a field of academic inquiry and its construction of “Buddhism” through texts. Second, there is the historicity of Japanese Buddhism and the establishment of Jōdo shū (Pure Land School) and Jōdo shinshū (True Pure Land School) as independent sectarian traditions in pre-modern times.

The end of the nineteenth century was a time when notions of “world religions” first emerged in intellectual circles across the globe. It was in this context of modern academia that the notion of distinct Pure Land tradition became rigidified and it came to be considered as a school. Indeed, the discourse about Buddhist schools, in which Pure Land would be one among many, can be partly traced back to the formation of modern Buddhist sectarian institutions in nineteenth-century Japan. These institutions faced many challenges during the nineteenth century Meiji Restoration. At the time, the Japanese state was concerned not only with restoring imperial institutions, which were to replace the feudal institutions of the Tokugawa *bakufu*, but also with suppressing Buddhism and its institutions. The state disestablished the traditional system of temple affiliations or parish temples, which seriously affected the economic basis of Buddhism as a whole. The imperial government also issued edicts mandating the separation of Shinto and Buddhism, which completely reconfigured the religiosity of the common people. These acts helped to establish a national ideology that could compete on an equal footing with the recognized success of Protestant Christianity in the West.

Facing these imperial threats and confronting the intellectual trend toward modernization, Buddhist sectarian institutions in Japan sought new models for organizing themselves. One way was to establish Buddhist sectarian universities. Consequently, each of the major Buddhist sects established a university (Sueki 2005). Through modern education, these powerful Japanese institutions produced an influential and normative body of sectarian scholarship (*shūgaku*) that shaped the views and perspectives of subsequent generations of Japanese and Western scholars.

Perhaps one of the most influential Japanese works that contributed to the widespread acceptance of Buddhism as constituted by discrete “schools” of thought was *Hasshū kōyō*, a short and obscure work by a medieval Japanese monk named Gyōnen (1240–1321), which was translated into English as *The Essentials of the Eight Traditions* (Gyōnen 1994). This work was the basis of Akira Hirakawa’s (1915–2002) own *Hasshū kōyō*, published in 1980–1981. Gyōnen’s division of Buddhism into schools had abso-

lutely no impact on Japanese Buddhism during his time. However, his work came into prominence during the nineteenth century, and became especially influential during the 1878–1924 period, when Meiji Buddhist institutions were deliberately and consciously modernizing themselves as part of a movement that sought to make Buddhism a “world religion,” complete with schools and sects. This short book was widely reprinted as a primer in the newly established Japanese academies.

It was, for example, also around this time (1905) that a “Religious Studies” program was first established at Tokyo Imperial University. The central figure at this time was Anesaki Masaharu (1873–1949), a one-time student of Thomas William Rhys Davids (1843–1922), who founded the Pāli Text Society in 1881. Rhys Davids was a controversial figure and a prominent promoter of Theravāda Buddhism in England, where an enthusiastic Victorian discourse about Buddhism had already been pervasive for a few decades (Almond, 1988). After Eugène Burnouf’s (1801–1852) *Introduction à l’histoire du Bouddhisme indien*, the textual analysis of Buddhism was perceived to be a major scholarly task, and Buddhism became progressively less a living religion of the present and more a religion of the past, bound by its own textuality (Burnouf 2010). What is important to note in this growing process of understanding Buddhism through texts was that it became a tradition constituted by different “schools” or “sects,” and that it also constituted a “philosophy” on a par with Western philosophical traditions.

Several of the early Japanese sectarian works made their way into Chinese Buddhist academies and seminaries during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For example, Chinese thinkers—most notably Yang Wenhui (1837–1911), the teacher of the famous modern Buddhist reformer Taixu (1890–1947) (see Pittman 2001)—responded to Nanjō Bun’yū’s (1849–1927) *A Short History of the Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects* (Nanjō 1979), originally published in Japanese in 1886 (and translated into English in 1979), with both enthusiasm and criticism. Their responses led to critical Chinese productions of books on the Chinese Buddhist “schools.” Many of these thinkers adapted such “master plan” models of Buddhist philosophical “schools” of thought in their own seminary curriculums, and used them as fundamental textbooks for training Chinese monastics. Meanwhile, in the United States, this tradition of presenting Buddhism in terms of schools continued uninterrupted until well into the eighties. Two of the most influential textbooks used at universities in the United States that perpetuated this view of sectarian Buddhism were *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy* by Takakusu Junjirō (1866–1945), edited by Wing-tsit Chan and Charles A. Moore, and Nanjō’s *A Short History of the Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects*.

The category of “Pure Land Buddhism” must also be contextualized in relation to the history of organized Japanese sects such as the Jōdo shū and Jōdo shinshū, established by Hōnen (1133–1212) and Shinran (1173–1262), respectively. These two Japanese reformers touted the Chinese monk Shandao (613–681) as one of the founding “patriarchs” of the whole Pure Land tradition and constructed a spiritual genealogy that essentially culminated in Japan. It is important to note that, from this sectarianized and teleological perspective, the messiness of Chinese Buddhist eclecticism and syncretism, particularly in later China, was made out to be a sign of “decline.” This is one of the reasons why received scholarship portrays the Tang dynasty (618–907) as the “golden age” of Chinese Buddhism, and asserts that everything that follows was in a

state of decline. Such a perspective typically privileges “founders” and “schools,” as well as their essentialized “doctrines.” Once key Pure Land doctrines are codified, anything else that does not resemble these principles comes to be viewed as a bastardization of the tradition and its truth.

The Jōdo shinshū tradition, of course, is arguably the best-known Pure Land tradition in the West. Its influence reaches beyond its followers and into the Buddhist academia, to the extent that Western scholarly writings on the Pure Land tradition often tend to assume that Jōdo shinshū interpretations of Pure Land history and doctrine are accepted by all devotees of Amitābha. When historical developments of Amitābha worship and related Sukhāvati motifs are viewed through the lens of such pre-modern Japanese developments, which are further strengthened by sectarian scholarship, “Pure Land Buddhism” as an analytic category often takes on connotations of institutional and historical autonomy that may not be appropriate to the Chinese setting.

In reality, the so-called Pure Land Buddhism in pre-modern China and pre-Hōnen Japan was merely a devotional orientation centered on Amitābha Buddha, with the attendant aim of rebirth in Sukhāvati or the Realm of Highest Bliss to the West, or simply, the Western Pure Land. Scholars have shown that this picture is in sync with the role of Amitābha and Sukhāvati in Indian and Central Asian Mahāyāna Buddhism (Schopen 1977). It was not until the Amitābha and Sukhāvati motifs were introduced into China that there began to periodically emerge a somewhat discrete point of devotional and soteriological orientation. While this orientation can be said to mark the rise of an identifiable, perhaps even autonomous, tradition of Pure Land ideas and practices, in China it remained a largely diffused movement.

In Chinese the term *zong*, which is usually translated as “school,” carries a very different valence than the Japanese sectarian usage of the same term. *Zong* can refer to a specific set of doctrines or theses; it also refers to principles underlying certain teachings, and a lineage or shared ideology of community of people—none of which implies any institutional basis. Recent scholarship shows that from a critical historical point of view, *zong* as a “lineage” in Chinese Buddhist text is linked more closely with prescriptive truth claims than with descriptive realities. Historical studies reveal that only at intermittent points did the culture surrounding Pure Land practice approach the status of an independently organized institution or school. There is also a plethora of evidence that such devotional and soteriological motifs were not exclusively “Buddhist” at all, as we will read below.

In the following sections, I discuss some of the central foci in received Pure Land studies. I employ the less conceptually ramified category of “Pure Land teachings,” because it is more accommodating of cultural and social nuances that might otherwise be overlooked, and it also seems better suited to the historical situation in China.

Focus on Genealogy

Most scholarship focused on Pure Land teachings nearly always provides some version of discrete Pure Land genealogies and lineages of masters. Received sectarian scholarship

proposes that the Pure Land genealogy emerged into the Buddhist rhetorical field in North China during the sixth and seventh centuries, and continued on in Japan in the form of discrete Pure Land sects. We cannot deny the fact that practitioners, whether monastic or lay, engaged in certain practices that aimed at rebirth in the Pure Land of Amitābha. But the construction of discrete genealogies comes mainly from the impact of Japanese sectarian scholarship, particularly scholarship influenced or funded by the Japanese Pure Land sect of Jōdo shinshū. Such received scholarship historicizes the formation of Pure Land Buddhism in China as beginning with key figures such as Tanluan (476–542), Daochuo (562–645), and Shandao (613–681), who systematized a discrete theology, soteriology, and exclusivist practices centered on Amitābha and Sukhāvati that were differentiated from other forms of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

The most popular scholarly construction of a Pure Land genealogy is the one that begins with Tanluan, Daochuo, and Shandao, and then continues on to the Japanese priest Hōnen, and finally culminates with Shinran. Yet, there is very little evidence that such lineage actually existed in China. One place that scholars look to construct such genealogy is various rebirth narratives. However, rebirth narratives are not genealogies. In China, Pure Land rebirth tales were merely part of the general Mahāyāna tradition. If we examine these narratives carefully, we will read about the rebirth stories of Chan masters, Tiantai clerics, and lay people. These records were never meant to be construed as genealogies of a Pure Land patriarchate; they merely testify to certain sentiments that were prevalent among practicing Buddhists.

We also cannot conflate the various commentaries of Pure Land scriptures as proof that those commentators belong to a discrete Pure Land school. The three so-called “Pure Land scriptures” that have served as the *locus classicus* for Japanese Buddhist discussions of Pure Land Buddhism are the *Foshuo wuliang shou jing* (*Sūtra on the Buddha of Immeasurable Life*; Skt. *Larger Sukhāvatīyūha Sūtra*); the *Foshuo Amituo jing* (*Amitābha Sūtra*; Skt. *Smaller Sukhāvatīyūha Sūtra*); and the *Foshuo guan wuliangshoufo jing* (*Sūtra on the Contemplation or Visualization of the Buddha of Measureless Life*). Yet, numerous Chinese Buddhist clerics commented on these scriptures.

The emergence of the so-called Pure Land scriptures in China actually coincided with the emergence of the phenomenon of *panjiao* or doctrinal classification, which developed in late sixth-century China. The works of many eminent Buddhist clerics of this era, such as Zhiyi (538–597) and Fazang (643–712), are notable for bringing their interpretive and systematizing genius to bear upon scriptures and doctrines that we now associate with the so-called Pure Land Buddhism. Even those with particular Pure Land inclinations (i.e. the founders of Chinese Pure Land) also wrote commentaries on other scriptures. For example, Tanluan was known as an exegete of numerous Mahāyāna scriptures.

Moreover, the first real evidence of a construction of a Pure Land patriarchate appears relatively late, in a Song-dynasty (960–1279) work titled *Lebang wenlei* (*Topically Arranged Tracts on the Land of Ease and Succor*), composed by the Tiantai scholar-monk and historian Shizhi Zongxiao (1151–1214). Yet, what is curious in his genealogical construction is the absence of figures that became important in later Japanese Jōdo shinshū genealogies, namely figures such as Tanluan and Daochuo. In fact,

none of the figures in Zongxiao's list were ardent advocates of the exclusivist Pure Land practice of verbal *nianfo* (or recitation of Amitābha Buddha's name). That includes Shandao, who was touted by the later Japanese traditions as a popularizer of verbal *nianfo* among the common people. In a 1269 Tiantai work, *Fozu tongji* (*Comprehensive History of the Buddhas and Patriarchs*) by Zhipan (1220–1275), Shandao does appear as the second “Pure Land patriarch.” However, in the historical context of this work, he was only listed in order to establish the sectarian identity of Tiantai as a national school, which included its own brand of Pure Land devotional rituals and a patriarchate (Getz 1999: 504). Shandao is portrayed there not as a popularizer, but as a practitioner who engaged in the austere practices of never lying down to sleep and constantly practicing samādhi (*buddhānusmṛti*) and ritual activity, and he is said to have advised other people to do the same.

Yet, Japanese traditions portray Shandao as advocating the notion that rebirth in the Pure Land was accessible to all, as long as the person is replete with “faith” (*xin*); they also assert that he articulated a “devotional movement” beyond monastic and academic Buddhism. There is little evidence that Shandao advocated any of this. His tract, *Lingzhong zhennian wangshen wen* (Correct Mindfulness for Rebirth at the Moment of Death), actually presents a more nuanced understanding of the rebirth process, wrought with dangers that can hinder the dying aspirant's rebirth in the Pure Land. His extensive commentary on the complex samādhi practices of visualization, discussed at length in his commentary to the *Sūtra on the Buddha of Immeasurable Life*, also presents challenges to any simple portrayal of him as anything less than a dedicated meditation expert and a scriptural exegete. He was hardly a mere popularizer of Pure Land devotionalism among the laity. There is ample evidence that both Shandao and his immediate monastic disciple Huaigan (ca. 650–750?) engaged in the extreme practice of ritual confinement, which involved prolonged and intense periods of solitary retreat (Stevenson 1995: 363). It seems that the practices he advocated were not really suitable for an ordinary commoner or lay person.

Moreover, from the perspective of later Jōdo shinshū Buddhism, it is questionable whether the three important figures—especially Tanluan and Daochuo, but also Shandao—as a trio ever exerted any real impact in later China. If we examine Song dynasty monk-historians' chronicles, we see no mention of them in a linear fashion. Granted, the monk-historians were mostly Tiantai monks, so it would be odd, at least from their perspective, to separate out these figures as members of a distinct school or lineage of Pure Land masters. We must reiterate that Zhipan's inclusion of Shandao as a Pure Land master was only for the purpose of aligning him with traditional Tiantai foci of intense meditation and ritual practice. If this trio was so influential, one would at least expect a casual grouping of them, or a mention in passing of their works together. But their absence in historical chronicles suggests that their works did not “survive” beyond the Tang dynasty (618–906), at least in the sense that the three masters were neither conceived of as a trio in any genealogical construct, nor were their works included in canonical catalogues from the later Song period. Certainly, Song clerics who advocated rebirth in the Pure Land did not cite their works as sources of authority.

Focus on the Doctrine of Rebirth

Received scholarship has asserted that, beginning with the likes of Daochuo and Shandao, Chinese Pure Land devotees routinely distinguished between two basic approaches to Buddhahood: the so-called “difficult path” (*nanxing dao*) of saintly practice that resorts to “self-effort” (*zili*), and the “easy path” (*yixing dao*) of rebirth in the Pure Land through reliance on the “other power” (*tali*) of Amitābha Buddha’s grace. The path of “self-effort” was accordingly identified with the gradual scheme of the bodhisattva path presented in Indian Mahāyāna scriptures and treatises. The “easy path” of rebirth in Sukhāvatī (the “Pure Land” path) was synthesized on the basis of the three Pure Land sūtras. Metaphorically speaking, this is often referred to as a “horizontal transcendence” (*hengchao*), as opposed to the vertical path of self-effort, suggesting that one takes a shortcut to enlightenment or Buddhahood by “transcending” literally to the “West.” These interpretations were based on particular Jōdo shinshū readings of certain scriptures.

In this scheme of things, a basic division was established between the Pure Land path and the larger field of Mahāyāna thought and practice, with the Pure Land path promising an effortless (*yixing*) acquisition of all the merits of the latter, through the simple act of rebirth in the Pure Land. Scholars also conveniently attribute this understanding of the superiority of the Pure Land path to the emergence of the notion of “three periods” in the historical decline of the Dharma: (1) the age of true Dharma (*zhengfa*); (2) the age of semblance Dharma (*xiangfa*); (3) and the age of demise of Dharma (*mofa*). The notion of an easy path, conjoined with the corollary idea of the three periods of the historical decline of Dharma—especially the notion that the current age itself was the “the age of demise of Dharma”—presents rebirth in the Pure Land as more than just a speedy path to Buddhahood. It presents it as the *only* viable path to Buddhahood, insofar as people living during the third age of demise of Dharma were deemed too afflicted to gain salvation, and other Buddhist teachings were also considered to be too corrupted to bring about salvation. Surprisingly, Shandao never latched on to the idea of the age of demise of Dharma, which was only part of the teachings of Daochuo. However, this idea was central to the Japanese priest Shinran’s conception of his personal predicament and of his times. For him, faith in Amitābha’s vows alone was the most important cause for rebirth, during an age of corruption.

All three of these so-called “Pure Land scriptures” make the rather striking claim that a person may obtain salvation on the deathbed through recollection of Amitābha’s form or recitation of his name, even after having committed a lifetime of the worst evils imaginable. In two of these scriptures, the *Sūtra of Immeasurable Life* and the *Sūtra on the Contemplation of the Buddha of Immeasurable Life*, rebirth is assured with a mere “recollecting or reciting of the Buddha’s name ten times” (*shinian*) at the moment of death. In the eighteenth of his forty-eight vows, recounted in the *Sūtra of Immeasurable Life*, as an aspiring bodhisattva destined in the future to become Amitābha Buddha, Dharmākara states:

May I not take possession of perfect enlightenment . . . if any among the throng of sentient beings in the ten directions of the universe should whole-heartedly desire to be reborn in my land with joy, faith, and gladness, and if they should bring to mind this aspiration for even ten thought-moments and yet not gain rebirth there . . . (Gomez 1996: 167; T 12: 268a).

Similarly, the *Sūtra on Contemplation of the Buddha of Immeasurable Life* states:

The sentient beings in the lowest level of the lowest grade of rebirth are those who commit such evil acts as the five heinous crimes and the ten transgressions, and are burdened with various kinds of evil. . . . When the life of such a wicked person is about to end, this person meets a virtuous and learned teacher who provides various kinds of comfort, expounds the exquisite Dharma, and urges mindfulness of the Buddha. If that person is too tormented by pain to be mindful of the Buddha, the virtuous friend says, “If you are unable to be mindful of the Buddha, you should recite the name of and take refuge in the Buddha of Immeasurable Life.” And so, with a sincere mind and an uninterrupted voice, this person says, “Homage to Buddha Amitāyus” *even as few as ten times* . . . the evil karma binding this person to birth-and-death for eight million eons is eliminated . . . When the lives of such people come to an end, a sun-like golden lotus flower appears in front of them. And in the interval of a single thought-moment, each person will immediately attain rebirth inside a lotus flower in the Realm of Ultimate Bliss. (T 12.346a; emphasis mine).

Passages of this sort supposedly became important proof-texts for discussions of the requirements and efficient causes of salvation (i.e. rebirth) in the Pure Land circles of China and Japan. Moreover, early figures such as Daochuo and Shandao also supposedly seized on them as a basis for developing their distinctive claims about salvation for all, including the most benighted commoners, through reliance on the all-inclusive “other power” of Amitābha’s original vow and the calling of his name (*nianfo*). Yet, matters are not that simple.

Jōdo and Jōdo shinshū interpretations of Shandao carried this line of thinking a great deal further, to the point where the scriptural passages on the “ten moments” become little more than token expressions of the notion that salvation is assured with a mere moment of “faith” (Jp. *shin*) in Amitābha and calling of his name. Recent scholarship shows that this is more apparent in the works of Hōnen and Shinran, and their thoughts on the exclusivist approach of faith differed from those of their Chinese counterparts. For example, when asked how should one interpret “ten moments” of calling Amitābha’s name, Hōnen replied that Shandao’s “interpretation was all-inclusive, for it includes both . . . lifelong and single *nembutsu* (*nianfo* or reciting the Buddha’s name)” (Hōnen, *Senchakushū*, 1998: 81). In Shinran’s interpretation, he concludes that faith alone is the ultimate teaching, which is completely predicated on Amitābha’s grace (Dobbins 2002: 28–29).

Viewed in this light, the element of deathbed salvation in the scriptural passages on the “ten moments” tends to be dismissed as largely figurative—a matter of evangelical flair rather than literal concern. But on the Chinese side of the equation, Shandao’s own disciple, Huaigan, notes the existence of some fifteen different theories regarding the notion of rebirth through “ten moments of recitation or recollection” on the

deathbed that were in circulation during Shandao's day (T 47.43c-44a). This indicates both the widespread importance and the contested nature of this concept. By the same token, Pure Land ritual tracts and hagiographical records from Shandao and his contemporaries show a concern for deathbed salvation and the "ten moments" that goes well beyond a mere figurative reading of these scriptural passages as a guarantee of unconditional salvation.

In his text *Guannian Amitufo xianghai sanmei gongde famen* (The Meritorious Dharma Gate of the Samādhi Involving Contemplation of the Ocean-like Marks of the Buddha Amitābha), Shandao himself describes a specific set of ritual protocols for helping the dying devotee achieve successful deliverance from "evil destinies" and procure safe passage to the Pure Land (T 47. 24b). His contemporary Jiakai's (ca. 620–680) *Treatise on the Pure Land* contains twenty accounts of laymen and laywomen, monks and nuns, who are said to have shown auspicious signs of successful rebirth at the moment of their death. On the surface, these accounts of the deathbed passage would seem to be little more than colorful testimonies to the fact of universal and unconditional salvation. On closer inspection, however, these representations of the deathbed passage and salvation are complex; they portray a sense of precariousness that is quite unexpected in the face of such a seemingly simple concept, not to mention the evidence of dense ritual structuring.

This relates to the seemingly simplistic prerequisite of merely reciting Amitābha's name only ten times at the deathbed in order to be reborn in the Pure Land. Again, received scholarship tends to champion Shandao as the cleric who truly opened the gates of salvation (i.e. rebirth in the Pure Land) to the laity. Part of this trope is to cast him as a popularizer: an artist who painted hundreds of Pure Land paintings, a charismatic preacher who freely associated with the populace, and an advocate of the exclusive practice of reciting the Buddha's name. Yet, in a careful reading of available sources about or produced by Shandao, one thing that stands out is his intense focus on samādhi and visualization practices, which is often intentionally or unintentionally overlooked in much of modern scholarship. For example, the short tract *The Meritorious Dharma Gate* mentioned above is often dismissed in scholarly literature as one of Shandao's "less important" works, because of its emphasis on samādhi and ritual practice. Yet this dismissal is historically ungrounded, being based on the assumption that the text's foci are at odds with the putative emphasis on faith and devotion as the sole prerequisites of salvation, and the importance of recitation of the Buddha's name that is characteristic of Japanese Pure Land Buddhism. A different picture emerges if we examine Shandao in the context of his disciples and contemporaries.

Intense samādhi practice, particularly the seven-day isolated retreat practice, features quite prominently in both the life of Shandao and the lives of his contemporaries. Evidence shows that his own teacher Daochuo, in training his monastic and lay disciples, was a promoter of seven-day intense retreats centered on mindfulness of Amitābha Buddha. Other Tang masters such as Jiakai, who was closely associated with Daochuo and was a contemporary to Shandao, also encouraged this practice. Also, subsequent generations of Shandao disciples—most notably Huaigan—continued to emphasize meditative practice. Huaigan, for example, was asked why is it that young boys and girls, who had no prior exposure to Pure Land teachings and *nianfo*, were able to

suddenly enter into samādhi in his presence (T 47.74b-74c). We also have evidence that around the end of the Tang dynasty (ca. 908), monks and nuns regularly entered isolated retreats for long periods of time in order to devote themselves to intense meditation and worship of Amitābha. It is quite clear from these records that meditation practices were privileged and emphasized in the teachings of these clerics. This tradition of samādhi practice continued in the Song era, when there appeared to have been a resurgence of devotion to Amitābha among monastics. The aim of these intense practices was supposedly to forge the “karmic connections or circumstances that lead to rebirth in the Pure Land” (*jingye*).

The whole issue of rebirth was apparently not as simple as we have been led to believe. Hagiographical compendia and treatises by Chinese Pure Land devotees reveal much anxiety over the deathbed passage and the proper protocols for rebirth. When we examine their representations of deathbed salvation, we also find that these anxieties and the ritual protocols linked with proper rebirth intersected deeply with a broader idiom of Buddhist and non-Buddhist beliefs and practices regarding death and the afterlife. Thus the deathbed passage seems not only to have been a central concern among Chinese Pure Land devotees; it also was a site where Chinese Pure Land devotees actively and regularly constructed their self-identity in relation to other religious alternatives.

The issue of deathbed salvation as a practical concern of Pure Land devotees in China has largely been overlooked in modern scholarship. The reasons for this oversight are doubtlessly complex. In part, they reflect a long-standing tendency to map Chinese Pure Land culture in terms of later Jōdo shū and Jōdo shinshū concerns, a strategy that is not altogether commensurate with the Chinese religious landscape. At the same time, they also reflect a more generalized tendency to downplay the role of ritual in the construction and transmission of religious values, in favor of an emphasis on canonical texts and doctrinal systems. Whatever the reason, the conspicuous emphasis on deathbed lore and ritual protocol among Pure Land practitioners in China, coupled with its equally conspicuous neglect by modern scholars, commends Pure Land deathbed culture as a potentially revealing topic for further study.

New Directions in Pure Land Studies

The above are just some of the problems that plague the field of Pure Land studies, in which there tends to be undue focus on constructing genealogies, glorifying specific historical figures, emphasizing doctrines and canonical literature, and simplifying rebirth criteria to the exclusive practice of verbal *nianfo* and faith in Amitābha. These foci demonstrate how historical interpretations have served the claims of Japanese sectarian ideology. With the reappraisal of these emphases in recent decades, we have seen a gradual turn to other modes of thinking about the historical presence of Pure Land traditions and identities in East Asia. The following sections suggest several recent directions for Pure Land studies and cite various scholars' works as examples. Given the scope of this article, it is impossible to survey all scholarly works in the past five to ten years. Therefore I only cite those that best illustrate the main points.

Local Variants and Artistic Motifs

One approach to Pure Land studies is to examine the ways in which people were regionally and materially exposed to Pure Land teachings on the ground. In this regard, it is worthwhile to bracket the familiar emphasis on canonical text, ideology, and lineage, and begin to consider other agencies through which Pure Land cultures were organized and communicated in East Asia. Oral narratives, visual and material cultures, and the like reveal a much more nuanced picture of how pre-modern people of Pure Land persuasion conceived of the tradition. If we look at steles with Pure Land motifs from the Northern and Southern Dynasties (386–589) from Luoyang and Nanjing, two important artistic and cultural capitals at the time, we see the coexistence of indigenous traditional motifs of “Confucian” virtue and “Daoist” immortality with Pure Land Buddhist ideals. One may interpret this as evidence of ritual art produced in the service of conservative state ideology, while in regions outside the control of state ideology, where artisans had a greater degree of freedom, such as Sichuan, people focused on other sorts of Pure Land imagery, with the themes of meditation, visualization, *prajāpāramitā* (perfection of wisdom) thought, and even mountain worship.

These regional idiosyncrasies reveal much about different conceptions of the Pure Land and the social concerns current at the time. There is evidence that Sichuan steles were influenced by local Buddhist clerics in this region, most notably Daoan (312–385) and Huiyuan (334–416). In certain Chinese texts, including *Fozu tongji* or *A General Record of Buddhas and Patriarchs*, Huiyuan is historicized as the first Buddhist cleric who established the White Lotus Society. Members of this society, both monastic and lay, vowed to be reborn in the Pure Land. Yet, their understanding of prerequisites for rebirth reflected a generalized form of Mahāyāna practice that encompassed precepts, meditation, and wisdom.

Moreover, Sichuan was also the home of the sacred Daoist site Mt. Emei. This mountain later became a sacred Buddhist site associated with Samantabhadra Bodhisattva. Thus it is natural that the motifs of mountains and immortals also figure into the steles that were produced in this area. Careful studies of these Buddho-Daoist motifs in the Sichuan steles yield a more nuanced understanding of the interactions of various strands of theoretical templates and visual practices (Wong 1998/1999).

The discrepancies between prescriptive doctrines and visual representations are telling as to how the Pure Land was imagined and depicted. Scholars have shown that even in Chinese Buddhist cave art that dates to the period of the supposed early emergence of “Pure Land Buddhism,” tableaux of Amitābha’s Pure Land are integrated into large pictorial programs, and Amitābha is sometimes topographically divorced from any connection to the Sukhāvatī (Wang 2003). Despite older generations of art historians’ futile attempts to map out and identify visual representations of Pure Land motifs on the basis of Pure Land scriptures, in the case of Dunhuang art we are faced with numerous visual details in Pure Land art that do not jibe with these scriptures. Sarah Fraser has shown that sometimes it is the artists themselves who determined the compositional programs. The artists played a considerable role in cave constructions and exerted a discernible influence over the artistic renderings executed on behalf of

regional kings or other patrons (Fraser 2004: 23). Moreover, knowledgeable members of the Dunhuang monastic community only played an auxiliary role in the artistic process (Fraser 2004: 41). Art has a life of its own, and it is therefore misleading to identify Pure Land art primarily through texts. Rather, specific visual representations should be studied on their own terms, in connection with other sorts of representations.

Literary Deviants

Another way to appreciate how people of the pre-modern era understood the Pure Land is through novels and other fictional literature, which provide an understanding of popular representations of the Pure Land. These kinds of materials also demonstrate how preachers and storytellers drew upon and manipulated Pure Land images and ideas, in order to both teach and entertain. It is true that some authors of this genre of literature utilized scriptures and commentaries in composing their stories about the Pure Land, but there were others who were less canonically accurate in their narratives, describing Amitābha and his Pure Land in whatever ways they saw fit. It is important to recognize that novels not only entertain, but also convey certain social values that are acceptable to their readers. Their depictions of the contexts of religious life must be, for the most part, intelligible and familiar, because they announce themselves as accounts of the lives of real persona. We need to recognize that, even though the tropes and themes featured in these works may appear fantastic and can take on a life of their own, they nonetheless may derive from social reality, and they may come, in turn, to influence social practice. If we are to familiarize ourselves with pre-modern understandings of the Pure Land and the ways people imagined it, it is important to move away from prescriptive doctrine and examine popular literature.

A good example of this is R. Keller Kimbrough's article on medieval Japanese fiction on the Pure Land (Kimbrough 2006), where he discusses how the unorthodox and improbable descriptions of the Pure Land in the fifteenth–sixteenth century work *Chōhōji yomigaeri no sōshi* (Back from the Dead at Chōhōji Temple) reveal important aspects of the Pure Land, as it was construed or experienced by the people of Muromachi Japan. Specifically, he demonstrates that people had a much more nuanced understanding of how rebirths take place. For example, children were supposedly able to be reborn in the Pure Land by virtue of their filial piety, while immoral people who were reborn into the animal realm could achieve salvation in the Pure Land if their children perform proper memorial rituals.

Works of fiction can be of value to us in reconstructing the everyday details of the authors' lives and observations, especially if they are trying to write realistic narratives. This is because narratives reveal the mental stereotypes of people and their likely reactions to the circumstances in which the authors place them. Even the most extreme fictional stereotype can take on a life of its own as a literary discourse and influence social practice. Thus, when a novel depicts a protagonist engaging in ritual in order to cause a parent to be reborn in the Pure Land, such action actually provide us with a

window to glimpse at the expectations and understandings of those who were actually engaged in similar rituals in real life.

Performativity of Texts

It is important to note that the ways in which we map things associated with the “Pure Land” onto the Buddhist landscape might themselves encode postures toward, say, belief, action, visual/material representation, and sociality that are at odds with the way Pure Land teachings actually spread throughout East Asia. A shift in focus to material culture may open productive new vistas on any number of established *topoi*. For example, related to popular notions of the Pure Land is the production and ritual employment of ritual “charts” or “circulars” that appear to have been quite widespread from the Song period onward, when printed materials began to have wider currency (Stevenson 2008). These charts or circulars are still very popular in modern times. Here “ritual” does not refer to a representational or symbolic set of actions that are staged for public decoding and stand for “meanings” outside themselves. Rather, common people used these charts and circulars to tabulate recitations of the Buddha’s name; they oriented illiterate people with simple imagery and phraseology to imagine the benefits of the Pure Land. They were really a resource that choreographed the postures, gestures, and idioms that were brought to bear upon people’s daily existence—things that perhaps helped them to process their most elemental sense of wellbeing in the world and tap into the presence and power of Amitābha.

These charts and circulars are individual sheets of paper discovered in the Dunhuang caves, which contain images and simple phrases related to Amitābha’s Pure Land. Scholars have shown that the employment of such charts as a means for gaining merit was to become a common element in popular religious practice in both China and Japan (Getz 1999: 499–500). Occasionally they also functioned as tally sheets, which were sometimes referred to as *nianfo tu* (charts for the recitation of the Buddha’s name). They reiterate and ingrain proof-texts extrapolated from scriptures, such as: “Amitābha’s great compassionate forty-eight vows of delivering sentient beings,” or “single-mindedly recollect [or recite] the name of the Buddha.” These phrases and images must have been mnemonic devices that ritually oriented people toward Pure Land rebirth teachings. Their power to shape people’s understandings of the significance of the Pure Land in their lives is evident in how widespread they were.

Such ritual “texts” constructed the linguistic, esthetic, sensorial, and gestural dimensions of people’s lives. In other words, these circulars not only embodied particular meanings but also were “performative” in that they were active agents that constructed taxonomies and sensibilities that were generative to discourse about rebirth in the Pure Land. But they were not necessarily “read.” Of course, it is tempting to assume that these circulars were “read,” or that the act of reading them was somehow inscribed in the text, an effect automatically produced by the very words, phrases, and images peculiar to them or to this genre of texts. Yet, reading, in the broad sense, is a creative process, which invents meanings and significations that are not reducible to the intentions of those who produced them.

Ritualizations

It is reductive to suggest that the aforementioned texts reflect the social reality of how Pure Land was imagined in pre-modern times. Yet, they do reveal the complexity of ritual actions associated with them, and we can safely assume that there is more to the texts than just ideas and readings. One way to get around the privileging of Pure Land doctrine and thought is to examine Pure Land from the perspective of ritual studies. Catherine Bell's admonition is quite helpful in this respect: one should not bifurcate "thought" and "action," thereby creating a particular mode of inquiry and a form of privileged knowledge. Her insight is that just as symbols are to be understood in relation to other symbols used in a given context, so too must rituals be interpreted by comparing them to other practices that the same people perform. Examining the ways in which people engage in ritual activities allows us to understand the production and negotiation of power relations (Bell 1992: 90, 196). In other words, if we are to understand Pure Land "practice," we have to examine a particular ritual in the context of different rituals. We have to pay attention to the process by which certain effects are created by certain forms of social interactions.

Applying this approach to Pure Land studies implies paying attention to the cultic orientation of Amitābha and Sukhāvati motifs. These motifs are found not only in doctrinal discourses, but more importantly within all manners of ritual cycles, as a generic goal in the prayers, vows, animal releasing rites, and festivals that typically constitute various cultic practices. It can be found, to name a few sources, in the feeding of hungry ghost rites, the repentance rituals, and even the funeral prayers for Chan abbots, as they are codified in the "pure rules" of the Chan school. All of these have long histories in East Asia, particularly in Chinese Buddhism. One way to interpret the diffusion of these motifs is to conclude that the impact of Pure Land teachings was pervasive. But another way to understand this pervasiveness is to realize that the motifs are not necessarily coterminous with "Pure Land Buddhism," if by "Pure Land" we mean the sort of reified ideological emphasis on Amitābha and the project of rebirth that would intentionally set this orientation in opposition to other Buddhist options, which also provides the basis of an exclusivist religious community.

Scholars of Chinese Buddhism have noted that what stands out in the diffused ritual programs for rebirth are certain rhetorical markers, exemplified by well-known statements such as "binds that secure the conditions for rebirth" (*jie jingyuan*) or "practices that [secure rebirth in the] Pure Land" (*jingye*). These expressions are found in liturgies, missals, letters, stelaes, inscriptions, hagiographies, charts, and circulars. They are formative expressions around which practitioners intent on rebirth in the Pure Land ritually organize their spiritual endeavors (Stevenson 2008), produce the spiritual capital needed for desired rebirth, and negotiate their own agency in their daily lives.

Scholars of Japanese Buddhism, for example, are now reexamining received notions about deathbed practices and freeing themselves from the shackle of Japanese sectarian scholarship. We now know that in Japan during the Heian period (794–1185) assorted esoteric rituals were freely employed with the aim of securing rebirth in the Pure Land. In other words, many practitioners framed their postmortem aspirations for rebirth

through certain rhetorical markers that were distinctive to esoteric Buddhism (Stone 2004). Studies of this sort challenge the rigidly defined sectarian boundaries and the mutually exclusive doctrines advanced by modern sectarian scholarship. In these examples of ritualization in China and Japan, there is no division between thought and action, belief and practice, body and mind, orthodoxy and orthopraxy, which permeate received notions of what Pure Land rituals entail. Using this paradigm of ritualization in our study of Pure Land might yield fruitful insights.

Pure Land Out of Bounds

Another approach to appreciating the complexity of Pure Land teachings is to examine lay societies that were beyond the boundaries of clerical control. This approach would examine the type of non-canonical or non-Buddhist sources that challenge the “insider’s” construction of the Pure Land narrative and provide perspectives that self-identified Buddhist writings could not. When confronted with these lay societies’ liturgies and traditions of ritual practice, one is amazed at how similar they are to those associated with institutionalized religions. These continuities reveal interactions that, by way of our own predisposed categories of “isms,” have been outside the analytic maps of standard Buddhological, Sinological, and art historical studies. When conjoined with textual studies, they provide a window into how the Amitābha and Sukhāvati or Pure Land motifs were circulated and popularly conceived.

Scholars of Chinese Buddhism have shown that during the Song period, for example, Pure Land societies and recitation groups were mostly sponsored and organized by Tiantai Buddhist clerics (Getz 1999; Stevenson 1999). Even though Buddhologists acknowledge that a good deal of Pure Land activities, however construed, fell outside the province of the Tiantai school, their conclusions only present one side of the picture. For example, Getz concludes his study of Pure Land during the Song period by arguing that Pure Land forms of devotion and practice have been part of Tiantai from its beginning. He further shows that “they functioned largely as an integral component within doctrinal and institutional settings that were not identified with Pure Land” (Getz 1999: 479). These observations make it seem as if there were never any self-conscious movements that subscribed to motifs of Amitābha and Sukhāvati at all. Yet, matters are not so simple. Since little research has been done on popular religious movements during the Song, it is difficult to ascertain the exact relationship between clerical and popular Pure Land practices, and the differences in religious interests and manifestations between the two. Modern scholarship has not investigated this topic sufficiently. Yet, it is unquestionable that the two forms, namely those of clerical-sponsored Pure Land societies and non-Buddhist lay Pure Land societies, were different. But what are their similarities? For that, we could turn to a number of good studies, which deal with later (post-Song) periods.

Ter Haar, for example, has shown that, in later periods, the members of various types of lay-oriented “White Lotus” sectarian movements engaged in the practice of *nianfo*, specifically verbal recitation of Amitābha’s name, along with their worship of other divinities, such as the mother goddess or the Queen Mother of the West (ter Haar

1992). This female deity has a long and rich history in Chinese religions, beginning perhaps as early as the Shang dynasty (1700–1027 BCE) and continuing into the sectarian movements of late imperial times. In the White Lotus movements, she is portrayed as the primordial source that sends various Buddhas, including Amitābha, down to the human realm to save human beings. In this scheme, Amitābha is part of the general repertoire of Chinese divinities, interfused with other deities and not belonging exclusively to “Buddhism.” Ter Haar has convincingly shown that diverse White Lotus movements—whether constituted by the clergy, the literati, or non-elite lay groups—were highly coherent and a well-integrated part of the society, without an institutional structure (Haar 1992: 64, 111).

The “precious scrolls” (*baojuan*), the popular scriptures of these groups, also show significant evidence of Pure Land motifs, the most prominent being those of Amitābha as a symbol of divine compassion and the descriptions of his paradise or Sukhāvati (Overmyer 1999: 33). An examination of the process of appropriation, reaction, resistance, and mutual impact between obvious Pure Land Buddhist texts and popular literature would yield a more nuanced understanding of the extent to which Amitābha and his Pure Land were integrated, popularly conceived, organized, socialized, and ritualized into the lives of ordinary people.

I am not suggesting that these Buddhist motifs were simply accepted by different popular religious movements by default, due to ideological poverty, or by fiat. Instead, they were probably gradually adapted, either purposefully or by historical accident, into indigenous Chinese concepts of transcendence and responsiveness of the cosmos (such as the idea of stimulus-response or *ganying*), which helped solve particular problems faced by people. There is very little ground for assuming that the emergence or flourishing of eclectic and syncretic forms of Buddhism signaled decline, particularly a degeneration from some pure, original, unadulterated school of thought that is traceable to particular founders. Such view stems from the nineteenth-century textual world of Buddhist studies, where India and China were considered by European scholars to be corrupt and effete civilizations. In reality, how particular forms of Buddhism were practiced on the ground has always been intimately related to other Buddhist or non-Buddhist traditions.

An excellent place to begin an investigation of the intersection of Buddhist Pure Land discourses and indigenous Chinese concepts is the recently published twelve-volume collection on late Chinese popular religious scriptures, *Scriptural and Literary Collection of Chinese Popular Religions* or *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian* (2006). This collection contains over 150 non-canonical popular religious scriptures and other kinds of literary works, produced from roughly the fourteenth to the nineteenth centuries. It is a rare gem for research on popular religion, outside of the so-called elite institutionalized traditions of “Confucianism,” “Daoism,” and “Buddhism.”

As I pointed out above, in medieval Japan, particularly prior to the institutionalization of Jōdōshū and Jōdō Shinshū during the thirteenth century, practices associated with Amitābha acquired a trans-sectarian status and were intimately connected with concerns about esoteric rituals. There is also evidence that Pure Land motifs were more associated with ancestor worship than personal salvation. It was only during the Heian period (794–1185) that soteriological interpretations of rebirth in Sukhāvati gradually

gained widespread acceptance (Rhodes 2006). Pure Land teachings developed within the frameworks of the main schools for different purposes, mainly through the writings of scholar-monks (Stone, 2004). In these contexts, Pure Land devotion meant something different from what is the current understanding of Japanese Pure Land Buddhism. Basically, it was very similar to what was going on in China. That is, Pure Land teachings did not have a centrally organized canon, a system of doctrine and practice, or a historical lineage.

On the level of ordinary folk in Japan during the medieval period, Pure Land sentiments were popularized by religious groups that were situated outside of clerical control. As in the case of the Chinese lay movements, there were marginal groups of cultic practitioners called the *hijiri*, who eclectically cultivated elements of indigenous cults, mendicancy, and shamanism. Their practices issued forth from a common field of popular religiosity that is not easily contained within any one religious tradition. A *hijiri* is usually translated as “holy man,” “saint,” “itinerant monk,” or the like. A precise definition of *hijiri* is not possible, because historically the term was not used with consistency, and scholars debate the exact referent of the term. Generally, scholars attribute the designation to those living on the fringes of sectarian and institutional Buddhism, who were sometimes even perceived as threats to established Buddhist institutions. They were known for their peripatetic lifestyle and austere ascetic practices, which they undertook in sacred mountains (Kleine 1997).

Many of these *hijiri* practitioners propagated the cult of Amitābha and his Pure Land. The itinerant monk Kūya (903–972), for example, is said to have traveled through the countryside of Japan, dancing to the tune of verbal recitation of Amitābha’s name (*nenbutsu*) (Chilson 2007). Similarly, there is evidence that on Mt. Kōya during the same time there was a group of “*nenbutsu hijiri*” practitioners (Sanford 2004). These and other, less well-known, groups deserve more scholarly attention.

Deathbed Rituals

The issue of deathbed salvation as a practical concern for people of Pure Land persuasion is another area that has only garnered scholarly interest in recent years. The reasons for this oversight are doubtlessly complex. In part, it may reflect a long-standing tendency to map Pure Land cultures in terms of received notions of what the tradition is. At the same time, as was already noted, it may also reflect a more generalized tendency to downplay the role of ritual in the construction and transmission of religious values in favor of an emphasis on canonical texts and doctrinal systems. Whatever the reason, the conspicuous emphasis on deathbed lore and protocol among Pure Land practitioners in China, coupled with its equally conspicuous neglect by past scholars, commends Pure Land deathbed culture as a potentially revealing topic of study.

Nothing exists in isolation. It is important to examine the discourses of death, after-life, and salvation within which Pure Land notions of deathbed salvation operated on the ground. For example, despite the fact that the so-called Pure Land scriptures guarantee rebirth in Sukhāvati for all those who practice *nianfo*, for the majority of people in China, the simple act of faith in Amitābha and the calling of his name alone did not

guarantee the desired rebirth. Rebirth discourses operated in resonance with a range of diverse and, at times, conflicting idioms of death and afterlife, Buddhist as well as non-Buddhist. As such, the dynamics of deathbed deliverance were not as simple as certain proof-text scriptural passages and received scholarship on this subject would suggest.

Among the questions that deserve more scholarly attention are the placing of Pure Land concerns and deathbed practices within the larger context of Buddhist lore about death and the intermediate state, and the competing idioms of death, afterlife, ancestral worship, and mourning customs from non-Buddhist traditions. What exactly happens to the deceased after death? What are the obstacles, if any, at the moment of death and during the intermediary period, that could hinder rebirth? What are the ritual procedures that assure safe journey to the Pure Land? Several issues need to be worked out in answering these questions. For instance, there is the relationship between Pure Land deathbed salvation and the discourses of death and liminal intermediate existence. Here some of the core variables include: a) the complex problem of the subjectivity of karmic influences or the karmic subject; b) the “last thought at the moment of death” as a determining factor for rebirth; c) the Buddhist process of death and the intermediary state to which the deceased is subjected; d) the ritual practices that can mediate both death and rebirth; and finally e) the negotiation of preexisting Chinese conceptions of death and the afterlife.

An understanding of Pure Land deathbed salvation that is embedded in its larger Chinese cultural milieu, with all of its historical contingencies, ritual protocols, and doctrinal incongruities, requires us to consider a variety of sources beyond prescriptive texts as part of our discussion of the cultic and liminal dimensions of death, afterlife, and rebirth in Pure Land teachings. Fissures and incongruities of prescriptive truths and descriptive realities are evident even in authoritative Pure Land compendia, which contain numerous tracts on the subject of deathbed lore. They demonstrate an ongoing anxiety about deathbed salvation that bears upon indigenous views about death and its negotiation. Some of these compendiums show that family disturbance, malignant spirits, illness, deliria, and economic hindrances can easily prevent the devoted person from attaining a favorable rebirth.

Every discipline is made up of a set of restrictions on thought and imagination, and perhaps none is more hedged about with taboos than professional historiography. Within Pure Land studies, sometimes such taboos preclude the use of insights from other subfields within the history of Chinese religions, such as “Daoist studies” or “popular religions,” because they compel historians to blur the distinctions between disciplinary boundaries. Unfortunately, these distinctions fail to recognize the actual processes of interaction, mutual appropriation, and negotiation that happen on the ground. The literary and visual productions that stem from such interactions are complex. Every attempt to describe historical events, be it “Pure Land devotion” or “Pure Land Buddhism,” necessarily relies on narratives that display the coherence, integrity, fullness, and the closure of an image of life that is, and can only be, imaginary. This chapter points out the conflicting tendencies in Pure Land representations that defy received historiographical attempts to account for the realities of varied Pure Land discourses. It does not reject received scholarship. But what is called for is a rethinking

of the received categories and methodologies, in more workable and critical terms. It is hoped that my emphasis on contextuality, overlapping categories, and dynamic interactions among different traditions helps us to rethink the nature of both Pure Land studies and the historical realities they try to describe or elucidate.

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CHAPTER 11

Bodhisattva Cults in Chinese Buddhism

Natasha Heller

Admiration for the figure of the bodhisattva is a defining characteristic of the Mahāyāna tradition of Buddhism dominant in East Asia. While all bodhisattvas represented attainments and ideals to which practitioners could aspire, in China four bodhisattvas were singled out for special attention: Wenshu, Dizang, Guanyin, and Puxian. In various ways, these bodhisattvas were identified as having special powers and recognizable jurisdictions, and further came to be connected with specific mountain locales within China. Imagery, rituals, and narratives grew up around these bodhisattvas, but the four cults did not emerge simultaneously, nor are the four bodhisattvas of equal status. Yet the cults of Wenshu, Dizang, Guanyin, and Puxian represent distinctly Chinese developments within the history of Buddhism.

“Bodhisattva” is a Sanskrit term that has entered the standard English lexicon. “Bodhi” means “awakening” and “sattva” is a living being; thus a bodhisattva is a being working toward awakening, but also one who awakens others. The term “mahāsattva,” which means “great being,” is frequently used as another term for bodhisattva. Early Chinese translations of these terms included *dashi*, *gaoshi*, and *kaishi*, all of which use *shi*, meaning “gentleman” or “scholar,” as an equivalent to “sattva.” In the first two cases, the term “gentleman” is modified by an adjective that indicates the “great” or “lofty” status of this being. In the last example, *kai*, meaning “to open,” refers to the bodhisattva as one who both self-awakens (as in the compounds *kaijue* and *kaiwu*) and who opens the path to awakening for others. These Chinese terms are early attempts to translate the meaning of “bodhisattva” and “mahāsattva,” but the transliteration *pusa* eventually became the standard term for “bodhisattva.”

The bodhisattva was one of the central ideas of Mahāyāna, and represented a new way of thinking about the path of practice. For bodhisattvas, the goal of countless lifetimes of practice was the enlightenment of a Buddha, and it was believed that reaching this status brought about physical transformation into a marvelous body

replete with superhuman powers. Buddhist practitioners could identify themselves as on the bodhisattva path—and indeed in China, bodhisattva vows were the norm—and looked to more advanced bodhisattvas as an inspiration. Many advanced bodhisattvas were named, described in texts, and depicted in images. They were also seen as demonstrating the attainments of practice, often expressed as the six perfections. These bodhisattvas were known for their salvific interventions in the human realm. Close in stature to Buddhas, several among this group of bodhisattvas became objects of devotion.

In sūtra literature it is possible to identify several overlapping roles for bodhisattvas: they are audience members and interlocutors, and they also appear within narratives of the past lives of the Buddha. To take the *Lotus Sūtra* as an example, in the opening chapter the Buddha is accompanied by monks, nuns, other students of the path, unnamed bodhisattvas and mahāsattvas, gods, and kings of the non-human guardians of Buddhism. In response to auspicious signs displayed by the Buddha, the bodhisattva Maitreya asks the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī (Wenshu) about its meaning. Here, Maitreya is identified as a bodhisattva, in the sense of one who will eventually become a Buddha, and indeed he is predicted to become the next Buddha. The idea of a bodhisattva as a Buddha-to-be holds also for depictions of Śakyamuni Buddha prior to his awakening, that is, as Prince Siddhārtha. Wenshu, in this first chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra* and elsewhere, is represented as a very advanced disciple who is able to explain aspects of the Buddhist teaching, and here the conversation between the bodhisattvas serves to advance the narrative.

Bodhisattvas, in addition to possessing great wisdom, are also shown to be beings of great power. In later chapters of the *Lotus Sūtra* (chapters 25 and 28 in the Kumārajīva translation), the bodhisattvas Guanyin and Puxian are depicted as a savior of sentient beings and a special protector of the *Lotus Sūtra*, respectively. These chapters depict typical roles for bodhisattvas, and in turn supply a key kernel of the cults of these two bodhisattvas. However, early scriptural evidence such as this offers depictions of bodhisattvas that are useful for understanding how they were conceptualized, but does not itself constitute proof of a cult (Harrison 2000: 186–87). The cults for each bodhisattva developed slowly, in large part through new scriptural transmissions; these texts often described the vows of the bodhisattva, detailed visualizations, or offered *dhāraṇī*. Further, indigenous miracle tales attested to the efficacy of the bodhisattva's power.

The role of the bodhisattva in scriptural literature finds echoes in visual evidence, and indeed representations of various bodhisattvas in paintings and statuary were as important as scriptures in the development and spread of the cult of bodhisattvas in China and East Asia. The generic bodhisattva is depicted as a princely figure, adorned with jewels, and frequently wearing an expression of serenity. These types of bodhisattvas flank the Buddha in paintings and statuary. While the identification of Buddhist images is often subject to revision by art historians, making definitive attributions difficult, each of the four great bodhisattvas in China developed an iconography with which they were especially associated. This iconography became more clearly defined as narratives and traditions grew up around each bodhisattva.

Wenshu

Of the four bodhisattvas considered here, Wenshu (Skt. Mañjuśrī; Jp. Monju; also known as Wenshushili) was the earliest to become established in a distinctly Sinitic form, a process bound up with his identification as the resident deity of Mount Wutai in northern China. He is well attested in Chinese sources by the mid-second century, quite early in the transmission of Buddhism eastward (Harrison 2000: 172). In these early Mahāyāna sources, Maitreya (Ch. Mile; Jp. Miroku) and Wenshu are the bodhisattvas who appear with the greatest frequency. Maitreya, the future Buddha, is a figure from the pre-Mahāyāna tradition, and his function is often to ask the Buddha questions. Wenshu first appears in Mahāyāna texts, and mentions of him in early scriptures of the Great Vehicle outnumber those of the other three bodhisattvas that would become objects of distinct cults in China (Hirakawa 1983: 16).

Scriptural sources present Wenshu as the epitomization of wisdom. Wenshu's role as wisest of the bodhisattvas is perhaps clearest in the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra*. In this popular scripture Vimalakīrti compassionately manifests himself as a wealthy layman who has taken ill. When people call on him to express their concern, he uses the occasion to explain the impermanence of the body. Vimalakīrti, having received many such polite visits, wonders why the Buddha and his disciples have not come to call. The Buddha enjoins his disciples and the bodhisattvas to visit Vimalakīrti, yet they all refuse him in turn because the wise layman in the past has corrected their teaching. Only Wenshu is willing to call on him, and the core of the scripture focuses on the meeting between the two, reaching a climatic point when Vimalakīrti employs silence to demonstrate nonduality, here besting even Wenshu with the eloquence and economy of his response. The meeting between Vimalakīrti and Wenshu was a popular theme in early Chinese Buddhist art, circulating the image of the wise bodhisattva, while also framing their encounter as a spirited philosophical discourse like those found in the elite circles of medieval China. As noted earlier, Wenshu often fielded questions, spoke for the Buddha, or otherwise represented sagacity. For example, in the *Lotus Sūtra* episode in which the dragon-king's daughter attains highest awakening in an instant, it is because she has heard Wenshu expound the scripture.

Another Mahāyāna scripture in which Wenshu plays a key role is the *Sūtra of King Ajātaśatru* (T 626). Here Wenshu is represented not only as especially wise, holding his own discourse at the sūtra's opening part, but also as a superior teacher and a master of magical powers. He is further said to have practiced Buddhism for eons, which has brought him to a very high level of attainment. Similar to the way in which he was credited with awakening those in the dragon-king's realm in the *Lotus Sūtra*, here Wenshu is also said to have brought about the awakening of countless Buddhas and bodhisattvas (Harrison 2000: 169). In the *Śūraṅgama-samādhi sūtra*, Wenshu is described as using high spiritual attainments to present himself passing into extinction, allowing his relics to be distributed and worshipped, and then being reborn to continue to work for the benefit of sentient beings. It is the power of his meditative absorption that permits Wenshu to perform these acts, Buddha-like activities that mark him as foremost among the bodhisattvas (Hirakawa 1983: 24–25).

Because of his ability to instruct and enlighten others, Wenshu is sometimes given the epithet “Mother of Buddhas” or “Mother of Awakening” (*Fomu*, *Juemu*). In the iconography of the bodhisattva, a book or scroll signals wisdom, and thereby indicates Wenshu. The bodhisattva’s lion mount, a common iconographic element in Chinese Buddhist art, also serves to identify him.

In the *Sūtra on the Parinirvāṇa of Mañjuśrī* (T 463), powers are ascribed to the very name of Wenshu: hearing, reciting, or upholding the bodhisattva’s name will supposedly ensure that the believers avoid unfortunate and unpleasant rebirths, instead attaining rebirths in Pure Lands where they may encounter the teachings (Lamotte 1960: 38). The specific devotion directed to Wenshu in this late third-century text is one step toward the formation of a cult around him. But Wenshu’s cult status would be confirmed by establishing a tie between the bodhisattva and China, a process in which the *Flower Garland Sūtra* (*Huayan jing*) played a key role. This scripture, popular in Tang China and crucial for the development of the bodhisattva cult, identified Wenshu’s dwelling place as Mount Clear and Cool (Qingliang shan), located in the northeast (Lamotte 1960: 79). While there is nothing that would connect this mountain specifically with Mount Wutai, or even more generally with China, later texts would make this precise connection. One such text is *Wenshushili’s (Mañjuśrī’s) Dharma Treasury Dhāraṇī Sūtra* (T 1185A/1185B). Here the Buddha speaks of Wenshu’s role after his death:

After I have passed into extinction, the youth Wenshushili will roam and dwell in a mountain named “Five Peaks,” which lies in the center of a country named “Mahācina” (Zhenna) located to the northeast of Jampudvīpa. At the center [of the mountain] he will preach the Law for all sentient beings, and receive the protection, offerings, and veneration of all the countless gods, dragon-spirits, demons, ogres, heavenly musicians, snake spirits, humans and non-humans (T 20.791c; Birnbaum 1983: 11).

Far more firmly than earlier scriptures, this text allowed for the identification of Mount Wutai with Wenshu’s dwelling place. Mount Wutai is located in present-day Shanxi province, to the northeast of Chang’an, the capital during the Tang dynasty and an important city throughout the medieval period. The “mountain” is more properly a range of peaks, among which are identified a central peak and four others corresponding to the cardinal directions. Many pilgrims that went to worship Wenshu at Mount Wutai would begin their journeys from the nearby city of Taiyuan, where they might have been able to acquire a map of the region. Such illustrated maps would prove important in the transmission of the cult of the bodhisattva and his mountain throughout greater Asia.

Although scriptural legitimization was important, the establishment of Wenshu’s cult at Mount Wutai specifically, and China more generally, required the support of Buddhist clergy and the institutionalization of the bodhisattva’s presence. Amoghavajra (705–774), the great translator and promoter of esoteric Buddhism (*mijiao*), was also instrumental in promoting the cult of Wenshu. Several memorials from Amoghavajra requested imperial support for the cult at Mount Wutai, in the form of funds for building projects and ordination of monks to serve in temples there. In the late eighth

century Amoghavajra urged the emperor to take steps that would increase Wenshu's stature throughout China. First an edict established Wenshu as the protective deity installed in monastic refectories, followed shortly thereafter by an edict directing all monasteries to erect a shrine to Wenshu. This interest was connected to Amoghavajra's promotion of Buddhism for the protection of the nation, in evidence in the translation of the *Sūtra for Humane Kings* and the description of Wenshu as "guarding" the nation (Birnbaum 1983: 32–33). In large part through Amoghavajra's efforts, Mount Wutai became a site of imperially sponsored Buddhism, with Wenshu at its center.

This imperial support was buttressed by accounts of miracles at the mountain, in which Wenshu manifested himself in various ways. One early and important story is that of Buddhapālita (also referred to as Buddhapāli), a Central Asian monk who traveled to China in the late seventh century. When he reached Mount Wutai he met an old man who instructed him to return to his homeland, secure a *dhāraṇī* scripture, and return with it. Buddhapālita did as instructed, and when Buddhapālita reached the mountain for the second time, the old man revealed that he was a manifestation of Wenshu. The bodhisattva led the monk into a cave, where Buddhapālita remained ever after.

By the early eighth century, pilgrims would travel to Mount Wutai with the expectation of having their own encounters with Wenshu. For example, the Tang dynasty monk Daoyi is said to have met an old monk on an elephant who guided him deeper into the mountains to a monastery made of gold. The old monk was later revealed to be Wenshu, and the two conversed about Buddhism. After their conversation drew to a close, Daoyi turned back on the path and saw that the monastery had disappeared. Daoyi would later report this to the emperor; with the support of Amoghavajra he also had the monastery that appeared in his vision built at the mountain (T. 51.1113a–c). Other pilgrims were similarly inspired by encounters with the bodhisattva. The monk Fazhao (d. ca. 820), for example, visited Mount Wutai and purportedly had two meetings with Wenshu, one facilitated through Buddhapālita. These experiences helped Fazhao confirm his own practice of the recollection of the Buddha's name.

Even journeys to Mount Wutai that did not end with new texts, construction projects, or an audience with the bodhisattva were spectacular experiences. Many pilgrims reported various types of visions, including unusual clouds, halos of light, multicolored rays, and auspicious birds (Cartelli 2004). Miracles such as these, featured in the collections *Old Chronicle of Clear and Cool* and *Extended Chronicle of Clear and Cool*, attested to Wenshu's sacred presence at the mountain. Visitors wrote poems about their experiences, in both Chinese and Tibetan, and referred to visions or addressed the bodhisattva in verse (Cartelli 2004; Schaeffer 2011). Wenshu's manifestation at the mountain is also reflected in visual evidence; when the bodhisattva is depicted as a prince with scepter descending from radiant clouds, this mirrors visions of Wenshu (Birnbaum 1983: 24).

The human-made environment at Mount Wutai thus reinforced the presence of Wenshu on the mountain: not only did pilgrims go hoping to have their own encounter with the bodhisattva, but they also went to see where those who had traveled before them had met Wenshu. Pilgrim's reports such as those of Ennin (793–864) and Zhang Shangyin (1043–1122) included reference to the history of the mountain, the visual

phenomena there, and the sites attesting to Wenshu's presence. Ennin took such reports back with him to Japan, and Zhang's account showed the importance the site held for elites of middle period China (Reischauer 1955a and 1955b; Gimello 1992). Pilgrimages such as the ones noted here continued throughout the imperial period, and until the present day. The site would come to be especially associated with Tibetan Buddhism, as that tradition gained prominence in north China during the Yuan dynasty. The fame of Mount Wutai had two effects: It became a legitimate pilgrimage site for Buddhists from beyond China, and it prompted—although the evidence for this is largely circumstantial—an interest in identifying other mountains as the dwelling place of important bodhisattvas.

Wenshu had other appearances in China: Mongol and Manchu emperors were identified as manifestations of the bodhisattva. Although compelling evidence in Chinese is lacking, Mongolian sources seem to identify Qubilai, better known as Kublai Khan (1215–1294), as a manifestation of Mañjuśrī (Wenshu) (Farquhar 1978: 12). Being able to identify the emperor as an incarnation of Wenshu is likely a product of Tibetan Buddhism, in which reincarnations of bodhisattvas can be identified in living individuals, and religious lineages were conceived of as reincarnations of the same figure. During the Qing dynasty all emperors were considered to be Wenshu manifest in successive forms. The identification of Qing emperors with Wenshu happened frequently in Tibetan and Mongolian texts, and was supported through numerous imperial pilgrimages to Mount Wutai. Further, emperors were depicted as Wenshu in unmistakably religious paintings (Berger 2003).

Puxian

The bodhisattva Puxian (Skt. Samantabhadra; Jp. Fugen), like Guanyin, has a chapter devoted to him in the *Lotus Sūtra*. In this chapter, the last in Kumārajīva's translation, Puxian vows to be the protector of those who recite and uphold the *Lotus Sūtra*, especially in times in which the Buddhadharma is in decline. He also offers believers *dhāraṇī* to safeguard them. As he is also depicted elsewhere, here Puxian is described as riding on a six-tusked white elephant. Puxian's mount of an elephant serves as the primary iconographic identifier of this bodhisattva. In visual culture Puxian is frequently coupled with Wenshu, who rides on his lion. Paired, they represent two key aspects of the Buddhist path: Wenshu embodies wisdom and Puxian personifies practice.

One early text revolving around this bodhisattva is the *Puxian Bodhisattva Sūtra*, translated into Chinese around the year 300. This text treats confession and repentance as an integral part of the path of spiritual development. Here Puxian teaches ritual methods to be employed in an ongoing practice of repentance, necessitated by the karmic burdens hidden in the practitioner's past (Mai 2009: 263–65). The cult of Puxian further developed through the *Scripture on the Method of Contemplating the Bodhisattva Puxian* (T 277). This text emerged around the mid-fifth century, one of a number of repentance texts produced during this era. The rite described therein offers a method of purifying the senses that would reward the practitioner with a vision of Puxian (Mai 2009: 252–54). The sūtra picks up themes found in the chapter on Puxian

in the *Lotus Sūtra*, melding them with confessional practices popular at the time. It opens with an elaborate description of Puxian and his elephant. The animal's features offer both an image of miraculous resplendence of lotus flowers and beams of light, and also incorporate symbolic meanings, such as his seven legs corresponding to the elimination of seven evils (killing, theft, improper sexual behavior, lying, speaking ill of people, wrong speech, and two-faced speech). Being able to see the bodhisattva and his mount in all their glory is the outcome of upholding Mahāyāna scriptures and practicing repentance. Puxian also guides the practitioner in a series of purifications of the senses, allowing the practitioner to gain visions and supranormal experiences. In the central portion of this text, the visions are not of Puxian, but of Śākyamuni and certain elements from the *Lotus Sūtra*, such as the treasure stūpa. Therefore, Puxian has a dual role, serving as both the object of visions and a guide through the practice of repentance.

The influence of this scripture is evident in the *Lotus Samādhi Repentance Rite* authored by the Tiantai prelate Zhiyi (538–597 CE), which also drew inspiration from the chapter on Puxian's vows in the *Lotus Sūtra*. While the *Scripture on the Method of Contemplating the Bodhisattva Puxian* promoted the recitation of scriptures generally, Zhiyi's ritual places the *Lotus Sūtra* in a central position. Zhiyi described how one should set up the sanctuary and prepare for the rite, the lengthiest portion of which is the five-fold repentance. The first stage of the repentance focuses on the confession of sins related to each of the senses, drawing on the earlier scripture. During this process, the practitioner focuses on a vision of Puxian and his elephant. Zhiyi's rite lasts for twenty-one days; should the practitioner carry it out with deep engagement, Puxian will appear as confirmation of the practice at its conclusion (Stevenson 1986: 67–71). This is not the only text by Zhiyi about Puxian; the Tiantai master also wrote a brief work entitled *The Vow of the Bodhisattva Puxian*, outlining the various commitments the bodhisattva makes to save all living beings (Z 55.914).

Another key textual source for the cult of Puxian is the chapter of the *Flower Garland Sūtra* entitled "Vows of the Bodhisattva Puxian," included in the later translation of the scripture by Prajñā at the end of the eighth century. In this chapter Puxian describes ten "great practice-vows" cultivated in order to achieve the limitless merits of the Thus-Come One (the Buddha): (1) showing reverence to all Buddhas; (2) praising the Thus-Come One; (3) broadly making offerings; (4) repenting one's karmic obstructions; (5) delighting in the merits of others; (6) requesting the turning of the wheel of the Dharma; (7) asking the Buddha to dwell in this world; (8) ever following the Buddhas for study; (9) to be constantly in accord with all sentient beings; and (10) to transfer one merit's to all others (T 10.844b). This chapter circulated separately from the larger scripture, and provided a connection between specific forms of meritorious activity and the bodhisattva who best exemplified Buddhist practice.

While the *Lotus Samādhi Repentance Rite* demonstrates Puxian's significance for Tiantai scholars like Zhiyi, Puxian's prominent appearance in the *Flower Garland Sūtra* assured his status within Huayan thought. A Liao dynasty (907–1125) monk, Daozhen, included discussion of Puxian's practices in the first part of his *Collection of the Essentials of Achieving Buddhahood through the Perfect Penetration of Exoteric and Esoteric Teachings*. The text describes practices such as following the breath and making ritual

offerings, along with contemplation and repentance of bodily impurities. This exoteric portion of Daozhen's text was paired with a second section offering an esoteric teaching based on the deity Zhunti (Skt. Cundī) (Gimello 2004: 235–36). Based on these texts, Puxian is associated with accessible practices that emphasize confession and purification.

In addition to being venerated in ritual, Puxian was also localized in geography. Mount Emei, in Sichuan, became the Chinese home for Puxian in the late Tang dynasty. Following Mount Wutai, it is the second mountain in China to develop a firm association with a specific bodhisattva. Like many other mountains, Mount Emei was a spectacular site, and religious adepts had already found it to be a suitable place for cultivation before Buddhism's arrival. Its association with Buddhism was bound up with the patronage of the first two emperors of the early Song dynasty, Taizu (r. 960–976) and Taizong (976–997). Their imperial interest in Mount Emei was prompted by its association with an eminent monk by the name of Jiye, who took part in an imperially sponsored trip to India to bring back Buddhist texts and relics. Upon his return to Song China, Jiye established himself on the mountain, and the monastery he built would become one of the largest at Mount Emei. At roughly the same time in the late tenth century, officials from the area reported to the emperor miraculous appearances of the bodhisattva Puxian, prompting lavish donations from the court (Hargett 2006: 98–99).

That Puxian would be expected to show himself at Mount Emei demonstrates his prior association with the mountain, as do Song dynasty sources that describe a Puxian Monastery that existed there during the previous dynasty. Some Buddhist legends date the connection between the bodhisattva and the place to the first century of the Common Era, although this tale appears only many centuries later (Hargett 2006: 141–42 and 223 n. 97). It was also important to legitimate the connection through scriptural sources that could confirm the mountain's identity as the dwelling place of the bodhisattva. This task required somewhat forced interpretations of place names that appear in Buddhist sūtras. The longer version of the *Flower Garland Sūtra* contains a chapter entitled “The Dwelling Places of the Bodhisattvas,” in which a mountain in the southwest named Radiantly Bright (Guangming) is said to be where a bodhisattva named Xiansheng or Xianshou lives. This bodhisattva was identified with Puxian. A firmer connection with the Chinese site could be made through the light imagery in the name of the mountain, which is associated with the visions of Puxian and is said to frequently manifest on Mount Emei's many peaks.

Tenuous though the connection with Puxian may have been, by late imperial times Mount Emei was well established as the pilgrimage site for this bodhisattva. Fan Chengda (1126–1193), a Song dynasty official and geographer, wrote one of the earlier accounts of the mountain, but many more such pilgrimage records were written during the Ming and Qing dynasties. Gazetteers of the mountain compiled various sources to provide a comprehensive history. These records note that visitors sought out the White Stream Monastery, which housed a bronze statue of Puxian, and hoped to experience an optic phenomenon called “Buddha Light” (Foguang), which could include what were believed to be images of Puxian. Human construction and natural beauty reinforced the image of Mount Emei as a place where one could encounter this bodhisattva.

Dizang

The emergence of a distinct identity for the bodhisattva Dizang (Skt. Kṣitigarbha; Jp. Jizō) can be traced to the latter half of the sixth century, in texts such as the *Scripture on the Ten Wheels* and the *Section on the Sumeru Treasury*. The *Scripture on the Ten Wheels* reflects the sociopolitical context in which it was written, the turbulent period of division, between the fall of the Han dynasty in 220 and the reunification under the Sui in 589. The text is concerned with the practice of Buddhism in a defiled age. This age is characterized by the lack of a Buddha and other signs of the declining morality in the world. In such debased times, the bodhisattva Dizang appears as a successor to Śākyamuni and offers the people of this world salvation through his own efforts and through the protection of the *dhāraṇī* he teaches in the scripture.

The *Scripture on the Ten Wheels* opens with a section praising Dizang, and describes him as a *śramaṇa* or Buddhist monk. Like other bodhisattvas, Dizang is said to be able to assume different forms—gods, humans, animals, and so forth—to best aid living beings. He is also described as saving those who call on him from various disasters or difficult situations. After this opening section of the scripture, Dizang asks the Buddha to preach, leading to the instruction on the Ten Wheels that forms the core of the sūtra. The *Section on the Sumeru Treasury* likewise praises Dizang as a great bodhisattva, associating him in particular with the mastery of a meditative state that endows him with superhuman abilities to make offerings to the multiplicity of Buddhas and to aid living beings. Dizang also teaches a *dhāraṇī*. As with the *Scripture on the Ten Wheels*, this text is also concerned with disasters and disturbances in the cycles of nature, and the importance of the ruler's protection of the monastic community.

Although in many ways Dizang's appearance in these two scriptures reflects the general attributes of a great bodhisattva, presenting him as a savior-monk for treacherous times may have set the stage for later associations (Zhuru 2007: 29–41). For example, the *Scripture on the Divination of the Recompense of Good and Evil Karma* depicts Dizang as teaching people to see their past lives with the use of wheels, while the *Scripture of the Bodhisattva Dizang Spoken by the Buddha* describes the bodhisattva as leading people from hell to rebirth in the paradise of the Pure Land. Another text, the *Scripture on the Past Vows of the Bodhisattva Dizang*, narrates the bodhisattva's past lives and features stories that emphasize his filial piety. In this scripture Dizang also promotes Buddhist rites conducted on behalf of the deceased, especially important during the forty-nine day period between death and the determination of karmic retribution (Zhuru 2007: 113–14). The *Scripture on the Past Vows* is today the most popular of the texts associated with Dizang, reprinted in many different formats and distributed freely at temples.

Later ritual texts again have Dizang instructing the audience on the use of mantras, but also presenting Dizang as the object of ritual devotion. Indeed, by the seventh century Buddhist historians had chronicled the worship of Dizang, and these records included miracle tales about the bodhisattva. A late tenth-century text, *A Record of the Numinous Confirmation of the Image of the Bodhisattva Dizang*, collects many of these

tales and reflects the way in which Dizang was understood in middle period China. These stories show the power of Dizang to aid the deceased, as in a tale in which a daughter has made an image of Dizang and thereby ensures that her deceased mother will ascend to heaven (Z 87.591b). In another story, a man dies and is given a tour of the sufferings of hell. In the course of this journey, he meets a monk who identifies himself as the Dizang statue belonging to a specific monastery. This Dizang enters hell once a day to guide those suffering there, and gives the man verses to recite upon his return to the living (Z 87.589b–590a). Another tale tells of a woman who worshipped spirits and did not believe in Buddhism. After she dies she is bound in the underworld by a demon, but then disappears at the sight of a monk. This monk is none other than the Dizang statue from a local temple, who saves the ignorant, admonishing them about their evil hearts, and returns them to the living. In the case of the non-believer, she is converted by her experience and becomes a nun when she returns to life (Z 87.594a–b).

Not only do these tales demonstrate that Dizang is believed to be able to aid people in their postmortem journeys, but since they revolve around statues with salvific powers, such stories also show the importance of visual and material representations of Dizang in the religious life of middle period China. Further, the protagonists of the Dizang tales are from a range of backgrounds and socioeconomic positions, suggesting that belief and worship of Dizang was widespread during this time. Other sources describe embroidered images of Dizang fashioned on behalf of the deceased; in cave paintings Dizang also featured in images of the underworld, in particular depictions of the Ten Kings of Hell (Zhiru 2007: 203).

Further, in some contexts a connection is drawn between Dizang and Mulian (Skt. Maudgalyāyana), a disciple of the Buddha who traveled to hell to rescue his mother. As a follower of the Buddha, Mulian is depicted in monastic garb, and often carries a staff that he uses to break open the gates of hell. The iconography of Dizang also furnished him with a staff and robes, and, as described in the *Scripture on Past Vows* and elsewhere, he worked to save those beings that resided in hell. There was thus a natural overlap between the activities of Dizang and those of Mulian. Consequently, in many visual images it is difficult to determine who is being illustrated. At times Dizang and Mulian both appear in the narrative, and indeed the most elaborate narrative of Mulian's journey depicts Dizang as a higher judge than King Yama, chief among the Ten Kings of Hell. Some texts even posit that King Yama is an emanation of Dizang (Wang-Toutain 1998: 153–57).

Because of Dizang's power to aid living beings after death, this bodhisattva is also associated with the heavens, and with Buddha Amitābha and his Pure Land. The tales collected in *A Record of the Numinous Confirmation of the Image of the Bodhisattva Dizang* offer many instances of followers of Dizang being reborn in Buddhist paradises, including Tuṣita Heaven, where the future Buddha Maitreya is believed to reside, the Heaven of the Thirty-Three Celestial Beings, and Amitābha's Pure Land. Votive inscriptions about Dizang also mention rebirth in the Pure Land, and in the Amitābha triad in visual art—usually Amitābha, Guanyin, and Mahāsthāmaprāpta (Dashizhi)—Dizang at times replaces Mahāsthāmaprāpta (Zhiru 2007: 140, 181).

Devotional activities directed to Dizang are largely those common to the worship of all bodhisattvas. These include the recitation of his name, the copying of scriptures

associated with Dizang, and the production of statues and images of him. Due to his ability to aid those in the underworld, Dizang also figured in the confession of sins and in funerary rites.

Dizang's realm in China is identified as Mount Jiuhua, located in Anhui province. The first association between Dizang and Mount Jiuhua can be traced to an essay written in 819 that relates the life of a Korean monk who had Dizang as his Buddhist name and was believed to be a this-worldly incarnation of the bodhisattva. However, the mountain did not emerge as a site for the worship of Dizang until quite late: this development may be credited to the Ming dynasty emperor Shenjong (1572–1619), who promoted it as a pilgrimage site (Zhiru 2007: 218). From then onward, pilgrims would have come to the mountain intending to ascend to the peak and the temple dedicated to Dizang located there. For many, participating in a memorial service for a deceased family member at a temple lower down on the mountain served as the focus of their visit. The main temple features paintings of various hells and the torments therein, reinforcing the ritual message of salvation from lower rebirths. Many images of Dizang are found on the mountain, most depicting him as a seated bodhisattva with a five-panel ritual crown (Powell 1987: 57–58, 67).

Guanyin

Of the four great bodhisattvas worshipped in China, not only is Guanyin (Skt. Avalokiteśvara; Jp. Kannon) the most popular and widely represented, but this bodhisattva also underwent the most numerous and complex transformations. First of all, the name of the bodhisattva in Chinese is a translation of the Sanskrit Avalokiteśvara, meaning “the lord who beholds what is beneath,” implying that the bodhisattva looks down to regard this world with compassion. The “world” is made explicit when the bodhisattva's name is rendered in Chinese as Guanshiyin, or “perceiver of the world's sounds.” The middle syllable would eventually drop out in common usage, making “Guanyin” the most frequently used appellation of the bodhisattva. For clarity, in the texts discussed below the bodhisattva is referred to as Guanyin even though the original texts may use variants of the name.

Among the earliest sources for the cult of Guanyin is the chapter on this bodhisattva in the *Lotus Sūtra*, the twenty-fifth chapter in Kumārajīva's translation. This chapter opens by explaining the bodhisattva's name, in effect joining to the idea of Guanyin perceiving the sounds of sentient beings the practice of calling on the bodhisattva. Such a connection reiterates what is seen to be the function of bodhisattvas in this sūtra and other Mahāyāna scriptures. The audience is further told that Guanyin hears all those who call his name and will come to offer aid. The sūtra offers specific situations in which calling on Guanyin will save people from eight different kinds of disaster or harm: fire, storms at sea, murder, attack by demons or ghosts, imprisonment, bandits, and lustful urges. The scripture also directs itself to women, noting that appeals to Guanyin are effective in assuring the birth of son. The seed here planted of Guanyin's special relationship with women and childbearing will be developed later in popular Buddhism.

The *Lotus Sūtra* chapter further elaborates Guanyin's salvific powers by describing the many forms the bodhisattva may take to save living beings. Guanyin may appear as a Buddha, as one of the gods of India, as a human being, male or female, of various ages and social positions, and even as different types of non-human beings. In this chapter these manifestations number thirty-three, but what this list conveys is that Guanyin can take on any sort of body to best aid sentient beings in need. Although the ability to transform is not unique to Guanyin, this power is reflected in the visual representations of Guanyin, and also foretokens later transformations of the bodhisattva. This twenty-fifth chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra* would also come to circulate separately as a text of special importance for those devoted to Guanyin. Faith in this bodhisattva was encouraged through accounts of the experiences of Chinese devotees that demonstrated the bodhisattva's responsiveness to their supplications. These often reflect the perils described in the *Lotus Sūtra*; for example, there are many early anecdotes describing those rescued from jails or saved at sea through Guanyin's intervention.

The *Lotus Sūtra* was not the only scripture to detail the manifestations and abilities of Guanyin. The *Śūraṅgama Sūtra* (*Shoulengyan jing*) lists thirty-two forms of the bodhisattva, drawing on those in the *Lotus Sūtra*, but explicates the reason that the bodhisattva assumes each form. For example, the bodhisattva might appear as a scholar to those who like to discuss teachings, or as a queen to provide a model for lay women. The *Śūraṅgama Sūtra* further has Guanyin describe other types of forms he may take; these include having multiple (and indeed almost innumerable) faces, arms, and eyes (Yü 2001: 46–48).

The *Heart Sūtra*, a brief but highly influential scripture in the Perfection of Wisdom tradition, is preached by Guanyin. The scripture opens with Guanyin practicing the perfection of wisdom, and observing that the components of human existence are empty, or void, of independent, permanent existence. In the central part of the scripture, the bodhisattva then explains this truth to Śāriputra, one of the Buddha's chief disciples, concluding that because of this truth bodhisattvas are unimpeded in their mind and fearless. While there is no explicit connection between these scriptures, the various appearances of the bodhisattva may be a result of the insight into the emptiness of phenomena; the *Śūraṅgama Sūtra* calls the benefits offered by Guanyin "fearless powers" (Yü 2001: 47).

Guanyin also plays a key role in the *Flower Garland Sūtra*, in which the bodhisattva is one of the teachers visited by the young pilgrim Shancai (Sudhana), who is the main protagonist in the last and longest chapter of the sūtra. Guanyin figures in the Pure Land tradition as well, in which the bodhisattva acts as a helper to Buddha Amitābha. The *Scripture on the Visualization of Amitābha* offers sixteen visualizations, and among these is a detailed description of Guanyin, radiating light and wearing a bejeweled crown with a standing Buddha. Consequently, when Guanyin is depicted with a crown adorned with a Buddha, this figure is usually identified as Amitābha.

While there are many indigenous scriptures associated with Guanyin, another important group of texts related to him are esoteric scriptures. These scriptures emphasize the salvific powers of the bodhisattva, manifested through the *dhāraṇī* taught therein, and illustrate these powers through the bodhisattva's appearance with many faces, eyes, and hands. Among these esoteric texts is the *Sūtra of Eleven-Headed Guanyin*,

translated into Chinese in the late sixth century. This scripture, like others of this type, offers a ritual sequence as well as a *dhāraṇī* that assures the bodhisattva's protection; it also describes how to make an image of the bodhisattva. In addition to protecting from the perils described in the earlier sūtra literature, here Guanyin's incantation is said to free the practitioner from disease and protect from poison; the benefits extend after death, allowing the practitioner to avoid hell and gain rebirth in the Pure Land of Amitābha.

Although the *Sūtra of Eleven-Headed Guanyin* was popular during the Tang dynasty, this era also saw the introduction of a new set of esoteric texts about Guanyin, centered on the bodhisattva's compassionate manifestation with a thousand hands and a thousand eyes. Chief among these new scriptures is *The Vast, Perfect, Unobstructed Dhāraṇī Sūtra of the Great Compassionate Heart Taught by the Thousand-handed and Thousand-eyed One*, known by its abbreviated form as the *Sūtra of a Thousand Hands*. There are several different versions of the text, but the one translated by Bhagavadharma in the early seventh century became the most popular. In it, the believer is exhorted to call on the bodhisattva, and to make ten vows to advance in practice. Further, the *dhāraṇī* offered in the text will ensure that the reciter achieves fifteen kinds of good rebirth and avoids fifteen types of unfortunate and painful death. This scripture also furnishes formulae to address specific troubles, such as difficult childbirth, and suggests practicing *mudrā* (hand gestures) to achieve various aims. The *dhāraṇī* in this scripture, known as the "Great Compassion Dhāraṇī," was circulated separately and to this day is recited by clergy and laity alike. It is also the focal point of a repentance ritual devised by the Song dynasty Tiantai cleric Zhili (960–1028), revised in the Qing dynasty, and still in use (Yü 2001: 264).

The esoteric manifestations of Guanyin not only led to ritualization but also informed visual representations of the bodhisattva. In the Tang dynasty, artists depicted the eleven-headed Guanyin, and later also produced images of the thousand-armed Guanyin. Such depictions, popular in the Song dynasty, often use the bodhisattva's multiplicity of arms to form a nimbus; these images also show many of the hands holding ritual or symbolic objects. Among these objects are a willow branch and a water vase, items that would come to be accessories of the bodhisattva in later times. For example, images of Guanyin described as "water-moon" show the bodhisattva sitting in a position of relaxation and ease next to a body of water, with the moon taking the place of an aureola. Often the bodhisattva holds a willow branch in these images, and has a water vase nearby. These images signify different aspects of the bodhisattva as well, as gazing at the moon reflected in the water is meant to prompt the thought that all things are as illusory as the reflected moon.

Even as these esoteric images of Guanyin illustrated the popularity of the vision of the bodhisattva as a suprahuman being equipped to aid others, the bodhisattva was undergoing a shift from a male bodhisattva to a female deity. This transition is already apparent in some "water-moon" Guanyin images, in which the formerly bare-chested bodhisattva is clothed in a white robe and head cover. In Guanyin's transition from male to female bodhisattva, the tale of Princess Miaoshan played a decisive role. Various versions of the tale emphasize different elements and elaborate the narrative in different

ways, but at its core it is a story about manifestation of the bodhisattva as compassion embodied within a traditional family.

The tale of Miaoshan emerged in the eleventh century, although records surrounding it claim a much longer lineage for it. In this story, the young female protagonist, Miaoshan, is the youngest in a family of three daughters. Her elder sisters have dutifully married, but Miaoshan has been drawn to Buddhism from a young age, and resists marriage in the hope of being permitted to pursue a religious path. Her father refuses this request, sequestering her in the garden of the family estate in the hope that being deprived of food and company will dissuade her from becoming a nun. When these measures do not have the intended effect, Miaoshan's father summons the abbess of the local nunnery and orders her to persuade his daughter to heed him. If she should be unsuccessful, the father vows to burn down the nunnery. Consequently, the abbess assigns Miaoshan the most onerous of tasks, yet the young woman completes them happily with divine assistance. The king burns down the nuns' temple, but Miaoshan is saved through the intervention of the gods, and is established in a mountain hut where she can engage in spiritual cultivation. Meanwhile, her father sickens and no conventional medicine will cure him. A strange monk appears at the palace, and prescribes a cure that uses the hands and eyes of one who has never angered. The king, wondering where to find such a person, is directed to the hermitage on Fragrant Mountain. He dispatches an envoy, who secures from Miaoshan her eyes and hands. These indeed cure the king, and when he visits the hermitage to offer his thanks, he is stunned and saddened to discover the generous hermit to be none other than his daughter. Miaoshan then transforms into the Guanyin of a thousand hands and eyes, and the king is at last converted to Buddhism (Dudbridge 2004: 24–35).

The Miaoshan tale transforms the daughter's rejection of her father's wishes into a higher form of filial piety, and an expression of deep compassion. Later elaborations of the story have Miaoshan executed when the nunnery is destroyed, whereupon she descends into hell; some versions include the bodhisattva Dizang as her guide in the underworld. In that story she is described as saving those suffering there before returning to the world, her body having been protected during her time in the netherworld. The story retained currency through late imperial times, appearing in the popular "precious scroll" genre (Dudbridge 2004; Idema 2008).

Miaoshan's tale promotes a feminine ideal that focuses on the role of the daughter and filial generosity. Guanyin's change from male to female, however, could carry other messages about the role of women and the bodhisattva's special aid to them. Some of these messages emerged from scriptures about Guanyin that were composed in China. One example is the *Dhāraṇī Sūtra of the Five Mudrās of the Great Compassionate White-Robed One*. The text was in circulation by the early eleventh century, and by the late sixteenth century would become especially popular among people hoping for sons. Prefaces, instructions, and miracle tales supplemented the scripture and attested to its perceived efficacy (Yü 1996: 98–99). Guanyin's assistance in childbearing had an impact in the visual culture of the bodhisattva as well, as the feminized bodhisattva was depicted in draped white clothing with a small child seated on her lap. As with other iconographies of Guanyin, this did not replace earlier representations of the deity

but added to the forms in which she appeared. Other popular stories and representations, such as “Mr. Ma’s Wife” and “Fish-basket Guanyin,” emphasize the female form of the bodhisattva, describing her exceptional beauty, and her ability to convert men to Buddhism through her sexual allure. These manifestations of Guanyin are also depicted in illustrations of the bodhisattva’s many forms.

The story of Miaoshan may have been developed to assert a connection between the bodhisattva and Fragrant Mountain (Xiangshan), located in Baofeng county, Henan province. From the eleventh century, the temple there claimed to have the relics from a this-worldly manifestation of the bodhisattva; in the temple a Guanyin Hall was also constructed (and reconstructed). Local tradition further identified other sites connected to the legend. These elements, along with a community of nuns at the site, established Fragrant Mountain as a successful pilgrimage site, which it remains to this day (Dudbridge 2004: 15–20). The Guanyin cult found footing in other places as well. In Hangzhou, the cult centered on Upper Tianzhu Monastery, where a stele detailing Miaoshan’s life was erected in the early twelfth century. This temple also housed a statue of the bodhisattva, which was said to have miraculously appeared in a block of wood; the bodhisattva’s connection with the site solidified through her aid in averting natural disasters (Yü 2001: 360–61). The presence of many monasteries and Buddhist sites in Hangzhou, along with the city’s cultural and political importance, ensured the temple annually attracted large numbers of pilgrims. These pilgrimages continue in contemporary times. Many of the women pilgrims sing songs and tell stories in which they speak in the voice of Guanyin, showing how closely they identify with this female bodhisattva (Yü 1995).

However, Guanyin’s putative home in China is primarily identified as Mount Putuo, a steeply hilly island in the East China Sea lying to the east of Ningbo. “Putuo” is the Chinese transliteration of Potalaka, the realm of Avalokiteśvara (Guanyin) identified in scriptures such as the *Flower Garland Sūtra* and *The Vast, Perfect, Unobstructed Dhāraṇī Sūtra of the Great Compassionate Heart Taught by the Thousand-handed and Thousand-eyed One*, where it is the site of the sūtra being preached. The choice of this island as Guanyin’s dwelling place in China reflected descriptions in scriptures of Potalaka as being located amidst waves (Läänemets 2006: 305), but it also situated the pilgrimage site on a major sea route. At the time when the cult developed, Ningbo was an important city for the production of Buddhist objects and also a launching point for journeys to Korea and Japan. Located at the entrance to Hangzhou Bay, the city also played an important role in domestic shipping. Consequently, Mount Putuo was well situated to become a pilgrimage site, and the surrounding sea provided many opportunities for Guanyin to respond to ships in peril, further building the cult.

Although there was both a Buddhist and Daoist presence on the island in earlier times, the Guanyin cult developed in conjunction with Ningbo’s rise, accelerating in the Song dynasty. One of the foundational legends establishing Putuo’s association with the bodhisattva concerned a miracle experienced by the Japanese pilgrim Egaku in the early tenth century. Egaku had been to Mount Wutai, where he acquired an image of Guanyin. On the return voyage to his homeland, Egaku’s boat got stuck in a mass of water lilies near the island of Putuo. The Japanese monk vowed that he would

build a temple on the island if the image of Guanyin was not fated to go with him to his homeland, whereupon the boat dislodged itself and floated to the Cave of Tidal Sounds. The image's affinity with the island now confirmed, Egaku, along with a local witness to this event, established a shrine for the image of Guanyin. In two other Northern Song miracle tales about the island, government emissaries are rescued when their ships are imperiled near the island. Egaku and these officials had not sought out these experiences, but soon pilgrims would arrive to do just that. The Cave of Tidal Sounds, noted early on as a site for the manifestations of the bodhisattva, was an important stop on the itineraries of these pilgrims (Yü 2001: 384–85).

One monastery on the island would grow to two, and then three in modern times, along with many more smaller establishments, each housing smaller numbers of religious practitioners. The pilgrimage to Mount Putuo enjoyed great popularity at the end of the Ming dynasty and into the Qing (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries). Many travelogues from this time describe the throngs of pilgrims and their devotions, ranging from bowing every three steps as they walked to the sacred sites to burning incense on their heads. The form of Guanyin most closely associated with Putuo, from the sixteenth century onward, is that of Guanyin of the South Seas, a white-robed female form most often depicted near crashing waves, with a willow branch and vase. This figure of the feminine Guanyin lent itself to a connection with another of the bodhisattva's female manifestations, as vernacular literature of the Qing dynasty identified the Fragrant Mountain of the Miaoshan legend with Mount Putuo.

From the description in the *Lotus Sūtra* to late imperial tales, Guanyin was the most malleable of bodhisattvas, taking new forms in new places. In these many guises, Guanyin remains today a ubiquitous figure in the multifaceted landscape of Chinese religion.

Bodhisattvas in Combination

While each of these four bodhisattvas developed cults that treat the individual deity as the object of devotion, the bodhisattvas also took on meaning in combination. Noted above, the pairing of Wenshu and Puxian appears very early, as the two embody the two parts of the Buddhist path of practice and realization, wisdom and practice. As a duo, Wenshu and Puxian sometimes flank doorways and accompany Śākymanuni, one on each side. These two bodhisattvas also at times appear with Vairocana Buddha, as the “Three Sages of Huayan,” reflecting their significance in the *Flower Garland (Huayan) Sūtra*. The triad of Wenshu, Puxian, and Guanyin—called the “Three Great Beings”—is also a popular grouping (Tythacott 2011). Pairings of Guanyin and Dizang reflect the fact that both bodhisattvas are seen as aiding sentient beings. Eventually, this duo would come to reflect a division of duties, wherein Guanyin aided the living, and Dizang served to guide those in the underworld (Yü 2012).

These different combinations show the overlapping characteristics of these four bodhisattvas, but also take meaning from each bodhisattva's particular specialization. That their narratives and iconography continued to develop over the long history of Chinese Buddhism demonstrates that these four bodhisattvas have remained a

living part of the tradition, examples and guides for the many types of Buddhist believers.

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CHAPTER 12

Funerary Rituals in Japanese Buddhism

Nam-lin Hur

Unlike in China and Korea, where Buddhism has often been understood to be anti-thetical to family and social values, Buddhism in Japan has been a mainstay of sustaining harmony between family and society. Buddhism's involvement in family values in Japan is longstanding and has unfolded in diverse directions. Among them, its role in death-related rituals and ancestral veneration is most salient, especially when compared to the inaction and disinterest evidenced in other religious traditions, including Confucianism and Shinto.

Japanese Buddhism, which is commonly associated with death-related observances and ancestral rites, is often dubbed “funerary Buddhism” (*sōshiki Bukkyō*) (Tamamuro 1963). Some scholars and Buddhist critics use this term in a pejorative sense, to underline the negative features of Japanese Buddhism which, in their view, left Buddhism bereft of its original spiritual value (Covell 2005: 11–22; Suzuki 2000). Nonetheless, the term “funerary Buddhism” succinctly captures the major socioreligious functions of Buddhism in Japan.

How and when did funerary Buddhism begin to take root in the family life of the Japanese people? The answer can be found in important events that took place in the early seventeenth century, when the Tokugawa bakufu (1600–1868), the militaristic regime led by the Tokugawa shoguns, began to implement a policy of anti-Christianity and to rely solely upon Buddhist institutions throughout the country. Buddhism's involvement in the Tokugawa government's anti-Christian policy led to the establishment of what is commonly known as the “danka system,” which would cement the dominance of Buddhist forms of death-related rituals and ancestral rites in Japanese society. The universal practice of funerary Buddhism, which was firmly entrenched by the late seventeenth century, announced the arrival of a new age in the history of Japanese Buddhism.

The Origin of Funerary Buddhism

During the Tokugawa (or the early modern) period, every family in Japan was forced by the government to be affiliated with a Buddhist temple. Moreover, everyone had to die a Buddhist and be given a Buddhist funeral. Not only the funeral rites, but also the postmortem rituals were by and large within the religious parameters of Buddhist control. All families, once they were affiliated with local Buddhist temples, stayed with them, generation after generation, through recurring rites and services related to death and ancestral veneration. The enduring relationship between a Buddhist temple and its funerary patron households was framed in terms of the *danka* system (Hur 2007: 376). Here, “*danka*” (also known as “*danna*,” which stems from the Sanskrit word *dana* [giving]) refers to the funerary patron household affiliated with a Buddhist temple.

The *danka* system is often rendered as the “temple parish system” in English, but it should be noted that it had little to do with the idea of a “parish,” which connotes a geographical zoning for the affiliations between patron families and funerary temples. On the contrary, the *danka* system simply indicates the affiliation between patron households and funerary Buddhist temples—an affiliation that was formed when the former, with free will and no restrictions on location, chose the latter. Too often, patterns of affiliation between households and temples were so arbitrary, disorderly, and crisscrossed that it was almost impossible to group them into temple-centered parishes that could be demarcated by geographical boundaries (Hur 2007: 121–24).

Anti-Christianity and the *Danka* System

When it was formed initially, the *danka* system was not really a legal “system” or “institution” *per se*. Rather, it was a custom enforced by Buddhist temples in order to capitalize on the Tokugawa bakufu’s anti-Christian policy. Despite its lack of clear legal status, as a public custom it was applied to the entire populace without exception, and it has exerted lasting influence on Japanese society to the present. In understanding the practice of the *danka* system, which shaped the contours of funerary Buddhism in Japan, it is essential to comprehend its anti-Christian context—a context that decisively transformed the sphere of Buddhist practice (see Boxer 1951).

Japan’s anti-Christian policy goes back to the reign of Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–1598), the unifier of the warring states of Japan. In 1587 Hideyoshi proclaimed that “Japan is the country of the gods, but it has been receiving false teachings from Christian countries. This cannot be tolerated any further” (Lu 1997: 197). In 1613, Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616), who had previously taken power from the Toyotomi house and had established a new shogunal government, pronounced the “Statement on the Expulsion of the Bateren (Padres)” (see Ross 1994). The term “*bateren*” (derived from the Portuguese word “*padre*”) referred to Roman Christian priests who entered Japan for the purpose of proselytizing. Over time, the ban on *bateren* was extended to all “*Kirishitan*” (which came from the Portuguese word “*Christão*,” which referred to all Christian followers), who, according to Gonoï Takashi, numbered as high as 760,000

during the period between 1549 and the 1630s (Gonoi 1990: 5–12). The 1613 edict served as a benchmark of the Tokugawa government's endeavor to eradicate Christianity.

In the beginning, Kirishitans, once detected, had to prove their “korobi” (literally, “rolled over,” which in this context means apostasy) status by obtaining a non-Christian certificate, which had to be issued by a Buddhist temple with which they were affiliated. If a korobi Kirishitan failed to obtain a proof of not being Christian from his or her temple, the person in question could be charged with being a secret Christian and would be put to death. The enforced association between being non-Christian and being Buddhist began to enter the lives of the early modern Japanese people, but it was limited to those who had once been Christians (Hur 2007: 49). For a korobi Kirishitan, a few lines of script on a temple document made the difference between life and death. For Buddhist temples, the authority to issue a non-Christian certificate gave them unprecedented power over residents.

A turning point in the anti-Christian policy came with the Amakusa-Shimabara Rebellion (1637–1638), which was condemned as a Christian-inspired revolt. Indeed, as if confirming the government's perception, the peasant rebels eventually rallied around Amakusa Shirō (Masuda Tokisada, ?–1638), a boy of fifteen or so, whom they declared the leader of the revolt and whom they endowed with the divine Christian aura of “an angel from Heaven” (Elison 1973: 220–21). After the rebellion had been quashed, the government, which was already determined to expel all Christian elements from the country, intensified its suppression of Christianity. To that end, it used various means, including the institution of anti-Christian oath, the requirement of temple certification, the reward system, the enforced trampling of Christian images, and the five-man group association (Ooms 1996: 356–57). Of all these anti-Christian measures, bakufu leaders determined that temple certification, which had already been tried out in a few areas, was most promising in their nationwide effort to keep the whole populace under check.

By the 1660s, the Tokugawa government streamlined the system of temple certification called *terauke*, in which the *tera* (i.e. the head monk of a Buddhist temple) conducted the task of *uke* (i.e. “certifying” that persons affiliated with the temple were not Christian). Under this system, all residents were required to prove their non-Christian identity each year, by allowing the Buddhist temple with which they were affiliated to inspect them. The temple would then issue them a “certificate,” stating that they were affiliated with it and, therefore, had nothing to do with the Christian religion. Those who failed to undergo the process of temple certification were classified as Christian (Kirishitan) and were put to death. Based on the non-Christian certificates of their residents, village officials were required to draw up an anti-Christian register, known as a “register of sectarian inspection” (*shūmon aratamechō*), for all residents under their jurisdiction, and to submit it to the government (Hur 2007: 95–100). Those who were not registered had no place in Tokugawa Japan—at least until 1871, when the system of temple certification was officially abolished and replaced with a new family registration act.

As the annual anti-Christian inspection was put into strict practice, Buddhist monks, who acted like public officials, were quick to transform their religious

inspectees into regular funerary patrons, and to organize them into a system of permanent danna relationships. In making Buddhist temples responsible for the requisite anti-Christian inspections, the Tokugawa bakufu never officially bound the Buddhist inspection to the danka system, nor did it formally authorize Buddhist temples to enforce funerary patronage upon the populace. Nevertheless, Buddhist temples succeeded in incorporating the entire population into a mandate of Buddhist death rituals.

The Danka System and Funerary Buddhism

Under the anti-Christian system of temple certification, every household, regardless of its social status, came to be affiliated with a danna temple of its choice. Once the two parties became affiliated, the latter exercised an exclusive right to preside over the funerary and memorial services of the former. Eventually the government recognized the give-and-take relationship between the two, given that it was a relationship that contributed to social stability.

Initially, as the Tokugawa bakufu spelled out in 1665, Household A's affiliation with Buddhist Temple B was the consequence of A's initial choice. But once that choice was made, power relations often shifted in favor of the danna temple, because it was the institution that wielded the authority of religious inspection. In other words, Household A, which activated Temple B's right of religious inspection in the first place, ended up being subjected to the enduring power of the latter (Hur 2007: 113–14). Therefore, those born into the bondage of a danna relationship could not do much about it. Descendants simply had to stay with what they had inherited from their ancestors, regardless of their individual religious orientation. On their part, danna temples were quick to strengthen their exclusive supervisory power over death-related rituals, memorial services, and ancestral rites of danna households in order to secure a steady source of income (Williams 2005: 23–24).

Under the aegis of the danka system, Buddhist death rituals and ancestral rites were promoted as a sort of social “norm” to which the danna households were expected to subscribe: people were to die Buddhist and to venerate ancestral deities within the framework of the danka system. Every new death reinforced the prescription of Buddhist death, and ancestral rites, which were conducted throughout the year, both regularly and irregularly, were a constant reminder of the mandate of the danka system. This is how funerary Buddhism came into being and how it became ingrained into the lives of the Japanese people.

Despite the political character of its diffusion, the danka system was also appropriated because it accommodated the people's socioreligious needs. The Japanese, who needed to deal with the deaths of their family members and wanted to ensure their postmortem wellbeing, were receptive to the ritual prescriptions of the danka system. Rather than continuing with the medieval approach to death, which had, by and large, reflected the Buddhist notions of karmic reward and retribution, the early modern Japanese gradually adopted the hands-on funerary rituals and services of familial Buddhism.

Funerary Rituals and Japanese Buddhism

In ancient Japan, the word “hōmuru,” which is used to refer to “funeral,” meant “to throw away” or “to discard.” As such, funerals often consisted of dumping the dead body. According to the *Shoku Nihon kōki* (Later chronicles of Japan continued), in 842 Kyoto officials had to collect and incinerate as many as 5,500 corpses that had been casually abandoned in the city (Sakamoto 1991: 141–54). Similarly, Kūya (903–972), a well-known mendicant monk, often gathered dead bodies that had been deserted in the wilderness. He then cremated them after blessing them by reciting the Buddha’s name. As the *Konjaku monogatari* (Tales of times now and past), the *Shasekishū* (Sand and pebbles) of Mujū Ichien (1226–1312), and other narratives inform us, the custom of discarding corpses—particularly corpses of members of the lower classes and of those who had no family—persisted into the medieval period (Ury 1979: 183; Morrell 1985: 105; Nauman 2004). It is true that court nobles conducted funerary services and erected mausoleums for their deceased family members. However, in most cases, even aristocrats did not feel obliged to offer regular memorial services for their ancestors or tend to their burial sites.

In medieval Japan, the Buddhist idea of “six courses” (*rokudō*), which refers to the six possible modes of being—gods [*kami*], humans [*ningen*], asuras [*ashura*], animals [*chikushō*], hungry ghosts [*gaki*], and creatures of hell [*jigoku*—began to gain increasing currency as a frame of reference for understanding life and death. According to this belief, after death, in a cycle of ongoing transmigration, one was destined to be reborn into one of these modes of being, in accordance with the law of karmic reward and punishment (LaFleur 1983: 26–29). The vital concerns of life, death, and rebirth, which were understood in terms of the Buddhist law of karma, delivered a powerful message to the medieval Japanese: each person must be individually responsible for his or her own future life.

In particular, the horrid images of hell, which was located at the bottom of the transmigrational cycle, captured the keen attention of medieval Japanese. Their anxieties about the possibility of slipping into hell after death led them to undertake all manner of quests for salvation, which was commonly understood as a progression toward a dream-like happiness in paradise (Moerman 2005). Nevertheless, no matter what effort they made, they could not dispel the agonizing knowledge that the avoidance of hell was their own personal and individual responsibility.

By the mid-seventeenth century, the impact of ghastly images of hell diminished, as new ideas about the religious path, which promised liberation from the cycle of endless transmigration, took root (see Ruch 2002: 566–75). This path evolved through the growth of family-centered funerary Buddhism, which was nurtured within the *danka* system. The task of saving one’s soul through one’s own religious actions, which had been a mainstay of medieval Buddhism, gave way to a family-centered ritualism, through which family members sought to save the soul of the deceased or to elevate the deceased to the status of an ancestral deity (see Smith 1974). These religious measures represented a new mode of Buddhist death rituals and memorial services that moved beyond the doctrine of karma.

In funerary Buddhism, one's spirit, which was deified through familial funerary rituals and ancestral rites of oblation, was called "hotoke." Hotoke (literally, Buddha) was believed to be a divine being who had wholly transcended the domain of karmic transmigration. Relieved of their anxiety over karmic causality, the Japanese people believed that their spirits could be saved as long as their descendants practiced the familial Buddhism of death, which was now institutionalized through the danka system. Familial death rituals and ancestral rites of oblation were heralded as the solution to what might be dubbed the "problem of death and hell."

Over time, mortuary rites for deceased family members were gradually standardized into three dimensions of ritual conduct—a mortuary ritual, a series of post-funereal memorial services, and annual ancestral rites—all of which were under the aegis of funerary Buddhism. The early modern mode of death-related rituals laid an enduring foundation of funerary Buddhism that persists to the present day. In understanding funerary Buddhism in Japan, it is therefore essential to grasp the archetypes of death-related rituals and ancestral veneration that took firm root in early modern times. The following discussion is devoted to funerary Buddhism in Tokugawa Japan (see Walter 2008; Reader 1991: 77–106).

Mortuary Rituals and Buddhism

In dealing with the death of a family member, during the Tokugawa era the Japanese followed a three-stage series of mortuary rituals. The first-stage rite—known as "calling back the soul," or "bringing back the life"—was concerned with the soul's separating from the body. Based on the belief that the dead could come back to life if the departing soul could be lured back into the body, the first course of action involved trying to bring the soul of the deceased back to the body through ritual gestures. This first-stage rite soon yielded to concern with feelings of loss, sorrow, uncertainty, defilement, fear, and distance. The second-stage rite involved appeasing the soul, taking care of the corpse while it decomposed, and trying to protect survivors from the dangers that death might pose. This rite, known as "appeasing the soul" or "cutting off the connection," aimed to sever the worldly ties between the living and the deceased. After the rite of severance, a funerary ritual was held in order to send the soul to the other world, where it would supposedly attain eternal life as a "Buddha" (*hotoke*). This constituted the third-stage rite—the rite of "transforming [the deceased] into a Buddha," or "sending off the soul." Once this rite was completed, the corpse was entombed or cremated, and its ashes were buried.

It should be noted that these mortuary rites, which were composed by combining bits and pieces of many ideas, practices, and customs, were never free of local variations. They could be diffuse, redundant, overlapping, and often self-contradictory. Interestingly, however, all rites pertaining to death and funerary observance were collectively referred to as "Buddhist rituals" (*butsuji*)—a term that attests to the fact that, within Japanese society, death was understood as occurring within parameters defined by Buddhism.

Calling back the soul

When a family member neared death, or right after he or she had died, the surviving family members practiced the rite of calling his or her name. In the past, most commonly, a family member would climb onto the roof of the house and, facing in the direction of the family gravesite, a mountain, the sea, the western directions, or the deceased, would shout out something like “please come back [the name of the deceased].” At the same time, on the deathbed of the deceased, family members and relatives gathered and moistened his or her lips. The action of dampening the lips of the dying or the dead with a brush or a chopstick wrapped in cotton was a last-ditch effort to keep his or her life from departing. This custom, which is known as “water at the final moment,” was based on the life story of Śākyamuni, who was said to have sought water right before slipping into Nirvana (Fujii 1977: 121–22).

Appeasing the soul

As time passed, fear of the defiling nature of death set in. The family then took various measures to prevent the defiling energy, or *kegare* (ritual pollution), of death from spreading (Ohnuki-Tierney 1984: 51–74). Traditionally, the “red impurity” caused by menstrual blood and the “white impurity” caused by the blood of childbirth were both feared. However, neither was feared as much as was the “black impurity” caused by death. Efforts were directed toward the living, who had to restore the status quo, which had been disrupted by death, through the actions of taboo, prohibition, and abstinence. Another custom involved the hanging of a lantern at the main entrance of the house, along with the sign of *kichū* (lit. “in the middle of abstinence”). A death affected not only the individual household, but also the community. In the name of communal abstinence, loud noises, excessive gestures, festive dining and drinking, and recreational activities were all banned (see Smith 1961; Bolitho 2003: 17).

Despite concerns about death pollution, family members proceeded with the task of handling the dead body. Commonly, the corpse was laid on a straw mat, with its head pointing toward the north and the body facing the west, and was enclosed by a folding screen. A picture of the Buddha was hung in the room, and a fire was lit on small pieces of incense by the bedside of the dead. The positioning of the dead body derived from the legend that, on his deathbed, Śākyamuni asked his disciple Ānanda to lay his body toward the west with the head facing north, because he wished the Buddhist dharma to spread north after his death. In some areas, rice cake dumplings, known as “pillow dumplings,” were offered to the dead, on the grounds that they were powerful enough to counter the defilement of death or to return the departed to life (Hur 2007: 149–50).

After this, the family reported the death to its danna temple. Upon being notified, a monk from the temple would visit the family and offer a brief recitation of a Buddhist sūtra known as the *Makuragyō* (lit. “pillow-sūtra,” a reference to the practice of chanting a sūtra at the pillow-side of the deceased). The relatives, members of mutual

assistance groups (usually a nenbutsu confraternity), and neighbors were also involved in the tasks of laying the dead to rest and of restoring normalcy to the community. The first task came with the arrival of night: relatives gathered, washed the body, and outfitted the deceased with a new robe known as a *kyōkatabira* (“garment of sūtra”), which was made out of hemp, cotton, or paper, stitched with thread that contained no knots. Then a Buddhist monk from the danna temple chanted sūtras and shaved the corpse’s head (often symbolically, by cutting a small clump of hair on the front part of the head). Shaving the head and shrouding the body in a “garment of sūtra,” on which sentences from a Buddhist scripture were inscribed, were actions designed to prepare the deceased to renounce this world and to follow the path of Buddhist salvation into the other world (Walter 2008: 261–62).

Around this time, as a token of initiating the deceased into the Buddhist path to salvation, the head monk of the danna temple granted a posthumous Buddhist name or *kaimyō* (“precept name”), also referred to as *hōmyō* (“dharma name”), to the deceased (Blum 2000: 183–84). Originally, a “precept name” was conferred upon those who had completed all procedures involved in renouncing the secular world and had formally entered the Buddhist sangha (monastic order). A Buddhist name, which was given to the deceased according to his or her lineage, wealth, social position, and status, usually consisted of four or six letters, chosen from among Buddhist terms that offered an eulogy to the deceased (Williams 2005: 26–32). The name was then inscribed on two temporary white mortuary tablets (*ihai*). One of these was placed beside the deceased during the funeral and then taken to the tomb, and the other was placed on the household Buddhist altar for memorial services.

After the conferral of a posthumous Buddhist name, the body of the deceased was prepared to be placed in a coffin, thereby being readied to go through the transition from this world to the other. After laying the dead body in the coffin, family members and relatives kept vigil over it throughout the night, a ritual procedure commonly known as *tsuya*. This observance inherited some elements from the ancient custom of *mogari*, in which the mourners “lived with” the encoffined dead emperor or aristocrat, in a specially erected building or “mourning hut,” for a certain period of time before burying or cremating the body (Ebersole 1989: 123–70). During the *tsuya*, a monk from the danna temple usually chanted the *Amitabha Sūtra* or other sūtra in order to solicit Buddhist merit, which would ensure the departing soul’s smooth progression to the other world. The vigil was followed by a funeral ceremony.

The funeral ceremony

Structurally, all Buddhist funerals were designed to send the deceased to the other world via the path of Buddhist salvation. In order to accomplish this, Buddhist funerals incorporated two key ritual components: (1) the establishment of the deceased as a Buddhist disciple through the conferring of a set of Buddhist precepts—a sort of postmortem ordination (*jukai*); and (2) the guiding of the deceased, now a newly anointed Buddhist disciple, to rebirth in a Pure Land, or paradise (*indō*). (Notable exceptions to this basic pattern were rituals pertaining to the Nichiren and Jōdoshin sects, or Nichirenshū and

Jōdoshinshū). The first component could be started, depending on sectarian tradition, when the deceased was tonsured or encoffined, when a posthumous Buddhist name was also conferred, or during the *tsuya*. However, in all cases, the process had to be completed before or during the funeral ceremony. The ritual formula for the second component varied, depending on sectarian tradition, local customs, and family situation. For example, Shingon Buddhists performed a *kanjō* ceremony, which featured “sprinkling water on the head” of the deceased. In the case of the Zen sects, the rite usually consisted of a brief sermon concerning the emptiness of attachments and desires (Faure 1991: 193–94; Rowe 2000: 358).

With these two ritual components, a Buddhist funeral was expected to extinguish the sins or transgressions of the deceased. Since the deceased could not cleanse themselves, the funeral involved the indirect soteriological path of *ekō* (merit transference), in which the bad karma of the deceased was offset by a “transfer of merit” from the living (Gombrich 1971: 219). With the power and grace of transferred religious merit, the deceased was believed to be reborn in the heavenly paradise. Thus, the key issue was how to invoke or elicit the compassion of Buddhist deities, and thereby realize the transfer of religious merit on behalf of the deceased. Ritual strategies for this could be diverse, but the chanting of *sūtra*, *darani*, and hymns was the most common method.

Sūtra-chanting, which constituted a liturgical means of learning the doctrinal truth and moral ideals presented in Buddhist scriptures, was a fixture of Buddhist funerals. The chanting of *darani* (spells or mantras), which consisted of incomprehensible combinations of Sanskrit syllables and were usually untranslatable, also constituted a major means of invoking the salvific compassion of Buddhist deities. In addition to the offerings of chanting, Buddhist funerals across all sects shared many other ritual elements, such as purifying the priests and the funeral site; inviting, greeting, and feasting the Buddhist deities, along with praising, thanking, or offering worship to them; repentance; incense burning; and the dedication of merit to the deceased and all sentient beings.

On the surface, the ways in which these ritual elements were put into practice appear to be similar, but each sect maintained its own style and tradition. Furthermore, within the same sect, ritual practices were not necessarily identical, due to their *mélange* with folk elements and local customs. Variations ran through locality, period, individual temple, and even individual head monk. In many cases, funerary rituals were almost like a private business run by each temple. Given all this, the following discussion of the characteristics of Buddhist death rituals of different sects is limited to some basic features.

In the case of Tendaishū, the funeral was premised on the teaching that all sentient beings possessed the innate nature of Buddhahood, so that when the deceased was awakened to this truth, he or she would be emancipated from the karma of transmigration. Accordingly, the purpose of the funeral was to help the deceased to realize his or her Buddha-nature. In order to help the deceased discard the shades and obstacles obscuring his or her Buddha-nature, various ritual measures were taken during the funeral. With regard to exoteric measures, the chanting of *sūtras*—particularly the *Lotus Sūtra*, in a format known as the Lotus repentance—was most favored. Tendai followers believed that, by listening to the chanting of the *Lotus Sūtra*, the deceased

would be purified and brought to the realization of Buddhahood (Donner and Stevenson 1993: 261–69).

Shingonshū funerals were initially based on the teachings of Kūkai (774–835), who advocated the ideal of the “attainment of enlightenment in this very existence” (see Haketa 1972). Later, Kōgyō (1095–1142) added to this the thought of Pure Land, and Myōe (1173–1222) added the “mantra of clear light,” further complicating the ritual procedure (Tanabe 1992; Unno 2004: 21–44). The goal of the Shingonshū funeral was the union of the deceased with Mahāvairocana, which was believed to preside over the eternal life of the deceased in the Pure Land of Tusita (Tosotsuten). In order to achieve this goal, after conferring upon the deceased Buddhist precepts and a posthumous name, the ritual officiant conducted the rituals of the “three mysteries” of the Buddha, represented by the triad of body (*mudrā*), speech (*mantra*), and mind (*samādhi*). These mysteries were meant to facilitate the union of the deceased with Mahāvairocana.

In the case of Zen Buddhism, whether Sōtōshū or Rinzai shū, funerals followed the procedure known as *matsugo sasō*, in which the deceased was ordained as a disciple and connected to the lineage of Zen masters known as “blood lineage” (Bodiford 1993: 185–216). As an ordained Buddhist disciple, the deceased was then blessed with incense burning, an offering of tea, the chanting of sūtra, the dedication of merits, and bowing (Faure 1991: 193). Sōtōshū, which based its funerary formula on the *Keizan shingi*, a collection of ritual manuals compiled by Keizan (1268–1325), paid particular attention to the elements of ordination, repentance, the vow of returning to the three jewels of Buddhism, merit-transference, and sūtra- and spell-chanting. In Zen funerals, the final words of guidance offered by the officiating Zen priest were considered particularly important.

The formula of Jōdoshū funerals was rooted in the ritual practice of *samādhi* (*zanmai*), which Genshin (942–1017) had articulated and propagated among the populace. Originally, the purpose of the *samādhi* ritual, which featured nenbutsu-chanting (repetition of the Buddha’s name), was to take care of the dying with deathbed prayers, to pray for the rebirth of the deceased into the Western Paradise, and to provide mutual help in conducting funerals for the deceased (Stone 2008: 62–71). Later, nenbutsu-chanting, in combination with the formulae of ordination and salvific guidance, evolved into a funerary rite for the followers of Pure Land Buddhism. The current ritual formula goes back to the memorial service held at Zōjōji in 1614 for the deceased mother of Tokugawa Ieyasu—Denzūin—on the occasion of the thirteenth anniversary of her death.

As has been mentioned, the funerary rites of Nichirenshū and Jōdoshinshū followers were different from those of other sects. In the case of Nichirenshū, its followers omitted the ordination rite on the grounds that the deceased had already accepted the teachings of the *Lotus Sūtra*, and thus would automatically be ushered into paradise. For this reason, in Nichirenshū funerals there was no procedure for initiating the deceased into Buddhism through the conferring of precepts. Instead, the deceased was granted a “dharma name” (*hōgō*), as evidence that he or she was already a follower of the dharma of the *Lotus Sūtra*. Within this context, the role of the ritual officiant was not so much to guide the spirit of the deceased directly to paradise as to introduce it to Nichiren, the founder of the sect, who was believed to lead the soul to paradise (Hur 2007: 161).

On the other hand, Jōdoshinshū followers believed that all members had already been redeemed by the original vow of Amida Buddha and that, therefore, the funeral service signified nothing more than the continuation of their usual expression of gratitude for Buddha's salvific grace. Based on this belief, funeral services were primarily devoted to Amida Buddha rather than to the deceased: family members, relatives, and friends would give thanks for Amida's compassion and celebrate the salvation of the deceased. Within this context, all services were conducted in the spirit of *dōbōgyō*, or "the practice of companions," under the doctrinal dictum that there were no distinctions between monks and lay people (see Dobbins 1989). There were even some cases in which the funeral ceremony was officiated by a lay person.

After a funeral ceremony, the coffin was carried to the gravesite for burial or cremation. The manner of "removing the coffin from the house" varied according to local customs, which particularly focused on the concern that the departing soul, not being fully appeased, might return to the house and inflict harm upon the living (Akata 1986: 77). Once taken outside, the coffin was carried by pallbearers to the gravesite. Since, in the countryside, the gravesite was usually separated from the funeral site, the transport of a coffin involved a procession, known as *nobe okuri* ("sending to the edge of a wild field"), which symbolized the one-way journey of the deceased to the other world.

Despite the Buddhist rhetoric, cremation was not widely practiced until 1897, when the Meiji government began to strictly enforce the cremation of those who died of a contagious disease (see Bernstein 2006). Before that, cremation was usually performed when there was an urgent need to promptly terminate the defilement associated with a violent death—a defilement that was believed to be much more persistent and malicious than the defilement associated with a regular death. Besides its association with malignant death, there was another factor that hampered the spread of cremation: the idea that the dead might be regenerated as another person or being (see Bolitho 2002). Cremation, which, at least visually, ensured the complete removal of death pollution, posed a new quandary: the removal was so complete that it not only posed an affront to the resurrection of the body, but also threatened to destroy all possibility of an afterlife. This concern was especially acute in regard to the funerals of young children.

After the inhumation of the body, the family erected a grave stūpa, known as a *sotoba*, at the gravesite. The grave stūpa contained basic information about the deceased, such as the posthumous Buddhist name and dates of birth and death. Often perceived as emblems of a family's social status, the stūpa varied in material, size, shape, and decoration. Despite these variations, all stūpas featured the format of "five-wheels" (*gorin*), which represented the five elements of the dharma in Esoteric Buddhism: (from the bottom upward) earth, water, fire, wind, and air. In Buddhist terms, a five-wheel grave stūpa signified that the spirit of the deceased had returned to the world from which it had come. It was also commonly believed that the grave stūpa would serve as the resting place of the spirit. In the case of cremation, the ashes of the deceased were collected, put in an urn, and taken to the house. The urn was then placed on a special altar. Forty-nine days after death, the urn was taken to the grave and the ashes were buried there to the accompaniment of a brief ceremony. The family then erected a stūpa.

Grave customs differed throughout the country. Jōdoshinshū followers in some regions neither made a grave—a custom known as the “no-grave system”—nor erected a gravestone. For them, disposing of the corpse was not much different from disposing of waste in the wilderness. Among a variety of burial customs, the dual-grave system (*ryōbosei*) offered a unique structure that reflected deep-seated Japanese ideas regarding the dead body and the ancestral spirits. In this grave system, which started in the Kinki area and later spread to other parts of the country, the family established two graves, one at the actual burial site, which was usually outside or near the village boundary, and the other within the village. The former was called the “burying grave” or “dumping grave,” and the latter was called the “visiting grave,” which was used for ancestral veneration. Once the corpse was buried at the “burying grave,” it was abandoned (Bitō 1991: 384–85).

Post-funereal Memorial Services

The conclusion of a funeral was not the end of ritual care for the deceased. It also signaled the beginning of the next step of ritual care—the post-funereal care that would take place over an extended period of time, in the form of memorial services designed to facilitate the transformation of the deceased into an ancestral deity. The focus of post-funereal ritual care moved from the gravesite to a newly built domestic Buddhist altar, where a white spirit tablet—now a memorial tablet—for the deceased was enshrined.

The rationale for posthumous memorial services, known as *tsuizen kuyō* (offerings for [making Buddhist] follow-up merits), was based on the belief that the deceased was still in the process of “attaining Buddhahood” and that, therefore, he or she needed further religious care or assistance. The period during which these memorial services were conducted consisted of two distinct stages. The first began after the burial, and continued up to the “clearance of memorial abstinence” (*imiake*)—the day on which the temporary white mortuary tablet was burned and a permanent spirit tablet (an upright wooden plaque, usually lacquered in black, standing on a flat base) was prepared and installed in the household Buddhist altar. The second stage began after the “clearance of memorial abstinence” had ended, and continued up to the “conclusion of memorial services” (*tomuraiage*, a term that had rich local variations)—the day on which the spirit tablet enshrined in the household Buddhist altar was either removed or sent to the temple repository (Hur 2007: 171–79).

Most commonly, the celebration of the “clearance of memorial abstinence” took place on the forty-ninth day after death. Up to that day, Buddhist rituals (seven altogether) were offered at seven-day intervals. On the forty-ninth day, the family usually invited numerous relatives and Buddhist monks from its danna temple, and offered a grand Buddhist ritual in honor of the deceased. During the period of “seven sevens,” the spirit of the deceased was believed to undergo a transitional existence, and to make progress toward rebirth and ancestral deification. The idea of intermediate existence was expounded in Buddhist terms, but the idea itself was not foreign to the Japanese, who traditionally believed that, right after the funeral, the spirit of the deceased was still unstable and, therefore, needed to be further appeased and stabilized (see Poussin 1988: 120–21).

The Japanese believed that the new spirit, called *aramitama*, or untamed spirit, was not completely liberated from the defilement and agony of death. Worse yet, they believed that, if the deceased was not further pacified through posthumous ritual care, he or she would inflict curses upon the survivors (Reis-Habito 1991: 49). Traditional ideas pertaining to the defilement and instability of the new spirit set the context within which further posthumous Buddhist rituals were conducted. The overall ritual scheme followed the logic that, by generating Buddhist merit and transferring it to the deceased, the volatile nature of the spirit in transition would be removed (Malalasekera 1967: 86).

With the completion of the seventh “seven,” the spirit of the deceased was supposed to be greatly purified. If ashes had been preserved, the family then buried them, or sent a portion of them to a charnel house at Zenkōji, Kōyasan, Osorezan, Asamayama, or other well-known Buddhist site—places reputed to be entrances to paradise. After this, free from the shadow of death pollution and mortuary obligations, the family began to eat usual food and to distribute mementos of the deceased to relatives and friends.

Despite the ritual measures that led to the “clearance of memorial abstinence,” the new spirit still continued to be subject to appeasement, purification, and religious nourishment. The second stage of posthumous memorial services lasted far longer than did the first stage, and was marked by longer intervals between memorial services. Usually, these services occurred on the one hundredth day, on the death day in the first year, the third year, the seventh year, the thirteenth year, and the thirty-third year after death. This amounted to six more memorial services, in addition to the “seven sevens.” All together, “thirteen Buddhist rituals,” as the Japanese called them, constituted the cycle of post-funereal ritual care.

Notwithstanding local and sectarian variations, as well as the existence of diverse theories, in general post-funereal memorial services were rather simple. Usually, a priest from the danna temple chanted some lines from the *Lotus Sūtra* or the *Amitabha Sūtra* in front of the altar, and family members burned incense and offered food. The Japanese believed that, when the “thirteen Buddhist rituals” were completed, the spirit of the deceased had been completely transformed into an ancestral deity, who would thereafter remain a permanent source of divine help to its descendants. The tablet of the spirit was then removed from the household Buddhist altar, and was either burned, floated down the river or over the sea to its imagined permanent residence, or taken to the danna temple for permanent enshrinement. With regard to the ancestral deification of the deceased, Yanagita Kunio commented:

In the thirty-third year after a person died (rarely, in the forty-ninth or fiftieth year), a final Buddhist ritual called *tomuraiage*, or *toikiri*, is held. It is said that on this day the person in question becomes an ancestor . . . It means that [he or she] has been completely purified from the pollution of death so that descendants can now worship [him or her] as a kami (Yanagita 1969: 94–95).

In short, the rhetoric of Buddhist salvation, which justified the involvement of danna temples and Buddhist monks, also served the process of kami making. In the final analysis, ancestors were neither Buddhas nor Buddhist deities, but kami-like beings.

Annual Veneration of Ancestral Deities

Ancestral deities, who were believed to join the cluster of deified spirits of the family, remained closely connected with their descendants. Contacts between ancestors and their descendants were initiated by the latter, who made food offerings to the former on the occasions of annual observances (*nenchū gyōji*). Unlike Buddhist ritual offerings, which were made during the transitional period of ancestral deification—offerings that were directed toward a specific individual spirit, on specific dates—the annual ancestral offerings were collectively made to all ancestors.

The conduct of annual ancestral rites was symmetrical. The year was evenly divided into two cycles (i.e. the first and second half of the year) that basically repeated themselves. The calendar was set out as follows: celebrations in the first month of the first half of the year began on the first day, with an offering of veneration to ancestral deities who were invited to the New Year altar, and they concluded with an event known as “minor first month,” which lasted from the fourteenth to the fifteenth or sixteenth day. Celebrations in the first month of the second half of the year (i.e. the seventh month) began on the first day, with the installment of an altar at which ancestral deities were venerated, and concluded with the Bon festival from the thirteenth to the fifteenth day. Similarly, in the second month of the first half of the year, as in the second month of the second half of the year (i.e. the eighth month), one week, designated as Higan (lit. “the other shore”), was dedicated to celebrating the equinox and venerating the ancestors. On the last day of the last month of each cycle—the sixth and twelfth months, respectively—major purification rites were conducted in preparation for the upcoming ancestral rites (Hur 2007: 185).

Buddhist elements of the annual ancestral rites were sporadic, loose, and sometimes invisible. During the New Year celebration, after having made food offerings, family members usually visited the graves of their ancestors, and sent New Year offerings such as glutinous rice cakes of various kinds, fruits, and the like to their danna temple, where the ancestral tablets were enshrined. In return, monks from the danna temple made a round of visits to their danna families for sūtra-chanting.

During the week-long period of Higan ceremonies, families decorated their household's Buddhist altars, offered food to their ancestors, paid homage to their family graves, and visited their danna temple with rice offerings. For their part, monks visited their danna households for sūtra or nenbutsu-chanting. Some Jōdoshinshū followers focused more on listening to the priests' preaching about Shinran's teachings, and on enjoying vegetarian meals at their danna temples.

In the case of the Bon festival, families set up a Bon altar, greeted ancestral spirits, and offered food and flowers. With the exception of some Jōdoshinshū followers, it was a universal custom for families to pay a visit to the graves of their ancestors and to their danna temples, and monks from the danna temples made a round of visits to their patron families in order to chant Buddhist sūtras in front of the Bon altar—an annual event known as *tanagyō* (“altar sūtras”)—and to collect service fees. At the same time, Buddhist temples conducted the *segaki* (“feeding the hungry ghosts”) ritual for wandering spirits, according to their sectarian traditions, local customs, and ritual specialties.

By and large, *segaki*, held in front of a specially installed altar in the temple's main hall, was composed of various ritual elements, including the recitation of Buddhist sūtras, hymns, or mantras, offerings of food, and transference of merit (see Teiser 1988; Payne 1999: 162–65).

To one degree or another, Buddhist monks and danna temples were all involved in mortuary rituals, memorial services, and annual ancestral rites. Their multifaceted involvement in the household institution through the leverage of the danka system ranged from officiating at rituals to chanting Buddhist sūtras, taking care of graves, and responding to the special needs of their danna patrons. At the same time, a host of traditional ideas and customs, related to death pollution, purification, temporary lodges of deities, deification processes, ancestors, calendars, the other world, grudge-bearing spirits, and so forth, were all inseparable from the context within which these “Buddhist” rituals were practiced.

Funerary Buddhism and Japanese Society

The introduction of new modes of Buddhist death rituals and ancestral veneration during the Tokugawa era mirrored changes in the family structure, which was moving away from the medieval system of the extended family. The new family structure known as *ie*, which has persisted to the present, featured a single household that demanded spiritual support of the kind that would foster its subsistence and solidarity (Murakami 1979: 302–08). Funerary Buddhism was in rapport with the *ie* system of Japanese society.

The term *ie* (household), which, etymologically, derives from “hearth,” signifies the “matter of managing a corporate unit of living by establishing a residence,” rather than a house or a family unit. The term *kazoku*, which is usually rendered as “family,” was not used until the Meiji period (1868–1912). The terms *kazoku* and *ie* are, therefore, different in both origin and connotation: the former signifies the members of a consanguineous or quasi-consanguineous unit, regardless of whether or not they live under the same roof, whereas the latter signifies members of a residential unit who conduct the business of life together, regardless of their blood relationship (see Nakane 1972).

The elements constituting a household can be grouped into two separate yet interdependent categories: (1) a material base represented by means of production and labor (in a peasant household, for example, these would be a farm field, a homestead, and able-bodied family members); and (2) a non-material base represented by status, family title, lineage, and religious life. Depending upon how these elements were practiced, combined, acquired, or granted, the social modes of the household unit could go in various directions.

However, regardless of how a household unit was acquired or composed, what was taken most seriously was preserving the unit as a social institution of communal life. And this involved ensuring the continuity of the household lineage through its ancestors, its current members, and its future descendants. Without both the recognition of the ancestors and the potential of future generations, the household could not realize its collective goal of continuous subsistence and prosperity. Perpetual

subsistence was the ultimate *raison d'être* of the household and the primary duty of its living members, and this goal was represented by the wellbeing of its ancestors and future descendants.

As far as the Japanese were concerned, the wellbeing of a household as a corporate body was ensured when its ancestors provided it with divine protection. By the same token, the posthumous welfare of the ancestors was contingent upon the care of their descendants. If the living household members did not care for their ancestors, then the latter were believed to suffer from “malnutrition and starvation,” and eventually they could lose their divine power. For ancestors, the household was a place where their spirits could find peace and tranquility. The household itself was regarded as an altar at which descendants conducted rites of veneration for their ancestors, so that the latter could have peace and comfort in the other world (Hur 2007: 203–05). In fact, each household maintained a Buddhist altar that served as a vehicle for ancestral veneration throughout the year. The Buddhist altar, the spiritual epicenter of a household, brought its members into unity through generations.

As well as being the domestic ritual center of ancestral veneration, the Buddhist altar was also a gateway connecting the household to its *danna* temple. Whenever a priest from the *danna* temple visited a *danna* household, it was the Buddhist altar that served to justify his presence: the priest was to stand before it and chant either a few lines from a Buddhist *sūtra* or the Buddha's name. As far as the *danna* temple was concerned, the Buddhist altar offered evidence that its household patron was in compliance with *danka* requirements. In fact, as the Japanese often dubbed the annual Bon visit of a *danna* priest an “inspection of the Buddhist altar” (*butsudan aratame*), the Buddhist altar functioned as a constant reminder that death rituals and ancestral veneration were an integral part of the *danka* system.

When ancestors were well nourished through ancestral veneration, they would, in return, bless the household of their descendants with divine protection. The household institution was a joint enterprise, whose success depended on both the deceased and the living. In this sense, ancestors and descendants were eternal partners who depended upon each other for their respective wellbeing, even though, in practice, it was the current household head who took responsibility. Nothing was more important than preserving the household institution and passing it down to posterity, and this task was what the value of filial piety was all about.

In Japanese society, filial piety focused upon the household institution rather than upon individual members of the household. Filial piety was, to a great extent, practiced within the framework of Buddhist death rituals and ancestral rites—a framework that entailed distinctive sociocultural implications. Before the Meiji period, professional Buddhist practitioners, except those belonging to Jōdoshinshū, were required to abandon ordinary family life, and, for that reason, they were commonly referred to as “those who left the family” (*shukkesha*). Anti-Buddhist critics charged that it would be ludicrous to delegate the control of filial piety to those who had rejected their parents, had no descendants, and only contributed to terminating the family lineage. Paradoxically, however, under the *danka* system, temples and monks offered the Buddhist blessing of filial piety to their patron households through involvement in every stage of death-related rituals and ancestral rites of the household.

Epilogue

Traditionally, Confucianism refuted Buddhism by claiming that it was anti-social, otherworldly, and, therefore, inimical to family values (see Ebrey 1991). What can one say in response to this critique? Buddhist institutions were an integral part of the governing apparatus of the Tokugawa regime, and Buddhist monks were the vanguard agents of family values. Far more than any other religious tradition, Buddhism was socially oriented and family centered. In Confucianism, filial piety was treasured not only as a means of keeping families and, by extension, society in harmony, but also as the springboard of all other social virtues, such as sincerity, propriety, compassion, neighborly love, and loyalty (Whitlock 1994: 115–24). Interestingly, however, in Japan the Confucian virtue of filial piety was promoted within the religious apparatus of funerary Buddhism. Danna temples and the Buddhist clergy were the key arbiters of “Confucian” filial piety.

Similarly, Shinto was unfriendly to funerary Buddhism. With the onset of a new age in Meiji Japan, which saw the overhaul of the government structure, radical change began to occur (see Hardacre 1989). Meiji leaders swiftly moved to unite Shintō ritual and government, and to promote State Shintō. Amid this trend, the system of temple certification began to lose its steam. The first omen appeared in the third month of 1868, when an anti-Buddhist movement, known as “abolish the Buddha and discard Śākyamuni,” spread with lightning speed (Collcutt 1986: 150–56).

In a show of trying to divest imperial rites and ceremonies of any Buddhist character, Emperor Meiji (r. 1867–1912) conducted Shintō-style memorial services for his father, Emperor Kōmei (r. 1847–1866), who had previously been buried with a Buddhist funeral. After this, the imperial house no longer conducted Buddhist funerary rites for its members (Ketelaar 1990: 44; Gilday 2000). Soon after, the Meiji government ordered all Shintō priests to conduct Shintō funerals for their family members, effectively freeing them from the bondage of funerary Buddhism. At the same time, it encouraged the populace to leave their danna temples and to switch to Shintō funerals. In the fourth month of 1871, a new law pertaining to family registration was passed. Based on this new legislation, in the second month of 1872, the central government ordered local governments to conduct a census and to draw up a register of all residents under their jurisdiction (Jaffe 2001: 60). This family register, known as the *Jinshin koseki* (family register of the year of Jinshin [1872]) system, replaced the previous population register of sectarian inspection.

Amidst this trend, it is hard to know to what extent the populace actually switched to Shintō funerals during the Meiji period. Two decades into the Meiji era, Western scholar Arthur Hyde Lay observed that, of 754,000 deaths in one year, Shintō deaths numbered roughly one-third (224,500), Buddhist deaths two-thirds (526,500), and Christian deaths 3,000. Despite the fact that the imperial family and the upper classes had adopted Shintō funerals at the beginning of the Meiji period, Lay found that “the bulk of the nation—and in particular the country people, have, however, clung tenaciously to their old belief, and most of the burials among the middle and lower class are still carried out with Buddhist rites” (Lay 1891: 542).

Against the increasing conversion to Shintō funerals, Buddhist temples and their pro-Buddhist followers fought back. Anxiety about Shintō funerals ran deep, not only for Buddhist temples that were poised to lose their main source of income, but also for the people who were suddenly pressured into abandoning generations-old customs and norms. Many families that had switched to Shintō funerals tried to switch back to Buddhist funerals, once they realized how uneasy they were with the former and once the government gradually eased its aggressive policy (Bernstein 2006). Many families were very nervous about having to remove their ancestral tablets. Remove them to where? They feared that the removal of ancestral tablets from the ancestral danna temple or the household Buddhist altar might irritate their ancestors and invite misfortune.

The government eventually eased its stance on Shintō funerals, which had posed more and more problems. The system of temple certification had already become a relic of the past, but the danka system weathered the pro-Shintō era of Meiji. The Buddhist framework of funerals and ancestral rites in Meiji Japan no longer had its previous legal (or semi-legal) clout, but it did persist, thanks to its deep settlement into the mindset and the household institution of the Japanese, which went beyond the realm of religious faith. Indeed, funerary Buddhism had little to do with the personal faith of individuals, who were bound by the generational danna relationship regardless of their own religious beliefs. In other words, the danka system was not geared toward fostering individuality and freedom in religious life; rather, it was structured to keep individuals from moving from one religious affiliation to another according to their whim. To this day, the danka system has sustained the household customs of Buddhist death rituals and ancestral veneration, and funerary Buddhism has preserved the legacies of the danka system in Japanese society.

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CHAPTER 13

Pilgrimage in Japanese Buddhism

Hendrik van der Veere

Visits to sites that carry “religious” meanings or associations are an embedded feature of Japanese cultural and social life. Younger age groups visit temples of historical interest during school outings, while adults on leisure trips combine tourism and relaxation with visits to sacred sites and the climbing of sacred mountains. In the Japanese calendar a number of days are reserved for events of a ritual nature, notably commemoration days for the deceased. The contacts that the Japanese entertain with sites that carry religious connotations are part of the overall cultural framework; participation in this kind of activity seems inevitable, even though Japanese society is professedly secular. Japanese society thus provides space for non-secular, ritual conduct in its calendar, and it associates this with certain sites. In times of crisis or other special circumstances, this space may be utilized for pilgrimages—journeys to sacred sites that are undertaken under special conditions. In such cases, the pilgrim opts out of daily life and its constraints for an extended period of time, in order to devote himself (or herself) to a longer undertaking of a ritual or religious nature. Given the fact that there are many possible courses for such pilgrimages, and in view of the high rate of participation, it is clear that pilgrimage is not to be underestimated as an element of Japanese culture.

This in itself does not mean that participation in pilgrimage is necessarily an explicit mode of religious conduct. Scholars like Ian Reader have pointed out that religious activity in Japan need not be informed by doctrine or guided by membership in various organizations (Reader and Tanabe 1998). Religious conduct is often driven by feelings of crisis, which makes it ad-hoc and orients it toward the pragmatic. A visit to a shrine or a temple is in itself no evidence of religiosity or adherence to a religious worldview, and the same can be said for pilgrimages. Faced with this problem, academic descriptions have moved away from investigations of religious conduct, and toward inquiries into the functions and meanings of sacred sites, and what they represent to people. Alan Grapard has worked toward a definition of sacred space in

the Japanese context (Grapard 1982), and recent publications have tested his descriptions for important sites such as Mt. Oyama (Ambros 2008), or regions such as Kumano (Moerman 2005).

Sites that form stages of longer pilgrimages represent a variety of meanings. The pilgrim is led to acknowledge these religious meanings for their validity in specific ritual or religious domains, in an environment where perceptions and notions are directed by a worldview that instills “sacredness” into these places. The Japanese vocabulary used to express this worldview owes much to Buddhism, as I will discuss below. We may learn much about the conceptualization of the nature of these places, as well as about the role pilgrimages play, through study of the places themselves, by making an inventory of their meanings, as well as from an analysis of this worldview and the vocabulary by which it is expressed.

The general rubric of pilgrimage is applied to many kinds of travel, varying from one-day visits to local shrines or sacred mountains, to Japan’s great pilgrimages such as the Kannon pilgrimage of Saikoku and the *henro* of Shikoku. However, it is at times hard to distinguish between leisure and other kinds of social or cultural activities, because not all travel is necessarily religiously inspired. Religious meanings need not be instilled consciously, but may derive from a subconscious part of culture. Visitors to shrines come with varying motives: some for arduous religious practice, some for “world-renewal” (*yonaooshi*), and others for the scenic beauty of the sites. Which of those motives relate to meanings and connotations derived from a Buddhist worldview, and which stem from local beliefs or newer forms of religious organization (including the new religions), can only be determined in relation to a specific sacred place.

I will start with a short discussion of the main theories about pilgrimage and the general characteristics of the Japanese situation. Then I will consider the problem of real and ideal landscapes, before introducing ideas from Buddhism such as merit (*kudoku*) and maps (*mandara*), which play determining roles in the attribution of meaning. In the second part of the chapter, I will describe some of the longer pilgrimages and the pilgrims themselves, and relate the Buddhist conceptions mentioned above to their manifestations in actual practice.

The Concept of Pilgrimage

The wide range of meanings and associations evoked in western writings by the term “pilgrimage” is to a large degree determined by the cultural space of the reader. Dictionary definitions describe pilgrimage in terms of a journey, mostly long, to a shrine or a sacred place, undertaken as an act of religious devotion. Accordingly, some prefer the term religious journey. However, there is no generic term in Japanese for the concept of pilgrimage, nor do Japanese apply the same meaning to the term “religion” as do non-Japanese. Religion in Japan is mostly understood as organized or institutional religion, not as a term referring to personal acts of devotion, piety, and so on. Pilgrimage may be a quest of some sort, but the explicit notion of a spiritual quest is largely absent in the Japanese context, or at least it is vague for many pilgrims. Religious

institutions have no prescriptive authority for the pilgrim, although attempts are made to create such a role.

Generally speaking, the diversity of modes of religious travel, the broad level of participation, and the variety of sites and meanings associated with them have attracted the interest of academics from various disciplines. In itself, that is a sign of the multi-layered nature of the phenomenon of pilgrimage. Various general descriptions of pilgrimage have derived their early terminology from the fields of ethnography and anthropology. Initially, pilgrimage was considered a rite of passage. Arnold van Gennep (1873–1957), the French writing folklorist and ethnographer, described the “*rites de passage*” as consisting of three phases: separation, transition or “liminality,” and reintegration. A direct result of such identifying or labeling of pilgrimage was a search for these three phases in the phenomenon of pilgrimage.

The British cultural anthropologist Victor Turner (1920–1983) looked at pilgrimage as a ritual, and analyzed it as a “processual symbolic action” (Deflem 1991). He devoted much attention to the transitional phase, “liminality.” As part of his analysis, he developed the concept of “*communitas*,” indicating an anti-structure that is opposed to the structure of society. In summary, a pilgrim was considered to be leaving society, remaining in a border area in which everyday meanings are absent or inverted, and then returning in developed (mental) form, from a different, or opposite, value system. The key distinction between “profane” and “sacred,” proposed by Mircea Eliade (1907–1986) and others, formed a supporting conceptual framework for such a position (see Eliade 1959), and for many years these terms and assumptions dominated the field. Some later scholars, such as Michael Eade and Urbana Sallnow, have contested this approach and have problematized the relationship between the profane and the sacred. They have asserted that the earlier assumption, that the world of the pilgrim stands apart from daily life and society, has hampered the study of pilgrimage considerably (Eade and Sallnow 1991: 1–29).

Although not all these writers were concerned with Buddhist pilgrimages in Japan, or with Japanese pilgrimages more generally, part of their vocabulary was adopted by Japanese writers on the subject, notably the terms “*communitas*” and “liminality.” Examples of this usage may be found in the publications of Hoshino Eiki and the work-group of the Faculty of Social Studies, Waseda University. In their descriptions of the pilgrims’ world on Shikoku, they label this world as a counterculture, a kind of anti-structure where meanings are inverted (Osada *et al.* 2003). In the same way, many Japanese authors have utilized or elaborated on Turner’s concept in order to explain the anti-social nature of the pilgrims’ community (Hoshino 2001).

In their introduction to a special issue of the *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* dedicated to pilgrimage (JJRS 1997), Reader and Swanson point out that the application of the originally western concept of pilgrimage in the Japanese context is not without danger. In particular they find the emphasis on religious activity as a defining ingredient of travel, within the broader context of world religions, to be problematic. Within their framework, they approach the problem from an anthropological perspective, although they fail to incorporate all possible religious activities into their scheme. In the same publication we find an inventory of terms that, in various ways, denote religious travel. These journeys differ in terms of their length, destination, or the intention

of their participants; however, somehow they all fall into the category of pilgrimage. In the list we find one-day visits to shrines (*mōde*), journeys open to all, as well as the seasonal mountain ascent and descent (*nyūbu*) outings that are undertaken by mountain-practitioners (*yamabushi*), which traditionally used to be closed to all but initiated followers (JJRS: 232–37).

The Japanese words *sanpai*, *junrei*, and *henro* can all be translated as pilgrimage, but they also carry specific meanings and connotations. They epitomize acts of veneration (*sanpai*), refer to the touring of a circuit (*junrei*), or are used in reference to one specific pilgrimage (Shikoku *henro*). This does not mean that the Shikoku *henro* is excluded from the category of *junrei*; rather, it is a special form of *junrei*. The fact that these are not generic but specific terms, used in reference to intentional (and religious) movements toward specific geographical hot-spots—namely visits to sacred spaces—underlines the importance of taking the sacred places, which serve as terminal points for Japanese religious travelers, as points of departure for the description of these journeys.

The phenomenon of religious travel has variously been perceived or described as an anthropological, social, and religious phenomenon. However, some contradictory assertions and unresolved issues remain in the ongoing scholarly attempts at an overall analysis, starting with the very term “pilgrimage.” It is for that reason that, in this chapter, I take a different starting point in my description of Buddhist pilgrimage. Pilgrimage and religious travel encompass the idea that at certain points in time, and for various reasons, people move from one space to another, both geographically and in their perceptions of space itself. Pilgrims and travelers envision other forms of space that differ from the quotidian space, and they project their conceptions and wishes on this alternative space. The creation of such spaces is informed by various concepts, which may be social, religious, or cultural. One way to transcend the various categorizations and typologies that have been proposed regarding Japanese pilgrimages, each of which has a descriptive value but is not exhaustive in describing the complicated field of movements, is to use Foucault’s term “heterotopia” for places that are actually existing as “utopia” (Foucault 1986). The goal of any pilgrimage, the sacred site itself, may then be compared to such a “heterotopia.”

This approach bypasses a basic problem: the actual practice of pilgrimage in Japan is not necessarily religious in nature. The religious journey may well be undertaken without a reference to god(s), and at the outset the traveler might have no information about any relevant doctrine, history, or belief. A pilgrimage may be inspired by belief in the salvific power of bodhisattva Kannon, or by belief in benefits that accrue from visits to temples. It may also be undertaken for its curative potential, in order to bring about physical or mental healing. Whether the main motive for pilgrimage is the management of a life crisis or not, pilgrimage is an action undertaken in order to reach a perceived other world, located within a specific Japanese cultural setting, a utopian ideal projected onto a landscape or a frame of mind. The merits accrued from making contact with that other realm constitute the major motivating factor for undertaking pilgrimage. Such an approach to understanding the phenomenon of pilgrimage may create an opportunity to describe together the seemingly disparate forms of travel to sacred places that we encounter in Japan.

Space and Projection

I am aided in my description of Japanese pilgrimage by the existence of much material that maps the other world, which can be construed as cartography of the ideal domain. Whether this other space is conceived of as a realm of the dead or a Buddhist pure land, an abode of the mountain gods or a *mandara* (mandala) for Buddhist practice, history has provided us with many maps and guidebooks, along with descriptions of landmarks and other tools for reading the other world as it is projected onto the landscape. These materials also include valuable reports found in various “ego-documents” (a category that includes diaries, memoirs, and travel logs), produced over the centuries by pilgrims.

In Japan the pilgrim’s formation of new perceptions of space is clearly informed or guided by Buddhist concepts, such as the projection of the world of enlightenment onto specific sites and the accumulation of karmic benefits (*kudoku*). There is an embedded consciousness in the Japanese cultural setting about benefits that can be acquired by association or engagement with a perceived sacred site, or by travel to such a site.

A common denominator of such sacred places may be that they are construed by the believer as intersections where an ideal and universal world, populated by Buddhas and *kami*, meets the everyday world of the believer. Although there may appear to be no visual clues at specific spots that support such assumption, the informed viewer recognizes such places through a system of symbols that is projected onto the features of the landscape, a system that is learnt through education, culture, or religious training. The recognition of sacred spaces in the landscape is not necessarily limited to Japanese soil, but is of a general nature and transcends national borders. Consequently, the range of pilgrimages to such places can be transnational, national, or local, as well as a combination of these.

When the Japanese first embraced Buddhism, the early transmitters of the Buddhist Dharma were held in high esteem. Monks who returned from Buddhist study in China were treated as heroes, almost on a par with the great Chinese pilgrims who traveled to India. Medieval Japanese became informed about Buddhist forms of pilgrimage through their embassies to China. They were aware of the pilgrimage cults of four (or eight) sacred places in India connected with the historical Buddha, and of the cult of relics (*shari*), which supposedly continued the Buddha’s presence in the world even after his demise. A visit to any of these sacred sites may be considered an expression of faith, and therefore a virtue; it was also a step in the acquirement of positive karma or merit, while the presence of relic(s) supported believers in their efforts to attain better rebirth. The Japanese were aware of the epic journey of the young Sudhana to various places, where an assortment of teachers instructed him about the truths of Buddhism, as described in the influential *Kegonkyō* (or *Huayanjing* in Chinese). It is hard to gauge Sudhana’s role, however, or rather the roles of the canonical texts that told his story, in the development of journeys to sacred places.

For the ancient Japanese, China also constituted an ideal world. Even though the historical Buddha had not lived there, earthly manifestations of famous bodhisattvas

were associated with the sacred mountain ranges of Tiantai and Wutai. The early Japanese travelers to China were compared to the famous Chinese pilgrims that went to India in search of the Dharma, and they were entrusted with the task of gathering as much information as possible, in order to bring it from China to Japan. Both aspects can be discerned in the diaries of Ennin (794–864), the noted Tendai patriarch, who used the phrase “in search of the Dharma” and described his religious quest as a pilgrimage (*junrei*).

The embassies to China were essential for the introduction of successive developments of continental Buddhism into Japan, culminating in the lives and works of Kūkai (774–835) and Saichō (767–822), the two celebrated Japanese Buddhist leaders who visited China at the beginning of the ninth century. Prince Shinnō, a major disciple of Kūkai, entertained the idea of emulating the famous Chinese pilgrims and visiting India. He reached Chang’an, the capital of Tang China, and received permission to travel to India, but information about his later whereabouts is sparse and contradictory. The world of Indian Buddhism and the sacredness of its sites remained appealing ideals for later monks as well, although few attempted the long and arduous journey.

As can be gathered from the above, the idea of moving from one world to another, or from one space to another, hinged on a conception of the relative worth of one domain in relation to the other. In the above cases, the movement was international; it also involved a voyage from a supposedly lower spiritual level to a higher one. In these cases, the higher domain was geographically reachable, with some effort. Other portals that facilitated the making of contacts with the rarefied world of the Buddhas and gods were also known in Japan, notably places such as the oracles of Usa and Ise. Unfortunately, we have no way of knowing in detail how the ancient Japanese conceived the other world before they took over notions derived from the Buddhist tradition, but presumably the realms of the dead and the higher powers were already connected with spaces created by the mountains of Japan. The role of the shaman as an intermediary is important in this respect, because he or she was a ritual specialist who could travel to the other realm without actually traveling.

***Reijō*: Paradise in the Backyard**

Mountains form the natural surroundings of Japan. In the Japanese worldview, mountains occupied the first place among the geographical domains that were perceived as spaces where different worlds intersected. Japanese mountain religion (*sangaku shinkō*) exerted great influence on the formation of these ideas. From early on, mountains were envisioned as a world separate from ordinary life, a mostly unconstructed space (*mui*) in which the ordinary actions, conceptions, and perceptions of human behavior became subject to other rationales. It was believed that this world could be tapped for power that was not only symbolic, but also power that could be applied to cure diseases or to make rituals effective. Ascetics accumulated these powers by their austerities in the mountains. Their power was derived from their association with holy mountains, by which they were “tainted,” because those mountains contained “spiritual power” (*rei*). Such places of mystical or spiritual power (*reijō*) were created through the influence of

the other, ideal, domain. Mountains constituted the other world, as well as a projection of that world.

Religious austerities and the abode of the dead both became associated with mountains, and, in reverse, religious establishments were mythologically connected with the power enmeshed in mountains. Accordingly, Buddhist temples have a mountain name (*sangō*), even when they are situated in the middle of a plain or in a big city. A mountain is more than a part of the landscape—it is a potential portal that connects this world with the other world. Through this kind of association or connection with the ideal world, wandering ascetics and devotees projected their religious ideals onto the surrounding mountains, renaming features of the landscape according to the vocabulary of Buddhism. Pertinent examples include the Cascade of Fudō or the Nose of Jizō for certain rock formations. Some sacred mountains were locally known as Sutra Peak (Kyōgadake) or Kokūzōsan, after the bodhisattva Kokūzō. In many regions, people still ascend these mountains on certain ritual days, such as the New Year.

The use of the term *reijō*, which designates a spiritual location, is also applied to places where auspicious happenings have occurred; by extension, it also includes sites where powerful icons or relics are conserved, or where the remains of saints are venerated. For instance, presumed manifestations of Bodhisattva Kannon are commonly commemorated by erecting stone pillars or by building temples. Some of these sites may turn into destinations for religious travel. Such apparitions have always been a common theme in *setsuwa* literature, which features a variety of folktales, legends, and anecdotes. Other auspicious happenings follow the same pattern.

The cult of relics grew up around sacred places where icons or relics could be venerated. It was based on the notion that a relic, as part of the body of the Buddha, was directly connected with the domain of enlightenment, the ideal world. Among Japanese temples that boasted the possession of such relics there was fierce competition for attracting sponsors and believers. Over the centuries, new centers of power developed, while others deteriorated and disappeared (Ruppert 2002). To this day, some of these sacred places attract large numbers of visitors, who visit them with hopes for all kinds of worldly benefits. A relic at a *reijō* fulfilled a function similar to a geographical anomaly that makes a place seem special, while serving as a portal to the ideal world. There was also the possibility of benefits that could be accrued from association or contact with it. This kind of relationship between the two domains, of everyday life and the other world, supposes a bridgeable distance. In Japan, the methods used to bridge this distance are mostly discussed in Buddhist terms.

Worldview and Merit (*kudoku*)

The introduction of organized esoteric Buddhism (*mikkyō*) at the beginning of the ninth century brought major changes to the way the Japanese conceptualized both this life and the after-world; it also couched all concepts into a new discourse (Abe 1999). Esoteric notions and terminology were applied to the relationship between the everyday world and other realms or spaces. These worlds were considered correlative; it was also believed that they could mutually interact. Buddhist teachings postulated the existence

of alternative, correlative worlds. These worlds were pure domains inhabited by Buddhas and bodhisattvas, who were effective in exercising their compassion in numerous ways. They could appear to people as all kinds of emanations, as well as intervene in everyday life on behalf of people that called upon them, or whose behaviors and religious inclinations merited such interventions.

For some, the gap between these correlative worlds could be bridged through the projection of the Buddha-land onto the landscape, but there were definite distinctions in terms of modes of existence between the everyday world and these otherworldly lands. Because Buddhist pure lands belonged to other categories of being, a different kind of map was needed—a map drawn up according to a peculiar logic that was fitting for the celestial domains. These maps (or *mandara*) depicted otherworldly domains that were not subjected to the ordinary dimensions of time and space. They were maps of correlative worlds, which could be used as guides for meditation, as well as for movement within the projected domain. In the course of history, such maps were drawn up for the major sacred sites, such as Kumano and (later) Shikoku. In the case of the pilgrimage on Shikoku, we find that representations of the World of Compassion of Dainichi Nyorai, the central Buddha of Shingon esoteric Buddhism, are projected onto the island of Shikoku. The *mandara* of Shikoku becomes a guide of the other realm, showing pilgrims how to progress toward their Buddhist goals, more specifically the unfolding of each person's inherent enlightenment through progression along the stages of pilgrimage.

Sacred places become defined by means of a network of meanings described by a *mandara*. Since these *mandara* presented other spaces not subjected to the ordinary laws of time and space, they also broke down the borders of everyday life, which made them suitable for use as practical guides for religious practice. The basic notions and connotations that influenced the drawing of these maps were taken from Japanese Buddhism. They were built on the proposition of nonduality, a key concept that was extended to the relationship between the quotidian world and the world of enlightenment.

The projection of the ideals of mountain-practitioners (*yamabushi*) onto the mountain-scape forms the best known instance of such practices. During ritual mountain ascent (*nyūbu*), the stages of Buddhist practice and the insights gained were emplaced in the physical surroundings. Certain landmarks demarcated stages in the mountain climb, which corresponded to different levels of initiation. Examples of such projection are the ten stages of Mt. Fuji, although most climbers nowadays start from the parking lot at station five. The actual directions for the projection of Buddha-lands and *mandara*-worlds can be retraced to works of art and literature, which sustain the maps to form a corpus of guidelines and guidebooks (Moerman 2005).

Recognizing that these *reijō* attracted people because they were perceived as ideal worlds, in the sense that people projected their ideals on them, still does not help us explain the attraction itself or the ideals that were projected. The objective of most pilgrimages is to gain something or to improve one's condition. The marketing of pilgrimages, an important factor in the economic vitality of temples, hinged on the well-known Buddhist ideas of acquisition of merit (*kudoku*) and transference of merit (*ekō*). In the Buddhist sense, pilgrimage was beneficial within the process of spiritual advancement because it promised positive results based on action, or merit based on participation.

In Japanese Buddhism the world is seen as an ephemeral space in which the consequences of present actions determine one's station in the future, in this life as well as in lives to come. The law of cause and effect, along with the overall doctrine of Buddhist causality, explains that actions (*karman*) have consequences. By extension, good deeds are rewarded, while wrong actions lead to unwanted consequences. Acts conforming to Buddhist morality thus create a store of positive karma, or merit, which helps secure a better existence in the next life. The search for merit and the ensuing benefits are still among the major motivating factors that drive temple visits and pilgrimages. A store of merit leads to this-worldly benefits (*gense riyaku*), or may help secure an entry into a paradise or a pure land.

An example of the benefits or merits accrued through pilgrimage can be found in the belief that the Judge of the Dead, Enma (or Enrao), may judge favorably the newly deceased if he is shown a pilgrim's book (*nōkyōchō*), with stamps of the temples visited by the deceased. The effort invested in collecting the stamps secures merit, and the possession of this merit has its rewards. Furthermore, pious acts done in order to acquire merit may invite the protection of specific Buddhas or bodhisattvas, may cure diseases, atone for misdeeds, and so on. In addition, benefits derived from accumulated merit can purportedly be transmitted or conveyed to others (*ekō*). A pilgrimage can be undertaken by proxy, for someone who is not physically capable of travel. It can also be done on behalf of recently deceased persons who did not have an opportunity to undertake the journey themselves, as is common on the Shikoku trail. In the same way as priests at the end of their rituals transfer the newly acquired merits to the believers, a pilgrim may do the same after he has undertaken a journey on behalf of an ailing member of his family, or on behalf of a (recently) deceased relative or friend. It is not uncommon to find pilgrims in modern Japan carrying a photo of a loved one so as to provide the deceased with an opportunity to make a journey to the holy sites.

Famous Pilgrimage Courses

Turning now to the actual geography of pilgrimage routes and holy places, we find that the Japanese landscape is dotted with such sites. From early on, certain mountains and cliffs were mentioned as mystical places, including the three mountains in the north of Japan, known as Dewa Sanzan, and Mt. Hiko in Kyūshū. Near Nara, the ancient capital, the mountain ranges of Katsuragi and Ōmine are probably the best-known examples of such places. The sacred nature of these sites may make them seem dangerous for ordinary people. That is the reason often quoted by religious caretakers of various sites, who were keen to guard their domains and exert control over them, and who accordingly set up conditions of entry and tried to control access. In effect, they were trying to build up their religious capital by creating and maintaining such systems of control.

The sacred places that served as destinations of religious travel became known and acquired their essential function in several ways. They could be recognized or become acclaimed because of their extraordinary appearance, which could include peculiar cliffs or rock formations. They could also be considered to be dwellings of local mountain gods, linked with important seasonal events such as sowing and harvesting. It is a

matter of contention whether all these places were constructed as sacred sites. Places that held powerful Buddhist images or relics were often formed not only for religious reasons, but also in order to gain economic leverage. In the same way, as power could be found in a strange place or a potent image, sites associated with powerful relics or the remains of important religious leaders could also become connected with religious journeys.

There are thus a number of power-holding places that the religious traveler may visit in order to acquire some of that power, which can translate into an improvement of his fate through the acquirement of *kudoku* or *riyaku*. The pilgrimage itself is not necessarily Buddhist, as a holy place can also be the abode of a protective *kami* or a vengeful ancestor, but even in such cases the vocabulary used is often derived from the domain of Buddhist doctrine.

Kumano

From early in Japanese history, the mountainous area that runs from the south of Nara prefecture to Wakayama prefecture has been considered a space brimming with religious meanings. These meanings are taken from a variety of traditions, and they permeate the locality. Until this day, the three shrines of Kumano form a complementary domain, where meanings from various traditions overlap. To begin with, traces of the ancient gods of Japanese mythology are present in the landscape. Furthermore, the layouts of Buddhist pure lands were projected onto the landscape. The area is known as a departure point for passage to Fudaraku, the pure land of Kannon. At another level of meaning, at this geographical point the ordinary world and the realm of the dead come in contact with each other. In addition, two courses used by mountain-practitioners, the Yoshino and Ōmine courses, are deemed to be projections on the physical landscape of specific courses of spiritual advancement. Many of the religious meanings that dominate the Japanese worldview come together in Kumano, where they are conflated in the unique sanctity of its space. The three shrines (Kumano sangon) that form the core attractions of the area—Hongū, Hayatama, and Nachi—are invested with a variety of meanings, derived both from *kami*-cults and from Buddhism. Over time, these developed into a syncretized worldview that is typically Japanese, in which each believer can form his image of the landscape around the sacred places.

Since in ancient times this region was felt to be among the most powerful domains, where the gods had left their traces, and because it was in the vicinity of the early capital Nara, it was frequented by court nobles and served as a popular destination for religious travel and leisure outings. It may be that the stations along the road from the capital to the three shrines were first laid out by monks, but before long participation extended to larger sections of the population. Because the main centers of Kumano were patronized by emperors and court nobles, as their popularity grew, fixed courses were developed and a system of official pilgrim-guides (*oshi*) was set up. With increased levels of organization, the temple-complex accumulated considerable economic and political power, which in part was based on the large landholdings it received from its sponsors.

Gradually the fame of Kumano spread throughout Japan, as it became recognized as the foremost among the holy places. Eventually its sanctity was exported to subsidiary shrines all over the country. There the three main divinities of the shrines of Kumano were enshrined alongside various local deities, sometimes located at sub-temples within other complexes. At times they were perceived as projections of Kumano onto other sacred mountains, as in the case of Sasayama on Shikoku. The main organization that managed the shrines of Kumano also controlled an extensive network of subsidiary shrines, founded on the belief that the central sacred space could be emplaced and empowered in faraway places, through the deployment of correct ritual. Although competition for sponsors was an economic necessity, the cult of Kumano was not doctrinally incompatible with other local cults, which to an extent were seen as being supplementary.

Pilgrims that journeyed to Kumano had various motives for their undertaking, and the meanings they attributed to the sacred sites they encountered were derived from all kinds of traditions, ranging from esoteric Buddhism, various *kami*-cults, and Pure Land Buddhism. All pilgrims were, however, motivated by the same hopes of acquiring merit and practical benefits. They also moved within the confines of a cultural framework that had developed specific notions about sacred places. Kumano itself is a good example of the possible transference of the sanctity of a site, which could be recreated in geographically distant places. That was accomplished through rituals that instilled the original meanings of Kumano into new cultic sites. This practice of reconstituting a sacred domain in other places in order to tap into its power, and of making it visible through ritual activity, is also discernible in the sacred sites associated with the Kannon and Shikoku pilgrimages.

The Kannon pilgrimage of Saikoku

Bodhisattva Kannon is the main deity of the well-known Pilgrimage of the Western Provinces or Saikoku *junrei*, whose route links thirty-three temples located in Japan's central provinces. The first temple of this pilgrimage is Seigantoji, located at Nachi in Kumano, while the last one is Kagonji in Gifu prefecture. The pilgrimage also includes some of the most famous temples in that part of Japan, such as Ishiyamadera, Hasedera, and Kiyomizudera. All thirty-three stations on this route are prominent temples in their own right. They are renowned as sacred places because of their locations, and because of the presence of the powerful icons of the bodhisattva that are enshrined in them. Each of these icons represents the bodhisattva in one of his thirty-three manifestations, and they serve as popular objects of devotion because of their reputed power to save or cure. Temple histories (*engi*) relate the miraculous happenings that led to the discovery of the icons, along with legends about the wonders performed by particular images (MacWilliams 1997).

The textual background of the thirty-three appearances of Kannon goes back to the *Lotus Scripture*, although the thirty-three forms depicted in the canonical text do not correspond one-to-one with the manifestations of Kannon in Japan. Pilgrimages to individual temples included in the Kannon pilgrimage are attested to in early sources,

but the complete pilgrimage course of thirty-three temples clearly makes its historical appearance at the end of the seventeenth century. The pilgrimage has attracted the attention of academics from all kinds of fields, from art historians to specialists in literature, folk tales, and popular devotional movements.

According to traditional beliefs, Bodhisattva Kannon resides in the pure land of Fudaraku, which is variously depicted as an ideal space, a domain to be reached after death, and a real land positioned geographically in the sea south of Japan, which can be reached by boat. Kumano has a long tradition of stories about people who through self-immolation or ritual suicide hoped to secure immediate rebirth in this pure land, which was believed to be in close vicinity. Others set sail to reach the pure land by boat. Recognized access points, such as Kumano or Cape Ashizuri on the Shikoku circuit, were popular points of departure, either for ships destined for the pure land or for ritual suicide.

As already noted, sacred domains were sought out by ascetics. Some of them, such as Kūkai, became famous masters. More general participation in these kinds of activities among the populace only becomes possible during the Tokugawa period, namely from the seventeenth century onward. The feudal government that controlled Japan from 1600 to 1868 has often been characterized as instituting a strict and totalitarian rule, which placed restrictions on all kinds of activity, including travel. However, more recently scholars have started paying more attention to the actual situation that existed on the ground, instead of focusing purely on the legal system. Although leisure travel was frowned upon by the government, and it was expressly forbidden at certain places, these restrictions could be circumvented. Further, it seems that there was an awareness that a ban on religious travel and pilgrimage would have caused more trouble with the populace than the authorities cared to create (Vaporis 1994). Consequently, religious travel became an excuse or a pretext for travel, which led to an increase in the numbers of pilgrims and an expansion of supportive networks of inns and other services. At certain times there were spontaneous mass movements of people traveling to the Shrines in Ise (*okage-mairi*), which seems to indicate that, at the level of everyday life, legal inhibitions did not count for as much as it is often assumed.

In the second half of the seventeenth century Japan lived through a golden era of sorts, which manifested itself in an explosion of bourgeois culture that, in large part, was led by the merchant class. This new culture was supported by a growing printing industry. Among the wood-block prints produced during this period, we find the earliest publications dedicated to various pilgrimages. Some of these publications contain descriptions of specific sites and explanations of their merits; we also encounter practical guidebooks and geographical maps. Since knowledge about various routes and temples was spreading among the populace, that may have increased the popularity of specific courses and strengthened prevalent beliefs about the merits that could be obtained by visits to these sacred places.

The temples of the Saikoku pilgrimage are spread over a wide area. They are connected together because all thirty-three temples venerate Kannon as the main deity (*honzon*). A pilgrimage of this kind is called *honzon mairi*, namely a pilgrimage to a group of temples that venerate the same main deity. Other examples of similar pilgrimages that focus on the benevolence of Bodhisattva Kannon can be found in Chichibu,

Saitama prefecture, which includes thirty-four temples, and the Bandō pilgrimage in the eastern provinces around Tokyo. A pilgrimage along thirty-three stations in north Kyushu has the same name, Saikoku junrei, as the one in the central provinces. Similar pilgrimages that combine a number of temples into particular routes, where the main deity is either Jizō or Fudō bodhisattva, can also be found all over Japan.

Pilgrimages centered on one main deity can be distinguished from other kinds of pilgrimages that involve a number of different sacred places, *seiseki mairi*, which connect the various stations along their courses in other ways. In these kinds of pilgrimages, such as the Shikoku *henro*, the pilgrimage of the thirteen Buddhas (*Jūsanbutsu*), or the pilgrimage of the Seven Gods of Luck (*Shichifukujin*), veneration is directed toward a number of religious figures or deities, derived from a popular pantheon or from local belief.

In general, the Saikoku *junrei* around Kyoto is considered to be the oldest of the longer pilgrimages, as can be seen from literary evidence. This pilgrimage shows a number of common traits shared with other pilgrimage courses, but it also has its own peculiar characteristics. Nowadays, there are few pilgrims who walk the complete course; the modern pattern mainly consists of temple visits by car or by organized excursions. Organized tours are popular, because they offer pilgrims the possibility to perform their devotions and accumulate merit without the kinds of hardships that were common in earlier times.

Nonetheless, many of the old customs remain. Whether the temples are visited in succession or one at a time—which might be done on weekends—most pilgrims still dress in white, with the name of the pertinent bodhisattva inscribed on their back. They also perform Buddhist litanies that are prescribed for such occasions. The merit resulting from each temple visit is made tangible by a stamp placed by each temple in the pilgrim's book or in the scroll used for such purposes. In this way, the pilgrim has concrete evidence of the merit accrued from the pilgrimage. He or she is able to take home some of the sanctity of the place, along with the benevolent protection of the bodhisattva linked with it.

To this day, pilgrims ideally wear white garments to indicate the religious nature of their journey, with the name of the main deity written on the back. Their practice is supposed to be based on the spiritual qualities of mercy and compassion. It is also inspired by a wide network of associations that are reinforced by temple histories and songs (*goeika*), and by meritorious acts such as the copying of Buddhist texts, especially the *Heart Scripture*. Such copies are left in the care of the temples as offerings. During the pre-modern era, a system of inns and shops that catered to pilgrims developed along the pilgrimage routes, and these also played an important role in instructing pilgrims about proper observances. Over time, sites of local renown, where miraculous events supposedly happened to passing pilgrims, also became incorporated into the lore associated with the pilgrimage courses.

For those incapable of making the journey themselves, it has always been possible to send another person as a proxy. During the pre-modern period, local organizations (*kō*) were set up to raise funds to send representatives on pilgrimage. Each person elected was expected to bring back a scroll, a stamp-book, and necessary charms and amulets from the sacred places visited, in order to guarantee the welfare of the community,

typically a village. The Shikoku pilgrimage was also seen as a test of endurance. In some places, young girls were only eligible for marriage after they had completed the pilgrimage course. By doing that, they not only demonstrated their stamina but also showed that they could control their purse strings.

Another way to a possible transference of merit is the copy-pilgrimage, which is basically a collection of small-scale temples that contain copies of the icons of famous temples. In the same way as the temples of Kumano exported the sanctity of their shrines all over Japan, miniature copies of the temples that comprise the Saikoku and Shikoku courses were constructed, to allow people without the time or the means to make the actual pilgrimages to enact their observances. These places are constructed using earth from the original sacred sites, which is then dedicated at a local temple or at another site, thereby giving pilgrims an opportunity to progress along a re-created course. By performing a Buddhist service (*o-tsutome*) which includes reciting the *Heart Scripture*, the pilgrim is supposed to be able to generate a similar amount of merit as if he had traveled to the original sacred domains. As is to be expected, the efficacy of this method is sometimes contested by people who have endured the hardships of real courses. The same kinds of copy-courses can be found along major pilgrimage routes. On Shikoku, for example, we find quite a few temples that have reconstructed the Kannon pilgrimage in miniature form on their terrain; some even have scaled versions of the pilgrimage they are part of in their own backyards.

The Shikoku henro

The pilgrimage on the island of Shikoku is the best-known Buddhist pilgrimage in Japan. It is the only pilgrimage called *henro*; nowadays it is often referred to as “the eighty-eight stations,” *hachijuhakkasho*, after the number of temples on the official pilgrimage route. Shikoku is a mountainous island, which in ancient times was separated from the center of Japanese civilization. In ancient Japan the island was often associated with the other world, where the souls of the deceased went. The first character of the island’s name, *shi* (“four”), has the same pronunciation as the character for “death.” The aura of mysticism associated with Shikoku was reinforced by the presence of ascetics on the island, who left society and performed their austerities on its mountains. The presence of these practitioners enhanced the sacred nature of the whole domain.

Several local pilgrimages developed in the provinces of Shikoku, in the Naruto area and around Matsuyama. However, as noted above, the earliest literary evidence of the pilgrimage, undertaken along a route that includes the present eighty-eight temples in order to acquire merit through strenuous effort, is only available from the middle part of the seventeenth century. The Shikoku *henro* developed along the same lines as the Kannon pilgrimage. They also share a number of characteristics, including the behavior of their pilgrims, and the ways in which member temples cater to the needs of pilgrims. There are, however, some important differences. As was noted above, the Kannon pilgrimage is categorized as a *honzon-mairi*, while the Shikoku *henro* is identified as a *seiseki mairi*.

The Shikoku *henro* can be described as multilayered. On the one hand, specific temples, along with the deities housed in them, provide distinctive solutions for problems or crises that pilgrims encounter in their everyday lives. On the other hand, the pilgrims show devotion to Kōbō Daishi, or Kūkai, the founder of the Shingon school. While Kannon is an accompanying presence on the trails of Saikoku, it is the Daishi ("the great master"), as Kūkai is commonly called, who functions as the main guiding and protecting figure on the Shikoku pilgrimage. In the past, faith in the saving powers and miracle-working abilities of Kōbō Daishi was connected with various places on the route, which led to the construction of all kinds of sacred sites (*reijō*). Locally, there was a strong belief that the saint protected against bad harvests caused by droughts or floods; more generally, there was a popular belief that he could cure illnesses and infertility. To this day, all kinds of auspicious events are attributed to him.

The Shikoku *henro* is arguably the best-researched of the many pilgrimages in Japan. The considerable length of the pilgrimage course, at around 1,400 km, the physical challenges posed by the mountain paths, and the pervasive sense of religious advancement that is projected onto the course, still attract numerous pilgrims from all over Japan. The total number of pilgrims has been estimated at 200,000 to 300,000 a year. As in the case of the Saikoku *junrei*, most modern pilgrims on Shikoku circle the island and its eighty-eight temples by means of modern transportation. Nonetheless, the Shikoku pilgrimage also affords religious travelers the challenge of walking the pilgrimage on foot. Estimates of the number of people walking the whole pilgrimage course vary, from around five hundred participants at the beginning of the 1990s, to 2000 during the *henro* boom of the late twentieth century, and to perhaps 1500 people in 2010.

In contemporary Japan the romantic image of the pilgrimage, which is commonly perceived as an arduous challenge, was enhanced through a series of NHK television broadcasts, as well as through the publication of all kinds of travel diaries and other ego-documents. Today there is an enormous amount of literature on the Shikoku *henro*, in print as well as on the Internet. Online are several community sites that offer information or advice on practical matters, such as routes, lodgings, and suitable preparations; there is also information about the history of various places, their surroundings, and the touristic aspects of neighboring regions. A modern leisure culture, it seems, has gradually taken over the traditional sense of pilgrimage to sacred spaces.

This wealth of information contrasts sharply with the earliest descriptions of Shikoku in the West. The first European to write about the pilgrimage circuit was Alfred Bohnet, who toured part of the route when he was living in Matsuyama (Bohnet 1930). A romanticized report on the pilgrimage was published by Oliver Statler, based on his personal experiences in the 1970s (Statler 1983). Statler's account has shortcomings in regard to theory and interpretation, but it set the tone for a romantic approach to the Shikoku pilgrimage. Among recent publications, the most insightful and useful may be the work of Ian Reader, which shows a long-term interest in the walking pilgrims (Reader 2006).

In Japanese scholarship, the research field is much broader. Historical studies of the pilgrimage were initiated by pioneering research teams, which during the 1920s charted the pilgrimage course (Kondō 1982). Associations for the research of local history have also added a considerable amount of useful information. There has been

research into patterns of travel, along with investigations of the pilgrimage's influence on local economies. Further, the historical roles of itinerant pilgrims and their impact on local communities have also received scholarly attention.

Space limitations do not allow for a full account of these studies. A majority of studies treat the Shikoku *henro* as a unified complex, without allowing for embedded contradictions. The pilgrimage's variety and diversity, especially among the walking pilgrims, reflect diverse images of Shikoku; they also point toward the various forms of life crisis for which the pilgrimage is deemed to offer solutions. I think that a crucial distinction can be made, in regard to the basic forms of merit acquisition, between the kind of merit that is derived from a temple visit, based on association with the sacred sites, and the pursuits of the walking pilgrims, who (consciously or not) emulate the saints of the past, and who try to accumulate merit through hard practice. This difference may be the reason why many walking pilgrims assert that their practice cannot be compared to the "stamp rally" of motorized pilgrims. Moreover, while they acknowledge the sacred places of the Shikoku domain, they also question the authority of temple priests.

Notwithstanding such distinctions, some basic ideas about pilgrimage current in Japanese culture and society still appear applicable to all pilgrimages. Walking pilgrims and motorized travelers may differ in the ways they frame their religious universes, or the ways they describe their motives and goals. Still, the two groups share certain characteristics, because their ritual universes are informed by the same cultural and religious notions, which are expressed via a Buddhist vocabulary and grounded in an overarching system of symbols that relies on Buddhist concepts.

The once arduous practice of the Shikoku pilgrimage was primarily meant for people who faced various crises in their lives. For instance, there used to be separate roads on Shikoku for lepers, and elderly people were also sent here. Even today, some terminally ill Japanese prefer to die there, because the domain of Shikoku is perceived as a pure land. Interestingly, at the outset of their journeys few of the walking pilgrims are aware of old customs or habits; for example, many walk in non-traditional outfits that fit their circumstances. In contrast, motorized pilgrims appear to be much more traditional in terms of the way they dress and look.

The symbolic use of objects is part of the pilgrims' ritual life. As noted above, pilgrims are supposed to dress in white, the color of religious practice, as well as the color of garments worn by the dead. On Shikoku, the pilgrim's staff has the same inscriptions as the ones found on grave markers. Called the *gorintō*, these can be used to mark a final resting place, should the pilgrim die on the way. A similar symbolic connection is made between the straw hat worn by the pilgrim and the lid of a coffin.

Most pilgrims only learn about this kind of folklore in the course of their pilgrimage, or by reading instructions contained in pilgrim guides, the *oshi* or *sendatsu*. On Shikoku the range of meanings associated with the staff has increased due to the influence of miracle tales, derived from the repertoire of the cult of Daishi. In that context, the staff becomes a symbol for Kōbō Daishi, who guides and protects the pilgrims on their way. The staff is even sometimes equated with the saint himself; consequently, the notion that the pilgrimage is done in the company of the saint (*dōgyō ninin*) is projected onto the staff. Therefore, the staff is to be treated with respect: it must be cleaned before the

pilgrim washes himself, and it is supposed to be placed in the alcove of honor (*tokonoma*) when the pilgrim is sleeping at an inn.

Most rituals and symbols encountered on modern pilgrimage courses have rich historical precedents, and for individual pilgrims the pilgrimage itself serves as a course in Japanese history. The earliest extant texts about the Shikoku pilgrimage are *Reijōki* (Records of Mystical Places) and *Kudokuki* (Records of Merit), both of which belong to a genre of texts that promotes pilgrimages. The first text is a description of sites associated with the pilgrimage, while the second is a collection of miracle stories. It is clear from the oldest existing map, published in Osaka in 1763 (Valckx and van der Veere 2010), that persons versed in Buddhist doctrine attempted to project a scheme of religious practice onto the course of Shikoku. In these texts Shikoku is called the altar of practice and a *mandara*, which can be divided into the inland's four provinces. These in turn are associated with four stages of Buddhist practice: inception of the mind that strives for insight (*hosshin*); practice of meritorious acts (*shugyō*); insight (*bodai*); and ultimate fulfillment (*nehan*).

On the Shikoku circuit the quest for merit has taken on local colors, in the form of *osettai* (alms). Arguably the most esteemed mode of conduct for the Buddhist is the exercise of altruism, which may take the form of alms-giving or general bestowal of gifts (*fuse*). Most payments done at temples are called *fuse*, which reflects a dislike of bringing economic relationships into the human equation, at least where Buddhism is concerned. On Shikoku this kind of alms-giving developed into a distinctive system of support, meant to aid pilgrims in their spiritual quest. That involves expansion of the meaning of the word *settai* (reception), which in this context includes all kinds of behavior supportive of the pilgrims (Kouame 2001). Gifts of money, food, drink, and other necessities, as well as the offering of lodging and advice, are all included. For sponsors, these served as opportunities for the accumulation of merit, but over time they also enhanced the saintly qualities associated with the pilgrim. Here we encounter another contradiction, between the supposed sanctity of the exemplary pilgrim, who is elevated because of his associations with the holy places and with Kōbō Daishi, and the actual reality of the individual pilgrim, who at least at the early stages of the pilgrimage may find it hard to cope with the immediate predicament. Often the popular image of the pilgrim as a cultural hero or a healer does not necessarily concur with the actual role that the pilgrim envisages for himself.

Conclusions

Although there is no overarching doctrinal system that requires or prescribes pilgrimage, the majority of pilgrims in Japan are attracted to sacred spaces because of general ideas about merit. The actual landscapes visited by the pilgrims can be transformed under the influence of prior suppositions, which the pilgrim brings to the other domain. This change is fine-tuned by information derived from local cults and informants, which may contribute to a sense of transformation experienced by the pilgrim. As a result of these transformations, new experiences gained in the course of the pilgrimage should provide the pilgrim with a new outlook or perspective on himself, as well as lead to an

increase of merit and procurement of this-worldly benefits. Pilgrimage is mostly about a redistribution of power, which in the Japanese context usually means the power to control karmic patterns. This power rests in sacred spaces, as well as in objects that are permeated with it. After contact with these objects, and after becoming a power-holder, the pilgrim returns to his former station in life, but with an altered perspective and different status. Now he has new knowledge, perhaps even wisdom, as he continues his Buddhist lay practice.

In view of the variety of practices, as well as the multilayered nature of various cults associated with sacred places, the generic term pilgrimage is hard to use in the Japanese situation. Admittedly, the prevalent discourse and shared worldview about religious travel are derived from the Buddhist tradition, but the actual ties between institutional Buddhism and the actual practitioners one encounters on pilgrimage trails tend to be weak. One of the contradictions of the Shikoku pilgrimage is that many pilgrims undertake the pilgrimage without explicit reference to certain Buddhist concepts associated with the temple system. This tendency conforms to a more general attitude that is prevalent in Japanese society, which tends to be unsympathetic toward Buddhist organizations.

Without going into historical detail about the reasons behind widespread feelings about the inadequacy of Buddhist answers to present-day problems, it is a fact that the construction and dissemination of popular images about a pilgrimage circuit like Shikoku is controlled by people with ties to established Buddhist organizations, while pilgrims often look for something more or different. Perhaps walking pilgrims, facing feelings of crisis and engaged in strenuous physical effort, experience this more deeply than the motorized pilgrims. When it comes to understanding how meanings related to pilgrimage are generated and attributed in Japanese society, it might be useful to investigate the agendas and policies of Buddhist organizations, especially at those times when they take over control of cultic spots and sacred places, or even whole circuits, as well as pay attention to the ways in which they presently instill certain meanings into select information streams via the Internet.

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CHAPTER 14

Healing in Tibetan Buddhism

Geoffrey Samuel

The aim of the present chapter is to discuss healing practices in Tibetan societies, and in particular the role of Buddhism in relation to those practices. I have pluralized “Tibetan societies” since Tibetans lived in the past and live today in a wide range of environments, as well as within different social and political contexts. Tibetan healing was a plural system from early times, incorporating elements from the Indian, Chinese, and Greco-Islamic medical traditions, alongside Buddhist and indigenous practices. Today Tibetan medical and healing practices in most places exist in a situation of medical pluralism, alongside Chinese, Indian, or Nepalese versions of biomedicine. Tibetan medicine (*gso ba rig pa*, pronounced “sowa rigpa”) is also becoming increasingly popular among urban non-Tibetan populations in China and India, as well as in Europe, North America, and elsewhere.

The following account begins with a description of the *gso ba rig pa* medical tradition. I will then discuss the wider context of other healing practices within Tibetan societies. Finally I will discuss the topics of divination and diagnosis within this wider field of healing.

gSo ba rig pa (“Traditional Tibetan medicine”)

The term *gso ba rig pa* literally means the science (or art) of healing, and is probably the most widely accepted term for this medical tradition. Other names often used are “traditional Tibetan medicine,” “*a mchi* medicine,” which derives from *a mchi*, the common, Mongolian-derived, Tibetan word for a medical practitioner, and “*rGyud bzhi* medicine,” from the main Tibetan medical text, the *rGyud bzhi* (Four Medical Tantras).¹

In general terms, *gso ba rig pa* is a system of treatment using mainly herbal medicines, mostly derived from plants growing at high altitude on the Tibetan plateau or at its edges. There are also some mineral and animal ingredients. The medical compounds used in *gso ba rig pa* today are often quite complex, often including twenty to forty separate

ingredients, but there are usually one or two major ingredients, while the others are thought of as aiding the effect, or possibly as balancing harmful effects. They are most often prepared as small round pills (*ril bu*), and taken two or three times a day.

Although Tibetan historians describe the Galenic or Greco-Arabic medical tradition as being preferred and imported by the Tibetan rulers of the early seventh century (Beckwith 1979), the basic principles of *gso ba rig pa* as we know it today are closer to those of the Indian medical system of Ayurveda. Some of the principal medicinal plants are well known within the Ayurvedic pharmacopoeia as well, as with the three myrobalan plants (*Terminalia chebula*, *Phyllanthus emblica*, *Terminalia belerica*; *a ru ra*, *kyu ru ra* and *ba ru ra* in Tibetan; *haritaki*, *amlā* and *bibhitaki* in Sanskrit). Many of the Ayurvedic plants were, however, substituted over time by more readily available local equivalents. There is considerable stress in traditional Tibetan pharmacology on using plants grown naturally in pure, high areas, and gathered at the right time of the day and year. Indeed, pharmacology was an important part of medical training in pre-modern times, and *a mchi* frequently collected their own herbs and made their own medicines, though this is increasingly less common. Medicines today are often mass produced in semi-industrial conditions, and medical training in Tibetan medical colleges in China and India does not necessarily include extensive knowledge of pharmacology.

A further and more elaborate set of medicines derives from the Indian alchemical tradition (*rasāyana* in Sanskrit, *bcud len* in Tibetan), which was transferred to Tibet in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. These are the so-called *rin chen ril bu* or “precious pills,” complex compounds based on mercury (cinnabar) and other heavy metals, treated in elaborate ways that are thought to render the mercury and other potentially dangerous ingredients safe (Gyatso 1991; Sallon *et al.* 2006). Similar complex mercury-based medicines are used in Ayurveda and also in Chinese medicine. These “precious pills” are intended to be taken under special conditions, after fasting, late at night, and with the recitation of appropriate prayers. In other words, these are heavily ritualized medicines, imbued with the general mystique and power of Buddhist Tantra.

There are also a variety of other treatments used in *gso ba rig pa*, such as cupping and moxibustion. Diagnosis through pulse and urine examination is standard, and there is a complex system of pulse diagnosis involving some twelve different pulses sensed at different points on the patient’s wrist. This technique appears to have originated through interaction between Chinese and Tibetan diagnostic procedures (Hsu 2008).

The theoretical and conceptual vocabulary of *gso ba rig pa* is closely linked to that of Ayurveda. The three *doṣa* of Ayurveda, three quantities associated with disease causation that are often compared with the four humors of pre-modern European medicine, have direct Tibetan equivalents. Much of the underlying theory and many of the disease categories also appear to be borrowed from a classic Ayurvedic treatise, the *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdayasaṃhitā* of Vāgbhata, which was translated into Tibetan in the eleventh century.

Three *doṣa* (Ayurveda)

vāta
pitta
kapha

Three *nyes pa* (Tibetan medicine)

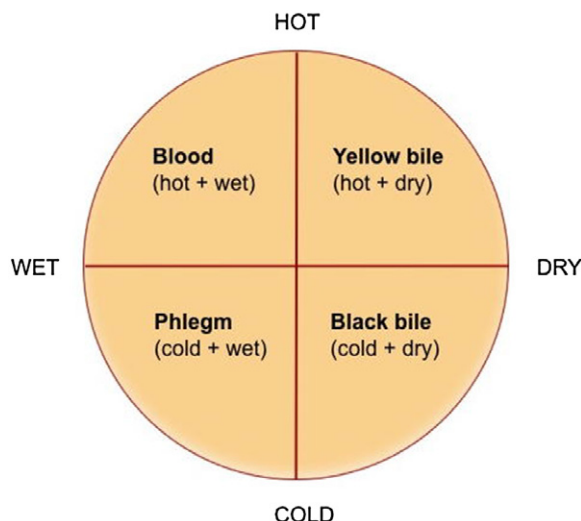
rlung
mkhris pa
bad kan

English equivalents

wind/air
bile
phlegm

However, *gso ba rig pa* is not a simple transposition of Ayurveda from India to Tibet. There are also evident borrowings from Chinese medicine, as with the pulse diagnosis technique, and from the Greco-Arabic medical tradition, which appears likely to be the main source of Tibetan urine diagnosis. Tibetan *a mchi* and medical scholars throughout the centuries have also clearly been involved in an ongoing process of creative synthesis of elements from different sources, including elements of Tibetan folk medicine. In addition, as we will see, all of this has been placed within an explicitly Buddhist frame.

Whether *gso ba rig pa* (and for that matter, pre-modern Ayurveda) should be regarded as a humoral system on the model of Greco-Arabic medicine is also uncertain. The logic of a humoral system is balance. The four humors of the classic Greco-Arabic system are arranged along two axes (hot/cold and wet/dry) and the idea is that the human organism should be at the center, with the four in balance, as shown in the figure below.



The logic of the three *doṣa* and of the three *nyes pa*, on the other hand, is that *any* amount of any of them is harmful, although, in any particular situation of illness, one tends to predominate, so treatment focuses on reducing it. In the Tibetan textual descriptions, at any rate, this is not described in terms of balance between the *nyes pa*. Modern Western-language presentations of the Tibetan system tend to present the system in terms of balance, and such ideas are common among Tibetan *a mchi* these days as well. This may be at least partly the result of influence from the Western model of holistic medicine, which has been influential on how Tibetan medicine is perceived and presented in the West, and increasingly also perhaps on how it is understood among the Tibetan diaspora communities themselves.²

The main text of the system, the *rGyud bzhi* (Four Medical Tantras), has the form of a Tantric scripture. More specifically, it presents itself as a teaching by the Medicine

Buddha (Skt. Bhaiṣajyaguru, Tib. Sman bla), a Buddha who is specifically related to healing. This teaching takes place in a palace adorned with healing gems and situated within a visionary “City of Medicine,” surrounded by meadows and mountains rich in medicinal plants and substances. Bhaiṣajyaguru has a considerable prior history in Indian Buddhism, and his cult was also important in China and Japan. He is of considerable significance for Tibetan medicine, both as a personal deity for Tibetan doctors, and also for his role in the blessing or empowerment of medicinal substances. This is an important aspect of *gso ba rig pa*, since medicines are thought of working not merely through the pharmacological activity of the ingredients, but also through the Tantric blessing (*byin rlabs*) instilled by the empowerment (*smān grub*) that in the past usually formed part of their preparation.³

The Tantric form of the *rGyud bzhi* would imply its origin in a revelation from a Vajrayāna deity in India and subsequent transmission to Tibet. Some Tibetan authorities regard the *rGyud bzhi* as indeed being a text revealed in India and translated into Tibetan. There is no Sanskrit original extant, however, and the *rGyud bzhi* does not form part of the Tantra section of the *bKa’ ’gyur*, the Tibetan canonical collection of materials that were supposedly revealed by the Buddha, as one would expect were it a Tantric text of Indian origin. The *bsTan ’gyur*, the standard collection of commentarial material and other texts translated from Indian and other non-Tibetan sources, includes Tibetan translations of a number of medical texts, but the *rGyud bzhi* is not among these either. The most substantial of the *bsTan ’gyur* medical texts is, however, a well-known Ayurvedic treatise, the *Aṣṭāṅgaḥṛdayasamhitā* of Vāgbhata, which was translated into Tibetan in the eleventh century. As mentioned earlier, this translation appears to have been one major source for the *rGyud bzhi*.

Contemporary Western scholarship generally regards the *rGyud bzhi* as originating with the twelfth-century Tibetan doctor g.Yu thog Yon tan mgon po (1126–1202), a major foundational figure for the whole Tibetan medical tradition.⁴ Parts of the *rGyud bzhi* have been translated into English (Kelsang 1977; Clark 1995). An overview of the work as a whole is provided in the introduction and commentary to an edition of a series of medical paintings based on the *Baiḍūrya sngon po* (*Blue Beryl*; Parfionovitch, Meyer, and Dorje 1992). This commentary, authored by sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653–1705), a distinguished scholar of medicine and astrology who was regent to the fifth Dalai Lama, is the best known of a number of important commentaries on the work (Czaja 2007).

Despite the origins of much of the text in a non-Buddhist context in India, and the relatively pragmatic nature of much of the contents, the tradition is generally seen by Tibetans as part of the general heritage of Buddhist knowledge. The *rGyud bzhi* itself emphasizes its Buddhist character on a number of occasions, besides the external frame-story of its revelation by the Buddhist deity Bhaiṣajyaguru. Thus the text describes the three *nyes pa* as deriving from desire, hatred, and delusion, the so-called three poisons of Buddhist doctrine. These are the three classic roots of samsara, the world of rebirth from which Buddhists are trying to awaken and liberate themselves. In this way, the *rGyud bzhi* makes disease into something that is directly linked to the unenlightened nature of everyday reality and to the central Buddhist project of transcending this everyday world of suffering and rebirth.

As mentioned above, the cult of the Medicine Buddha or Bhaiṣajyaguru is significant for many Tibetan doctors. There is also a specific tradition of Buddhist practice, the *g.Yu thog sNying thig* (Heart-Essence of *g.Yu thog*), which is associated with the *gso ba rig pa* tradition. The *g.Yu thog sNying thig* is plausibly claimed to go back to *g.Yu thog Yon tan mgon po*, and the Medicine Buddha plays an important role in it (Ehrhard 2007; Garrett 2009). This is not a specifically monastic tradition of practice; it forms one of a group of *sNying thig* lineages which are associated with the mainly non-celibate, *rNying ma pa* and *rDzogs chen*, style of Tibetan Buddhist practice. The *rnam thar* or hagiography of *g.Yu thog the elder* (Rechung 1973) presents him as, in effect, a Tantric *siddha*, not a monastic. This is understandable, given that *gso ba rig pa* was initially practiced by members of hereditary lineages of lay doctors, and many doctors still come from these hereditary medical lineages.

Despite the lay framing of medical knowledge in the *g.Yu thog* tradition, medicine has, become progressively associated with Tibetan monasticism, particularly from the time of the regent Sangs rgyas rGya mtsho. Medicine was taught in some monastic colleges, especially in eastern Tibet, and the term *gso ba rig pa* refers back to medicine as part of the curriculum of the ancient Buddhist monastic universities of India. It is not unusual for learned lamas to have studied medicine and to have written texts on it, again reinforcing the sense of *gso ba rig pa* as a form of Buddhist knowledge.

Another area where *gso ba rig pa* links up with wider religious concerns is that of the causation of illness by the action of offended local deities and malevolent spirits. These deities and spirits are not explicitly Buddhist, but are closely linked to Buddhism, in that much of the more pragmatic side of Tibetan Buddhism is concerned in various ways with controlling and countering their destructive actions. One of the central narrative elements of Tibetan Buddhism is the story of the Indian tantric guru Padmasambhava (Padma 'byung gnas)'s epic journey through the Tibetan landscape, during which he tamed and subdued the major spirit-beings of the land of Tibet, compelling them to swear obedience to the powers of Vajrayāna Buddhism. These spirits and their lesser followers continue to cause illness, which can be alleviated by medical treatment and also countered by Vajrayāna ritual.

The *rGyud bzhi* treats the action of spirits as a cause of disease alongside other, more specifically organic, causes. The action of spirits is particularly implicated in what we might call psychiatric illness, but also in what we would consider to be purely organic or physical disorders, such as boils and skin diseases, strokes and partial paralysis (Samuel 1999, 2001, 2007; Millard 2007; Epstein and Rabgay 1982). The main Tibetan methods of diagnosis, pulse and urine examination, both include spirit-caused illness on a regular basis, alongside other illness causes (Meyer 1990; Donden 1986: 88–89, 101–03, 126–30). Contemporary Tibetan lay people are often still very aware of the possibility of spirit-caused illness, and may go directly for modes of religious treatment (see below) if they recognize an illness as caused by spirits (Samuel 1999, 2001). In practice, the extent to which Tibetan medical practitioners see spirit issues as central has probably varied considerably between different times and places. Medical texts demonstrate a strong pragmatic and materialistic side to the tradition (Gyatso 2004).

Medical Training and the Development of Medical Colleges in Tibet

The question of medical training needs some discussion. A central part of medical training for many centuries has been taken up by memorizing the *rGyud bzhi* (Four Medical Tantras), the central medical text of the tradition, and studying it with the aid of commentaries, above all the *Baidūrya sngon po*. However, while the Four Medical Tantras provides an intellectual framework for the practice of *gso ba rig pa*, it does not constitute a comprehensive guide to current clinical practice, and needs to be supplemented by other texts and clinical experience (cf. Millard 2002).

The *rGyud bzhi* consists, as its name implies, of four distinct texts. The first two, the *rtsa rgyud* (Root Tantra, 6 chapters) and the *bshad rgyud* (Explanatory Tantra, 31 chapters), are essentially theoretical works, providing an introduction and a survey of the general principles underlying the system. The third, the *man ngag rgyud* (Oral Instruction Tantra), is much longer, and consists of 92 chapters. Some of these are on individual diseases, while others deal with topics such as injuries to various parts of the body, diseases of children, and so on. The chapters discuss their causes and modes of treatment in detail. The fourth volume, the *Phyi ma'i rgyud* (Additional Tantra, 25 chapters), presents a series of further topics, including the important subjects of pulse and urine diagnosis.

However, the *Man ngag rgyud*, the third and longest Tantra, is often cut in contemporary study (in Dharamsala in the 1990s, students only memorized three of its 92 chapters), and in any case the treatments given do not correspond in detail to contemporary modes of treatments, since the complex medical compounds, with twenty or more ingredients, characteristic of Tibetan medicine today appear to have developed at a somewhat later period. There are later texts that discuss medicines and their uses, but all this leaves open the question of how exactly the student becomes an effective medical practitioner. It would seem that this takes place primarily by working as an apprentice with an experienced doctor.

In the past, a high proportion of doctors came from hereditary medical lineages, so that a practitioner generally worked as an apprentice with his (very rarely her) father or other older family members. The medical tradition was for many centuries mostly transmitted from father to son through specific families. Associated with this was a quite strong feeling that a good doctor should come from a hereditary medical background. To quote the *rGyud bzhi* itself, “The physician without medical lineage,/ Like the fox who seized the royal throne,/ Is not able to gain everyone’s respect,/ And even if respected, cannot hold the kingdom down.” (Schrempf 2007b: 91).

The lCags po ri medical college at Lhasa, established in the late seventeenth century at the initiative of sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, initiated a different and more formally structured pattern of medical training, and several large Tibetan monasteries in eastern and northeastern Tibet also established medical colleges during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. A significant encounter with biomedicine began in the early twentieth century, with the British invasion of Tibet in 1904 (the Younghusband expedition) and with the thirteenth Dalai Lama’s residence in Calcutta for some time six years later, when he became acquainted with some of the public health initiatives of

the British Raj (McKay 2007). On his return to Tibet, the thirteenth Dalai Lama instituted a new medical college at Lhasa, the sMan rtsis khang, which was made responsible for various public health measures as well as for astrological study and teaching (Janes 1995).

Following the flight of the fourteenth Dalai Lama to India in 1959 and the suppression of traditional Tibetan culture, the Lhasa sMan rtsis khang and Tibetan medicine in general continued to operate and to receive a measure of state support. Medical practice became very difficult after the Cultural Revolution got underway in Tibet in 1963, with many doctors being arrested and imprisoned. A limited and radically reconstructed training regime on the “barefoot doctor” model was introduced in the 1970s, but a genuine revival of Tibetan medicine did not take place until the general liberalization of Chinese rule in Tibet after the 1980 visit by Hu Yaobang (1915–1989), the general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party.

In the early 1980s, the Lhasa sMan rtsis khang became a center for revision of the Tibetan medical curriculum in the light of biomedicine. New textbooks were written incorporating elements of modern medical knowledge. By the early 1990s, Tibetan medicine was a well-established part of the medical system in Tibetan regions of the PRC, and provided a culturally Tibetan enclave within an increasingly Sinified hospital system. Craig Janes has described how Tibetan understandings of psychiatric disorder in terms of *rlung* disorder served as a culturally acceptable way to deal with the stress of Chinese control (Janes 1995).

After the liberalization of the economy, state funding was greatly reduced and the availability of official Tibetan medicine became very limited, especially in the countryside (Hofer 2008). Some of the old hereditary lineage doctors still survived, but they were in an increasingly marginal position. Tibetan medicine, however, became very popular among Han Chinese, and Tibetan medicine is now a popular and profitable business in large Chinese cities. The idea of Tibet as pure, unpolluted, and spiritually powerful is widespread, and Tibetan medicine was particularly in demand during the SARS epidemic (Craig and Adams 2008). A number of new medical colleges have been founded, with some of them, like the one in Xining (the capital of Qinghai province), within the standard university system.

gSo ba rig pa Medicine in South Asia

Meanwhile, in India a new sMan rtsis khang (known in English as the “Men-Tsee-Khang”) was gradually established from 1961 onward at the capital of the Tibetan government-in-exile at Dharamsala in north India, alongside a biomedical hospital. The Dharamsala Men-tsee-khang became the main center for teaching the traditional medical system among the refugee population, and a whole system of clinics was set up around the refugee settlements in India and Nepal.⁵ The Men-tsee-khang trained some 230 doctors between 1961 and 2009, as well as several batches of astrologers. The Men-tsee-khang also increasingly became a key representation of threatened traditional Tibetan culture for Western consumption (cf. Kloos 2008).

A significant question both in Chinese-controlled Tibet and in India is the effect of the progressive transformation of medical training from the apprenticeship model characteristic of the hereditary lineage context to that of formal college education. It is difficult to provide the opportunity for an extended apprenticeship within modern contexts of medical training, such as the Dharamsala Men-Tsee-Khang, and this clearly has implications for what students learn and the kind of competence they acquire.⁶

In India, as in China, *gso ba rig pa* developed a complex relationship with biomedicine. Much of the Tibetan refugee population made use of both Tibetan medicine and biomedicine, though on the whole biomedicine was employed for serious illnesses such as tuberculosis, which was widespread among the refugee population in the early years (Samuel 2001). However, the Men-Tsee-Khang became progressively more involved in biomedical research on Tibetan medical compounds and their ingredients, in clinical trials of Tibetan medicine, and in attempting to validate Tibetan medicine in biomedical terms. As in the PRC, if to a lesser degree, elements of biomedicine were increasingly incorporated into the medical curriculum.

One key issue was the extent to which Tibetan disease categories could be identified with Western disease categories. Initially this was done in a fairly naïve manner, and specific biomedical disease terms were often equated directly with disease terms in the *rGyud bzhi*, but there were clearly problems, since the biomedical terms do not for the most part map directly onto the Tibetan categories. This made it difficult to identify appropriate treatment regimens, since “diabetes” or “cancer” could correspond to a variety of different Tibetan disease categories, if indeed an equivalence could be found at all.⁷ In any case, Tibetan treatment regimens are difficult to evaluate in biomedical terms, since they can be highly individualized and frequently changed in response to the patient’s condition, an approach that fits poorly into the biomedical system of randomized controlled trials or RCTs. As for the spiritual aspects of Tibetan treatment, these make no sense at all within the culture of Global Pharma (Adams 2002).

There were also issues with “new” diseases that were not identifiable within the *rGyud bzhi*. There is a preexisting Tibetan category of “new” diseases expected to occur with the increasing deterioration of society and human life in this degenerate period of the Kali Yuga, the last of the four cosmic cycles featured in Indian mythology. There is a natural fit here, perhaps, with contemporary Western and global concerns over increasing levels of pollution and with the progressive deterioration of the environment. However, there is disagreement regarding how far to use this category of new illnesses to deal with, for example, AIDS, or various cancers. There is an ongoing tension in the Tibetan system between the pre-given categories, which in a sense have scriptural authority, and a medical profession that for several hundred years has clearly often been open and experimental in its approach to medical treatment (Gyatso 2004).

In practice, as the interaction with biomedicine continued, *gso ba rig pa*, like other modes of alternative medicine in the Western context, has tended to be seen as best suited to chronic illnesses where biomedicine has relatively little to offer. One recent list of “disorders particularly known to benefit from Tibetan Medicine” includes:

Diabetes; Chronic Hepatitis, Liver Failure; Digestive Disturbances such as IBS, Diverticulitis, Crohn's disease; Depression, Anxiety and Irritability; Nervous system disorders such as Parkinson's, Multiple Sclerosis, Fibromyalgia; Insomnia; Weakness of the body; Kidney diseases; Joint conditions such as arthritis and gout.⁸

As with other Asian medical modalities, a general understanding developed among Tibetan doctors and lay people that biomedicine acted more quickly, but provided primarily symptomatic relief; *gso ba rig pa* was slower and safer, and addressed the root of the problem. There has been some work toward developing more appropriate protocols than the standard RCTs for assessing Tibetan medical remedies, and some of the Tibetan remedies are beginning to receive plausible validation in biomedical terms.

In India, as in Chinese-controlled Tibet, there has been a progressive move toward the mass production of Tibetan medicine. The Men-Tsee-Khang's pharmaceutical production branch provides medicines for all the Men-Tsee-Khang clinics. It has also developed a whole range of cosmetic products, massage oils, shampoos, and the like, which are now extensively marketed in India and the West under the brand-name "Sorig" (an abbreviation for *gso ba rig pa*).

India has had an established legislative framework for medical pluralism since the 1970s, going back to the inclusion of homeopathy as an official medical modality in the late nineteenth century, and the later recognition of Ayurveda, Yoga, Siddha medicine, and Unani medicine as approved non-biomedical treatment modalities. Tibetan medicine was informally accepted as a version of Ayurveda (Kloos 2008). It has now received official recognition in India in its own right, under the name Sowa Rigpa, as a government-approved system of medical treatment.⁹

In India, as in China, Tibetan Medicine started to attract new groups of non-Tibetan users. Even in the small medical clinic in Dalhousie where I undertook fieldwork with two colleagues in the 1990s, around a quarter of the patients were non-Tibetan. Clinics in large Indian cities often cater primarily to non-Tibetans.

As both the system in Chinese-controlled Tibet and that in India became increasingly medicalized, the less "modern" aspects of traditional Tibetan medicine tended to drop out. The introduction of Good Manufacturing Practice in China, and similar changes associated with mass production of medicines in India, meant compromises on many of the details of traditional Tibetan pharmacology. The religious aspects, while rarely altogether omitted, became an increasingly minor part.

Meanwhile, associations of mainly hereditary *a mchi* elsewhere among culturally Tibetan populations in Nepal and India were also trying to establish themselves, and conflicts started to grow with Dharamsala Men-tsee-khang's apparent desire to monopolize the practice and provision of Tibetan medicine (see, e.g., Pordié 2008). The most effective institutional base for *gso ba rig pa* today outside Chinese-controlled Tibet and Dharamsala is probably Bhutan, which has an active, government-supported Traditional Medical Institute oriented toward developing and raising the status of the tradition. Derivatives of *gso ba rig pa* also exist among Mongolian populations in Mongolia, China, and Russia.

In considering the relationship between biomedicine and *gso ba rig pa* today, it is worth bearing in mind that while biomedicine is widely available in Tibet and South

Asia, its provision and quality is often at a low level, particularly in rural areas. While there are state hospitals and clinics throughout these regions, the facilities can be poor in quality, understaffed, and (especially in India or Nepal) too expensive to be easily available to local people. In India and Nepal, there are also private biomedical clinics and practitioners. Among these also the level of knowledge and competence can be very variable, particularly at the village level among the kinds of practitioners that poor people can afford. People will also buy drugs directly and receive informal medical advice from pharmacies. Thus the relationship with biomedicine is quite different from that between biomedicine and CAM (complementary and alternative medicine) in the West, where a relatively high level of effective biomedical provision can generally be taken for granted. At the same time, prestige is often attached to specific kinds of biomedical treatment, such as injections or saline drips. In Tibet, the latter tend to be prescribed for a very wide range of problems where they would not be used in a Western biomedical context.

The Global Presence of *gSo ba rig pa*

Most Western countries now have some presence of Tibetan medicine, though on a small scale compared to that of Chinese medicine. Practitioners come from a variety of sources. A number of Tibetan *a mchi* trained in India or Chinese-controlled Tibet have settled in Western countries. Others, including some from hereditary *a mchi* backgrounds, visit Western countries on a regular basis, gradually building up a regular clientele. A number of Tibetan lamas with some medical training, such as Khejok Rinpoche in Sydney, are now based partly or wholly in the West. A small number of Westerners have received Tibetan medical training in India and are now practicing in Europe, North America, or Australasia. There have also been several initiatives to set up Tibetan medical training programs in the West, with varying degrees of success so far, including Prof. Pasang Yontan Arya T. Sherpa's New Yuthog Institute in Milan, the Tara Rokpa Institute of Tibetan Medicine in the UK (Millard 2008), and the Shang Shung Institute in the USA.¹⁰

The legal situation for Tibetan medicine in Western countries tends to be problematic, as with Asian medicine more generally. The situation varies from country to country. The UK and Germany are at the permissive end, with some State mechanisms for recognition of non-biomedical practitioners (in Germany, this goes back to the 1930s). Most of the remaining European countries, including France and Italy, are more restrictive, with only biomedically qualified practitioners being legally allowed to treat patients.

Even where there is some degree of official tolerance for Tibetan medical practice, the acceptability of Tibetan medicines has become a major issue. Only a very limited number of the standard Tibetan medical compounds have been accepted for use in the UK, for example (Millard 2008), and even some of these are in considerably modified form. The introduction of a new European directive in 2001 (EU directive 2001/83/EC) has meant that the process of approval for Tibetan medicines has become extremely difficult. In the USA, Tibetan medicines have been treated as dietary supplements or

even sold as talismans, providing a way around legislative restrictions. Almost all medicines are imported from Asia, and there is as far as I know only one significant Western facility for the production of Tibetan medicines. This is Padma AG, in Switzerland, which was established in 1969, initially deriving from the Buryat branch of the Tibetan medical tradition. This currently sells ten Tibetan medical compounds on the Swiss market (Schwabl 2009).

Thus *gso ba rig pa* today has been both substantially medicalized and increasingly globalized. While it has generally taken on a subsidiary role to biomedicine among Tibetans themselves, both in Chinese-controlled Tibet and elsewhere, it is establishing itself in a variety of new niches elsewhere. While the Buddhist aura of *gso ba rig pa* is undoubtedly part of its appeal, both to Tibetans and to many non-Tibetans, much of the wider religious context within which it was traditionally practiced has disappeared or lost much of its significance. In the remainder of this chapter I sketch some of this wider context.

Wider Contexts of *gSo ba rig pa*: Folk Medicine and Village Healing

One important context of Tibetan medicine is what one might refer to as folk and popular ideas and practices regarding diet, nutrition, and herbal remedies. It is clear that knowledge of this kind was drawn on by the compilers of the *rGyud bzhi* as well as by later Tibetan doctors, although there has been very little research done as yet on these practices. People in some areas did have some knowledge of folk remedies but, again, there has been very little work done on this (Glover 2007).

Another significant context is that of village-level specialists who are involved in healing of spirit-caused illness. There are various indigenous terms for such specialists, most commonly referred to as *lha pa*, *dpa' bo*, and (in the case of female practitioners) *mkha' 'gro ma*. Here, by contrast, there has been a substantial amount of research (for a recent survey, see Diemberger 2005). Western scholars generally refer to these practitioners as spirit-mediums, shamans, or oracles. These terms do not indicate significant differences between kinds of practitioners, although there is some local variation in modes of practice. There is also a distinction between these village-level practitioners and other somewhat similar practitioners (*sku rten*, etc) who operate in a monastic or state context, such as the famous state oracle of gNas chung, a tradition maintained by the Dalai Lama's government at Lhasa and continued in exile at Dharamsala.

In fact, as with many such practitioners, particularly in the Himalayas, Tibetan *lha pa*, *dpa' bo*, and *mkha' 'gro ma* do not fit neatly onto either side of the dichotomy sometimes drawn by Western scholars between "shamans" and "spirit-mediums." They act as media through which local deities and spirits communicate, but they also often perform healing rituals in their own right, sucking out illness from the patient's body, or summoning back lost soul-substance or vital energy (*bla*). This latter idiom, in which illness is seen as the result of the loss of some kind of bodily energy or vitality to an offended or malevolent spirit, is a very widely distributed mode of explanation for illness globally. In the Tibetan context, it links up with the general understanding of spirit causation of illness. There is a strong ecological dimension here, focused on the need

to respect the local spirit world and stay on good terms with it as a way of maintaining success, prosperity, and good fortune, as well as good health. The practice of village-level shamans of this kind tends to be under the overall supervision of local lamas and monasteries, who are usually responsible for identifying and recognizing upcoming spirit-mediums and helping them to develop their abilities. The costumes worn by spirit-mediums incorporate specifically Tantric Buddhist elements, such as the five-Buddha (*rigs lnga*) head-dress, and the invocations used to induce possession also have Buddhist elements.

Lamas and Healing

The term lama includes a wide range of Buddhist practitioners in Tibet, from heads of major monasteries to smaller-scale practitioners, who come from hereditary lineages or who have acquired their status through personal yogic practice. Lamas may be celibate monks living as part of small or large monastic communities, or lay people living an ordinary family life, but they have in common that they are expected to have command over the ritual procedures of Vajrayāna Buddhism (cf. Samuel 1993).

As was mentioned, lamas tend to be in a supervisory role in relation to the general field of folk healing practitioners. They are also involved in healing ritual in their own right in a variety of important ways, ranging from the provision of empowered water, grains, and other substances with healing and protective powers, to the performance of major ritual sequences such as the life-empowerment (*tshe dbang*) rituals, performed annually or more frequently at most major Tibetan monasteries for the local lay population (Beyer 1973; Kohn 2001). The life-empowerment practices, generally focused around a small number of Tantric deities, primarily Amitāyus, White Tārā, and Uṣṇīṣavijāya, derive in their turn from Tantric practices (*tshe grub*) by which the practitioner achieves control over life-energies and forces (Samuel 2012; Cantwell and Samuel, forthcoming). The practices of the three major deities mentioned ultimately derive from India, but have been substantially reshaped and developed within Tibet (Samuel 2012).

The general idea behind all of these healing modalities is that of the conveyance of power and blessing (*dbang*, *byin rlabs*), from the deities to the lamas and ritual practitioners, and on to the general lay population. Life-empowerments and similar rituals involve the “charging up” or empowering of liquids and pills (*ril bu*, *tshe ril*). The pills are similar in general form and appearance to the medicinal pills (also *ril bu*) used in *gso ba rig pa*, but while the *ril bu* used in *tshe dbang* typically contain substances thought to be health-promoting in a general sense, the focus here is not on pharmacological action but on the conveyance of blessing and power. As already noted, Tibetan medical pills in the *gso ba rig pa* tradition also undergo some kind of empowerment ritual by a lama, so there is a kind of continuum between the *ril bu* used in *gso ba rig pa* and the *tshe dbang* pills, with both involving pharmacology and ritual empowerment, but with the emphasis primarily on the first in the case of *gso ba rig pa* and on the second in the case of the *tshe dbang*. The *rin chen ril bu*, “jewel pills” or “precious pills,” which contain powerful pharmacologically active ingredients and also have important Tantric ritual

associations, are somewhere in between. All this helps to reinforce the relationship between *gso ba rig pa* treatment and the ritual treatment of the lamas.

A notable feature of the life-empowerment or longevity practices is that they operate with a version of the shamanic idiom mentioned before. In other words, these practices work on the assumption that protective energy, life-force, and life-energy of various kinds have been lost from the body and are recovered through the ritual, by the action of the Tantric deities invoked in the ritual. The term *bla*, referred to above in the context of village shamanic healers, is used here, alongside a variety of other terms for different aspects of the life-energy (e.g. *srog* “life”; *tshe* “life-duration”; *dbug* “breath”; cf. Gerke 2008). While part of the process involves the recovery of these lost life-energies, another involves the ingestion of the positive, health-giving essence of the universe (*bcud*, *bdud rtsi*). Here the idea is that the universe is transformed through Tantric practice into its underlying Buddha-nature, allowing access to its innate life and health-giving properties.

For the most part, these practices are not performed so much as specific medical interventions but as occasions for conveying health and long life to whoever comes along to the particular monastery festival or other event where the empowerment is given. They may, however, be performed in response to a specific need for healing; there seems to be an increasingly common practice in places such as Nepal and Bhutan of longevity empowerments being given in cases of serious illness or injury, sometimes in the context of a modern biomedical hospital.

A variety of healing mantras can also be employed directly for healing. These include generic healing mantras such as the Bhaiṣajyaguru mantra or the *rDo rje go khrab* mantra, and also specific mantras and ritual practices for particular diseases.

As mentioned earlier, lamas and monasteries also act as providers of other healing substances that are used more directly by lay people themselves for healing. These include blessed water, empowered medicinal pills and other substances, grains empowered by possessed oracle-priests such as the *gNas chung* oracle, pieces of clothing from the clothes of revered lamas, and so on. The “precious pills” are often used in this kind of context too, though they can be prescribed by doctors as well. This provision of healing substances by lamas is a side of Tibetan healing which has received little attention from Western scholars, but was very widespread in research I undertook with colleagues in a Tibetan refugee community in northern India in 1996 (Samuel 2001). There were quite varied attitudes to these kinds of practices among the Tibetan lay population, with some people seeing them as very important and others as more or less irrelevant. There was clearly a relationship of mutual support between this whole field of Tibetan spiritual healing and that of *gso ba rig pa*, with both lama and *a mchi* (in this case, a Men-Tsee-Khang *a mchi* who was also a monk, though of a different tradition to the lama) regularly referring patients to each other.

Divination and Diagnosis

This leads to another important part of the wider context of Tibetan healing and medical practices, and again one where Buddhism plays a significant role. This is the

question of divination in relation to medical diagnosis. The generic Tibetan term for divination is *mo*. Its purpose is to discover the underlying causes behind a given situation, to find out what is the likely outcome, and above all to decide on the best course of action. There are all kinds of ways of getting a *mo*, of varying levels of expense, prestige, and seriousness. Most Tibetan communities have lay diviners. These are typically older members of the community, often women known for their Buddhist piety and commitment, and their ability to deliver an effective *mo* is a reflection of this. One of the most common methods used by such lay diviners consists of counting off beads on a rosary in groups of four; the response depends on the number left at the end.

Spirit-mediums (or rather the spirits speaking through them) can also be asked for *mo*. So can lamas, who use a variety of methods, mostly including Tantric invocation of a deity associated with divination, such as the goddesses dPal ldan lha mo or rDo rje g.yu sgron ma. A lama's divination may be taken more seriously than that of a lay diviner, particularly if the lama is an important one or known for his divinatory accuracy. In our north Indian study, decisions about medical treatment and related issues often involved consulting the lama. He was asked, for example, where a woman should give birth to her child, at home or at one of a number of hospitals. In this case, the one hospital close at hand had limited facilities, so if there were to be problems with the childbirth the staff might not be able to cope. The other hospitals were better equipped, but also several hours' journey over rough mountain roads, so it would not be possible to travel there if there were complications with the birth. Going to one of these hospitals would also be considerably more expensive for the family, who were not wealthy. The lama indicated the most distant hospital, the Tibetan hospital at Dharamsala, a choice that made sense since the couple were recent migrants and spoke little Hindi or English. He also recommended that they use a Tibetan taxi driver, again a sensible choice in pragmatic as well as divinatory terms.

Other researchers have reported similar consultations of lamas for medical divination. These consultations provide a way to make decisions in what are typically complex situations, where families have to decide how much of their limited resources to commit in an unpredictable and risky situation. The lama's divinatory role is by no means confined to medical situations, but this is one of the most common and significant areas where he is called upon to provide a *mo*.

A closely related tradition to that of divination is that of astrology (*rtsis*). The main astrological system used is that of elemental astrology (*'byung rtsis*). This system is closely related to Chinese astrology (hence its alternative name, *nag rtsis*, which means "Chinese astrology"), and is one of the two major Tibetan astrological traditions, the other being Indian and associated with the Kālacakra Tantra. Elemental astrology works in terms of cycles of years, days, and hours, each involving a succession of periods dominated by different elements. These can be used to predict good or bad days or times for particular individuals, including better or worse times for particular kinds of medical treatments. The body's protective spirit-energy (*bla*) also moves around the body on a regular cycle, corresponding to a lunar month, and procedures such as moxibustion at particular points should be avoided on days when the *bla* is located in the area concerned and might be damaged by the procedure.

It is useful perhaps to see divination, medical diagnosis, and Tibetan Buddhist ritual within a common framework. Diagnosis (*dpyad pa*) is at one level distinct from *mo*. Diagnosis is concerned with distinction, differentiation, or analysis. Its aim is not so much to predict the outcome of a situation, but to find the correct category in which to locate it. However, the boundary between diagnosis and divination can be blurry. The purpose of diagnosis, after all, is also to predict the future, in this case the future outcome of the disease, and some forms of diagnosis seem closer to what biomedicine might regard as divination. Consider, for example, the use of pulse or urine diagnosis to determine whether spirits are active in a particular illness, and if so what kind of spirits. There are also forms of pulse-reading described in the *rGyud bzhi* that seem very close to divination, such as the “seven extraordinary pulses,” by which a sufficiently skilled pulse-reader can discover the state of health of family members not present, or get information about the patient’s enemies.

The more pragmatic and this-worldly forms of Tibetan Buddhist ritual belong within the same general field as divination and diagnosis. Offering rituals can placate dangerous spirit-entities, and protective rituals help guard against their attacks, whereas rituals for good fortune and long life can increase the likelihood of a positive outcome to a situation. None can provide certainty of a happy outcome, but between them they provide a degree of security and reassurance, in part because of the various ways in which they reinforce and strengthen each other. The Buddhist aspects of the *gso ba rig pa* tradition help to build confidence in its validity and in the compassionate and caring motivation that underlies it, whereas ritual procedures fill the gaps that the medical system cannot deal with. To oversimplify, one could say that *gso ba rig pa* deals with the physiological and ritual with the psychological side of the patient’s situation (cf. Samuel 2010), but this would be to discount the non-dual philosophical basis of Tibetan Buddhist thought, which systematically tends to counter and dissolve such dichotomies and insist that the process of human existence has to be seen simultaneously at both levels—or rather, in Tibetan terms, all three levels: body, speech (energy, expression), and mind or consciousness.

The dominance of formal scientific testing in contemporary “evidence-based” biomedicine perhaps can distract from and conceal the essential unpredictability of medical outcomes even in the contemporary Western situation. For pre-modern Tibetans, and even for many Tibetans today, the security, real or apparent, of the best contemporary biomedical practice is not available. The options at hand may be all limited and problematic. The wisdom of the traditional Tibetan Buddhist approach to healing perhaps lies, as much as anything else, in its acceptance of this fundamental uncertainty of human outcomes, and its attempt to provide as much assistance and security as can be realistically afforded.

Notes

- 1 While many authors refer to “Traditional Tibetan medicine,” this is a problematic term for two main reasons. The first is that the most widespread and popularized versions of Tibetan medicine in Chinese-controlled Tibet, in India, and in the West have all

undergone a fair degree of reconstruction through encounters with biomedicine. Thus, as with “Traditional Chinese medicine,” what one encounters today has often been changed by this encounter, in both obvious and more subtle ways. The second difficulty is that the word “Tibetan” can also be a problem. This medical system is practiced in countries and regions (for example Nepal, Bhutan, Ladakh, and Spiti in India) where for political reasons the use of the term “Tibetan” is problematic. Thus one comes across references to “Ladakhi medicine” or “Bhutanese medicine,” referring in essence to the same body of knowledge, techniques, and practices as those of Tibetan *a mchi*, and it is better to go for a more general term.

- 2 Thus, for example, Barry Clark’s translation of Chapter 8 of the *bshad rgyud*, the second section of the *rGyud bzhi*, regularly renders *nyes pa* as “humour,” and inserts references to imbalance that are not explicit in the original text (e.g. Clark 1995: 76). I am not clear how far this reflects the teaching he received from contemporary Tibetan *a mchi*. Jhampa Kelsang’s earlier rendering of the same passage translates *nyes pa* as “poison” and refers to “disturbance” rather than “imbalance” (Kelsang 1977: 67). Yeshe Donden’s 1986 text refers extensively to ideas of balance (e.g. Donden 1986: 56–57).
- 3 The question of how far medicines produced today in factory-type conditions, whether in India or in Chinese-controlled Tibet, are effectively empowered is a somewhat sensitive one, as is the observance of other traditionally significant elements of pharmacology such as the gathering of plants at the correct time.
- 4 There was a long history of controversy over the exact origin of the *rGyud bzhi* in Tibet (Karmay 1998). Emmerick demonstrated that parts of the *rGyud bzhi* are based closely on the Tibetan translation of Vāgbhata’s *Aṣṭāṅgaḥṛdayasaṃhitā*, but other parts clearly have different origins (Emmerick 1977). For a recent study, see Yang Ga 2010.
- 5 Further training centers were the medical section at the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies (CIBS) in Choglamsar, Ladakh (founded in 1989), the Chagpori Tibetan Medical institute in Darjeeling, established by Dr. Trogawa Rinpoche (1992), and the medical faculty of the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies (now Central University of Tibetan Studies) at Sarnath, near Varanasi (1993) (see Kloos 2008: 30–32).
- 6 See Samuel 2001. On training in Lhasa, see Janes 1995. See also Millard 2002, which provides a detailed account of learning processes in a Tibetan medical school in Nepal.
- 7 Cf. the papers by Czaja and Gerke in Adams, Schrempf, and Craig 2011.
- 8 http://holistic-health.org/boulder/?page_id=7, accessed 1 Sept, 2010.
- 9 See, e.g., <http://www.topnews.in/sowa-rigpa-ancient-tibetan-medicine-gets-official-status-2213191>, accessed 1 Sept, 2010.
- 10 See, e.g., http://www.tibetmed.org/worldwide_resources.html, <http://www.dharma-haven.org/tibetan/medicine.htm>, and <http://www.dharma-haven.org/tibetan/medicine-clinics.htm> (all accessed 12 Dec, 2010).

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PART IV

Institutions and Interactions

CHAPTER 15

East Asian Transformations of Monasticism

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Monasticism is conceived in current scholarship as a cross-cultural phenomenon. Although in different cultures and among diverse religious traditions monasticism might assume peculiar characteristics and appear in different forms, in a basic sense it can be defined as an institution of communal living, undertaken in pursuit of a spiritual state. Monastic members are required to live a disciplined and ritualized daily life. The ritualized procedures cover everything, from the initial rite of admission into the order until the burial rite at death; they even continue beyond death, in the form of commemorative rites.

Traditionally the scholarly study of monasticism has been deeply rooted in the study of the history of Christianity, which has provided basic paradigms and models for analyzing monastic ideas, institutions, disciplines, liturgical practices, and solitary life. However, monasticism is now interpreted in various other settings and in reference to other religious traditions. As Mahinda Deegalle has noted, since the earliest appearance of the monastic order on the Indian subcontinent, Buddhist monasticism has combined various forms of monastic dwelling, traveling, and preaching, and Buddhist monasticism could be considered the oldest monastic system in the world (Deegalle 2001). In early Buddhism, the monastic order consisted of monks and nuns, and it was supported by lay followers.

This chapter is meant to present a survey of the growth and transformation of Buddhist monasticism in East Asia. It primarily focuses on select aspects of monastic life and practice that developed in medieval China. Consequently, a number of other pertinent issues and developments, especially in Korea and Japan, are not covered. I start by briefly reviewing the main sources and recent studies on the subject, and briefly noting the major periods in the development of monasticism in medieval China. Then I lay out the textual foundation for Buddhist monasticism, surveying the scholastic tradition of Vinaya literature that developed during the early medieval period. In the next three sections I turn to the textual and ritual practices of Buddhist monasticism,

as they developed during the so-called transformation period (third to fifth century). There I focus on the rise of the ordination platform, various practices centered on Buddhist texts, and the shift from veneration of the Buddha's relics to the rise of the Chan tradition of flesh-body.

Sources and Studies of Buddhist Monasticism

Recent scholarship based on canonical sources and epigraphic materials has shown the complexity of early Buddhist monasticism, especially in the ways of dealing with monastic property and ritual practices (see Schopen 1997, 2004, 2005). Besides the numerous studies that deal with various aspects of Buddhist monasticism in South Asia, there are many publications in Chinese and Japanese that deal with East Asian Buddhist monasticism. Many books and articles focus on individual monks, texts, rituals, or temples. These works also reflect diverse approaches to the study of various aspects of Buddhist monasticism, such as doctrinal, historical, philological, anthropological, and archaeological. In terms of the sources for studying Buddhist monasticism in East Asia, they can be categorized in the following four groups: canonical sources; non-canonical sources in traditional historical materials such as local gazetteers and personal collections left by various literati; monastic records obtained from among the Dunhuang manuscripts; and inscriptions on Buddhist steles, monuments, and tombstones.

So far, Buddhist monastic life in Japan and Korea has been studied quite thoroughly, largely thanks to the enormous quantity of monastic gazetteers that have been compiled and published. In contrast, the study of Chinese monasticism is still under development. In the past two decades, local temple gazetteers have been collected and reprinted. Thousands of steles, monuments, and tombstones have been uncovered by archaeologists. However, scholars have only begun the work of reconstructing the lives of monks based on newly discovered inscriptional materials. An important progress in this area has been the study of inscriptions about nuns whose names are not known from traditional sources, both canonical and non-canonical.

Recent Western-language scholarly works on monasticism have been more focused on the interaction between the monastic community and lay society, in response to traditional sectarian scholarship in East Asia. There are basically two types of studies of Buddhist monasticism. One focuses on the inner structure and particular practices of Buddhist monasticism, based on traditional sources from the Buddhist canon (Foult 1993; Benn 2007; Chen, H. 2007). The other pays more attention to the interaction between the monastic community and lay society, with a focus on manuscripts from the cave library at Dunhuang, an oasis city in northwestern China. As James Robson has noted, scholars have aimed to investigate the multiplicity of monastic institutions (Robson 2009). Many works also explore the varied political, economic, cultural, and religious roles of Buddhist monasteries and the clergy in Chinese society (Teiser 1988; Gernet 1995; Cole 1998; Gregory and Getz 1999; Chen, J. 2002; Welter 2006; Halperin 2007; Robson 2009; Benn 2010).

In particular, lately scholars have moved beyond the scholarly legacy of Kenneth Ch'en and Erik Zürcher, who laid the foundation for the study of Chinese Buddhist

history on the basis of canonical sources. John Kieschnick and James A. Benn have focused on the biographies of eminent monks in medieval China (Kieschnick 1997; Benn 2007). Adding to Western hagiographical approaches, Kieschnick has described three categories of eminent monks, according to the three areas of asceticism, thaumaturgy, and scholarship. Benn has presented a comprehensive account of the practice of self-immolation in Chinese Buddhist monasticism. Nevertheless, as Kieschnick has recently noted, there is no single, book-length survey of Chinese Buddhist monasticism that covers its whole history, from the first century to modern times. Moreover, a complete picture of Buddhist monastic life requires a meticulous reading and analysis of an enormous body of canonical sources and archaeological and epigraphical materials.

In terms of monastic life, Kieschnick has observed that current scholarship often focuses on either ritual performance or monastic hierarchical structure (Kieschnick 2010). In particular, he refers to Kuo Liying's study on confession rituals (Kuo 1994), and to T. Griffith Foulk's article on ritual in Chan Buddhism (Foulk 1993). He has also noted that scholars such as Jacques Gernet and Hao Chunwen have provided sophisticated accounts of the socioeconomic history of Buddhist monasticism in the medieval period (Gernet 1995; Hao 1998). These scholars have shown that the most important monastic property during the medieval period consisted of land, fields, and gardens. The monastic community also rented various tools.

The study of the monastic records uncovered among the Dunhuang manuscripts has shed light on local forms of Buddhist monasticism that are very different from the kind of monasticism that is described in the canon. Many local monastic communities formed a sort of family-temple system, as many temples were included as family property and served family purposes. Other temples were supported by small groups whose members came from less-powerful families, who organized together and collectively supported the local monastic community. Monks and nuns in the Dunhuang area did not live in monastic congregations. Instead, they lived with family members at home. The traditional precepts for monastic living were for the most part not observed by monastic members in this area. Drinking was not strictly prohibited. The ritual performances in this kind of monasticism—an interesting subject that deserves further study—were fairly complicated, as they might involve elements from Tibetan, Khotanese, Turkic, and other Central Asian Buddhist cultures.

Periodization of Chinese Buddhist Monasticism

In his survey of Buddhist monasticism, Kieschnick identifies four periods in the development of Chinese Buddhist monasticism: the introductory period from the first to the third century, the formation period from the third to the fifth century, the development period in the sixth century, and the latter period from the sixth century onward (Kieschnick 2010). During the introductory period there were only loosely organized congregations of foreign monks. These monks were committed to celibacy, translation and study of scriptures, and performance of rituals, which were undertaken in the context of their own practice and for the benefit of the laity.

During the formation period, the major monastic codes and regulations were introduced and translated into Chinese, and they came to serve as the spiritual and legal foundations for daily monastic life. Monastic communities, organized largely by native Chinese monks and nuns, began taking shape across the country (Tsai 1994; see also Lori Meeks's chapter in this volume). Referring to a text compiled by Dao'an (312–385), a famous monastic leader in fourth-century China, Kieschnick summarizes the daily practices of monastic life in three key areas. The first area involved offering incense, circumambulating the Buddha hall, taking the seat, preaching the scriptures, and giving Dharma lectures. The second area centered on a daily practice schedule that was divided into six periods, involving such practices as circumambulating a Buddha statue, taking meals, and chanting at mealtimes. The third area included confession, observance, and repentance rituals. In this text Dao'an presented only some aspects of liturgical life in a medieval monastic community. As pointed out by Kieschnick, meditation and manual labor were not included in this list. Other notable features of this period included spread of the bodhisattva precepts (see Funayama 2004), which were based on the *Brahman-net sūtra* (*Fanwang jing*), and the establishment of the nuns' order.

The development of Chinese Buddhist monasticism reached a new phase during the sixth century. One of the most important changes during this period was the rise of vegetarianism. Monastic architecture was also transformed, developing into a distinctive Chinese style. Numerous stūpas and pagodas were built to house relics for worship. The imperial state launched a large-scale movement for distributing relics and building stūpas to house these relics. In addition, monasteries were renovated or reconstructed under the supervision of monks who were sent to local regions. The large-scale distribution and circulation of sūtras was also accomplished at this time (Chen, J. 2002; Chen, H. 2007: 57–92).

Textual Foundation of Buddhist Monasticism

The Buddhist monastic community was formed and managed on the basis of the Vinaya, the code of monastic discipline. The historical Buddha encouraged his disciples and followers to preach his teachings in their native languages, and from early on there was a tendency to adapt Buddhism to local conditions. The main monastic codes developed after the early Sangha had split into various sects. Over time different monastic communities developed distinctive requirements for admitting monks and for running their daily operations. Different sects ordained their monks under different procedures, and taught them different sets of rules and regulations. It should also be noted that there were notable gaps between the monastic codes included in various versions of the Buddhist canon and the actual practices in Buddhist monastic communities, including those that flourished across East Asia.

During the first three centuries, the monastic communities in China consisted largely of foreign monks. They were ordained in their own sectarian traditions, as established in India and Central Asia, including those of the Dharmagupta and Sarvāstivāda sects. The first generation of Chinese monks was ordained by these foreign monks. The

earliest monastic instructions and customs for Chinese monks seem to indicate a Dharmagupta association, which can be seen from the earliest translations of Karmavācanā texts, which describe correct procedures for the settlement of communal disputes and transactions (Yifa 2002: 7).

It is important to note that Central Asian monks, especially those associated with the Buddhist tradition in Kashmir—referred to as Jibin in early medieval Chinese Buddhist sources—played crucial roles in the introduction and translation of Vinaya texts into China. According to Chinese Buddhist sources, especially *A Collection of Records on the Translations of the Tripitaka* (*Chu sanzang jiji*), composed by Sengyou (445–518) in the fifth century, it seems that Central Asian monks who came from Kashmir during the fourth and fifth centuries contributed to the Chinese translations of four significant Vinaya texts. The first one, a Chinese translation of the *Ten-Stanza Vinaya* (Skt. *Daśabhānavāra-vinaya*; Ch. *Shisong lü*), was made by Kumārajīva (344–413), who received his formative monastic training in Kashmir. There Kumārajīva studied Buddhism under the distinguished master Pandodatta, before returning to his homeland of Kucha to learn the *Daśabhānavāra-vinaya* with the master Buddhayasas (Ch. *Fotuoyeshe*, fl. fourth century). Buddhayasas translated the *Four-Part Vinaya* (Skt. *Caturvargika-vinaya*, Ch. *Sifen lü*) into Chinese in Chang'an in 405 (Later Qin dynasty), with the assistance of Zhu Fonian (fl. fourth century). Kumārajīva had also followed the Vinaya master Vimalākṣa (Ch. *Beimoluocha*) in his study of the Vinaya.

The second of the four significant Vinaya texts was Buddhayasas' translation of the *Four-Part Vinaya*, which he recited in Chang'an in 410. As for the third, the Indian monk Buddhābhaddra (359–429), who had studied in Kashmir, translated the *Great-Assembly Vinaya* (Skt. *Mahāsaṅghika-vinaya*) in 415. The original version of this Vinaya was brought back from Ceylon (Sri Lanka) by the famous pilgrim Faxian (c. 337–422). Another Kashmiri Vinaya master, Buddhajīva, made a contribution by translating into Chinese the last of the four texts, the *Five-Part Vinaya* (*Mahisāsaka-vinaya*). He came to Jiankang (Nanjing), where in collaboration with a Khotanese monk named Zhisheng, he translated the *Mahisāsaka-vinaya*. This translation was produced at Longguang Monastery in 423–424. All told, the four translations of main Vinaya texts can all be attributed to Vinaya masters who either came from Kashmir or were trained there.

These four Vinaya texts figured importantly in the scholastic tradition of Chinese Buddhism, in which learning was transmitted from master to disciple. After the appearance of these texts in Chinese translations, generations of Chinese masters produced rich monastic literature in the form of Vinaya commentaries, explaining and interpreting the canonical texts from various perspectives, within the actual context of Buddhist monasticism. Among these four translations, the *Four-Part Vinaya* and the *Ten-Stanza Vinaya* were far more important than the other two. During the period of disunion the *Four-Part Vinaya* was popular among monastic students in northern China, whereas the *Ten-Stanza Vinaya* became dominant in southern China. Around the sixth century, the *Four-Part Vinaya* became established as the most influential Vinaya tradition in China. Later, in the seventh and eighth centuries, through the efforts of Daoxuan (596–667) and his disciples, as well as due to politically motivated promotion, the *Four-Part Vinaya* gained the unique status of official Vinaya tradition across the Tang empire. This Vinaya tradition was also transmitted in Korean and Japanese Buddhism.

Besides the aforementioned four Vinayas translated during the early medieval period, in 700–703 the Chinese pilgrim Yijing (635–713) translated a fifth Vinaya, the *Mūlasarvāstivāda vinaya* (*Genben shuoyiqieyou bu lü*), on the basis of a manuscript that he brought back from India. Since this Vinaya was translated in an era when the *Four-Part Vinaya* was already dominant, it never received great attention within the Chinese monastic community.

These five Vinaya texts represent monastic traditions that were imported from India and Central Asia. Their foreign nature and peculiar canonical features did not always resonate with Chinese historical and cultural contexts. Although some Vinaya rules and principles became the basis for Chinese monastic life, to a large degree the Vinaya remained a textual tradition. However, with the rise and development of the Chan tradition, Chan monks invented their own systems of rules and regulations, which were meant to regulate the daily operations of Chan monastic communities. These came to be known as “pure rules” (*qinggui*) in Chan literature.

The origin of the Chan tradition of “pure rules” is unclear. According to a tenth-century monastic hagiography included in the *Song Biographies of Eminent Monks* (*Song gaoseng zhuan*), compiled by Zanning (919–1001), Baizhang Huaihai (749–814) allegedly wrote a document that contained rules to govern his monastery. According to tradition, this document—which is no longer extant—initiated a Chan tradition of establishing rules for independent Chan monasteries, although modern scholarship has refuted the veracity of the Baizhang legend and the existence of his putative rules (see Poceski 2010). Some scholars have also suggested that the “pure rules” might not have been developed by a single Chan master (see Poceski 2003). Nevertheless, the Chan “pure rules,” along with other genres from Chan literature, including the recorded sayings (*yulu*) and the records of the lamp transmission (*chuandeng lu*), opened a new chapter in the history of Chinese Buddhist monasticism. Among other things, the manual labor that was supposedly required of Chan monks was codified in the “pure rules.”

The oldest extant example of a comprehensive Chan code composed in the “pure rules” genre is the *Pure Rules for Chan Monasteries* (*Chanyuan qinggui*), compiled in the twelfth century. According to Yifa’s study, in addition to its importance in China, this text was regarded as an authoritative Chan monastic code by Japanese masters, and it was also influential in Japanese Zen Buddhism (Yifa 2002). This detailed text provided a comprehensive guide for the daily operation of a Chan monastery. It contains a wealth of information, from the ordination rituals and the observance of precepts to the daily deportment of monks and the activities associated with various festivals. The text emphasizes upholding the monastic precepts, especially the threefold pure precepts of the Mahāyāna tradition. It also offers detailed information about regulations and procedures regarding eating and proper behavior at mealtimes. For example, we learn that vegetarianism was strictly required in Chan monasteries.

The *Pure Rules for the Chan Monastery* also deals with assorted rules concerning personal possessions, especially clothing, mats, water vessels, and so forth. Moreover, it offers guidelines about the monastic hierarchy and various monastic offices, the relationship between masters and disciples, and between senior and junior monks. The text clarifies how communal labor was adopted by the monastic community as a means

of self-support. In addition, it addresses issues related to state control over Buddhism and vividly manifests elements of both the Indian Vinaya heritage and the Chinese cultural traditions. On the whole, the emergence of the “pure rules” was among the most important transformations of Chinese monasticism, as it represented a partial replacement of the traditional Vinaya and marked the rising dominance of Chan monasticism.

Rise of the Ordination Platform

The ordination platform (Ch. *jietan*, Jp. *kaidan*) is an architectural space designed for carrying out Buddhist ordination rituals. In Buddhist monasticism the ordination procedure is used to admit new members into the order, and to pass on the ideals and values of the order from one generation to the next. The evolution of the ordination platform and the rituals associated with it is a crucial topic in the history of East Asian Buddhism. Examining the rise of the ordination platform helps us understand the Chinese transformation of Indian Buddhism and its impact on Japanese Buddhism. It also helps us understand the relationship between the Chinese and Japanese Buddhist communities.

Ordination platforms are something of a puzzle. They did not exist in early Buddhism. Many scholars believe that they were a Chinese invention, which later also flourished in Japan. Some Japanese scholars have proposed a possible connection between the Buddhist ordination platform and the traditional Chinese altar dedicated to ancestor worship. However, since current scholarship on this subject is very limited, there is a need for further research and analysis.

In medieval Chinese Buddhist monasticism, the ordination platform was one of the most important inventions, in both the institutional and the ritual spheres. It is essentially a distinct ritual facility, used for conferring ordinations and lecturing on the precepts. As a newly designed ritual facility, it is different from the ordination area (Skt. *śīmā maṇḍala*, Ch. *jichang*) in Indian and Central Asian Buddhism. Traditionally, in India and Central Asia the ordination area was not an architectural entity; rather, it was an area defined by consecrated boundaries, used temporarily for a ceremony of ordination. In other words, this area was not fixed or permanent. However, in East Asia the ordination platform was designed and constructed within the monastic compound for a permanent purpose, with multiple levels rising up from the ground. In medieval East Asia, other buildings were also built, to cover the ordination platform and to surround it. Within the larger monastic compound, these structures formed a separate quarter of the ordination platform (Ch. *jietan yuan*). The platform thus became one of the most important elements of monastic architecture. Below I introduce briefly the origin, design, history, and symbolism of the ordination platform, as well as its religious, social, and cultural implications.

Although the term “ordination platform” appears in Chinese translations of scriptural texts included in Buddhist canon, the actual structure was clearly a Chinese invention. In his *Illustrated Scripture for Constructing the Ordination Platform in Guanzhong* (*Guanzhong chuangli jietan tu jing*, T no. 1892), Daoxuan traces its origin to the lifetime

of the historical Buddha. That kind of normative discourse serves to place the authority for creating the ordination platform back to the Buddha. According to Daoxuan, the earliest ordination platform in China was built in the early fifth century, in Jiankang (present-day Nanjing), the capital city of various southern dynasties. It was associated with a Central Asian monk, Guṇavarman (367–431). After this monk passed away, it is said that he was cremated on this platform. Unfortunately, there are no details about the design of this ordination platform. According to Daoxuan's narrative, this ordination platform left a lasting legacy, as it initiated an ordination platform movement that spread through the southern dynasties. There were roughly three hundred ordination platforms in southern China during the later part of the period of disunion. In contrast, there were only a few in the north, where the Buddhist community suffered political persecutions at three separate occasions. That might be taken to indicate that the monastic community in the south was prosperous and flourishing during this period.

The first well-known ordination platform in Chinese Buddhist history is the one designed by Daoxuan, constructed in 667 at Jingye monastery, located in a suburb of Chang'an. In Daoxuan's *Illustrated Scripture*, he offers a great deal of detail about this three-level platform. That includes information about its square shape, its decorations, the scriptural and doctrinal foundation behind the design, and the specific procedures related to using the platform. On the top level of the ordination platform the Buddha's relics were placed for worship. Three masters and seven witnesses would sit on the second level, which was a reflection of their major roles in the ordination ritual and the bestowing of precepts.

The vertical setting of the three-level platform reflects a hierarchical structure that was operative within the monastic order. The Buddha, symbolized by his relics, is placed at the top, and functions as a central authority who oversaw the entire ordination procedure. In effect, the ordination ritual represents specific settings based on Buddhist tradition, which are designed in a particular manner so that power and knowledge could be passed from one generation to the next. Two kinds of settings are particularly important: the physical setting, illustrated by the architectural design of the ordination platform, and the spiritual setting, indicated by the roles of those sitting or walking on the platform (Chen, H. 2007).

Daoxuan's ordination platform gained a prominent reputation, largely through the meticulous depictions presented in the *Illustrated Sūtra*. This text was also transmitted to Japan, where it found a receptive audience. Consequently, Daoxuan's legacy in connection with the ordination platform was also inherited by the Japanese Buddhist community. Before long, the ordination platform became very influential in Japanese Buddhism. The earliest one in Japan was based on models found in Chinese illustrated scriptures and manuals, which were brought back by Japanese monks returning from Tang China. Japanese pilgrims' travel accounts of their visits to Chinese mountains and monasteries are also rich sources of information about ordination platforms in China.

The earliest ordination platform in Japan was constructed at Todaiji, Nara, under the supervision of the Chinese Vinaya master Jianzhen (688–763, Jp. Ganjin). It was based on Daoxuan's design. Daoxuan's construction of an ordination platform inspired some of his contemporaries, as it led to a movement of building ordination platforms in the Tang period. We have historical information about several other

masters who also constructed ordination platforms elsewhere across the Tang empire (McRae 2005). For instance, Yijing (635–713), Yixing (673–727), and Vajrabodhi (671–741) constructed such platforms in the Luoyang area. The country-wide movement of constructing ordination platforms was sponsored by both the government and private donors. In 765, a universal ordination platform (*fangdeng jietan*), portrayed as a Mahāyāna Buddhist ordination platform, was constructed at the Great Temple of Raising Kindness (Da xingshan si), upon the decree of the Tang emperor Daizong (r. 762–779). The emperor also appointed ten eminent masters, and bestowed the title Great Virtues of Ascending Platform on the ordination structures. Although the rituals connected with the platform followed guidelines based on traditional Vinaya literature, the ordination recipients were also instructed to evoke the mind dedicated to supreme enlightenment (*bodhicitta*), an important element of the Mahāyāna tradition.

The evolution of the ordination platform demonstrates how these platforms were designed for different rituals, and were used for conferring different sets of precepts. The main sets of precepts conferred at them were the five precepts, ten precepts, the full ordination precepts, and the bodhisattva precepts. The ordination platforms took different forms during different historical periods, exemplified by the contrast between the “sweet dew ordination platform” versus the “universal ordination platform.” The platforms were also made with different materials, such as wood, jade, and lapis lazuli, as well as stone, brick, and sand. Within the monastic compound, the ordination platform could be located in the Vinaya compound, or it could occupy an area called the ordination platform compound. In addition, different ordination platforms corresponded to different Vinaya interpretations put forward by various Vinaya masters. Some platforms were associated with Daoxuan’s interpretation of the monastic rules, while others with the interpretations of other Vinaya masters.

A sociohistorical survey of the relevant data reveals that the development of ordination platforms in Tang and Song China underwent a pronounced geographical change, which to some degree reflected the changing economic landscapes of these periods. Local gazetteers, monastery records, and inscriptions, along with the personal collections of various literati, provide us with some pertinent details. Clearly, the construction of large ordination platforms required abundant human and material resources. Famous ordination platforms attracted numerous ordination recipients. That brought more devotees, whose financial support could guarantee the upkeep and renovation of large ordination platforms. For example, according to the *Record of the Ordination Platform of Huishan Temple at Song Mountain*, an ordination platform on Song Mountain, originally constructed by Vinaya master Yuantong and meditation master Yixing in 795, became the site of a series of imperially-commissioned lectures. These were superintended by Zangyong of Anguo monastery, Xingyan of Shengshan monastery, and Lingzhen and Huihai of Huishan monastery. This is an illustration of how a local endeavor could eventually attract broad attention.

Following Vinaya master Daoxuan’s promotion of the construction of ordination platforms in Chang’an during the early Tang period, three platforms were erected and became well known in northern China in the mid-Tang period: the Lazuli ordination platform of Huishan Temple on Mount Song, the White Jade ordination platform at

Zhulin Temple on Mount Wutai, and the ordination platform designed by Daoxuan himself at Jingye Temple near Chang'an. Moreover, during the Song era, especially in the Southern Song dynasty, at least two ordination platforms in southeastern China became widely known: one at Kaiyuan Temple in Quanzhou, and another one at Longchang Temple on Mount Baohua.

The importance of ordination platforms in Chinese Buddhism was such that it was possible for a mountain to become famous for its ordination platform alone. For instance, Longchang monastery on Mount Baohua is still famous for this reason. During the Qing dynasty, Zhao Shiyi claimed that "the ordination platform on Mount Baohua is the finest Vinaya school platform in the world." Some sources suggest that this platform can be traced back to the Liang dynasty (502–557), when the famous monk Baozhi came there to establish a practice center.

The study of ordination platforms necessarily touches on the study of mandalas, since they are both called *tan* (platform) in Chinese sources and have some common features. For example, both can be associated with same scriptures, including the *Scripture of Consecration*. They both can also be used to invoke the protection of the same deities, and during rituals they can be associated with the same esoteric spells or techniques. They may also look similar, since both ordination platforms and mandalas are designed according to the same cosmological principles. However, mandalas and ordination platforms are essentially different from each other, since they are designed for different purposes. A mandala is created for the performance of confession rituals, and sometimes for making food offerings to the spirits. The ordination platform is created for conferring ordinations and bestowing precepts. There is still a lack of comprehensive study of the rise and fall of the ordination platform in East Asian Buddhist monasticism; it might be worth surveying how traditional Chinese practices contributed to the transformation of the ordination platform in Buddhist monasticism.

Textual Practices in Buddhist Monasticism

The Buddhist monastic community was, in a sense, a community of texts, in both oral and written forms. Monastic practice was centered on the production, reproduction, transmission, veneration, recitation, circulation, and annotation of texts. Monastic members carried on these text-centered activities by preaching and writing. In Chinese Buddhism, textual practice was a literary practice, a historiographical practice, and a ritual practice. That meant that written texts functioned as a material basis for doctrinal teaching and ritual performance, as well as for the preservation and reproduction of religious knowledge and monastic lifestyle.

Textual practice also had a crucial impact on the architectural layout of a Buddhist monastery. The Buddha hall, lecture hall, ordination platform, and monastic library all more or less served as places for different text-centered practices—reading, reciting, lecturing, or preserving the sacred texts—as well as textual practices that involved spells and talismans. In addition, other architectural sites or places for textual practice were also developed. For instance, the scripture platform was the place where Buddhist texts were translated, recited, read, commented upon, and venerated. The scripture

platform came to be considered sacred due to its associations with the historical and collective memory of members of the Buddhist clergy.

In the history of medieval Chinese Buddhist monasticism, some monasteries even developed their own compounds for specific scriptural traditions, such as the Compound of the *Lotus Sūtra* (Fayuan yuan), the Quarter of the *Flower Adornment Sūtra* (Huayan yuan), and the Quarter of the Vinaya (Lü yuan). The existence of these compounds reveals the strong connection between the monastic landscape and practices associated with particular textual traditions. An interesting example of such architectural features is the scripture pillar (*jingzhuang*), which was usually erected in front of a tomb. The power associated with the pillar was said to be able to eliminate the bad karma of the deceased, and to transfer merits to other beneficiaries (Liu 2008).

Although there are many works in Chinese and Japanese scholarship that deal with textual practices—especially the introduction, translation, and transmission of texts in Chinese Buddhism—most of them focus on textual and historical studies. Often they concentrate on the translation work done by a specific translation team and centered on a particular monk. In contrast, recent Western scholarship has focused on the making of Buddhist books and related aspects of material culture. In his study of the *Scripture on Ten Kings*, Stephen F. Teiser points out that Buddhists sought merit by holding, copying, and circulating Buddhist scriptures (Teiser 1994). Jean-Pierre Drège has discussed the medieval Chinese library, in the era of Buddhist manuscripts, through an analysis of the Dunhuang materials (Drège 1991). John Kieschnick has described the making and veneration of Buddhist scriptures in China from the perspective of material culture (Kieschnick 2003).

Buddhist texts in composed Sanskrit and Central Asian languages were transmitted to China in both oral and written forms. For instance, Kumārajīva was invited to Chang'an to recite numerous Sanskrit texts, and then to translate them into Chinese (T 55.100a–102a). Sanskrit and Central Asian texts in written form were introduced into China in several ways. The first involved the transformation from an oral to a textual version. Second, written Sanskrit manuscripts were brought into China by Indian or Central Asian monks. Third, Chinese pilgrims who traveled to India and Central Asia brought Sanskrit texts back into China. Typically, when Chinese pilgrims brought canonical texts from India and Central Asia back into China, they quickly became possessions of the imperial court. There were also many cases in which Chinese pilgrims brought back Sanskrit texts together with other sacred items, such as images and relics. Xuanzang's celebrated pilgrimage to the western regions yielded numerous sacred items, which he brought back to Chang'an. His biography provides a list of these items, which included seven Dharma-wheel-turning images of the Buddha, six hundred and fifty-seven Sanskrit scriptures and treatises, and one hundred and fifty relics. Fourth, some kingdoms in Central and South Asia offered Sanskrit texts as gifts or tributes to Chinese emperors. Sometimes a Chinese emperor would also order a particular kingdom to offer Sanskrit texts as a tribute.

In China monks and rulers alike viewed Sanskrit Buddhist texts as sacred objects possessing unique cultural and symbolic values. Sanskrit texts, coming from the Buddha's homeland, presumably could bring with them the power of the authentic Buddhist tradition. Whoever brought such texts from India or Central Asia received honor

and prestige, which was extended by the monastic community and the political authorities. Many pilgrims, including Faxian, Xuanzang, and Yijing, raised their status in the monastic community by bringing Sanskrit texts back from India and Central Asia. They were invited to reside at imperial monasteries, where they received the sponsorship of the political elites. Xuanzang's celebrated account of his journey to the western regions was frequently mentioned by Chinese scholars such as Daoxuan, who viewed it as an authentic record of Buddhism in its homeland.

When Chinese rulers received Sanskrit texts, their possession purportedly allowed them access to the true Dharma, which was contained in the sacred texts from India and Central Asia. At the same time, the sense of authenticity and authority embodied in these sacred texts became crucial cultural capital for the monastic community. The veneration of the sacred texts, along with the recognition given to returning pilgrims who brought them into China, inspired generations of monks to make arduous journeys seeking these objects. That inspired a notable movement in the history of Chinese Buddhism, in which the main focus was on looking for authentic canonical texts. Yijing eventually compiled a collection of biographies of these pilgrims.

In the medieval context, the sacred texts were usually not readily available to ordinary members of the monastic community. Only eminent monks were able to acquire them, offer them to the rulers, transmit them to their Dharma heirs, or use them for accruing prestige and official patronage. In the world outside the Buddhist cloisters, only the rulers could become legitimate owners of Sanskrit or Central Asian texts. They also had the authority to permit their translation and the establishment of spaces for honoring the texts. This practice seemed to contradict the basic ideals of Mahāyāna Buddhism, which advocates the accessibility of enlightenment to all. While this kind of preoccupation with Sanskrit texts went into decline after Chan became the dominant tradition of elite monastic Buddhism, the sacred texts and the cultural practices that surrounded them represented an essential chapter in the history Chinese Buddhism.

The circulation of sacred Buddhist texts, undertaken under imperial auspices, was somewhat analogous to the distribution and veneration of the Buddha's relics. During the Sui dynasty (581–618), Emperor Wendi (r. 581–604) ordered that the Buddha's relics be distributed among local temples and that pagodas be built to house them. This distribution of the Buddha's relics brought, for the first time, the symbolic presence of the Buddha to a local level, all over the Sui empire. Similarly, imperially authorized circulation of the Buddhist canon to local temples symbolically indicated that the Dharma was brought to the local level. In this fashion, the Buddha, the Dharma, and Sangha (represented by the Chinese monastic order) could all come together. In other words, all three could become one. This symbolic unification legitimated the presence of monastic communities in local areas. It also strengthened the unification of disparate regions under the central control of the imperial government.

Since there was no single or unified Buddhist church in medieval China, the imperial government assumed the role of issuing standard editions of Buddhist texts and distributing them from the capital to local monasteries. If the government had not supported the issuing and printing of Buddhist texts, presumably they would not have circulated as widely and easily throughout the Chinese empire. The large-scale and long-range dissemination of Buddhist texts was necessarily different from the circula-

tion and transmission of single texts. The broad circulation of Buddhist texts helped assure the loyalty of local Buddhist communities to the central government. Individual monastic communities also relished the chance to have their texts circulated among Buddhists in local areas, because that brought benefits to the common people and helped solidify a sense of identity for the monastic community.

In medieval China, the way of venerating a Sanskrit text was pretty much the same as for venerating the Buddha's relics. The *caitya* (sanctuary or place of worship) for venerating a Sanskrit text was set up as a distinct ritual space. The *caitya* was used to house the Buddha's relics, together with the scriptures he spoke during his ministry. In Chinese it literally means "collection," referring to a place where humans and heavenly beings collect infinite merit and kindness. It also refers to a place from where pure faith arises. The tradition of venerating Buddhist texts in a *caitya* seems to have antecedents in India. In Xuanzang's *Record of the Western Regions of the Great Tang*, he mentions that in India, Buddhists constructed small pagodas, five to six inches in height, housing scriptures, which were called relics of the Dharma. When a number of small pagodas had been constructed, a large pagoda was then built to house them, and that came to serve as a place for people to pay homage and make offerings to the scriptures.

When monasteries established libraries, monks also took charge of the task of producing and spreading Buddhist knowledge. They had to develop their own classification systems for organizing the library collections, and formulate criteria for deciding what should be included and excluded from the collections. In doing that, they did not always take the authority of Sanskrit Buddhist texts for granted. As Chinese monastic libraries were developed, the vast corpus of Buddhist texts established its position as a primary means of delivering Buddhist knowledge. Furthermore, by that time the Buddhist community had gained more influence in providing education, which traditionally had been done primarily by Confucian schools.

The establishment of monastic libraries during the Tang and Song periods reflected a significant cultural transition. The establishment of a permanent library as part of the monastic compound transformed the medieval Buddhist monastery into a cultural center. The library served not only the monks, but also students who could not attend Confucian schools, many of whom took advantage of the monastic library to prepare for the civil examinations. That was especially the case during the late Tang period, when the local school system collapsed, largely because of devastations brought about by warfare. A pertinent example of that from the Dunhuang area is the famous cave library, which helped preserve texts from diverse religious and cultural traditions. Along with a wealth of Buddhist manuscripts, a number of Confucian, Daoist, Manichean, and Nestorian Christian texts were also found in this monastic library.

From Cult of Relics to Cult of the Flesh-Body

In the Buddhist monastic communities throughout East Asia, relics—especially the putative physical remains of the historical Buddha—served as important sacred objects. Over the past several decades reports of reliquaries with Buddha relics, discovered in the ruins of stūpas or pagodas, have generated considerable religious enthusiasm

among present-day Buddhists across Asia. This reflects traditional patterns of Buddhist devotion, especially the worship of relics, which goes back to the early history of Chinese Buddhism. The cult of relics was connected with veneration of the “three gems” (or treasures) of Buddhism—the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha—which were primarily represented in China in the form of Buddha images, canonical texts, and members of the monastic order.

While that kind of cultic activity remained pretty constant, during the medieval period several movements centered on the distributing and venerating of the Buddha’s relics changed the landscape of Buddhist monasticism. After the rise of the Chan tradition, the new phenomenon of preservation and worship of the flesh-body (*roushen*) arose. The flesh-body (or mummy) of Huineng (638–713), the famous “sixth patriarch” of Chinese Chan, is a prime example of this significant development. I would suggest that, with the rise and flourishing of the Chan tradition during the Tang and Song periods, there was a notable transformation in Chinese Buddhist monasticism, from the cult of relics to the cult of the flesh-body.

The earliest story about the Buddha’s relics coming to China is associated with Kang Senghui (d. 280), a Sogdian monk who in 248 arrived at Jiankang, the capital of the Wu kingdom. The newly arrived monk displayed the indestructible power of the Buddha’s relics and convinced the king of Wu to support Buddhism. The king ordered the building of a stūpa to house the relics, and then a monastery was also built, called Jianchu monastery. This is said to have been the first monastery ever built in southern China. This story reveals a distinct tradition about the beginnings of the monastic order in southern China. According to it, the establishment of the monastic order in the south was authorized by the Buddha, as symbolized by the presence of his relics.

During the period of disunion, in the southern dynasties stories about King Aśoka and his distribution of the Buddha’s relics in ancient India rapidly entered the monastic community’s discourse. As many monasteries reported finding relics, stūpas were constructed to house them. As Roderick Whitfield has noted, reliquary deposits might have already been made around the Three Kingdoms period (220–280), but the earliest archaeological evidence can be dated back to the fifth century (Whitfield 1989). Archaeological evidence indicates that the Buddha’s relics could be enshrined in various parts of the stūpa, but the reliquaries were most often placed in a central chamber, located in the stūpa’s foundations.

Buddhist monks played central roles in the growth of the relic movement. First, foreign monks introduced the Buddha’s relics into China, and later Chinese pilgrims who went to India and Central Asia also brought back relics with them. Second, although in the medieval period Chinese rulers issued various edicts regarding distributing, honoring, and venerating Buddhist relics, it was monks who actually monitored, supervised, and participated in various projects related to relic worship, including the building or renovating of stūpas and monastic compounds that housed the relics. Third, though lay Buddhists sometimes claimed to have discovered a relic, the authenticity of such relics was typically certified under the guidance and supervision of prominent members of the monastic community. In other words, monks had the final word in determining a relic’s authenticity.

A number of modern scholars have analyzed the cult of relics in medieval China in terms of pertinent political and religious contexts, focusing on the relationship between the imperial state and the Buddhist community. The distribution and veneration of the Buddha's relics is often regarded as a political device, used for fulfilling the ideological needs of the political regime. Recently some scholars have also paid attention to the kinship ties and social bonds that were associated with this movement (see Chen, J. 2002). Even so, most studies have more or less focused on the political aspects of the movement, at the expense of exploring its religious implications. In particular, such emphasis has led to neglect of the impact of this movement on the Buddhist monastic community.

The flourishing of the cult of the Buddha's relics and the rise of the relics-distribution movement in medieval China should be viewed in their broad historical and cultural contexts. For a long time, Buddhism was regarded as a foreign religion, which according to its critics was at odds with Chinese culture. The Buddha was criticized by some Confucians and Daoists, who viewed him as a foreign figure who stood in opposition to the ancient Chinese sages. It was common knowledge among medieval Chinese Buddhists that the historical Buddha had never visited China. That was a source of anxiety, especially in regard to the legitimation of Chinese Buddhist institutions. Introducing the Buddha's relics as a symbolic presence of the Buddha in China helped the monastic community, which was able to present a more convincing image of the religion to a mass audience.

During the sixth to seventh centuries, the Buddha's putative relics were distributed and honored throughout the Chinese empire. At the time, when the relics were taken to local areas, this occasioned the building of stūpas, the renovation of old monasteries, and the construction of new monasteries. With the distribution of relics and their enshrinement in stūpas and monasteries, local monastic communities acquired the symbolic presence of the Buddha. In other words, as the relics came to function as concrete symbols of the Buddha, their presence transformed the monasteries that housed them into places where the Buddha himself wielded ultimate authority. By extension, that caused the authority of the monastic community to grow, in addition to attracting external support.

During the Tang and Song periods, with the rise of the Chan school, the Buddhist monastic community experienced far-reaching transformations. One of the notable changes was a partial shift from the cult of relics to the cult of the flesh-body. In some monastic communities the flesh-bodies of Chinese Chan masters replaced the Buddha's relics as central icons, which represented a notable shift in religious authority. Robert H. Sharf has made an analysis of the Chan school's tradition of mummification. He calls the mummies of Chan masters "icon[s] of flesh"; he also literally translates the Chinese terms *zhen shen xiang* and *rou shen xiang* as "true body portrait" and "flesh-body portrait," respectively. He suggests that within the context of the ritual of "ascending the hall" (*shang tang*), the Chan abbot enacted the role of a "living Buddha icon," when he took the "high seat," an ornate throne in the center of the Dharma Hall. He further comments on the perceived holiness and spiritual purity of the deceased bodies of Buddhist masters (Sharf 1992).

Sharf cites Holmes Welch's *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism, 1900–1950*, in reference to certain decorations of the Chan master's corpse, which were meant to correspond to some of the thirty-two sacred marks of the Buddha. The implication here is that pious devotees could see the image of the dead master before he attained Buddhahood. Sharf argues that "the mummified master enshrined in the temple grounds gives concrete and vivid expression to the fundamental tension entailed in the goal of all Buddhist practice: nirvana." He also suggests that "the abbot's enlightenment and Buddhahood lies precisely in the emptiness of his form, whether that form be the living abbot himself, his portrait, his *stupa*, or his mummified remains" (Sharf 1992).

Concluding Remarks

In the course of its spread to Central and East Asia during the medieval period, Buddhism developed into a complicated and multifaceted religion. Many local traditions of Buddhism developed during the long trip from India to Japan. As it grew in East Asia, Buddhism experienced numerous changes in its worldview and cosmology, as well as in the overlapping areas of textual, institutional, and ritual practices. In both China and Japan, local Buddhists developed their own distinctive traditions. As the confidence in these local traditions grew, some of them contributed to a new worldview in which their own land became the symbolic center of the world, and particular local traditions became principal expressions of authentic Buddhism. In other words, East Asian Buddhists gradually constructed their own concepts of center and periphery. These were some of the many transformations that Buddhism underwent in East Asia in the medieval period. This chapter has focused on several of the especially influential transformations that shaped the world of Buddhist monasticism, especially changes in the textual foundation of monasticism, the rise of the ordination platform, the development of various textual practices, and the cults of relics and flesh-bodies.

The gradual transformation of Buddhist monasticism in East Asia is exemplified by the continuing adjustment of its textual foundations. As we have seen, that involved a move from the canonical texts of the Vinaya tradition to local versions of new monastic rules, especially the "pure rules" that developed within the context of the Chan/Zen tradition. This reflected local developments within Buddhist monasticism that unfolded over the Tang and Song periods. During the Tang era, and even earlier, powerful noble families and the ruling class supported large monasteries, many of which were located in the capitals and other cities. By the time of the Song dynasty, the structure of Chinese society had experienced many changes, including the virtual fading away of the prominent noble families that dominated Tang society. With that, the practice of donating large properties and converting them into Buddhist monastic compounds also disappeared. Many monasteries were instead located in rural areas or in the mountains. Consequently, self-reliance and self-governance became necessary. The rise of the "pure rules" cannot be separated from these kinds of large social and cultural developments.

The creation of large collections of canonical Buddhist texts often required court patronage, but during the Song era the monastic community also sought ways of asserting its autonomy. That might have given Chan Buddhism the impetus to detach itself from the canonical collections, which were under the shadow of the court and its political authority. That shift resulted in the localization of Buddhist authority. If Chan monks no longer seemed to care about the scriptures, images, and other sacred items linked with political authority, that authority could have—in theory at least—little impact on the Chan monks and monasteries. Consequently, the Chan tradition seems to have undermined the cults of scriptures, images, and relics, by inventing a new tradition, whose central symbols were the Chan patriarch's mummy, the robe, and the bowl. That went hand in hand with a tendency to devalue the sacred significance of canonical writings.

Within the Chan tradition, the scriptures, images, and relics central to earlier Buddhist traditions were associated with the historical Buddha, who to some degree remained exotic and foreign to the Chinese. Instead, Chan Buddhists invented local traditions that were distinctly Chinese. In this process of reinvention and transformation, the mummified body of the Chinese Chan patriarch (partially) replaced the Buddha's relics. Similarly, the Chan patriarch's robes and bowls replaced the images of the Buddha, as they became sacred objects and authoritative vehicles of Dharma transmission. The localized authority of Chinese Buddhism thus to a large degree replaced the authority of Indian Buddhism. As that happened, the Buddhist monastic community perhaps found it a little easier to face a long-standing challenge on account of its foreign origin, which primarily came from the Confucian camp.

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CHAPTER 16

Nuns and Laywomen in East Asian Buddhism

Lori Meeks

Nuns and laywomen have played vital roles in the flourishing of Buddhism in East Asia, from the time of Buddhism's introduction in China through the present day. Early Western-language studies of East Asian Buddhism tended to focus almost exclusively on men, however, and especially on the "great thinkers" and "great texts" of elite monastic institutions. Because few Buddhist treatises authored by women survive, and because nuns have, for the most part, been barred from the hierarchies of elite monastic institutions, histories of Buddhism focused on scriptural exegesis, or on the biographies of those who wrote major commentaries or founded well-known monastic lineages, are limited in their ability to narrate the lives and experiences of Buddhist women.

To uncover the histories of Buddhist women, scholars must draw on a broader range of sources. One can certainly mine doctrinal sources for discussions of women, but these sources speak only to the ways in which the scriptural tradition conceptualized or imagined women. Mahāyāna sūtras popular in East Asia, texts such as the *Lotus Sūtra*, the *Amitābha Sūtras*, and the *Great Perfection of Wisdom*, contain passages that describe women as morally inferior, as soteriologically challenged, and as inhabiting impure bodies. As much recent scholarship has clarified, however, one cannot assume that female practitioners and devotees necessarily internalized these views of women, or that these ideas were central to their understanding of Buddhism.

In recent decades the use of interdisciplinary methods, combined with greater attention to non-doctrinal and extra-canonical sources, has helped illuminate the diverse roles of women in the history of East Asian Buddhism. Some of the sources that have proven most useful include narrative literature, poetry, hagiography, legal codes, and everyday historical documents, such as personal correspondence and records of payment or land transfer. The study of material objects, such as monuments and epigraphs, has also helped scholars gain a deeper understanding of the religious activities undertaken by nuns and laywomen.

The Establishment of Women's Monastic Communities in East Asia

China

It is not entirely clear when, exactly, Buddhist nuns first appeared in East Asia. In the *Da song seng shi lue* (Outline of Monastic History from the Great Song) the Song-period monk Zanning (919–1001) writes that China's first Buddhist nuns went forth (*chujia*) in the capital of Luoyang during the time of Emperor Ming (r. 58–75 CE) of the Eastern Han (25–220 CE) (T 54.237c). Scholars do not deem Zanning's account historically accurate, however, and later evidence of Buddhist nuns in China does not emerge in the historical record until the Six Dynasties period, when Buddhism gained a stronghold in China. During this period, which stretches from the fall of the Han in 220 CE to reunification under the Sui in 589 CE, many rulers became fervent devotees of Buddhism and few enforced strict limits on ordination. Temples and monasteries proliferated throughout the northern and southern kingdoms, and many people sought ordination. In the capital of Luoyang, for example, more than 1,300 monasteries had been established by the early sixth century. While some of these "monasteries" may have been small buildings housing only a couple of monks, these numbers still attest to the remarkable burgeoning of Buddhism during this time (Lewis 2009: 202–03).

Although far fewer in number than male monasteries, convents for women also blossomed during this period. Yang Xuanzhi's *Records of the Buddhist Temples of Luoyang* (ca. 547 CE) mentions the existence of Buddhist convents in that capital city, and the *Biqiuni zhuan* (Biographies of Buddhist Nuns, T 50, no. 2063), a collection of life narratives attributed to the monk Baochang (fl. early 6th c.), mentions about 50 convents. Most of the convents are associated with the capital cities of the various dynasties—Luoyang, Jiankang (now Nanjing), Jiangling, Pingcheng (now Datong), and Chang'an (now Xi'an)—but convents mentioned in the biographies extend as far as Gaochang (northwest of Dunhuang, close to Turpan), Chengdu, and Guangzhou.

Little is known about these early convents, but much can be inferred from the *Biqiuni zhuan*, which narrates the lives of 65 Buddhist nuns active between the time of the Eastern Jin (317–420) and the Liang (502–557). In its introduction, the *Biqiuni zhuan* declares its purpose: it seeks to record the lives of eminent Buddhist nuns so that others may model their own lives on the excellent virtuous of these women (Baochang, in Tsai 1994: 15). The text provides some insight, then, into the attributes that an early sixth-century monk found admirable in Buddhist nuns.

In general, the nuns featured in the *Biqiuni zhuan* are portrayed as having the same qualities for which great monks were celebrated. They are praised not only for their virtue and filial piety, but also for their intelligence, aptitude for learning, administrative skills, and meditation abilities. Baochang further describes these nuns as rigorously ascetic: many are said to have refused marriage, even in the face of great social pressure, to have delighted in rough clothing and austere, vegetarian diets, and to have made offerings of the flesh. Baochang treats these nuns both as holy women and as charismatic religious leaders. He also describes some nuns as having attracted large numbers of disciples, both lay and monastic, and he portrays many as having earned

the personal devotion of emperors, empresses, princes, royal ladies, governors, and other elites. He says that some were invited to the palaces of royalty to give lectures on the sūtras, to have been treated as the teacher of an emperor, and even to have performed rituals for members of the royalty.

According to the *Biqiuni zhuan*, the first Chinese woman to receive official training and ordination was Zhu Jingjian (ca. 292–361), who is said to have studied with a Chinese monk named Fashi. Although she was interested in taking full monastic vows, Fashi said that he did not have access to the rules of conduct (*vinaya*) for nuns, but that she could nonetheless receive a ten novice precepts from the monastic community. With the Kashmiri priest Zhishan as her preceptor, Jingjian took the ten novice precepts along with twenty-four other women. Zhishan subsequently returned to Kashmir, but the women, having established a convent in Luoyang, continued to practice under Jingjian's direction.

In 357, about forty years after Jingjian's initial going forth, the text continues, a Chinese monk managed to acquire a copy of the nuns' rules of the Mahāsāṃghika tradition. After the work was translated into Chinese, a foreign monk named Tanmo-jieduo prepared an ordination platform where Jingjian and her disciples could take the full bhikṣuṇī precepts. At this point, the narrative explains, a Chinese monk voiced opposition, citing the rule that nuns require dual ordination: that is, that they need to receive ordination from a group of ten fully ordained bhikṣuṇī before receiving ordination from the male monastic order. The community overturned the monk's objections, however, and continued with the single-sangha ordination of Jingjian and three others. Jingjian, the passage continues, is thus to be recognized as China's first bhikṣuṇī (Baochang, in Tsai: 17–19; T 50.934c).

The legality of single-sangha bhikṣuṇī ordination appears to have remained the source of some anxiety, however. According to a passage in the *Biqiuni zhuan*, for example, the nun Huiguo (ca. 364–433) questioned the Central Asian monk Guṇavarman (367–431) at length about the authenticity of bhikṣuṇī ordination in China. She explained that the first nuns in China, lacking access to a nuns' assembly, followed the example of the Buddha's aunt Mahāprajāpatī and became nuns by taking a single ordination from the male sangha. Guṇavarman is said to have reassured Huiguo, saying both that the precedent of Mahāprajāpatī was the correct one to follow and that the vinaya allows flexibility under extraordinary circumstances, such as those found in frontier countries (Baochang, in Tsai: 36–37).

The issue emerges yet again, in an even later passage in the *Biqiuni zhuan*. In the year 429, Buddhist nuns from Sri Lanka arrived in the capital city of Jiankang. A nun named Sengguo, included among the sixty-five luminaries profiled by the text, is said to have discussed the issue of the bhikṣuṇī ordination with these Sri Lankan nuns. Although the *Biqiuni zhuan* asserts yet again the validity of the earlier Chinese bhikṣuṇī ordinations that followed the precedent of Mahāprajāpatī, it goes on to tell of how Sengguo yearned for an additional ordination, this one including ten bhikṣuṇī from a foreign lineage. Guṇavarman, the same foreign monk mentioned in the passage above, reappears in this passage. Here he tells Sengguo that while an additional ordination is by no means necessary, it would in fact bring extra merit upon its recipients, and would therefore be a felicitous action. Some four years later (after the Sri Lankan nuns had

learned Chinese), the text explains, more than three hundred women took the *bhikṣuṇī* ordination a second time, this time receiving the precepts from both the foreign *bhikṣuṇī* order and the monks' order (Baochang, in Tsai: 53–55).

Although it is not difficult to imagine that some of the details in the *Biqiuni zhuan* may represent exaggerations, evidence from other sources, including materials from the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago, corroborates its general image of flourishing nuns' communities. Katsuura Noriko, in her comprehensive studies of nuns in East Asia, has divided the nuns' communities' of the Six Dynasties period into two dominant traditions: that of the northern kingdoms, and that of the southern kingdoms. Nuns in the northern kingdoms, she writes, were active primarily as the private teachers and ritualists of royal families and aristocrats. In the southern kingdoms, by contrast, nuns were active not only at court and among aristocrats, but among ordinary people as well (Katsuura 2004).

It was during the southern dynasties of the Liu Song, Qi, Liang, and Chen (420–589), Katsuura explains, that Chinese nuns' communities gained the stability necessary to provide women with opportunities for extensive doctrinal study. Indeed, she describes the late fifth through sixth centuries as a period of great learning for nuns of the southern dynasties. In its descriptions of nuns of the southern dynasties, the *Biqiuni zhuan* tells of women who memorized great numbers of sūtras, lectured at court, studied with famous male teachers, grasped Mahāyāna truths, and attained enlightenment. The Liu Song dynasty (420–479) even established a government bureau of nuns' affairs and appointed nuns to official, salaried bureaucratic positions. This system, which mirrors that established during Japan's Nara period (710–794), appears to have been quite unusual in China, however; it is not clear that other southern dynasties instituted similar practices, and neither the Sui (581–618) nor the Tang (618–907) offered nuns bureaucratic office (Katsuura 2004: 15–16).

Nuns of the Sui and Tang may not have received the same level of government patronage enjoyed by the nuns of the Liu Song, but sources from these later periods continue to attest to the vibrancy of nuns' activities as Buddhist teachers and practitioners. At the religious site of Bao shan (near Anyang in Henan Province), for example, nuns continued to participate in communal ascetic and devotional practices well into the Tang period (Adamek 2009a and 2009b). Seventh-century epigraphs for holy women at Bao shan mention that nuns there undertook meditation and visualization practices, rigorous asceticism, and serious scriptural study (*vinaya* texts are mentioned, as are the *Vimalakīrti sūtra*, the *Wuliagshou jing*, and the *Śrīmālā sūtra*). Some nuns, such as the Dharma Master Puxiang, are described as having attracted a large following of disciples, both ordained and lay, and some are further portrayed as having requested exposure-burials (Adamek 2009b: 45–50).

As Adamek explains, each of the memorials for deceased nuns at the Bao shan site was inscribed alongside a niche, in which a skillfully carved portrait statue of the nun would be placed. That the community at Bao shan was able to make the investments of wealth and time required for these large-scale memorials for holy women reflects the strength of the nuns' sangha there (Adamek 2009a: 2). Material evidence from the Longmen Grottoes also speaks to the vitality of nuns in the Tang period. Nuns were among the site's many pilgrims, and they commissioned a number of shrines there

(McNair 2007: 133–35). Nuns are also known to have commissioned art at other sites, such as Dunhuang, during the late Six Dynasties, Sui, and Tang periods.

Although the Tang did not make nuns regular employees of the state, as the Liu Song did, nuns continued to maintain visibility throughout the courts of the period. Most Tang emperors, including Yizong (r. 859–873), who ruled near the end of the dynasty, maintained palace chapels (*naidaochang*) for both monks and nuns. Palace convents provided spaces in which nuns patronized by the emperor and the court could practice and teach. The convents also appear to have housed retired, divorced, or widowed palace women, such as imperial consorts and palace maidens (Chen 2004: 105–56).

Korea

Buddhism is said to have entered the Korean peninsula during the Three Kingdoms period. According to official records, Buddhism was introduced to the kingdoms of Koguryō (37 BCE–618 CE), Paekche (18 BCE–660 CE), and Silla (57 BCE–935 CE) in 372, 384, and 527, respectively, though most scholars believe that knowledge of Buddhism had spread to all three regions as early as the third century CE (Cho 2011: 16–17; see also the chapter by Sem Vermeersch in this volume). Both of Korea's earliest official histories, the *Samguk sagi* (12th c.) and *Samguk yusa* (13th c.), mention that nuns were active in all three kingdoms. Paekche came to be known for its rigorous tradition of Vinaya studies, which included studies of nuns' *vinayas*, and the kingdom of Silla granted nuns prominence by creating the special government position of Toyunarang, which appears to have designated the "head of bhikṣuṇī affairs" (Cho 2011: 18, 40f9).

Neither the *Samguk yusa* nor the *Samguk sagi* offers a comprehensive overview of nuns' orders in early Korea, but those fascicles that deal with Buddhism do mention women devotees—and nuns—with great frequency. The patterns found in such passages may provide insight into larger social patterns or attitudes useful for understanding women's roles in early Korean Buddhism.

According to the *Samguk yusa*, the first known example of a Buddhist nun in the Three Kingdoms was that of Lady Sa, a third-century woman of Silla who converted to Buddhism after her brother Morye hosted the missionary monk Ado. *Samguk yusa* relates that Ado, a Koguryo man who came to Silla to spread the Buddhist teachings, was initially rejected by the Silla king Mich'u. After Ado saved the king's daughter from a sudden and inexplicable illness, however, King Mich'u agreed to build a temple for the monk. Morye's sister, the narrative continues, became a nun and took up residence in a convent that she commissioned (*Samguk yusa*: 157).

Buddhism is said to have waned soon after Ado's death, however, and according to the *Samguk yusa*, the faith did not begin to flourish in Silla until the mid-sixth century, under the leadership of King Pophung (r. 514–540). King Pophung is said to have been such a devoted follower of Buddhism that he gave up his own crown in order to take vows as a monk. Appointing himself the main priest of the newly built temple, Hongnyun-sa, Pophung "made temple slaves of his royal relatives." His queen also took orders, shaving her head and living as a nun in Yonghung-sa, a temple of her own

founding (Iryōn, Ha, and Grafton, trans. 2008: 165–66). According to the *Samguk sagi*, the Silla government began allowing women to take ordination as nuns in 544, a decree that undoubtedly helped facilitate the growth of the nuns' order (Kim Pusik, Shultz, and Kang, trans. 2012: 123).

The *Samguk yusa*'s biography of "Great National Priest" Chajang Yulsa (fl. 7th c.) describes how he increased the rigor of doctrinal studies at "the five monasteries and nunneries." These words of praise imply, of course, the existence of official state nunneries in seventh-century Silla. Indeed, according to the same biography, Buddhism had grown so popular during this time that "eight or nine of every ten families in Silla wanted to have their sons and daughters become monks and nuns, and the number increased yearly" (Iryōn, Ha, and Grafton, trans. 2008: 271).

Much evidence suggests that the Three Kingdoms gave rise to scholarly robust and spiritually fervent communities of nuns. Notably, nuns counted among the missionaries dispatched from the Korean peninsula to Japan in the sixth century. In the Paekche mission of 577, King Widōk sent two monks, one nun, and several Buddhist artisans. Widōk sent more nuns to Japan when he dispatched another group of missionaries in 588, and he also allowed a small group of Japanese women to return with his ambassadors in order to study Buddhism in Paekche (Best 2006: 155–56). The Japanese monk Ennin (794–864) also mentions in his record of his pilgrimage to China that Korean nuns were active in the Shandong area (Cho 2011: 20). Multiple records also suggest that many Korean nuns were known for their powers of healing. Fascicle 7 of the *Samguk yusa* tells of a nun who used laughter to heal the celebrated Silla scholar-monk Kyōnghūng (fl. late seventh–early eighth c.) when he was suffering with a grave illness (Cho 2011: 19). The *Three Jewels* also reports that Pōmmyōng (Jpn. Hōmyō), a Paekche nun residing in Japan, healed Fujiwara no Kamatari (614–669) with efficacious recitations of the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra* in 665 (Kamens 1988: 353).

The *Samguk yusa* mentions many cases of women who supported Buddhism by patronizing monks; commissioning Buddhist rites, images, or temples; or even encouraging their own sons to become monks. The *Samguk sagi*, which tends to focus on stories of royal and elite women, reports that it became common for women of high birth to take the vows of nunhood if and when they found themselves widowed (Cho 2011: 19).

These works are also suggestive of broader attitudes toward women and sexuality among Buddhist monastics of the Three Kingdoms period. Several passages from the *Samguk yusa* involve married "monks," for example, a detail suggesting that married clerics may not have been uncommon in early Korean Buddhism. In most of these stories, the "monks" live in private homes rather than monasteries and work as farmers or artisans. Although they live with women, they are often praised for giving up their connubial attachments to pursue higher levels of spiritual attainment.

In Fascicle 83, "Two Saints of the White Moon Mountains," *Samguk yusa* narrates the story of Nohil Paduk and Tal-tal Pak-Pak, two young men who practice Buddhism while remaining married. Eventually both men determine that their spiritual progress would be even greater if they were to break with lay life completely, and so they leave their homes and wives to live as mountain ascetics (Iryōn, Ha, and Grafton, trans. 2008: 211–12). Another story related in Fascicle 116 tells of a monk named Kwangdok who lives a sexually pure life with his wife, who is later revealed to be one of the

nineteen incarnations of Kwanum (Avalokiteśvara), the bodhisattva of compassion (Iryōn, Ha, and Grafton, trans. 2008: 211–12, 310–11).

While the *Samguk yusa* reflects the existence of Buddhist rhetoric that denigrates the female body as alternately seductive and impure, it describes many women as manifestations of Avalokiteśvara; furthermore, it suggests that monks should not place self-righteous adherence to the precepts above the basic Buddhist requirement to show compassion to sentient beings in need. At a later point in the narrative of the monks Nohil Paduk and Tal-tal Pak-Pak, for example, we learn of a beautiful young woman who visits their mountain abodes some years after they leave their wives. Pak-pak, frightened by his strong desire for the woman, turns her away when she asks to rest in his shelter. Paduk, however, grants her entrance, even though he is aware that the sacred space of his practice “must not be defiled by women” (Iryōn, Ha, and Grafton, trans. 2008: 213).

Not only does Paduk allow the beautiful young woman into his shelter, thereby making his place of practice vulnerable to both temptation and ritual impurity, but he also maintains equanimity when she announces that she is about to give birth, an act that will further pollute his cell. In helping this woman, then, Paduk registers his willingness to bear impurity for the sake of helping another sentient being. For this compassion he is rewarded handsomely: after putting Paduk through many trials, the woman announces that she is, in fact, the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, and she transforms him into a manifestation of Maitreya (Iryōn, Ha, and Grafton, trans. 2008: 213–14).

Another warning against strict adherence to purity protocols can be found in Fascicle 85. According to this passage, the famous Silla monk Wōnhyo (617–686) once met a woman who was washing her menstrual cloths in a stream of water under a bridge. Calling out to her, he asked (“in jest,” the passage says), for a drink of the water. Ignoring purity protocols, the woman offers Wōnhyo some of the “unclean” water, and he drinks it without hesitation. Just a couple of paragraphs later, it is revealed that this woman, too, was an incarnation of Avalokiteśvara (Iryōn, Ha, and Grafton, trans. 2008: 218).

Although these miracle tales are limited in their usefulness as historical sources, their handling of androcentric doctrines and practices—such as ritual prohibitions warning holy men against contact with sexual temptation, childbirth, and menstruation—are worthy of note. For while these passages reflect awareness of such teachings, they clearly suggest that men who are *truly* adept in their spiritual practices will not grow attached to such prohibitions, and will instead be cognizant of the possibility that Avalokiteśvara will manifest in a female form. The *Samguk yusa*’s approach to these matters may, in fact, reflect the tension between growing knowledge of the androcentric doctrines embedded in Buddhist texts, on the one hand, and the high esteem in which nuns were held in early Buddhist communities of the Three Kingdoms, on the other.

By the Koryō period (918–1392) public opportunities for nuns had narrowed, as women had been excluded from the examination system that certified monks, and from public posts and titles. But bhikṣuṇī ordinations continued, and women also remained ardent lay supporters of Buddhism, frequently commissioning the copying of sūtras,

monks' trips to China, and other meritorious activity. Numerous male masters mention such female disciples in their writings. Additionally, it became increasingly common during this period for women to become nuns in their retirement years, especially when widowed. As nunhood became more common, some women opted for unofficial or private ordinations; that is, for ordinations that did not follow the usual requirements of state and sangha (Cho 2011: 20–21; Kim Young Mi 2011: 46).

Japan

According to various records, Buddhism was officially introduced to the Japanese archipelago in the sixth century (see the chapter by Heather Blair in this volume). One prominent theory cites the year 538, and another 552, but most point to the sixth century (Katsuura 2003: 3). As many scholars have noted, however, material evidence suggests that knowledge of Buddhism had penetrated the islands even earlier. The *Nihon Shoki* (Chronicles of Japan) reports that Japan's first clerics—Zenshin, Zenzō, and Ezen—were women. They went forth as nuns in 584 and then, in 588, were given permission to study the nuns' vinaya in Paekche.

Women played a large role in the early flourishing of Japanese Buddhism, a period that stretched from the late sixth century through the late eighth. During the early seventh century, many monasteries and nunneries were built throughout the Kinai region near the capital of Heijō-kyō (Nara). According to the *Nihon Shoki*, nearly half of the early clergy were female: an entry dated to the year 624 reports that 569 women had gone forth as nuns and 816 men as monks. By the late seventh century, it had become common for monasteries and nunneries to be built as paired sets. This trend stretched as far south as Kyūshū, where a nunnery was built alongside the great Kanzeon Temple. The construction of monastery–nunnery pairs continued through the eighth century. The practice was exemplified in the 741 decree of Emperor Shōmu (r. 724–749) and his Queen Consort Kōmyō, which ordered that a state monastery–nunnery pair be erected in each of the country's provinces (Katsuura 2003: 9–12).

Utilizing *mokkan*, or documents written on thin wooden tablets, as well as the *Man'yōshū* (Ten Thousands Leaves Collection) anthology of poetry and documents from the Shōsōin collection, Katsuura has demonstrated that nuns were active both at court and in the households of aristocrats during Buddhism's initial establishment in the Japanese archipelago. These sources reveal that aristocratic families regularly employed monks and nuns in their private households. According to the *Man'yōshū*, for example, the Ōtomo family employed a Sillan nun named Rigan (d. 735) for more than twenty years (MYS: 2.460–461). Katsuura speculates that Rigan had been hired to educate the family's children—especially the daughters—to heal illness through the chanting of sūtras, and to perform services for the dead.

Katsuura's close study of the Nagayaō-ke *mokkan* (wooden tablets) reveals that household nuns may have been more numerous than household monks; this collection contains more records of payments delivered to nuns (*ama* and *nikō*) than to all male clergy combined. In addition to demonstrating the frequency with which aristocratic families of the eighth century employed both monks and nuns in their households,

mokkan also show that the court regularly asked nuns to perform alongside monks in the imperial household. One *mokkan* dating to the year 736 marks a payment made to thirty nuns for their service at court. Documents from the Shōsōin collection further illuminate the degree to which nuns were respected at court and within aristocratic households during the eighth century: in numerous examples, nuns are praised above monks for their ability to chant sūtras and *dhāraṇīs*, for the clarity of their chanting voices, and for their mastery of calligraphy (Katsuura 2000: 70–72, 81–83; Katsuura 2003: 16).

These sources suggest that Buddhist nuns of seventh- and eighth-century Japan were active participants in a larger, regional culture of household clerics. As Katsuura points out, the *Biqiuni zhuan* (discussed above) mentions numerous Chinese cases of Buddhist nuns employed as “family teachers” (*menshi*) or “mother-teachers” (*mushi*) (see, for example, T 50.942b, 928a) in aristocratic and royal households. Examples of nuns from the Korean peninsula who worked as household nuns in Japan are also evident in early Japanese records. In addition to the case of the Sillan nun Rigan, who worked for the Ōtomo family in the eighth century, many sources also mention the Paekche nun Pōmmyōng, who is said to have healed Fujiwara no Kamatari in the seventh century. As was also the case in the kingdoms of the Liu Song (5th c.) and in sixth-century Silla, the government of Nara Japan created official government posts for nuns. Although lesser than those of state monk-bureaucrats, these official nuns (*kanni*) received stipends as government bureaucrats and were commissioned to chant sūtras for state protection.

Another relevant factor in the case of early Japanese Buddhism is the presence of politically powerful royal women and even female emperors. Queen-Consort Kōmyō, the consort and co-ruler of Emperor Shōmu, is known for her patronage of nuns and nunneries, as is her daughter, the female emperor Kōken who returned to the throne, after one reign from 748 to 759, for a second reign as Emperor Shōtoku (r. 764–70). Kōmyō and her daughter both kept many nuns in their service, and both were important patrons of Hokkeji, the most visible and influential nunnery of the period. Kōmyō is said to have founded Hokkeji by converting her former residence into a temple in the mid-740s.

Perhaps as important as their patronage of Buddhist nuns was the degree to which royal women helped shape the reception of Buddhist doctrine. Although the evidence remains somewhat unclear on this point, Katsuura has shown that Kōken-Shōtoku, in particular, promoted Buddhist texts that portrayed women in a positive light. Records indicate that Kōken-Shōtoku had her scribes copy out the *Hōshō darani* and the *Saishōōkyō* as a set. Both texts discuss the “expedient means of a female body,” a teaching stating that bodhisattvas sometimes manifest themselves in women’s bodies in order to save sentient beings. Kōken-Shōtoku may have been self-consciously emulating Tang China’s female emperor Wu Zetian (624–705). As China’s only female emperor, Wu is known to have justified her reign through well-selected passages from Buddhist and Daoist texts. She claimed, for example, that she was a female-bodied manifestation of Maitreya (Katsuura 2003: 22–23).

This strategy of emphasizing textual passages portraying women as the manifestations of deities—rather than impure or soteriologically challenged beings—is in many

ways similar to the trend noticeable in the *Samguk yusa*. While the Korean authors of the *Samguk yusa* were clearly aware of Buddhist texts and practices that regarded women's bodies as sources of temptation and defilement, they chose to emphasize stories in which women were revealed to be manifestations of bodhisattvas, beings whose wisdom and compassion surpassed that of the monks around them. Although androcentric Buddhist teachings were not widespread among the populace in eighth-century Japan, monks and nuns in court service would have had scholarly knowledge of doctrinal passages that disparaged women (Katsuura 2003: 23–25). Highlighting the positive reading that bodhisattvas commonly manifested themselves in female bodies, then, was likely a conscious choice.

For reasons that are not completely clear, the Japanese nuns' order faced a series of devastating blows in the late eighth century. The death of Kōken-Shōtoku, who would be Japan's last female emperor until the early modern period, may have played a role in the sudden decline of the nuns' order, but other trends are also noticeable. Chinese vinaya master Jianzhen's (Ganjin, 688–763) introduction of a monks' ordination lineage in 754 represents another possible factor in the decline of the nuns' order. Growing concerns about the legitimacy of Japan's ordination lineage led the Japanese court to invite Jianzhen to Japan in the mid-8th century. After five failed attempts at safe passage, Jianzhen finally arrived with a party of 24 in the year 754. He took up residence at Tōdaiji, where he established an ordination platform in accordance with the rules of the *Four-Part Vinaya* and began re-ordaining Japanese monks.

Since it could not be confirmed that the earliest Japanese monks had received ordination from ten continental monks, it was believed that Japanese monks were not qualified to serve as legitimate witnesses and preceptors in ordination ceremonies. Jianzhen thus used his own disciples, brought from China, to serve in the ceremonies in which he re-ordained Japanese monks (Bowring 2005: 86–88). Most, if not all, monks recognized by the Japanese state were re-ordained during this time. Unfortunately, Jianzhen did not re-ordain nuns. He had brought three nuns with him from China, but ten would have been required to stage ordination platforms for women. It is not known whether there were attempts to bring additional nuns to Japan from China in order to re-ordain Japanese nuns, but, as Paul Groner has pointed out, this episode must have raised concerns about the authenticity of the nuns' order (Groner 2002: 69–75).

The last known record of nuns performing at an official state event dates to the year 773, when nuns were commissioned to serve at a memorial rite for Kōken-Shōtoku, who had died in 770 (*Shoku Nihongi*: Hoki 4/7). By the early ninth century, the state was no longer sponsoring official ordination platforms for women, and bureaucrat-nun posts (*kanni*) had disappeared. Women were no longer represented in the institutional hierarchies of Japanese Buddhism, and most large-scale nunneries were converted into monasteries or absorbed into the branch-temple systems of local monasteries (Ushiyama 1989: 45).

In the early ninth century, Tendai founder Saichō (767–822) campaigned to establish a new ordination platform that would ordain monks with the 48 bodhisattva precepts of the *Fanwang jing* (Brahma Net Scripture) rather than the 250 precepts of the *Four-Part Vinaya*. This new method of ordination, approved by the court soon after Saichō's death, eventually became the most common method of ordination for Japanese

monks. Although this ordination method did not require the ten witnesses from the continent the way earlier ordinations had, both known attempts to create bodhisattva precept ordination platforms that would allow women to gain status as full-fledged members of the Tendai order ended in failure (Meeks 2010a: 96–102).

Despite the abrupt cessation of nuns' ordination in early Japan, some nunneries remained open to privately ordained women, a group that grew exponentially over the course of the Heian period (794–1185). As the public status of nuns diminished during the Heian period, the custom of taking private vows late in life, often as a mode of retirement, became increasingly common. This practice, which was noticeable in China and Korea as well, is evidenced in early Japan but becomes more prominent with time. Queen Consort Kōmyō's mother, Tachibana Michiyo, is said to have taken private ordination as a nun in order to bring healing to her lord, Emperor Genmei (661–721).

In early Japan, taking the tonsure as a means of creating merit for the healing of a loved one was a common practice, but as Pure Land beliefs spread during the Heian period, many took private vows as a means of preparing themselves for an efficacious death. Early Pure Land teachings, such as those of Genshin (942–1017), held that one must spend years preparing for the kind of auspicious and disciplined death that would make birth in the Pure Land possible. Many elites of the Heian period—men and women—planned to devote their retirement years to ascetic practices that would allow them to achieve just such a death. By the eleventh century, taking vows as a privately ordained nun had become a standard part of the lifecycle of an educated woman (Meeks 2010b).

Another trend common throughout East Asia was for women to take vows following the death of a husband or lord. Empress Wu is herself known to have taken vows as a nun following the death of Emperor Taizong (r. 626–649), whom she had served as a consort. She was called back to court after her tonsure, however, this time to serve as a consort of Emperor Gaozong (r. 650–683). The practice of having the consorts and concubines of an emperor take Buddhist vows following his death was likely understood as a softer form of *xunsi*, or following one's lord in death. In much earlier periods of Chinese history, consorts had been killed upon the death of their masters. Requiring a consort to become a nun following the death of her lord was a means of ensuring her loyalty to the deceased.

If Empress Wu's example is at all representative, such customs did not always have the binding power that one might expect. Still, the trope of the loyal widow-nun is a compelling one that gained ground throughout East Asia. The *Samguk sagi* mentions many royal women who took vows following the deaths of their husbands. In China and Korea, the widow-nun's loyalty was measured largely in terms of sexual chastity, whereas household loyalty (rather than sexual fidelity) appears to have been prized in Japan. In Japanese examples stress is often placed on the ritual services that widow-nuns provided.

In cases from Heian Japan and later, women who became widow-nuns usually took private vows—they did not, after all, have access to official ordination platforms—and dedicated themselves to rites meant to help their deceased husbands navigate the after-life successfully. Narrative literature from the period abounds with tales of women who copied sūtras, commissioned rites and images, and chanted sūtras regularly as a means

of helping their deceased husbands survive their interviews with the ten kings of hell and achieve an advantageous rebirth. Although one can also find examples of widowers who became monks following the deaths of their wives, the more common pattern is that of a widow who cares for her husband's postmortem needs following his death. The expectation became so ubiquitous in the Heian and early Kamakura periods that journals from this time commonly mention, when describing a soldier's last words to his wife or lover, that he wanted her to say prayers for his salvation should he die on the battlefield.

Larger Trends in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods

In general, nuns in East Asia appear to have enjoyed greater social status and institutional support during the periods of the Six Dynasties, Three Kingdoms, and Asuka and Nara regimes, than in later periods of pre-modern history. It was during these early periods that we have greatest evidence of nuns receiving official state posts and enjoying state patronage, although there are, of course, important exceptions. Over the course of the medieval and early modern periods—as these designations are applied to the study of Japanese history, roughly corresponding to the 1185–1868 period—the opportunities granted to nuns ebbed and flowed as political conditions of the state and sangha changed, as larger discourses on marriage and family changed, and as particular teachings took root.

Although nuns remained important throughout East Asian history—and experienced, as we shall see below, many significant revivals—the relative prominence that nuns appear to have enjoyed during Buddhism's initial rise there did not endure unchallenged. While it is difficult to pinpoint direct causes, we might make several observations here. First, nuns appear to have fared best in smaller and more fragmented states. Many anthropologists and political scientists have observed that regimes that succeed in consolidating and centralizing political power are typically committed to the regulation of gender roles and the control of women's bodies. To a certain degree, we can observe that women—and nuns—lost political status as the states of East Asia moved toward larger, more centralized bureaucracies.

A related point, of course, would be the coalescence and spread of what might be called Confucian family values. While it is difficult to speak of any generalized Confucian views of the family, as Confucianism took on many regional variations and underwent great change over time, Confucian ideas about marriage, womanly duty, and the necessity of offspring did come to shape women's engagement with Buddhism in East Asia. To a large degree, Confucian values worked to discourage women from pursuing Buddhism as a lifelong profession. Many critics of Buddhism in China and Korea, for example, felt that marriage and motherhood were central duties to be fulfilled by all women.

Buddhist texts—such as the *Biqiuni zhuan*—often praised women who wanted to pursue the monastic profession from a young age by courageously refusing marriage, but outside critics typically portrayed such women as unfilial. The celebrated Neo-Confucian synthesizer Zhu Xi (1130–1200), for example, strongly opposed nunhood

as an option for women, and he criminalized female renunciation when he served as assistant magistrate in Fujian Province during the 1154–1157 period (Hsieh 2002: 179). Another Chinese official, Hao Tao, worked to remove nuns and nunneries from Nanjing in the 1530s (Grant 2009: 9), and in 1764 the Qing Dynasty is said to have forbidden women under the age of forty from taking up residence in Buddhist nunneries (Grant 2009: 9, DeVido 2010: 12). Officials of Korea's anti-Buddhist Chosŏn state (1392–1910) also believed that women's renunciation defied the basic laws of Confucian order. In one memorial, they even suggested that a drought had been caused by the existence of never-married nuns in their 30s and 40s, who disrupted the "harmonious energy" of the "human world" (Jung 2011: 156). The Chosŏn state even went so far as to abolish nunneries in 1661 (Jorgensen 2011: 131).

Secondly, nuns appear to have lost status as androcentric Buddhist doctrines gained ground. Two teachings commonly cited together are those of the Five Obstacles (Ch. *wuzhang*, Jp. *goshō* or *itsutsu no sawari*) and the Thrice Following (Ch. *sancong*, Jp. *sanjū*). The first, popularized in East Asia due in large part to its appearance in the Devadatta chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra*, holds that there are five ranks in the Buddhist cosmos, including that of a *buddha*, that cannot be attained in a female body. The second, which appears not only in the *Lotus Sūtra* and other Buddhist texts, but also in the *Laws of Manu*, as well as in Confucian classics, states that the fate of a woman is to be dependent upon men throughout her lifetime: in childhood, she must obey her father; in middle age, her husband; and in old age, her sons. Another related concept, "transformation into a male body" (Ch. *biancheng nanzi*, Jp. *henjō nanshi*), referred to the idea that women needed to acquire male bodies in order to reach Buddhahood. Many women were taught that the accumulation of good merit would help them achieve a male body, perhaps in the next life.

In general, the decline in the institutional status of nuns in East Asia corresponds chronologically to the popularization of these androcentric concepts. It is difficult to determine why, exactly, these androcentric concepts gained popularity when they did. It may be that knowledge of these concepts spread as clerics and scholars gained increasingly deeper knowledge of Buddhist doctrines. This is a simple answer, but as many Buddhologists have noted, the overwhelmingly large and complex Buddhist canon was impossible to master in the space of a few generations. As Buddhism spread to new areas, local scholars and converts spent generations, if not centuries, interpreting, categorizing, and making sense of the tradition. Finer points of doctrine—including teachings on the place and salvation of women—may have been of lesser interest as Buddhism was gaining ground in new areas. As scholastic monasticism took root, however, knowledge of androcentric theories grew, as did interest in them. Still, various groups chose to emphasize or deemphasize such teachings in particular contexts.

Finally, another related trend that damaged women's practice of Buddhism in East Asia was the rise in popularity of theories of female bodily pollution. Esoteric forms of Buddhism, in particular, came to adopt ritual protocols that required ascetic practitioners to avoid various forms of pollution, many of which related to the female body. Menstrual blood was considered polluting, as was childbirth. The exact provenance of these theories, or how they came to be emphasized in certain forms of Buddhist practice, requires further study. Although warnings about the polluted nature of the female

body appear in various forms in Brahmanical, Daoist, and Buddhist texts, local manifestations of these protocols diverged considerably. Moreover, as Katsuura has shown, beliefs about the polluting nature of the female body were not merely religious in nature; these ideas were also spread through legal treatises, and in medical and pharmaceutical texts.

In the *Laws of Manu*, religious adepts are warned to avoid looking upon, talking with, or eating food touched by a menstruating woman. Similar taboos were in place in Qin and Han China. Menstruating women, or those who had recently given birth or had a miscarriage, were not allowed to attend ancestral sacrifices; men who were purifying themselves in order to carry out sacrifices were also told to avoid pregnant and menstruating women, who would bring defilement upon them (Liu 2009: 910–11, 884). Narratives from the *Samguk yusa* of Korea also reveal an awareness of such taboos. As related above, the narrative about the monk Paduk tells of how he allowed a woman to give birth in his cell, despite the polluting nature of the act. A *Samguk yusa* narrative about Wŏnhyo, also related above, tells of how he drank water sullied by menstrual blood. Both of these narratives point to an awareness of the principle that menstruation and childbirth stood to defile holy men. In Japan, *nyonin kekkai*, which literally referred to sacred precincts that forbade the entrance of women, were established at some major mountaintop monastic centers as early as the tenth century. The practice grew in popularity over the centuries and was enforced atop many sacred mountains by the late medieval period.

There has been much debate over whether *nyonin kekkai* was based upon a continental precedent. Many Japanese researchers have held that the custom was unique to Japan, but given the existence of similar pollution taboos in early China and Korea, it is likely that an analogue of *nyonin kekkai* existed on the continent as well. In Japan, the spread of pollution taboos eventually rendered it impossible for women to receive monastic training at the most important Buddhist monastic centers. The Shingon and Tendai institutions, which rose to great power from the late ninth and tenth centuries onward, were both centered atop mountains that forbade women physical access. As these institutions grew to become centers of Buddhist orthodoxy in Japan, their exclusion of women had far-reaching consequences.

Despite the obstacles represented by the consolidation of patriarchal regimes, increased knowledge of doctrinal androcentrism, and the growth of gender-based pollution discourse, nuns' communities did persist throughout East Asia. Moreover, even as the political visibility of fully ordained nuns waned, the number of laywomen devotees and self-styled or privately ordained nuns increased. Conditions may have made it more difficult for women to pursue nunhood as a profession, but as Buddhism spread it continued to appeal to larger and larger numbers of women.

In both China and Korea, official nuns' ordination lineages are thought to have continued throughout the centuries. In Japan a new ordination lineage for nuns was created in the thirteenth century, with the help of Eison (1201–1290), a vinaya-revivalist who, much like his eighth-century ancestors, sought to re-establish vinaya orthodoxy in Japan. As part of his effort to create a more authentic Buddhist order, Eison was eager to ordain women at all levels, including that of *bhikṣuṇī*, for he was aware that continental monastic orders were not limited to men but included women

as well. Eison and his colleagues began ordaining women in the 1240s, and their lineages remained important for centuries (Meeks 2010a).

During the medieval and early modern periods, patronage and pilgrimage became mainstays of women's Buddhist practice. Many women became devotees of particular monks, commonly seeking private training, commissioning special rites, or funding monastic activities. Throughout East Asia we can also find countless examples of women raising funds for the copying or printing of sūtras, the sculpting of Buddhist images, or the erections of temples. While aristocratic or royal women sometimes covered such expenses independently, less privileged women commonly banded together, pooling their resources to create merit collectively.

In general, patronage and pilgrimage practices enabled women to engage closely with the Buddhist tradition, and to make significant contributions to it. In the fourteenth century, for example, ladies from Korea's Koryŏ dynasty who had been married to high officials of Yuan China played a central role in promoting Korean Buddhism there. Not only did these women bring Koryŏ monks to the Yuan court, but they also sponsored the establishment of new temples in the Yuan capital (Puggioni 2011: 69–83). Women's patronage of Buddhism also helped keep the tradition alive during the Chosŏn dynasty, when anti-Buddhist state policies posed tremendous challenges for monks and nuns. And to mention just one more example, the seventeenth-century burgeoning of China's Linji Chan tradition was also heavily indebted to the support of female laywomen.

At times, however, women's patronage of Buddhism was viewed with skepticism. In anti-Buddhist Chosŏn Korea, for example, the state commonly complained that male and female clerics were mixing too freely at monasteries, and in some cases women were punished for what was seen as unseemly fraternization with monks (Jorgensen 2011: 122–23). In Kamakura-period Japan, too, the journals of courtiers and monks warn against close alliances between female patrons and male monks, but harsh punishments were rare.

Female pilgrims, too, were sometimes viewed with suspicion. Much like the practice of patronage, pilgrimage gave women the opportunity to interact with the public world, and with male intellectuals, to an extent that would have been unusual in the everyday spheres of women's lives. Throughout much of East Asian history, the movements of women, especially elite women, were closely monitored. In late imperial China, for example, women were taught to stay in the inner quarters of the household, and in early modern Japan the state made it difficult for women to acquire papers necessary for travel. The religious aims of pilgrimage, however, often gave women the justification they needed to plan trips and to meet with individuals and groups outside their own households.

Pilgrimage to holy mountains, and to temples known for their efficacious icons, talismans, or rites, were a mainstay of Buddhist lay practice throughout East Asia, and records suggest that women helped keep pilgrimage routes thriving. In addition to acting as pilgrims, women sometimes worked along such routes. In medieval Japan, for example, women commonly served as informal tour guides at urban temples, took on part-time work gathering flowers or other offerings, or worked as spirit-mediums or entertainers. Many also ran inns for pilgrims, and would use their extra income to commission Buddhist images or rites.

But even while the majority of Buddhist women focused on lay practices during the medieval and early modern periods, nuns' communities persisted as well. Of particular note are the many cases of Chan (also Kor. Sŏn or Jp. Zen) nuns whose masters acknowledged their experiences of enlightenment. In China, nuns flourished especially during periods of Chan's ascendancy, namely, in the Northern and Southern Song (960–1279) and during the seventeenth-century revival of the Linji lineage. Scholars have speculated that laywomen's patronage of these monks encouraged both inclusionary doctrinal rhetoric and more open attitudes toward nuns.

As Miriam Levering has pointed out, a 1021 census reports a surprisingly large number of nuns in Song China: 61,240. The same census includes 397,615 monks, meaning that nuns represented just over 13% of the monastic population at the time. Though still a minority, this number is larger than one might expect, especially given the longstanding tendency for historians and scholars to focus almost entirely on the writings and activities of male monks (Levering 2002: 188). Over the course of the Song period, however, the Chan establishment slowly came to grant women a place, however small, in its teachings and institutions. Chan's gradual inclusion of women is reflected in the genealogical histories of the tradition. While the 1004 *Jingde Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, which includes biographies of some 950 monks, includes the narrative of only one nun, subsequent genealogical histories included more women: the 1183 *Outline of the Linked Flames* includes biographies of two abbesses, both of whom are recognized as dharma heirs of Dahui Zonggao (1089–1163), and the 1204 *Jia-tai Universal Record of the Flame* presents sixteen women as members of the Linji lineage (Levering 2002: 188–89).

Moreover, surviving records indicate both that Dahui trained his women disciples, however few they may have been, using the same methods that he employed with male disciples. Prominent women disciples such as Miaodao and Miaocong (1095–1170) underwent rigorous training that included *gong'an* meditation and interviews, sophisticated written exchanges, and textual study. They became esteemed masters who attracted their own students, managed their own institutions, and delivered their own, often quite erudite, sermons (Levering 2002). Few teachings from Song-period Chan women survive, though records do mention cases of women who wrote out their teachings or who had others record them (Hsieh 2002: 159).

Nuns also flourished, perhaps on a larger scale, during the seventeenth-century revival of Linji Chan. During this period of social and political upheaval, Beata Grant suggests, men and women were “jolted” from “traditional gender categories” and members of the gentry class, male and female, began to view Buddhist renunciation as an “acceptable, and even honorable, option” (Grant 2009: 7). Grant analyzes the lives of women from literati families who became prominent nuns in the Linji tradition. Buddhism allowed these women, the most prominent of whom was the master Qiyuan Xinggang (1597–1654), to engage with literati men as intellectual and spiritual peers. Not only did many women in the revived Linji lineage receive recognition as enlightened Dharma heirs, but they also gave regular, public Dharma talks, attracted both male and female followers, transmitted the Dharma to their own female heirs, and had their own discourse records (*yulu*) preserved. Qiyuan Xinggang is said to have become so well regarded that thousands of lay devotees would flock around her whenever she

went out in public; even male gentry praised her in writing as a living Buddha (Grant 2009: 69).

In Korea and Japan, too, historical accounts from the Sōn and Zen traditions mention cases in which male masters recognized female disciples as full dharma heirs. Korean's National Preceptor Chin'gak Hyesim (1178–1234), a disciple of the highly celebrated Pojo Chinul (1158–1210), for example, acknowledged female disciples in his writings. Remaining records indicate that Hyesim offered female disciples serious training in Sōn thought and doctrine; like Dahui, he exchanged letters of instruction with female disciples and guided them in *gong'an* (Kor. *kongan*) practice. Like the women practitioners of Linji Chan found in the Song, and in seventeenth-century China, Hyesim emphasized both the emptiness of sexual difference and the spiritual potential of women (Kim Young Mi 2011: 45–68).

Many of the Chinese monks who took up residence in Japan during the early Kamakura period, including Lanxi Daolong (1213–1278) and Wuxue Zuyuan (1226–1286), also taught women disciples and acknowledged some as having received Dharma transmission. Like Dahui, they employed the rhetoric of the *da zhangfu* (Jp. *daijōbu*), or “great [manly] hero,” implying that exceptional women could, through great study and dedication, overcome the limitations of the female sex and attain spiritual greatness. While this approach remains both androcentric and paternalistic, it appears to have succeeded in inspiring many women to realize their potential as serious practitioners and masters of Zen Buddhism. One such case is that of Mugai Nyodai (1223–1298), a recognized disciple of Wuxue who went on to found several nunneries in Kyoto, including Keiai-ji, the period's most prominent Zen institution for women. Nuns of the modern Sōtō tradition have also found inspiration in the works of Dōgen Kigen (1200–1253); he not only mentions the ultimate emptiness of gender distinctions but also criticizes monks who look down on women.

In the Chan, Sōn, and Zen lineages we find many examples of women who dedicated themselves not only to serious meditation, but also to highly sophisticated intellectual and artistic practices. Although nuns remained a small percentage of the larger monastic population, these and other Buddhist lineages provided women with opportunities to pursue the life of the mind, to train their own students, and to assume administrative leadership at major institutions.

Nuns and Laywomen in Modern East Asia

Nuns have remained visible members of the sangha throughout East Asia. Today the nuns' orders of Korea and Taiwan are among the strongest in the world and have assumed important roles of international leadership. Hong Kong also has a vibrant nuns' community that merits further study. In Korea today, approximately half of all sangha members are women; in Taiwan, where nuns have a clear majority, they are thought to constitute at least 75% of the Buddhist clerical population (DeVido 2010: 1). Nuns' orders in mainland China have also begun to make a comeback in the decades after the Cultural Revolution, though their numbers are not yet comparable to those of Taiwan. In Japan, where there is less public enthusiasm for Buddhism, the situation is

quite different, however. There, many nuns are concerned that their lineages are on the wane, especially as they struggle to find younger women interested in renunciate life.

The success of the contemporary Taiwanese nuns' order is well known throughout the Buddhist world. Its rise began in the early twentieth century, when Buddhist teachers from China began to offer ordinations in Taiwan. In ordinations of the 1920s and 30s, female postulants had already begun to outnumber male postulants significantly. Although the precise reasons for women's interest in Buddhist nunhood during this time has not been well documented in English, DeVido points to women's visibility in popular religious sects known as *zhaijiao* ("vegetarian religions"), many of which focused on devotion to female deities such as the Eternal Mother (*wusheng laomu*) and the bodhisattva Guanyin. Privately ordained women active in these sects, often known as *zhaigu* or *caigu*, maintained vegetarian diets and practiced in small hermitages and along popular pilgrimage routes. It is likely that many of these women were eager to take ordination as Buddhist nuns when the opportunity became available to them.

Taiwanese women's involvement with Chinese Buddhism continued to grow after 1949, when a number of Chinese monks moved to Taiwan to seek refuge from the Communist government. Many of these monks, unable to speak Taiwanese and lacking institutional allies, had a difficult time establishing themselves during this tumultuous period of Taiwan's shift from Japanese rule to Chinese rule. It was Taiwan's Buddhist women, DeVido writes, who supported prominent Chinese monks during their difficult transition to Taiwan. And these monks, in turn, helped the nuns' order gain strength throughout the second half of the twentieth century (DeVido 2010: 12–15).

The Chinese monk Baisheng (1904–1989), in particular, came to champion the interests of Taiwan's growing nuns' order. He established institutes of higher learning for Buddhist nuns, encouraged nuns to lead and instruct other nuns in ritual and doctrine, and eventually helped nuns who wanted to re-establish a dual ordination system for *bhikṣuṇī* (*bhikṣuṇī*). Although many other Chinese monks critiqued the large size of Taiwan's nuns' order and balked at attempts to re-establish the dual ordination system, Baisheng remained committed to the cause. The first successful dual ordination was held in 1976, and Taiwanese Buddhists have continued the ordinations since then, both in Taiwan and abroad (DeVido 2010: 15–17).

Today Taiwanese nuns are known for their high levels of education, and for their innovative charity and relief efforts. Master Chengyen (or Zhengyan in Pinyin), the charismatic founder of the highly successful Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, is Taiwan's most celebrated nun. As an international NGO, Tzu Chi boasts some five million members and has branches in more than twenty countries. Chengyen appears on television regularly and has a large following of lay devotees (DeVido 2010: 29). She is emblematic of the immense cultural and political influence that Buddhist nuns have begun to exercise in contemporary Taiwan.

Nuns are also highly visible in the contemporary Korean sangha, where they make up just less than half of the current number of Buddhist monastics. Although Korean Buddhism, and nuns in particular, suffered many setbacks under the long, anti-Buddhist reign of the Chosŏn dynasty (1392–1910), several important female Sŏn masters emerged during the period of Japanese colonization (1910–1945). The male masters Man'gong (1871–1946) and Hanam (1876–1951) both transmitted the Dharma to a

number of *bhikṣuṇīs*, who went on to have illustrious careers during this period. With the help of such masters, many nuns had the opportunity to acquire rigorous doctrinal educations, and to interact with male monastics as intellectual peers.

Korean nuns gained even more ground in the 1950s, due in large part to their support of the celibate monks' order during the Purification Movement (see Pori Park's chapter in this volume). The Purification Movement, which sought to remove married "monks" from the sangha, shaped the growth of Korea's Chogye Order during the 1950s. So many male clerics had become members of the married order that nuns actually outnumbered monks in the celibate order of the early and mid-1950s. Nuns actively supported the celibate order, attending meetings, voting on resolutions, and writing editorials. As a result, a number of large monasteries were, for the first time, assigned to nuns when the celibates' faction removed married monastics from major monasteries in 1955 and began reassigning them to celibate monastics. While some of these large institutions were eventually returned to male clerics, others remained in the hands of the nuns' order and became important centers of doctrinal training for women. As is the case in Taiwan, nuns in Korea today have many opportunities to pursue higher learning, and enjoy the respect and admiration of the laity (Park 2011: 165–79).

Despite their many successes, however, Park notes that Korean nuns do not yet have full equality. Even though Korean nuns have played such influential roles in the shaping of the celibate sangha, few have been appointed to major posts in the Chogye Order, which remains male dominant (Park 2011: 165).

In Japan, the nuns' community looks quite different. Compared with the nuns of Taiwan and Korea, their numbers are small: in most sects of Japanese Buddhism, fewer than 10% of ordained clerics are women (Covell 2006: 130–31). These numbers reflect the particular historical trajectory that Japanese Buddhism has taken since the early modern period. During the Edo period (1600–1868) the Japanese state required all families to register with local Buddhist temples as a means of proving their non-Christian status. This policy fueled the growth of the priesthood, and of regional Buddhist temples, most of which came to provide funerary services in addition to non-Christian certification. For the most part, the Japanese populace has continued to depend upon local parish priests to perform family funerals.

After the Meiji government (1868–1912) decriminalized clerical marriage in an effort to modernize Japan, married priests became the norm. Moreover, it became standard for priests to bequeath their temples—and their parish responsibilities—to their firstborn sons. As a result of the burgeoning of Buddhist temples in the Edo period, Buddhist priests remain ubiquitous in contemporary Japan. But most have inherited their posts and did not choose the religious path themselves. This structural weakness, combined with broader skepticism toward religion in general (and the longstanding critique that priests profit from their funerary work), might help explain why there seems to be less public enthusiasm for Buddhism in Japan than in Taiwan or Korea.

This broader lack of public interest in Buddhist renunciation poses great challenges to the Japanese nuns' community. Even as various sects have, in recent years, begun to offer training programs for women, and to make resident cleric positions available to women, few young women have been expressing interest in Buddhism as a profession. In her informative, if sometimes petty, critique of nuns and nunneries in contemporary

Japan, *Amasan wa tsurai yo* (Nuns have it tough!), Katsumoto Karen outlines some of the institutional and cultural factors that make nunhood unattractive to young women today (Katsumoto 2012).

One disincentive for young women may be the fact that Japanese nuns have tended to take pride in monastic celibacy, even though marriage has become the norm for their male counterparts (Arai 1999: 122). Women interested in Buddhist learning and culture, who also want to enjoy family life, may instead opt to become “temple wives” by marrying a priest. In recent years it has become more common for temple wives to seek ordination as priests, especially when widowed. Parish members, though, often display a clear preference for male priests; many female priests, both nuns and ordained temple wives, have found this lingering conservatism discouraging.

In spite of these many challenges, the Japanese nuns’ community has produced some strong leaders, especially among older women. As is also the case in Korea, many of Japan’s most celebrated nuns are also experts in the traditional arts, such as tea ceremony, poetry, calligraphy, and flower arrangement. There are also a handful of Japanese nuns who have become prominent public figures, both in Japan and internationally. Aoyama Shundō (b. 1933), Zen master and head of the Aichi Sōtō Zen Nuns’ Training Institute, has published widely and regularly lectures around the world. Jackuchō Setouchi (b. 1922), a writer of novels and essays who became a Buddhist nun at age 51, also appears in the media regularly and lectures to large crowds. It might also be added that, even though Japan’s own population of Buddhist nuns is relatively small, its many Buddhist universities have played an important role in educating Buddhist monks and nuns from other parts of Asia.

Over the past several decades, increased globalization has helped nuns build new international networks. The Taiwanese and Korea sanghas, in particular, have played important roles in staging international ordination ceremonies for nuns who hail from traditions in which nuns’ ordination lineages died out or were never established. In 1988, for example, the Hsi Lai temple, a Los Angeles branch of the Taiwanese monastery Fo Guang Shan, hosted an ordination ceremony for Sri Lankan nuns. The Korean sangha also offered ordination to Sri Lankan women in Sarnath, India in 1996, and Fo Guang Shan staged another ordination for nuns in Bodhgaya in 1998.

This survey has offered only an overview of the diverse activities undertaken by Buddhist women in East Asia. It has demonstrated, I hope, that no study of East Asian Buddhism is complete without close attention to Buddhist nuns and laywomen. The study of women and Buddhism in East Asia remains a young field, and there is much more work to be done. Continued research using interdisciplinary methods and diverse sources will allow us to further deepen our understanding of women’s longstanding contributions to Buddhist thought and practice.

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CHAPTER 17

Buddhist–Daoist Interactions in Medieval China

Livia Kohn

When Buddhism initially entered the Chinese religious scene during the Later Han dynasty (23–220 CE), Daoists were active at various levels of society. Among the aristocracy and at the imperial court, Laozi was well on his way to becoming a full-fledged deity, personification of the Dao known as Highest Lord Lao, much like the Yellow Emperor had emerged as the deity of the center and cultural ancestor of Chinese civilization; it was much as with Confucius, who had evolved into the patron saint of scholars and divine supporter of official examination candidates. The text associated with Laozi, moreover, the *Daode jing* (Book of the Way and Its Power), was equally sacralized. Laozi's text was honored ceremonially and recited on a regular basis, not unlike the Confucian classics, especially the *Xiaojing* (Classic of Filial Piety).

At that time imperial sacrifices included Daoist as well as Confucian and nature deities, and policies were influenced by both Confucian and Daoist ideals. Among the latter, the vision of Great Peace (*taiping*) especially stood out: a state of society where everyone works together in ideal communal harmony and cooperation, mutuality and love, when the channels of communication are open and pervasive, when even nature and the stars serve the greater good, bringing forth the right kind of weather and cosmic influences at just the right time, and in exactly the right place. Han thinkers and administrators relied heavily on cosmology, based on *yin-yang* and the five phases, as well as on the *Yijing* (Book of Changes), to analyze the greater patterns of nature and establish guidelines for human behavior. Divinatory arts—numerology, astrology, physiognomy, and energetic observation—were widespread, and the belief in dynastic cycles following the pattern of the five phases dominated the period.

Daoists participated actively in all these aspects of the Chinese world, and used them in both thought and practice. In terms of philosophical thought, they came to the fore after the Han dynasty ended, dominating the scene with the school of Profound Mystery or Dark Learning (Xuanxue). Thinkers such as Wang Bi (226–249), major commentator on the *Daode jing* and the *Yijing*, and Guo Xiang (d. 312), the main exegete of the

Zhuangzi (Book of Master Zhuang), the second major text of ancient Daoism (ca. 290 BCE), brought Daoist thought to a new level of depth and sophistication. They worked with key concepts such as non-being and spontaneity, enhanced the understanding of cognitive and meditative processes, including unknowing and sitting in oblivion, and gave new meaning to the understanding of self, inner nature, and destiny.

In regard to practice, the second century saw the rise of the first organized Daoist communities. As a reaction to the disastrous circumstances of the time—floods, droughts, locust plagues, famines, epidemics, and corrupt government—numerous revolutionary and visionary movements had sprung up. These movements believed that the cosmic cycle of dynastic change would bring a new dynasty, a state of Great Peace, and even a new world. Among the many Dao-inspired groups with millenarian and messianic outlooks, two major groups stood out: the Great Peace (Taiping) movement, and the school of the Celestial Masters (Tianshi), also known as the Way of Orthodox Unity (Zhengyi dao).

The two Daoist groups had much in common, but were located in different regions—in the east (Shandong) and in the southwest (Sichuan), respectively—and each saw its role differently. The Great Peace followers were “premillenarian” and believed that they should replace the ruling dynasty. Thus they rose in rebellion in 184, the first year of a new sixty-year cycle. After being defeated by the Han army, they became extinct as a Daoist school; their main text was reconstituted on the basis of surviving fragments in the sixth century. The Celestial Masters, on the other hand, were “postmillenarian” and saw themselves as advisers to the reigning dynasty or to whatever new ruler would arise. They submitted to Cao Cao (155–220), the local warlord of Sichuan and ruler of the Wei Kingdom (220–265). In due course the Celestial Masters spread throughout China and became a leading school of the religion, which is still present and active today.

In close imitation of the Han imperial administration, both groups had a “celestial master” as their leader, divided their territory into parishes run by ritually appointed libationers, who could also be women and ethnic minorities, and controlled the local population—who flocked to them upon the promise of political stability and economic security—by setting up household registers and family groups. Each household had to pay an annual tax in rice or its equivalent in silk, paper, brushes, ceramics, or handicrafts. In addition, each member, from children up, underwent formal initiations at regular intervals. A member was also equipped with a list of spirit-generals for protection against demons—75 for an unmarried person and 150 for a married couple. The list of spirit-generals was called a register and was carried, together with protective talismans, in a piece of silk around the waist.

Members of Daoist groups believed themselves to be the “seed people” of the new, permanent age of Great Peace. In daily life they observed strict moral rules, engaged in recitations of the *Daode jing*, and underwent ritual healing ceremonies. They also worked hard to support the community, building roads and giving free shelter to travelers, engaged in sexual rites known as the “harmonization of *qi*,” and enjoyed three major annual festivals, which were associated with the Three Primes, the divinities of heaven, earth, and water. Their activities, although originally millenarian and radically separate from lay society, eventually formed the foundation for the major organized Daoist school that still exists today (see Hendrischke 2000, 2006; Kleeman 1998).

Buddhism, which entered China from the west, thus came into a society that already had a vivid, multifaceted religious scene, and which, in addition to the newly arising Daoist dimension, also included traditional popular religion, and imperial and state worship. In the course of the following centuries, Buddhism made a major impact on the Chinese religious scene, especially on Daoism, but it also underwent numerous changes due to the contact. These multilayered processes involved both cooperation and rivalry.

Politics

On the political level, during the Later Han period emperors began to worship the Buddha, alongside Laozi and the Yellow Emperor, as a major cosmic deity, while court writers created the theory of conversion of the barbarians to explain who this “Buddha” figure was and why his teachings were so similar to Daoism. Under the Northern Wei dynasty (386–534), in the fourth century, the rulers used indigenous religious structures to help with the administration of their empire, first setting up a Daoist theocracy, and then turning to Buddhist sangha-households. In the fifth century, as the push for unification gained momentum, Daoists and Buddhists engaged in vicious debates about whose teaching should be at the center of the great new empire. Then during the Sui (581–618) and Tang (618–907) eras, both religions came to serve imperial purposes and had vast temple networks established throughout the country.

Conversion of the barbarians

The main Han theory of how Buddhism came to be and how it appeared in China is known as the “conversion of the barbarians” (*huahu*). Its starting point is Laozi’s biography in Sima Qian’s (c. 135–186 BCE) *Shiji* (Historical Records). There Laozi is said to have emigrated from China, because of a decline in the virtue of the Zhou. He reached the border pass, where the guard Yin Xi asked him to leave a record of his philosophy, and he duly transmitted the *Daode jing* in five thousand words. Then he left, and “nobody knows what became of him” (*Shiji* 63; see also Fung 1952 (vol. 1): 170; Kohn 1998: 10; Zürcher 1959: 288). In 166 CE, Xiang Kai wrote a memorial in which he cited this account and noted that “some people say that Laozi has gone to the barbarians and become the Buddha” (Zürcher 1959: 291). Other texts from the same period also develop the basic narrative of the biography, making Laozi continue his westward journey, either with Yin Xi or alone. He then goes on to convert the barbarians of Central and South Asia under the name of Buddha.

The political context of the memorial was the increasingly joint imperial worship of Laozi, the Yellow Emperor, and the Buddha. Laozi in this context was venerated as the creator of the universe, the defied Dao. The earliest official document about this is the *Laozi ming* (Inscription for Laozi), dated September 24, 165 CE (Seidel 1969: 37; Kusuyama 1979: 303–15). It contains a record of imperial sacrifices to the divine Laozi, undertaken by Emperor Huan (r. 146–168 CE) at the sage’s birthplace in Bozhou

(modern Henan). The text begins with a summary of the facts known about the ancient philosopher. It repeats the account in the *Shiji*, gives a concrete description of the birth-place, and cites the *Daode jing* as the major expression of his ideas. In addition, this inscription praises Laozi as the central deity of the cosmos, who was born from primordial energy, came down to earth, and eventually ascended back to the heavenly realm as an immortal.

Among organized Daoist groups, the same vision is present in the *Laozi bianhua jing* (Scripture of the Transformations of Laozi). This document, produced by an otherwise unknown Sichuan group, is dated to around 185 and has survived as a Dunhuang manuscript (S. 2295; see Seidel 1969: 131–36). The first real hagiography of the god, it contains a eulogy on Laozi as the Dao, as well as a record of his repeated descents as the teacher of dynasties, and guiding force of Chinese history and culture. The text also transforms his birth under the Zhou into a supernatural event, and has him ascend back to heaven after transmitting the *Daode jing* to Yin Xi. From there, he makes further descents back to earth as world savior, including a coming to the barbarians as the Buddha. The text ends with a depiction of descent that takes place in 155, during which he reveals instructions on Daoist meditation and recitation of the *Daode jing*. It concludes on a slightly apocalyptic note, admonishing believers to “hurry and follow” Lord Lao “when Venus fails in its course five or six times,” and thus to stay clear of danger (Seidel 1969: 73).

All these documents refer mildly to a historical identity or connection between Buddhism and Daoism, echoing a tendency also prominent in some early Buddhist texts, such as the *Mouzi lihuo lun* (Mouzi’s Correction of Errors), which describes Buddhist attainment in terms taken from the *Daode jing* and depicts the Buddha as a deified Laozi (Yoshioka 1959: 32). The situation changed around the year 300, when a full-fledged “conversion scripture,” the *Huahu jing*, was compiled by Wang Fu (Kohn 2000: 295). This event is recorded in Huijiao’s (497–554) *Gaoseng zhuan* (Biographies of Eminent Monks), as well as several historical sources (Zürcher, 294). Reflecting a growing sense of rivalry between Buddhism and Daoism, this conversion scripture uses the narrative to belittle and denigrate the newly arrived teaching, polemically establishing the cultural superiority of the ethnic Chinese and setting up a vigorous rivalry between the two religions.

Theocracy

The rivalry between Buddhism and Daoism became more pronounced under the Tuoba rulers of the Northern Wei dynasty (386–535). A Xianbei-Hun people, the Tuoba had gradually increased their presence during the fourth century, eventually extending their domination over all of northern China. In the process they had become quite Sinicized, adapting Chinese administrative structures and governmental systems. Deeply dedicated to Buddhism, they invited the renowned Central Asian scholar Kumārajīva (c. 350–409) from Kucha to head a translation institute in their capital, which led to texts that represented accurate presentations of Buddhist doctrine and practice and set the stage for the full-fledged Buddhist “conquest” of China (see Mario

Poceski's chapter in this volume). They were also responsible for the great Buddhist cave temples at Longmen and Yungang. Nevertheless, for a period they relied on a Daoist to run their empire for them, in a system known as the "Daoist theocracy."

It began with Kou Qianzhi (365–448), the well-educated son of a Celestial Masters family, who elected to practice Daoism and became a hermit on Mount Song in Henan. There, in 415, he purportedly received a first revelation from Lord Lao, appointing him to assume the role of Celestial Master, to take the place of the—at this point rather desiccated—Zhang lineage of Celestial Masters Daoism. He was also instructed to abolish some of their characteristic practices, such as the rice tax and the sexual rituals. Instead, he was to set up a system of religious activity based on longevity techniques, bolstered by a set of thirty-six community rules that was handed down by the divinity himself. The revealed text is still partially extant in the Daoist canon as the *Laojun yinsong xinke jiejing* (Scripture of Lord Lao's New Code of Precepts Chanted to Melody "In the Clouds"), usually simply called the "New Code." Before Kou could do all this, however, he had to perfect his own Dao and train in various ascetic practices, which he did until a second major revelation in 423 told him that he was ready to begin his big task.

In the following year, Kou took his divine information to the imperial court, where he secured the support of the prime minister, Cui Hao (381–450). In due course, he became the head of state-sponsored Daoism, which was geared to bringing peace and harmony to the northern empire. Kou set himself up in the capital, at the Chongxu si (Monastery of Venerating Emptiness). This was the first monastic establishment of Daoism, created in close imitation of Buddhist institutions and structures; it was also known by the Buddhist term for temple or monastery (*si*), which itself goes back to an appellation used for the administrative office in charge of foreigners.

With the help of 120 followers and administrators, Kou established Daoist institutions—temples, priests, moral rules, and rituals (not unlike the organization of the Daoist Association today)—throughout the country. At the height of Kou's power, all people in the empire followed the "New Code," which specified that they had to be loyal to the ruler, obedient to their parents and elders, and subservient to the Dao. To express their proper attitude, they had to observe daily and monthly rituals, as well as special festival rites throughout the year. Such festivals could last three, five, or seven days. Like the festivities of the Celestial Masters of old, they involved community assemblies and formal kitchen-feasts. Daily and monthly rites were performed through a series of bows and prostrations, as well as by the burning of incense and the offering of a prayer or petition. Strictly forbidden were popular practices such as shamanic séances and blood sacrifices, as well as the traditional Celestial Masters rites of sexual initiation. Many rules in the "New Code" closely echo the Buddhist *Vinaya* (monastic code of discipline). The code provides behavioral guidelines for the Daoist priests that, along with the basic ordination ceremony it prescribes, match those of Buddhism (see Mather 1979: 115).

The high point of the theocracy came when the emperor accepted Daoist initiation and proclaimed himself to be the new ruler of Great Peace. Then, in 440, he changed his reign title to "Perfect Lord of Great Peace." This, in turn, inspired some Buddhists to establish the claim that the Chinese emperor could be an incarnation of the future

Buddha Maitreya, poised to lead the world to a new level of perfection, as formulated in the apocryphal *Renwang huguo boruo bolomiduo jing* (Scripture for Humane Kings) (see Orzech 1998).

Kou Qianzhi's influence continued to grow, until he died in 448. Cui Hao then tried to hold it all together, but he became a bit too overbearing and megalomaniac in the process. The Daoist theocracy ended after his execution in 450. The Tuoba rulers soon looked to Buddhism for their administrative requirements. They appointed the head monk Tanyao to set up government-sponsored *sangha*-households and Buddha-households among the population. *Sangha*-households were families that paid taxes in the form of grain to the Buddhist monastic order (*sangha*), but were exempt from all other state duties. The *sangha* stored the grain for redistribution during famine, or sold it to satisfy its own needs. The Buddha-households consisted of freed criminals or slaves who did manual work for the monasteries (Ch'en 1964: 153–58). The followers of Kou Qianzhi, on the other hand, became freelance Daoists. Many of them congregated in a newly established center in the Zhongnan mountains, about forty miles southwest of the capital Chang'an. This was allegedly Yin Xi's old home, where Laozi had transmitted the *Daode jing* and had set off to convert the barbarians. Known as Louguan, or "Lookout Tower," it became the first independent Daoist monastery. The main rule text of the group, the *Taishang Laojun jiejing* (Precepts of the Highest Lord Lao), is a major integrative document, linking the five precepts of Buddhism with five-phases cosmology and Daoist values (Kohn 2000: 291).

Unification and temple networks

Politics and religion in sixth-century China were dominated by the quest for unification, which eventually led to the establishment of single empire in 589 under the Sui dynasty. A major concern among rulers at the time was to find a unifying ideology that could pave the way for political integration. The new conditions prompted both Buddhists and Daoists to create integrated and unified structures of textual classification, philosophical systematization, and ordination ranks. Within Buddhism the development of these features is well represented by the Tiantai school, while in Daoism there is the system of the Three Caverns.

After taking over the rule from the western empire of the Tuoba-Wei, Yuwen Tai of the Northern Zhou dynasty (r. 557–560, also known as Mingdi) saw himself as the new unifier of China. To this end, he conquered part of Sichuan from the Liang in the South, reorganized the imperial administration, and established a new provincial order. Moreover, he began to develop ideas about a new orthodoxy, a comprehensive worldview that would support his unification efforts. He was very much taken with the ancient rules and organizational patterns depicted in the *Zhouli* (Rites of the Zhou), the famous Confucian classic. The choice of black as his dynastic color (like the unifying Qin dynasty) and of Zhou as his dynastic name (like the longest of all Chinese dynasties), indicate his strong preoccupation with reunifying China (Kohn 1998: 26).

His son, Yuwen Yong (r. 560–589, also known as Wudi), continued along the same lines. Although he moved among various religions and worldviews—he was a devout

Buddhist in the beginning, then he became an initiated Daoist in 567, and he always supported Confucian principles of government—his ultimate concern was the creation of orthodoxy that could be deployed in the quest for unification. To this end, he wished to see a model that would integrate the various teachings and beliefs of China into one whole. He searched for an “equalization of the three teachings,” a worldview that would, in combination with the ancient rites of the Zhou, give his state the stability that was necessary for the conquest and reorganization of all China. To that end, he staged debates among representatives of the three teachings (Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism), so they could establish their relative superiority and hash out their differences.

In this he followed precedents set by the Tuoba rulers, who in 520 had organized a first set of debates between the Daoists and the Buddhists. Representatives of the two religions met in a formal court setting, where they presented the strong points of their own teachings—especially in regard to the wellbeing of the state—and criticized the shortcomings of their opponents’ teachings. At this occasion, the two sides often also presented arguments about the supposed “seniority” of their teachings, focusing on the problem of dating. If Laozi went west to convert the barbarians and become the Buddha, the Daoist argument went, he must have left China earlier than the recorded birth of the Buddha in India. The Daoists claimed that Laozi was born in 605 BCE, and converted the barbarians in 519 BCE. That supposedly proved that Buddhism was a second-hand form of Daoism, created by Laozi to control the barbarians. Its presence in China could do nothing but harm. The Buddhists countered this allegation by dating the birth of the Buddha back to 1029 BCE, finding evidence in an ancient Zhou record of certain phenomena in the western sky that could be interpreted as indicating the birth of a great sage. This dating was then bettered by the Daoists in the *Kaitian jing* (Scripture on Opening the Cosmos), but the Buddhists succeeded in showing that this was a forgery and not a revealed text. The Buddhists thus emerged victorious from this phase of the debate, gaining great influence at court (Kohn 1995: 24).

Under the Northern Zhou, the debates took on an even larger dimension and greater urgency. They began with a memorial, presented to the throne in 567 by Wei Yuansong, a renegade Buddhist monk. He proposed a new Buddhist orthodoxy with the people as the flock, the *sangha* as administrators, and the emperor as sacred Buddhist ruler. Because this meant the dissolution of an independent Buddhist organization and the return of all clerics to the laity, Buddhist leaders argued heatedly against it. Emperor Wu, however, liked the idea and honored Wei Yuansong with a formal title. At the same time some Daoists also presented their creed as a unifying state doctrine. They wrote a memorial that reintroduced earlier ideas about theocracy, which made some impression on the emperor.

Not willing to decide without his aristocrats’ approval, the emperor convened an assembly in 569 to debate the pros and cons of the two propositions, but no definite decision was reached. After several more assemblies ended similarly without a decision, the emperor ordered the compilation of reports that would evaluate the main teachings. Among these are the *Erjiao lun* (The Two Teachings) by the Buddhist monk Dao’an, and the *Xiaodao lun* (Laughing at the Dao) by the ex-Daoist Zhen Luan (translated in Kohn 1995). The former ignores Daoism completely, presenting instead a combination

of Confucian and Buddhist teachings as the best teaching for the state. The latter contains a wealth of information on sixth-century cosmology and practice, typically first presenting a Daoist argument against Buddhism, then refuting it by referring to authoritative scriptures or historical precedents.

In the event, Emperor Wu declared Daoism to be the superior teaching, and established the Tongdao guan (Monastery of Reaching to the Dao) as a research institute to create a properly unified ideology. He also sponsored the compilation of *Wushang biyao* (Esoteric Essential of the Most High), the first Daoist encyclopedia, which presents an integrated vision of the world according to Dao. His unification efforts, however, were superseded by the rulers of the Sui dynasty, who were much in favor of Buddhism, although they also established an official stele for Laozi, the *Laoshi bei* (Kohn 1998: 43–44). They in turn were overthrown by the Tang dynasty (618–907), whose ruling clan claimed to be descended from Laozi. Tang rulers tended to honor Daoism more—with some notable exceptions, such as Empress Wu (684–705), who saw herself as a bodhisattva descended to save the world. Still, various Tang emperors continued to organize interreligious debates, resulting in lengthy and increasingly scholastic documentation. They also instituted the same legal rules for all clergy, whether Buddhist or Daoist (see Kohn 2003: 68–69), and encouraged all sorts of religious organizations and activities.

Another feature of the Tang era was the imperial government's sponsorship of religious temples or monasteries as state-supported institutions. That had already begun under the Sui government, which was the first to establish Buddhist temples on the five sacred mountains, in the capitals, and at other important holy sites. The Tang continued this practice. In 666, Gaozong (r. 650–683) established one Buddhist and one Daoist monastery in every prefecture of the empire (Forte 1992: 219). Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712–755) expanded the practice further. In 738, he had state temples and monasteries, named Kaiyuan (Opening Prime) after his reign title, established in all major districts and holy locations of the empire. The primary role of these institutions had less to do with the spread of either religion; instead, they were mainly meant to form a sanctified imperial network throughout the country (Forte 1992: 235–37). In other words, just like the conversion story and the experiment with theocracy, the formal interreligious debates and the establishment of official temple networks primarily served the purposes of political legitimation and power-mongering. Ultimately they had little to do with the main religions themselves, but instead encouraged rivalry and exacerbated polemical discourse.

Philosophy and Cosmology

By far the greatest connections between Buddhism and Daoism are to be found in the areas of philosophy and cosmology. It is here that the most intense relations were established and the greatest Buddhist impact occurred. When Buddhist scriptures first came to China, during the first and second centuries CE, the Chinese interpreted them as alternative teachings about longevity and immortality. Soon they realized that these texts were based on a distinctive intellectual and philosophical tradition, but they still

translated them with the help of ancient Daoist terminology. In the fourth century, some Chinese aristocrats started becoming Buddhists, both as monks and as lay supporters.

However, it was only with Kumārajīva and Huiyuan (334–416), during the early fifth century, that the intellectual and scriptural traditions of Chinese Buddhism began a life of their own. By that time Buddhism had irretrievably incorporated numerous indigenous Daoist concepts into its teachings, and had also started to make an irreversible impact on the Chinese tradition. In the fifth century, after major new Daoist schools had emerged, and after Kumārajīva launched his translation project, Buddhist doctrine and cosmology were imported wholesale into Daoism. That is especially notable in the case of the Numinous Treasure school of medieval Daoism, and the Buddhist doctrine of karma and retribution also became a mainstay of traditional Chinese thought.

Buddho–Daoist thought

The main exponents of the early Chinese integration, adaptation, and interpretation of Buddhism, of whom we have knowledge, were:

1. Zhi Dun (314–366), an aristocratic monk, who introduced Buddhist religious activities into the higher circles of society;
2. Xi Chao (336–377), a lay activist, whose *Fengfa yao* (Essentials of Venerating the Law) laid down the basic rules and strategies to be followed by aristocratic Buddhist householders;
3. Dao'an (312–385), the leading Buddhist figure of northern China, who interpreted the Buddhist notion of emptiness through Wang Bi's concept of original non-being;
4. Huiyuan, the aforementioned "founder" of Chinese Pure Land practice, and defender of the monastic order's right not to bow to the emperor;
5. Sengzhao (374–414), a brilliant student of Kumārajīva and a creative thinker who interpreted the notion of wisdom (*prajñā*) through the Daoist concept of unknowing;
6. Daosheng (c. 360–434), another noted student of Kumārajīva, who is sometimes described as a forerunner of Chan Buddhism.

The first figure on the list, Zhi Dun (also known as Zhi Daolin), according to *Gaoseng zhuan*, came from a gentry environment that he never left, despite his position as a monk. He spent much time in the mountains of Zhejiang, where he founded two monasteries. To his aristocratic friends, his adherence to Buddhism was apparent from his monkish attire, his shaven head (which was greeted with suspicion and wonder), and his observance of the five precepts. All of these were severely criticized, because they prevented him from continuing the family line. His philosophical and religious ideas were linked closely with the Profound Mystery interpretations of the *Daode jing* and the *Zhuangzi*; he especially took note of Guo Xiang's philosophical system (see Fung 1952 (vol. 2): 250; Zürcher 1959: 116).

For Guo Xiang, the Dao is existence itself. To reach mystical oneness, one has to go beyond the specific delimitations imposed on existence by the human mind. For Zhi Dun, transcendence leads beyond matter (*se*, a translation of the Sanskrit *rūpa*). Matter is ultimately empty, because it arises as part of the chain of dependent origination (*pratītya samutpāda*)—it does not exist in itself. Nevertheless, there is an entity underlying matter. “Heaven’s truth is the original world,” says Zhi Dun. He sees the mystical process not so much in the elimination of “thirst”—passions and desires—but as a return to truth. For him, Buddhist cessation is not the ultimate goal; rather, it is the heavenly principle of Daoist thought.

The truth of heaven, however, is manifest in the true teachings of Buddhism, especially in the ten stages of *prajñā* (wisdom or insight). Nonetheless, even these true manifestations have to be overcome, as they are still nothing but the “traces” of the ultimate truth. According to Zhi Dun, people must go beyond the traces, by an act of forgetting or by the attainment of “oblivion,” a notion with strong Daoist connotations. The degree to which any given individual is able to attain the subtler truth depends on his fate, here described as the “karma” inherited from former lives. Still, Zhi Dun perpetuates some of Guo Xiang’s ideas, as the former defines his notion of karma by means of Guo Xiang’s concept of “share”—now no longer the share one is given by the Dao, but the share of life one has accumulated through past karma.

Consequently, Zhi Dun’s conception of inner nature differs from the one explained by Guo Xiang, who interprets it as the psychological correspondence to cosmic share. Guo Xiang postulates that inner nature is an aspect of the Dao, and therefore necessarily pure and good. In contrast, Zhi Dun admits the possibility that inner nature could also be evil. The evil in inner nature has to be fought in order to attain purity; it is not sufficient merely to discover one’s natural oneness with the Dao. This, then, justifies a religious lifestyle separate from society. In order to attain the “truth of heaven,” one must purge oneself of desires, cut all attachments to family and state, and submit to the precepts of the religious order.

Zhi Dun’s treatment and development of Guo Xiang’s ideas is a reflection of the unfolding of Buddhist–Daoist thought in early medieval China. Zhi Dun used the traditional Chinese system, to which he added three major points. First, he insisted that all things were empty due to the law of dependent origination, thus newly defining the relationship between Dao and beings. Second, he believed that inner nature was developed from karma, and therefore contained evil seeds that needed active purgation. Finally, he propagated a specifically religious lifestyle, which involved practice in a distinctly monastic setting (Kohn 1992: 118–19). In other words, he remained true to the indigenous Daoist tradition, thus altering the fundamental worldview and justification of Buddhism, yet he also incorporated key Buddhist elements, thus modifying the Daoist way.

New Daoist cosmos

A similar tendency to incorporate diverse Buddhist elements is apparent with respect to the cosmology of organized Daoist schools. The school of Highest Clarity (Shangqing),

founded in south China in the mid-fourth century on the basis of a series of revelations of new heavens and deities, focused on transforming people into immortals through visualizations and ecstatic excursions, as well as through secluded living and operative alchemy. It established an expanded cosmology, which layered multiple heavens above each other, with the Three Clarities at the top. Its successor, beginning in the 390s, was the Numinous Treasure (Lingbao) school, named after its key concept of precious talisman(s) that created and maintained the world. As its ideas and practices became more popular, its followers created additional scriptures that explained its cosmology in greater detail; they also integrated large segments of the Buddhist worldview into their texts and teachings.

The followers of the Numinous Treasure school acknowledged a new central deity, named Heavenly Worthy of Primordial Beginning (*tianzun*), a combination of the creator god of Highest Clarity and the Buddha. The name of the deity was based on one of the Buddha's titles, World-Honored One (*shizun*). This deity resided on a high heavenly plane. Like the Buddha, as depicted in Buddhist scriptures, he held court among the celestials and gave sermons in response to learned questions. Using divine talismans, Heavenly Worthy of Primordial Beginning created the world in original perfection, and then saw it decline; also, like Lord Lao, he descended to this world periodically to reveal various rules and texts. However, the cycles of nature went on and the world ended in destruction, to be recreated by him once again in renewed splendor. Each of these world-cycles was called a *kalpa* (*jie*), an adaptation of a prominent Indian notion. In one of his celestial audiences, the high god describes his activities in the following manner:

Then the [third] kalpa, Opening Sovereign, arrived. In its first year, the true writ of Lingbao opened the light of the three heavenly bodies. Heaven and earth were again set up properly, and the five planets shone forth brightly. At this time, I once more emerged and came to reside in the Heaven of green, beginning *qi*, known by the name Heavenly Worthy of Primordial Beginning. I spread the divine law far and wide, transforming and saving beings on all levels of heaven and earth. (*Zuigen pin*, ch. 1)

The creation of the world, here described as occurring through the power of the sacred talismans, was also understood to depend on sacred sounds. Instead of thinking of these sounds as native Chinese spells, such as those used by the Celestial Masters to dispel demons, Numinous Treasure Daoists linked them with the foreign sounds of Sanskrit and identified them as "Brahma-sounds." As the root power of creation, these sounds originally rested in heaven, where they also manifested themselves in sacred signs, which in turn coagulated into heavenly scriptures or "perfect texts." These texts, written in heavenly script (as seen on talismans), were then stored in deep, holy caverns, in the Mountain of Jade Capital in the Heaven of Grand Network. This was the central axis of a total of thirty-two heavens, placed in concentric circles around it. Like Buddhist heavens, they were divided into three levels—the worlds of desires (six heavens), form (eighteen), and formlessness (four)—plus the four Brahma-heavens for true believers, above which were the Three Clarities, situated at the very top. Every so often, the Heavenly Worthy would deem it appropriate—depending on the *kalpa*—to reveal one

or other of these pure, original texts. He would provide a translation into Chinese, either verbally through a spirit-medium, or by magical writing inscribed on the walls of caverns.

Karma and rebirth

The key revealing deity of the sacred texts, the Lord of the Dao, was the second major god of the Numinous Treasure school. An inquisitive and compassionate deity, he would make sure the world learned all the important details regarding life, death, sins, and the proper rules to be followed. These rules, adapted from Buddhist precepts and bodhisattva vows (resolutions to work for the benefit of all living beings), also involved the doctrine of karma and rebirth. When it first entered China in the first century, this basic Buddhist doctrine was greeted with surprise, sometimes even with aversion. However, soon the Chinese came to accept its more socially centered vision, as developed by the Mahāyāna tradition, which tended to influence the Daoists. As Buddhist ideas about karma were linked with indigenous views, there was a development of innovative forms of ethical thinking, which can be described in three phases.

The first of these is the ancient indigenous view. It focused on the notion of reciprocity, both within society and in a larger, supernatural context. People's deeds, if they harmed other beings or natural forces, were thought to be judged by the celestial administration, and they came back to cause them suffering. While this placed the responsibility for one's good or bad fortune plainly on one's own actions, there was also the simultaneous belief that people had certain inborn qualities—or "destiny"—that directed their lives, regardless of circumstances or the deeds they had committed. Human life in ancient China was thus understood as unfolding through a combination of self-induced good and bad fortune on the one hand, and the inborn character or fate that one has received from heaven at birth on the other.

In a second phase, this already complex understanding was expanded by the early Daoists, to include three further factors: (1) the belief that destiny could be inherited from one's ancestors; (2) the notion that the celestial administration had supervisory and punishing agents deep inside the human body; and (3) the attachment of numerical values to specific good and bad deeds, which resulted in particular additions or subtractions from one's lifespan. The individual's position in the universe was thereby tightened, both in a supernatural family network and through closer interaction with the cosmic bureaucrats; fate also became increasingly calculable, as deeds and days were counted with great exactness (see Hendrischke 2006).

Buddhism, then, provided the key element in the third phase, as the notions of karma and rebirth began to play active roles in the Chinese understanding of destiny. That brought into play four new factors:

- belief in rebirth and in the retribution of sins or good deeds accumulated during one's former lives, added to those committed by oneself in this life and to those of one's ancestors;

- vision of long-term supernatural torture chambers, known as “earth prisons” or hells, as well as of the punishments of being reborn in the body of an animal or a hungry ghost;
- trust in the efficacy of various forms of ritual, such as rites of repentance and the giving of offerings, to alleviate the karmic burden;
- faith in savior figures, such as bodhisattvas, gods, and perfected, who would use their unlimited power and compassion to lift people from the worldly mire—most importantly Bodhisattva Guanyin, who appears in Daoism as Jiuku tianzun, the Heavenly Worthy Who Saves from Suffering (Mollier 2008: 174–208).

Consequently, Numinous Treasure Daoists focused heavily on the contrast between “sin” and “good fortune.” In this context the word “sin” included the bad deed itself, the guilt that accompanied it, and the resulting suffering, which included various disasters, diseases, bad rebirths, and the tortures of hell. Bad deeds could be different acts of evil, transgressions, or faults. They led to bad karma, because they meant one had violated the moral precepts. This eventually would bring great suffering, which could involve physical pain, psychological frustration, or a general sense of hopelessness. “Good fortune,” on the other hand, meant the positive conditions attained through the practice of the precepts, both in this world and the next: good health, wealth, and intact family relations, as well as fortunate rebirths and residence in heaven. It led to the creation of “fields of blessedness,” which were understood to be akin to physical fields plowed and cultivated by farmers; they were essentially areas of goodness that eventually created the conditions necessary for liberation and immortality.

In the Buddhist context, these “fields” referred to the acquisition of virtues, such as charity, kindness, and goodness toward all beings. Although they did not protect against the vagaries of karma, they endowed the person with the power to remain mentally calm and inwardly happy. In Daoism, they were conceived of in more concrete terms, denoting attitudes and activities that created good living conditions for all beings, from the emperor and the aristocracy at the top, to the poor and orphaned at the bottom. Also, besides providing the mental stamina needed to deal with adversities, they also guaranteed that one would encounter mainly positive and fortunate situations.

Daoists also identified punishments for evil deeds in concrete terms, by adapting Buddhist notions such as the “three bad rebirths,” “five realms of suffering,” “eight difficult conditions,” and “ten situations of intense suffering.” As described in the fifth-century *Jieye benxing jing* (Scripture of Controlling Karma and Original Conduct), the three bad rebirths are in the hells, as hungry ghosts, or among animals, while the five realms of suffering include all areas of rebirth. The eight difficult conditions are life on the borders or among the barbarians; as a slave or servant; in poverty, as an orphan, or as a lowly person; as a sick person; as a mentally retarded, mad, or disabled person; in situations of trouble and distress; with no filial piety or compassion; and in a country that lacks the Dao. The ten situations of intense suffering are specific forms of punishment experienced in the hells, also adapted from Buddhism, that involve the mountain of knives, the tree of swords, the boiling cauldron, the hot iron pillar, the bed of spikes, and many other instruments of torture.

The process by which one is affected by bad karma is intrinsically gradual. People who violate the precepts first encounter various forms of misfortune, such as calamities involving water and fire, swords and weapons, capture and prison, evil winds and nasty demons. This will put great stress on their minds and cause increasing madness, while their bodies will contract diseases and decay. Too sick to live, yet not sick enough to die, they are caught in a living hell, even though they are still on earth. Even after death, there is no respite. On the contrary, the really bad suffering starts in the various depths of hell, and it lasts for *kalpas* eternal. Then, when they finally attain rebirth, such individuals will come back in the body of a domestic animal, pauper, or lowly person; they might also be dumb, deaf, mute, or crippled. They will suffer from hunger, cold, and chronic diseases, with numerous pains stabbing their bodies. This situation, of course, gives rise to more inner tension, as well as to greed for food, wealth, and mundane wellbeing, all of which makes it more difficult to create the good karmic conditions necessary for a better life. The only way out of this unfortunate predicament is to hold on tight to the precepts, pray to the savior deities, accumulate hidden virtues, and perform the right practices (Kohn 1992: 25–26).

Religious Practice

The interaction between Buddhism and Daoism led to the emergence of new forms or methods of religious practice, with mutual influences traveling in both directions. The Daoists adopted from Buddhism an entire complex of ethical rules and purified forms of living. They often made only nominal changes in the rules, texts, and guidelines they adopted, even as they always maintained their distinct vision, centered on the ultimate goal of immortality and a close connection to the cosmos. Another area where Buddhist practice came to pervade Daoism was the monastic complex. That included the physical and organizational setup of monastic communities, as well as the practice of insight meditation, which helped Daoists formulate a subtler approach to mind and mentation.

Moving in the other direction, there were also areas where Buddhists adapted Daoist practices, notably those connected to life extension: dietary and physical practices, accountable forms of reckoning, worship of life-enhancing deities, and methods for elimination of demons and protection against sorcery. Accordingly, numerous texts that deal with popular practices appear in both Buddhist and Daoist forms, with only minimal adaptations.

Moral living

Medieval Daoists adopted a great variety of precepts from Buddhism:

1. The five precepts, fundamental prohibitions of killing, stealing, lying, sexual misconduct, and intoxication; they also match the universal great rules, and appear in many cultures.

2. The ten precepts, which in their standardized version, found in the *Shijie jing* (Scripture of the Ten Precepts), became requisite for the first level of Daoist ordination in the Complete Perfection (Quanzhen) school. During the middle ages they came in many different forms, ranging from a list of ten prohibitions that included the basic five precepts plus rules against verbal abuse and various forms of pride, through ritual injunctions about proper purification, to sets of positive admonitions that were patterned closely on the Mahāyāna precepts, which encouraged filial piety, loyalty to the ruler, and an overall caring and compassionate attitude toward nature and humanity.
3. The 180 precepts of the early Celestial Masters (*Laojun shuo yibai bashi jie*; Kohn 2004a: 137–54) and the Numinous Treasure school (*Sanyuan pinjie*; Kohn 2004a, 188–95). Today they are central to the middle ordination level; they contain prohibitions and admonitions, as well as detailed behavioral guidelines for individual members, some of which closely resemble the rules of the *Prātimkṣa*, the code of discipline observed by Buddhist monks.
4. The 300 precepts of the Highest Clarity school, as well as of integrated Tang Daoism (*Guanshen dajie*; Kohn 2004a: 204–26). Today they are used for the highest ordination level; they include the 180 precepts plus additional practice guidelines and personal affirmations. These represent a more advanced way of bringing the mind closer to the Dao, based on a model that first appeared in the *Avatamsaka sūtra* (*Huayan jing*), one of the most influential canonical texts of Chinese Buddhism.

Equipped with such wealth of rules and regulations, Daoists established both lay and monastic communities that closely imitated familiar Buddhist patterns. Lay followers were expected to observe the five precepts in their daily lives, and to offer worship to ancestors, rulers, and deities. They produced or commissioned artistic representations of various deities, and then prayed for personal blessings, ancestral happiness, and peace in the land. Surviving steles and statues from the fifth century onward often show Buddhist and Daoist deities side by side (Kamitsuka 1998: 77).

The laity was also encouraged to participate in communal rites of repentance, which were meant to eliminate their bad karma and build up their destiny. If possible, they were to join a monastic community for special retreat days, the so-called “days of uprightness,” which numbered six, eight, or ten days per month. At those times they took eight precepts, instead of the regular five precepts, and participated in the monastic routine. The Chinese word for this kind of retreat is *zhai*. Over the centuries the rites and the retreats underwent notable changes, which are symptomatic of the increased Buddhist transformation of indigenous practice.

In ancient China, *zhai* indicated the preparatory purification before rituals, which included baths, fasting, and sexual abstention, along with the avoidance of death, blood, and other forms of defilement. The most generic and most ancient meaning of the term is thus “purification” or “fast.” Under the influence of Buddhism, *zhai* changed from a preparatory to an integral part of the ritual, indicating a resemblance to the Hindu *pūjā*, the offering of food to deities and the sharing of food among humans (lay donors and recluses). In addition, in Chinese Buddhism, while the term *zhai* had the

meaning of “fast,” it was also used for the ritual meal before noon. That meal was strictly vegetarian, and it was commonly sponsored by donors who gained merit through their generosity. As a result *Zhai* no longer meant “fast,” but came to indicate “vegetarian feast,” either offered to the gods or shared among members of the religious community. In the sense of “ceremonial meal,” the term in due course came to be used in a variety of compounds: *zhai*shi or “ceremonial food,” *zhaitang* or “refectory,” *zhaiqi* or “ceremonial dishes,” and *jianzhai* or “meal supervisor.”

Two additional meanings of *zhai* developed with the increased formalization of the ritual schedule, both in Buddhism and Daoism. First, there is the usage of the term in the sense indicated above, when lay followers join the monastic community for a certain period of time. The best translation here is “retreat” or “temporary renunciation.” Another dimension of *zhai* appears in its use as a designation for major ritual events, usually dedicated to the expiation of sins or the blessing of ancestors and the emperor, which are held at regular intervals throughout the year. In this context, *zhai* really means “festival.” In this sense, it is also commonly rendered as “rite of purgation,” which indicates its original sense of “purification.” We see, therefore, how far the term—and the practices it refers to—have evolved from the simple ritual preparations of ancient China (Kohn 2003: 24). Similarly, we see how Daoist practices and structures, in regard to lay life and organized communities, were heavily shaped by the influence of Buddhism.

The monastic complex

The monastic complex is another huge area in which Daoists are much indebted to Buddhists. The areas of influence include the physical layout of Daoist monasteries, as well as their time schedule, administrative structure, technical nomenclature, fundamental practice structures, and even the basic equipment of the monk’s cell (see Kohn 2003). As outlined in detail in the early Tang manual *Fengdao kejie* (Rules and Precepts for Worshipping the Dao; translated in Kohn 2004b), monastic compounds were built along a north–south axis and consisted of buildings separated by courtyards. Along the main axis were the gate, lecture hall, and main sanctuary. These were flanked on one side by dormitories and administrative offices, and on the other—usually the one that had a stream of running water—by kitchen and dining facilities, as well as bathing areas and outhouses.

The monastic daily schedule involved six periods of worship, spaced almost evenly over twenty-four hours. This kind of daily regimen contrasted with the patterns of ordinary society and made worship a permanent fixture of everyday life. The ceremonial meal was held before noon, and only “medicines” were allowed in the evening. Donors and gods were thanked profusely in meal-time rituals, and nourishment was shared with all beings, raising the act of eating from an individual physical need to a cosmic act of universal compassion. Cells in both Daoist and Buddhist institutions, moreover, were furnished with “a slanted bench, a knee-support, a ritual tablet, a broom, an incense burner, an incense holder, a scripture stand, a kerchief, a chest of wood or bamboo, a seat coverlet, a rope bed, a scripture repository, a lamp stand,

various plates and bowls for food, and a water pitcher" (Kohn 2003: 142; Kohn 2004b: 122).

Daoists thus adopted a plethora of well-proven organizational structures and successful community-building strategies that Buddhists had developed over many centuries. By doing so, they also enhanced the acceptance of monastic ideals and reclusive lifestyles within Chinese society, thus aiding the Buddhist enterprise. Daoists also made it fashionable for Chinese rulers to use lay communities and monastic institutions for state-supporting and peace-enhancing purposes, which increased the potency of organized religion in the country.

On the other hand, all this does not mean that Daoists were just Buddhists with long hair. They very much retained their unique approach to life and their peculiar understanding of the world. The main distinguishing characteristics of their monastic endeavor were: (1) their close relationship with the Dao as the underlying power that creates and supports everything in the best possible way, and to which one can relate through intuition and by cultivating non-action; (2) their understanding of the divine world as consisting of multiple layers of heaven created from the original Dao, occupied by pure, cosmic deities and transcendent bureaucrats, aided by human priests who transform into celestial officers in the course of formal rituals; and (3) their continuous endeavor to transform the *qi*-based human body-mind into an immortal spiritual entity, through the systematic and persistent application of longevity techniques and advanced meditations. While the external trappings and institutional setting were taken over from Buddhism, the internal convictions and subjective practices remained unique to Daoism.

Life enhancement

Moving in the opposite direction, Buddhists also learned a great deal from Daoists, in addition to assimilating the state-supporting role of religion and the vision of the emperor as divine ruler. As they endeavored to increase the appeal of their religion among the greater populace, Buddhists not only became champions of filial piety, but they also adopted various methods of enhancing life, such as increasing longevity with health practices, keeping track of the reckoning of fate, worshiping life-giving deities such as the Northern Dipper, and making sure their followers knew how to eliminate demons and protect themselves against sorcery. Just as Daoists often took over Buddhist original scriptures verbatim in the areas of cosmology and ethics, so Buddhists copied entire Daoist texts on these topics, thereby greatly increasing the stock of apocryphal sūtras created among the Chinese.

Thus, for example, the *Fumu enzhong jing* (Scripture of Repaying Parents' Kindness) exists both in a Buddhist and a Daoist version, allegedly preached by the Buddha and revealed by Lord Lao. The text describes the pains parents go through as they raise their children, the suffering of the mother during pregnancy, childbirth, and nursing, as well as the importance of children serving their parents and taking care of them as long as they live (Mollier 2008: 13–14). Similarly, the *Yisuan jing* (Scripture on Augmenting the Life Account) appears in both Buddhist and Daoist forms, encouraging practitioners

to recite the text, wear protective talismans, worship deities, and honor the precepts. The text promises “miraculous remissions for the ill and the dying,” causing the gods in the celestial administration to “infuse them with an existential reprieve” (Mollier 2008: 113). It also includes invocations directed toward specific Daoist deities of time, such as the Generals of the Six Jia, as well as petitions to the gods written in the classical style of the Celestial Masters, all of them supposed to ensure that the stars are correctly aligned and to bestow good fortune on the individual.

Among the destiny-enhancing stars, the seven deities of the Northern Dipper (Beidou; Ursa Major), plus its two invisible stars Fu and Bi, play a central role. Already the *Shiji* (Historical Records) describes the Dipper as being

placed in the center; . . . it governs all four cardinal points, separates yin and yang, and determines the four seasons. It balances the five phases and arranges the divisions [of time] and the levels [of space]. It fixates the various measures.

In Highest Clarity Daoism the Dipper was perceived as a major force, and special scriptures dedicated to it were prominent during the Tang era (Mollier 2008: 151). Moreover, a major set of Daoist texts, arranged according to the Dippers of the five directions and dated to the tenth century, presents sacred spells and talismans for summoning the Dipper gods and describes the benefits of repeated recitation, leading to the ability to “live as long as the Dao itself.” The talismans were used in the presentation of petitions, and were believed to contain power that made the gods respond favorably. The gods would then hasten to assist the practitioner speedily and efficiently. They were totally reliable and immediately available to rescue those in need, making sure that there was no harm and that life was preserved.

The same Dipper texts also form the foundation of the Buddhist *Beidou jing* (Scripture of the Northern Dipper), which survives in Chinese, Uighur, Mongolian, and Tibetan versions; there are also several other sūtras that deal with the “rites and recitations for the Northern Dipper,” associated with the eighth-century Tantric masters Vajrabodhi (671–741) and Amoghavajra (705–774). Although allegedly dating back to the Tang era, these texts were probably compiled under the Yuan dynasty, when a proscription of Daoist materials, enacted in the 1281, encouraged increased production of popular talismans and spells among Buddhists. Later they were transmitted to Japan, where they exerted a significant influence on the doctrines and practices of Yoshida Shinto (Kohn 1998: 100).

Similar patterns also hold true for self-cultivation practices that supposedly allow people to live extensively and without ordinary nourishment. Such practices are documented in the *Wuchu jing* (Scripture of the Five Kitchens) and in its Buddhist counterpart, the *Sanchu jing* (Sūtra of the Three Kitchens) (Mollier 2008: 23–54). The same applies to another major area of overlap and mutual borrowing between the two religions: techniques that effect the dispersal of curses and the elimination of sorcery. Relevant sources of that kind appear in the Daoist canon as well as among the Dunhuang manuscripts. They, too, prescribe talismans, spells, and ritual invocations, intended to assure that the gods provide the right protection (Mollier 2008: 55–99).

Conclusion

The complex interaction between Daoism and Buddhism in medieval China is often described by recourse to the term “Buddho–Daoist.” Erik Zürcher has likened the popular foundation of this specific kind of religious amalgamation to the base of a pair of huge pyramids, where the features of the two religions are merged, in contrast to their tops, where the unique nature of each is clearer and more pronounced. He suggests, on the basis of artwork that combines Buddhist and Daoist deities, as well as in reference to the contemporary situation, that the two religions were a great deal “less differentiated” at the bottom. Large segments of the Chinese population had no great interest in official religious affiliations, and they simply worshiped whatever (or whoever) proved efficacious in a given situation (Zürcher 1980: 146). However, as Christine Mollier points out, that does not mean that they were completely unaware of the fact that there were two different religions, or “that the spiritual engagement of the laity was completely blind” (Mollier 2008: 210). Rather, the varied combinations of diverse features and practices, facilitated by the complex patterns of interaction between the two religions, created a vibrant spiritual and ritual culture that allowed for remarkable flexibility.

This interaction is not, strictly speaking, a form of “syncretism,” which implies that “two hitherto distinct religions, cosmologies, rituals, or practices, become mixed together and that if circumstances were changed, the mixture would naturally separate” (Orzech 2002: 214). Rather, what goes on in medieval China is more a “translation” of Buddhist worldview, ethics, meditation, and ritual into a Daoist context and, vice versa, the rendition of Daoist cosmology, deities, and practices into a Buddhist framework. The patterns are obvious, the directions clear, and the levels distinct: intellectual speculations about the self and the universe are predominantly Buddhist, while the life-enhancing needs of the populace are served primarily by the Daoists. Through their mutual encounters, both religions gain new dimensions, while maintaining their unique and special natures.

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Further Reading

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PART V

Writings and Arts

CHAPTER 18

The Chinese Buddhist Canon

Jiang Wu

The Chinese Buddhist canon is an organized collection of Buddhist texts translated or written in Chinese. Its main contents center on translated Buddhist works brought into China from Indian and Central Asian regions and are supplemented with numerous texts written in Chinese. A carefully compiled canon assembles important texts in the Chinese Buddhist tradition, and over the centuries has acquired significant textual and spiritual authority. In Buddhist communities a whole set of the canon has also been treated as the object of worship and devotion, reflecting a reverential attitude that is evident in all aspects of its production and circulation. Because of the complexity of its structure and historical evolution, the formation and transformation of the Chinese Buddhist canon can be considered a multilayered phenomenon with religious, social, and textual significance in Buddhist history.

The Chinese Buddhist canon was often referred to as “Internal Classics” (*neidian*), “Myriad of Scriptures” (*zhongjing*), “All Scriptures” (*yiqiejing*), or by the more standardized name the “Great Storage of Scriptures” (*dazangjing*). It has been estimated that the number of all Chinese Buddhist works included in all editions of the canon amounts to 2,590. To describe this whole body of texts as a canon is somewhat misleading because, in addition to the Buddha’s sacred words, the Chinese Buddhist canon also incorporates a large number of texts written in Chinese by Chinese, Japanese, and Korean Buddhists, both clergy and lay people. The texts composed by East Asian authors range from commentaries to philosophical treatises, philological studies, catalogues, sectarian writings, geographic records and travelogues, biographical and genealogical accounts of eminent monks, encyclopedias and dictionaries, etc. In particular, the Chinese Buddhist canon reflects a tendency to collect all available Buddhist sources, though the issue of authenticity is often raised.

In the beginning, the canon was the repository of all genuine translated works brought from India and Central Asia, while writings by Chinese authors were excluded or minimized. By the ninth century, the main contents of the canon were relatively

fixed, as the translation process was gradually completed. However, in later times, with the rise of indigenous traditions such as Tiantai and Chan, the canon quickly expanded to include a variety of sectarian works, and in modern times it became literally the collection of all available Buddhist sources translated into or written in Chinese.

The evolution of the Chinese Buddhist canon was a long process. The initial formation of the canon can be traced back to the latter half of the sixth century, when the great number of translations of Buddhist texts available necessitated a process to catalogue and classify these texts. The early canon existed as hand-copied manuscripts which were widely distributed to well-established monasteries. During this early stage, the compilation of Zhisheng's *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* (Catalogue of Buddhist Works Compiled in the Kaiyuan Period) was a landmark event, as this work became the standard catalogue and served as a model for later editions to organize their contents. In the tenth century, the manuscript editions of the canon gave way to various printed editions, which have dominated the Buddhist world up to the modern era.

Origin of the Chinese Buddhist Canon

Although the Chinese Buddhist canon belongs to a distinctive Chinese textual tradition, the idea of constructing a canon was clearly influenced by Indian Buddhist practice. In early history, the Buddha's words were authenticated during various councils and the result was the formation of the so-called Tripiṭaka—the “three baskets” (*sanzang*), comprising Vinaya (*pini*, or *lǚ*, monastic discipline), Sūtra (*xiu duo luo*, or *xiu du lu*, or more commonly *jing*, scripture), and Abhidharma (*A pi tan*, or *lun*, study of scriptural doctrines). According to tradition, the Sūtra and Vinaya sections took form during the first council, held immediately after the Buddha's death at Rājagṛha, while the Abhidharma section was gradually developed and added to the original canon. Early Buddhist sources also refer to a classification of Buddhist literature into nine or twelve divisions (*jiufenjiao* or *shi'erfenjiao*, *shi'erbujiing*), based on the literary styles of Buddhist canonical texts.

The early Buddhist canon, especially the Abhidharma section, was also based on sectarian divisions that developed among various Buddhist communities, which reflected the sectarian views of early Buddhist orders. One version of the early canon was written down around the first century BC in Sri Lanka and became what is presently known as the Pāli canon (Hirakawa 1990: 69–75, 329–30; Lancaster 1987: 504–09; Harrison 2003: 111–15).

The formation of the Chinese Buddhist canon is first of all based on a massive translation program of Buddhist texts imported from India and Central Asia. The translation activities started during the first century of the Common Era, allegedly with the *Sishi'er'zhang jing* (Scripture in Forty-two Sections), and ended around the eleventh century. Roughly estimated, there are about 194 known translators who translated 1,440 titles, in 5,580 fascicles (*juan*, literally “scrolls” or “rolls”), according to a comprehensive catalogue compiled in the Yuan dynasty (1271–1367) (Li and He 2003: 36; Ch'en 1965: 365–72).

Chinese Buddhists were aware of the historical existence of the Buddhist canon during the process of translation. For instance, the fifth-century cataloguer Sengyou

(445–518) made reference to the compilation of the canon during the first council, recorded in the second fascicle of the *Dazhidu lun* (Treatise of the Great Perfection of Wisdom) and in the preface to the Sarvāstivādin Vinaya. He even mentioned the legend of a Mahāyāna canon (*Bodhisattvapitaka*) in eight sections, which was recorded in the fourth century translation of *Pusa chutai jing* (Sūtra on the Incarnation of Bodhisattvas) by Zhu Fonian (Link 1961).

Although the starting point of the Chinese Buddhist canon is still not clear, early records show that the process of canonization in China was the result of the rise of the Mahāyāna and the transition from oral to written culture in Indian and Central Asian Buddhism. This transitional process was accelerated when Buddhism was introduced into China, where it met with the distinctive Chinese textual tradition. The accumulation of translated Buddhist texts resulted in various attempts to examine and classify them. Eventually, Chinese Buddhists organized a unique Chinese canon, and they continued to produce various editions to update its contents and perfect its classification system.

Historical Development of the Chinese Buddhist Canon

The Chinese Buddhist canon exists in three forms: manuscript editions, stone canon, and printed editions. Although a few fragments of the manuscript canon and various catalogues have been discovered in Dunhuang, no single complete manuscript edition survived. While traditionally the Buddhist canon was written down on paper, some zealous Buddhists also started to carve the entire corpus of Buddhist literature on rocks and stone tablets, hoping that the Buddhist teaching would survive the period of the “Latter-day Dharma” (*mofa*). The tradition of the stone scripture (*shijing*) continued even after the printed editions became popular. After the tenth century, the printed versions dominated the Buddhist world throughout China and the rest of East Asia.

The manuscript editions were the earliest form of the canon before the spread of printing technology. While there is a lack of physical evidence, it is estimated that the first hand-copied canon might have been created during the first half of the fifth century, as there are indications of the existence of individually sponsored canons in the second half of the fifth century. The earliest evidence of the canon is a Dunhuang manuscript, fascicle 6 of the *Saṃyuktābhidharmamahādaya* (*Za apitan xin lun*, S. 00996), which belonged to one of the ten sets of the canon created by a powerful official of the Northern Wei (386–557) in 479. Other pieces of textual evidence show that the emperors of the Northern and Southern dynasties (317–589) sponsored copying of the Buddhist canon, and distributed sets of the canon to major monasteries. During the Sui (518–618) and Tang (618–907) dynasties, both officially and privately sponsored manuscript editions were widely distributed.

Prior to the creation of the first printed canon in the tenth century, Chinese Buddhists also started to create a stone version of the canon. The tradition of stone scriptures started in the Northern Qi (550–577) as a response to sporadic persecutions of Buddhism. The greatest project was initiated during the Sui dynasty by Jingwan (d. 639), a disciple of the Tiantai patriarch Huisi (515–577). The stone tablets of the canon are located in Yunju monastery in Fangshan county of Zhuozhou, 75 km south of

Beijing. After the Sui and Tang dynasties, the Stone Canon in Fangshan was sponsored by the rulers of the Liao (Khitan, 960–1123), Jin (Jurchen, 1115–1226), and Yuan (Mongol, 1271–1368) dynasties, which based their capitals in the north. The carving project continued during the Ming era. The earliest tablet has been dated to 631 CE, and in the beginning there was no plan to create an entire canon. Under the Liao dynasty, the stone tablets were rearranged and assigned call numbers according to the “Essay of One Thousand Characters,” largely based on the *Liao Edition* of the canon. The Liao government also followed the printing block format, carving 28 columns per tablet and 17 characters per column. Although the Stone Canon in Fangshan lacked the Abhidharma section and was not complete, it bore a close relationship with the manuscript and printed editions of the canon. Nowadays, 14,620 tablets and 82 stone inscriptions have survived in good condition (Lancaster 1989).

All printed editions of the canon were interconnected, since a new edition often relied on previous editions for content and format. Similar editions formed various “text families” or “lineages,” as they borrowed from each other in terms of content, format, and organizing schemes. Some even recycled the blocks of the previous edition, or re-carved its exact format. In the tenth century, the activities of printing the canon were initiated by governments based in the North: The *Kaibao Edition* (*Kaibao zang*) by the Northern Song (960–1127) and the *Khitan Edition* (*Qidan zang* or *Liao zang*) by the Liao were completed in 983 and 1068, respectively. The *Kaibao Edition* influenced other editions such as the *Korean Edition* and the *Zhaocheng Edition* in the Jin (Jurchen) dynasty (*Zhaocheng zang* or *Jinzang*). Selections from the *Khitan Edition* were also carved on stone tablets included in the Stone Canon in Fangshan.

Monasteries in southern China made efforts to carve new editions of the canon by their own means. The *Chongning Edition* (*Chongning zang*), produced in Fuzhou and completed in 1112, was based on a manuscript edition different from the *Kaibao Edition*. The *Pilu Edition* and the *Sixi Edition* (including the *Yuanjue Edition* and *Zifu Edition*) of the Southern Song era, the *Qisha Edition* (started in the Song) and the *Puning Edition* of the Yuan era, along with the *Southern Edition of the Hongwu Period* (*Hongwu nanzang* or *Chuke nanzang*) and the Japanese *Tenkai Edition* compiled during the early Tokugawa period, followed this tradition and formed a “text family” (Chikusa 2000).

During the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1912) dynasties, several new editions were carved. Among them, under the influence of the *Zhiyuan fabao kantong mulu* (Collated Catalogue of Buddhist Works during the Zhiyuan Period), compiled around 1287, the *Southern Edition of the Yongle Period* (*Yongle nanzang*) modified the classification system created by Zhisheng by making Sūtra, Vinaya, and Śāstra the first-order categories, under which texts were further divided as either Mahāyāna or Hīnayāna (see the diagram of its structure in the next section). This edition also re-organized the supplemental texts beyond Zhisheng’s list. These modifications influenced the *Northern Edition of the Yongle Period* (*Yongle beizang*), the *Jiaxing Edition* (*Jiaxing zang* or *Jingshan zang*) of the late Ming and early Qing, the *Dragon Edition* (*Long zang* or *Qing zang*) produced during the Qing era, and the Japanese *Ōbaku Edition* (*Ōbakuzō*) that was created during the early Edo period.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Western printing technology quickly replaced xylography and spurred demand for the creation of new editions of the canon. The

Japanese took the initiative to adopt the new technology, creating the so-called “*Small Type*” Edition (1880–1885) and the *Manji Edition* (ca. 1912). The *Taishō Edition* created in Japan (1922–1934) revolutionized the traditional classification system, primarily by abolishing the basic division of Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna and the use of the “Essay of One Thousand Characters” as its organizing system. Chinese efforts to create new editions, such as the *Pingie Edition* and *Puhui Edition*, initiated in Shanghai in the 1910s and 1940s, did not bring any major improvements, until the creation of two editions of the *Chinese Tripiṭaka* (*Zhonghua dazangjing*) across the Taiwan Strait were completed during the 1960s and 1980s, respectively.

Structure of the Canon as Seen from the Catalogues (*jinglu*)

Although the Chinese Buddhist canon maintained the tripartite structure of Sūtra, Vinaya, and Abhidharma, its overall structure is dramatically different from its Indian predecessors, having been adapted to accommodate unique Chinese concerns. Not only was the Sūtra section given greater emphasis as the first part of the canon, the subdivisions and classifications of the canon also became more complicated. The structure of the canon can be seen from various catalogues prepared for organizing Buddhist texts. Catalogues of Buddhist texts were compiled as a preparation for the creation of the canon, thereby serving as an important step toward canonization. The need for a comprehensive catalogue was a natural result of the influx of a large number of foreign texts. Initially, without much sophisticated classification, the Chinese would translate whatever sources about Buddhism written in Indian and Central Asian languages entered their country. As such translations accumulated, issues about classification arose, because groups of texts dealt with similar topics and had similar structures. Moreover, early Chinese Buddhists often had more than one translation of some of the original texts.

Earlier catalogues such as Dao'an's (312–385) *Zongli zhongjing mulu* (Comprehensive Catalogue of All Scriptures), compiled in 374, and Sengyou's (445–518) *Chu sanzang jiji* (Collected Records from the Buddhist Canon), compiled in 518, were not meant to be used for creating a canon. A lost catalogue discovered in Dunhuang, *Zhongjing bielu* (Separate Catalogue of All Scriptures, S. 2872 and P. 3747), is perhaps the first catalogue of a canon. This catalogue divided all texts into Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna, based on the Tiantai theory of the “classification of teaching in five periods” (*wushi panjiao*). Fajing's *Zhongjing mulu* (Catalogue of All Scriptures), in 7 fascicles and compiled in 594, continued the division of Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna, and under each category titles were further classified as Sūtra, Vinaya, or Abhidharma according to their contents. Chinese writings, however, were grouped separately.

The catalogues were directly related to the creation of a canon. That is evident when a record of the list of titles to be included in a new canon was added to a catalogue. In Fei Changfang's *Lidai sanbao ji* (Records of the Three Treasures in All Generations), in 15 fascicles, compiled in 597, “the Register of Canonical Texts” (*Ruzang lu*) in two fascicles was included, listing all titles which should be incorporated in the official canon. Many catalogues from the Tang era also list the titles that need to be scribed, indicating that these catalogues had been used as shelf lists of the canon as well. It is

clear that in the sixth century Chinese Buddhists became conscious of the role of the catalogues in creating a canon.

The monumental catalogue which directly contributed to the formation of the content of all later editions of the canon was Zhisheng's *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* (Catalogue of Buddhist Works Compiled during the Kaiyuan Period), in 20 fascicles, compiled in 739. Because Zhisheng's catalogue became the standard checklist for restoring the canon after the Great Persecution of Buddhism in 845, all the later editions followed its structure, with some variations. At the end of Zhisheng's catalogue (fascicles 19 and 20) is the "register of canonical texts" (*ruzanglu*), which includes 1,124 titles and 5,048 scrolls in 480 cases. This list became the standard for the main section of the canon in later periods.

A shorter version based on Zhisheng's catalogue, *Kaiyuan shijiao lu lüechu* (Outline of Catalogue of Buddhist Works Compiled during the Kaiyuan Period), modified Zhisheng's classification method slightly and was used by the compilers of different versions of the Buddhist canon in later times. (This shorter version is attributed to Zhisheng, though in fact it was compiled by an anonymous author). In it Buddhist texts are divided into three orderly sections: "Mahāyāna Works" (686 titles, 2745 scrolls, and 258 cases), "Hīnayāna Works" (330 titles, 1,762 scrolls, 165 cases), and "Works by Worthies" (108 titles, 541 scrolls, 57 cases). Under each section, there are subsections and subcategories to classify the texts, as illustrated below.

The structure of Zhisheng's catalogue, based on the outline of his work (*Kaiyuan shijiao lu lüechu*), is as follows:

- I. Mahānāya Tripiṭaka
 - A. Piṭaka of Mahāyāna
 - a. Mahāyāna sūtras of duplicated translations
 1. Sūtras of the five major classes
 - 1) Prajñāpāramitā class
 - 2) Ratnakūṭa class
 - 3) Mahāsannipāta class
 - 4) Avataṃsaka class
 - 5) Nirvāṇa class
 2. Sūtras beyond the five major sections
 - b. Mahāyāna sūtras of single translations
 - B. Piṭaka of Mahāyāna Vinaya
 - C. Piṭaka of Mahāyāna Abhidharma
 - a. Commentaries of Mahāyāna sūtras
 - b. Collections of Mahāyāna exegesis
- II. Hīnayāna Tripiṭaka
 - A. Hīnayāna sūtras of duplicated translations
 - a. The longer Āgama Sūtra
 - b. The medium Āgama Sūtra
 - c. The supplementary Āgama Sūtra
 - d. The miscellaneous Āgama Sūtra
 - B. Hīnayāna sūtras of single translations

- III. Tripiṭaka of Sages and Worthies
 - A. Collections of translated Indian works
 - B. Collections of works in this land (China)

This bibliographical structure was largely followed by later compilers of the Buddhist canon. In the outlined version of Zhisheng's catalogue, characters taken from the "Essay of One Thousand Characters" were assigned to each case for easy retrieval, marking another significant advance in organizing the canon. (For the use of the thousand characters, see the next section). The main sections of the canon thus became fixed. A major development in later times was the inclusion of the majority of the Chinese writings in the supplemented section of the canon. Although there was some confusion about how to classify new translations and added texts up until the Ming era (1368–1644), all the later supplements were to be arranged in chronological order.

The classification system developed by Zhisheng underwent another notable change during the early Ming dynasty. Starting from the *Southern Edition of the Yongle Period* (*Yongle nanzang*), which was completed in 1420, Zhisheng's structure was modified: the three "baskets," Sūtra, Vinaya, and Abhidharma, become the first-order categories, under which Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna texts were arranged. An example of this modified structure can be seen from the *Northern Edition of the Yongle Period* (*Yongle beizhang*), completed in 1440, a catalogue based on the *Southern Edition of the Yongle Period* and translated by Nanjō Bunyū.

- I. Sūtra Piṭaka
 - A. Sūtras of the Mahāyāna
 - B. Sūtras of the Hīnayāna
 - C. Sūtras of the Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna, admitted into the Canon during the Song and Yuan dynasties
- II. Vinaya Piṭaka
 - A. Vinaya of the Mahāyāna
 - B. Vinaya of the Hīnayāna
- III. Abhidharma Piṭaka
 - A. Abhidharma of the Mahāyāna
 - B. Abhidharma of the Hīnayāna
 - C. Abhidharma works of the Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna, admitted into the Canon during the Song and Yuan dynasties
- IV. Miscellaneous Works
 - A. Works of the sages and wise men of the Western Country (India)
 - B.
 - a. Works of this country (China)
 - b. Several Chinese works successively admitted into the Canon during the great Ming dynasty

The Japanese *Taishō Edition* compiled in modern times represents a revolutionary change to the structure of the canon. Its cataloguing system departs from Zhisheng's catalogue by abolishing the division of Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna, and the use of the one thousand characters as its retrieval method. This new structure is shown below.

- I. Main Content (55 volumes)
 - (The following sections roughly correspond to the Sūtra Piṭaka)
 - Āgama texts (vols 1–2)
 - Buddha's and his disciples' biographies (vols 3–4)
 - Mahāyāna sūtras, in six sections
 - Prajñāpāramitā section (vols 5–8)
 - Lotus Sūtra (Saddharma-puṇḍarīka) section (vol. 9)
 - Flower Garland or Avataṃsaka section (vols 9–10)
 - Treasure Accumulation (Ratnakūṭa) section (vol. 11)
 - Mahāparinirvāṇa section (vol. 12)
 - Great Assembly section (vol. 13)
 - Sūtra Collection section (vols 14–17)
 - Esoteric Teaching section (vols 18–21)
 - (The following section corresponds roughly to the Vinaya Piṭaka)
 - Vinaya section (vols 22–24)
 - (The following sections roughly correspond to the Abhidharma Piṭaka)
 - Commentaries on sūtras (with Indian provenance) section (vols 24–26)
 - Abhidharma section for Hinayāna works (particularly Sarvāstivāda) (vols 26–29)
 - Madhyamaka section (vol. 30)
 - Yogacāra section (vol. 31)
 - Collected Treatises section (vol. 32)
 - Commentaries on sūtras by Chinese authors (vols 33–39)
 - Commentaries on Vinaya by Chinese authors (vol. 40)
 - Commentaries on śāstras by Chinese authors (vols 40–44)
 - (The following sections roughly correspond to the supplementary sections of the Chinese canon)
 - Schools and Lineages section (vols 44–48)
 - History and Biography section (vols 49–52)
 - Sourcebook section (vols 53–54)
 - Non-Buddhist Teachings section (vol. 54)
 - Catalogues section (vol. 55)
- II. Supplementary Contents, by Japanese authors (30 volumes)
 - Supplementary Section of Commentaries on Sūtras (vols 56–61)
 - Supplementary Section of Commentaries on Vinaya (vol. 62)
 - Supplementary Section of Commentaries on Śāstra (vols 63–67)
 - Supplementary Section of Schools and Lineages (vols 70–84)
 - Siddham section of liturgical texts (vol. 84)
- III. Dunhuang Texts
 - Lost Ancient Texts section (vol. 85)
 - Suspected Texts section (vol. 85)
- IV. Iconographical Content (12 volumes)

This newly invented structure contains all the content of the three “baskets” and makes the sectarian division between Mahāyāna and Hinayāna less apparent. In addi-

tion, this new structure allows for more historical works related to Chinese Buddhism, such as non-Buddhist works, texts that have been rediscovered in Dunhuang, esoteric liturgical texts, catalogues, and iconography, to be included, thereby greatly expanding and enriching the content of the Buddhist canon. The new nomenclature also highlights the Japanese contribution to East Asian Buddhist literature by creating supplementary sections for works composed by Japanese authors.

Material Aspects and Physical Layout

The early editions of the Chinese Buddhist canon were handwritten and copied by scribes. During the Sui and Tang dynasties, different versions of the canon were available through hand-copying and were stored in royal palaces and Buddhist monasteries. In the tenth century, the major means of production was changed to woodblock printing (xylography). In this process, the physical layout and the material aspects of the canon underwent several changes, along with the advances in production technologies such as printing and binding. There are three important aspects we need to clarify here: the use of the “Essay of One Thousand Characters” as the call number system, the physical layout of the texts, and the effects of printing and binding technologies.

As a massive textual production, the creation of a canon requires a sophisticated method to store and retrieve each individual text in a precise way. Consequently, a call number system needs to be installed to assign a unique number to each individual text on the shelf. Although Zhisheng’s catalogue provided a classification system based on subjects, a call number system which reflects the shelf order of each individual text was needed for the Buddhist canon, thus resembling a library. Because the Chinese language is non-alphabetical, a natural alphabetical order based on titles and author names cannot be used.

After the Great Persecution of Buddhism in 845, a new method based on the one thousand characters (*qianziwen zhihao fa*) was accepted as the most convenient system. The “Essay of One Thousand Characters,” authored by Zhou Xingsi (469?–521) of the Liang dynasty, was a primer for teaching pupils about Chinese language and culture. As its name suggests, it was written using a thousand common Chinese characters without any duplication, and its contents covered basic knowledge of the natural world, history, ethics, and education. It became the didactic reading material for children, and all educated Chinese were supposed to memorize it by heart. The text was ideal for a call number system because it used one thousand different characters without repetition. That number of characters was large enough to include all Buddhist works, and it also allowed for later expansion. (In the case of the *Jiaxing Edition*, all thousand characters were used up, so some later texts were left without any assigned characters). Thus, a system based on this essay simply assigns one character to each case. This method first appeared in the anonymous *Kaiyuan shijiao lu lüechu* (*Outline of the Catalogue of Buddhist Works during the Kaiyuan Period*), which was based on Zhisheng’s work and was widely adopted by the printed editions of the canon in later times. Therefore, its appearance in a text became one of the key markers for establishing whether the text was included in the canon (Fang 2006: 494–513).

In addition to its contents, the Chinese Buddhist canon has some distinctive physical characteristics, such as typographical features and formats. For example, various editions of the canon differ in format (*banshi*). The layout of a finished page had been standardized as 28 columns per sheet of paper and 17 characters per column for the manuscript editions and the early printed editions. The first printed edition, the *Kaibao Edition*, which was still packaged as scrolls, has 23 columns per sheet of paper and 14 characters per column, apparently not following this standard format. The *Chongning Edition* created in Fuzhou, which appeared in an accordion folding style, has one sheet of paper with 36 columns (some are 30 columns) and 17 characters per column, folded into six pages, each having six columns. The string-bound *Jiaxing Edition* folds a sheet of paper into two pages, each having ten columns and twenty characters per column. The modern *Taishō Edition*, completely adopting the modern book format, prints three horizontal registers on one page, with 29 columns and 17 characters per column in each register. Variations of the format call for special attention and might provide the clue for dating a particular edition of the canon.

In the beginning or at the end of a text, a preface (*kanji*) or a colophon (*tiji*) was often appended, including information such as the origin of the text, dates of printing, sponsoring agencies or individuals, and even names of scribes (*xiegong*), carvers (*kekong*), printers (*yigong*), and binders (*zhuangbeigong* or *zhuangdinggong*). Some of these pieces of information appear in the center of particular printed editions (“block center,” *banxin*), where short titles, fascicle numbers, and ciphers based on the “thousand characters” can also be found. Most editions compiled in later times include illustrations, such as a frontispiece image (*feihua*) of a Buddha assembly in the front of the scroll or fascicle and the image of the protective guardian Weituo in the back. A so-called “dragon tablet” (*Longpai*) in the front or back, which was inscribed with prayers for imperial patronage, greatly enhanced the prestige of a canon. Some editions also have “donation tablets” (*Shijing yuanwen pai*), which were often decorated with a lotus flower (*lianhuapai*) and recorded the donor’s good wishes. Illustrations were also inserted into the text. For example, landscape woodcuts were printed in the text of one of the imperial prefaces for the *Kaibao Edition* during the Song.

The production of the canon was also affected by the development of printing technology. Woodblock printing was first invented in the seventh century, largely attributed to the need to spread Buddhist scriptures (Barrett 2008). The mature printing technology was used for printing the first canon in the printing center at Sichuan between 971 and 983, during the Northern Song dynasty. It was a suitable technology for producing massive writing (*Mizangquan*) such as a Buddhist canon because the printing blocks can be stored and repaired for later use.

The binding style (*zhuangbiao*) also changed through history. Early Buddhist texts were often copied on sheets of paper, and several sheets were pasted end to end to form a continuous scroll (*juanzhouzhuang*). Following the structure of catalogues such as Zhisheng’s, Buddhist texts were divided according to size: a hundred or two hundred sheets of paper, amounting to ten scrolls, were put together into a case. Such piles of scrolls were wrapped with covers (*Zhipi*, *baoyi* or *huyi* or *hanyi*) made of cloth, bamboo, or silk, often in different colors. The earliest printed canon, the *Kaibao Edition*, followed this style. Another earlier binding style was the so-called Indian style (*fanjia ben*), which

consisted of bundling pages together with strings by imitating the binding of palm-leaf scriptures. For easy location of a specific section in the text, a long sheet of paper was folded in several pages and was thus called “accordion folding style” (*jingzhe zhuang*). This became the dominant format for binding Buddhist scriptures. In the seventeenth century, the *Jiaxing Edition* adopted the popular string-stitched booklet style (*fangcezhuang* or *xianzhuang*), similar to the style used in the production of popular secular books at that time. One set of the *Khitan Edition* created in the twelfth century appeared in the butterfly style (*hudie zhuang*), by which one page is folded and pasted in the center to form a pile (Tsien 1985: 227–234).

The quality of the paper used for copying Buddhist scriptures varies. The common paper used in Dunhuang manuscripts was made from hemp and mulberry. Among the different kinds of paper used, one is called “white sūtra paper” (*baijing zhi*) or “stiff white paper” (*yingbai zhi*), and the other is called “stiff yellow paper” (*yinghuang zhi*), which was dyed with Huangbo extracts (*Phellodendron amurense*). Records suggest that the paper used for copying sūtras and producing a canon was of a better quality. In the Song, the famous “Golden-Grain Paper” (*Jinshu jian*), a variant of “stiff yellow paper,” named after Jinsu monastery at Haiyan in Jiangsu, was produced in Suzhou from 1068 until 1094. It was used for copying the canon, and among the literati it became a popular kind of collectable decorative paper. This kind of strong and sturdy paper was claimed to have been made out of silk cocoons, but actually it was made with mulberry and hemp. The surface of the paper is smooth and glossy, as both sides are waxed (Tsien 1985: 86–88). Korean paper and ink were also renowned for their quality, and they were used for producing the *Khitan Edition* during the Liao dynasty (Zhang 2006: 167). The woodblocks for printing the canon could be made from pear wood, jujube wood, or catalpa wood; among them, pear wood is the best for carving.

After its production, the canon was stored in large cabinets and installed at special locations. During the Tang dynasty, manuscript editions were stored in huge cabinets that were specially designed for storing Buddhist sūtras. The cabinets were divided into three vertical sections, each of which was further divided into nine horizontal levels. (The sixth level of the left section and the second and fourth levels on the right were further divided into two small sections). In total, there are thirty chambers. Following a sequence, the cases or wrappers were stored in fixed places, which were marked with titles for retrieval.

The earliest extant “tripitaka cabinet” is preserved in the “Bhagavat Scripture Storage Hall” (*Bojia jiaozang dian*) at Huayan monastery in Datong, in today’s Shanxi province. The cabinets inside this location have been used for storing the *Khitan Edition*. Thirty-eight cabinets were arranged along the wall of a hall. In a large Chinese monastery such as Huayan, a special building with two stories called a “Scripture Storage Pavilion” (*cangjingge*) is designed for storing the canon. This building is usually located at the back of the monastic compound. The first floor is the “Hall of Thousand Buddhas,” representing the assembly devoted to reading scriptures. On the second floor, cabinets are arranged along the walls in a style called “Wall Storage” (*bizang*) (Bai 2001: 45–54).

Another popular storage method was “Wheel Storage” (*lunzang*) or “Revolving Wheel Storage Cabinet” (*zhuanlunzang*), the equivalent of a revolving bookcase or repository in Western literature, and invented by Fu Xi or Fu Dashi (497–569). To mark

his contribution, Fu's statue was often placed in front of the device and flanked by the statues of his two sons. This device makes reading the canon a more user-friendly activity, involving the turning of an octagonal revolving cabinet full of Buddhist texts. (There were four-sided and six-sided versions in early times.) The cabinet could be as high as 8 feet, and was 9 feet in diameter. If the cabinet was a fixed structure and could not move, devotees would circumambulate around it. Such a device thus served as a shortcut to reading the entire canon, and so gaining the benefits contained therein (Goodrich 1942).

Canon and Community

In the English-speaking world, under the influence of scholars of comparative religion such as William Cantwell Smith, the Chinese Buddhist canon has been studied under the rubric of the comparative study of "sacred texts" or "scriptures." However, as Paul Ricoeur aptly pointed out some thirty years ago, such an "anti-historical" approach heavily relied on techniques of textual criticism that were borrowed from Biblical studies. Moreover, such an approach has fundamentally isolated the canon from the community which "constituted" it (Ricoeur 1979). In light of Paul Ricoeur's concerns, it behooves us to pay more attention to the role of the canon in Buddhist communities. Over the past several decades, the emergence of new academic approaches to the history of the book and the study of print culture have provided us with new opportunities for reexamining the Chinese Buddhist canon and its various religious and social contexts (Brokaw 2007).

The formation of the Chinese Buddhist canon involved a complicated religious, social, and textual practice, which deserves careful study. In religious terms, the creation of a canon is a work of faith that involves a series of devotional activities, and can be referred to as the "cult of the canon." Socially, such massive production and distribution of texts is facilitated by various social conditions. Each edition is a social project that mobilizes local or even national resources, and negotiates its relationship with the state and local society. Among the various resources, the invention and spread of printing was the most significant. Textually, the canon is a wonderful display of the skillful management of Buddhist knowledge in light of scholarly techniques derived from the Chinese textual tradition. The highly sophisticated cataloguing practice and classification system were the results of original bibliographical studies of Buddhist texts by Chinese monk-scholars.

Cult of the canon

The "cult of the canon" refers to a series of devotional activities involved in the creation, distribution, and maintenance of the canon. This religious phenomenon is rooted in the Mahāyāna tradition of the "cult of the book," as defined by Gregory Schopen, who notes that the early Mahāyāna scriptures placed great emphasis on worshipping written texts (Schopen 1975). Mahāyāna scriptures such as the *Lotus Sūtra* and the *Diamond*

Sūtra suggest that the spot where the written texts were located would become an object of devotion and a merit-field. These scriptures also promoted their own production and reproduction as pious activities.

Mahāyāna scriptures encouraged five devotional actions directly related to the handling of the scriptures: receiving and keeping the *sūtra*, reading it, reciting it, expounding it, and copying it. All these devotions would result in immeasurable merits in one's next life. Especially meritorious was the act of distributing the physical forms of the *sūtra*, which was related to its copying. The promise of a better afterlife no doubt stimulated the propagation of Mahāyāna scriptures.

The message of the "cult of the book" was widely disseminated in China, which had an established cultural tradition that valued the written word. The entirety of the canon soon became the object of devotion, as it represented the Buddha's teaching as a whole. Both the elite and the common people aspired to sponsor the production and distribution of the entire set. There were a number of activities related to the canon, which included devotional patronage and sponsorship, ceremonial consecration and worshipping, ritual writing and reading, etc. (Fang 2006: 210–22, 540–44).

The Chinese sponsors of the canon often invoked the rhetoric of repaying "Four Kindnesses" (*si'en*, i.e. the kindness of the Buddha, the rulers, the parents, and all sentient beings) and benefiting the "Three Realms" (*sanyou*, i.e. the realms of desire, form, and formlessness) as their motives for creating and distributing the canon. The imperial house was the most powerful sponsor of such projects, as it was believed that ownership of the canon could protect the nation. The Korean kings, for example, requested the *Kaibao Edition* from the Song government for the security of their nation, and later created their own canon as a way to defend themselves against the Mongol invasion. Commoners could also sponsor the project as an expression of their devotion. The creation of the *Zhaocheng Edition* during the Jin (Jurchen) dynasty (1115–1126), for example, was first initiated by a commoner called Cui Fazhen, who severed her arm at thirteen and vowed to print a canon. Her project was supported by lay people in Xiezhou (today's Yuncheng area in Shanxi) and its neighboring areas. More than fifty followers imitated her devotion and severed their arms as well. They collected funds by "burning arms and fingers," "cutting eyes and livers," and even donating all family properties and selling their children. It took them about thirty years to complete the entire canon. Cui Fazhen was allowed to be ordained and was awarded with a purple robe and an honorific title (Li and He 2003: 98–100). New studies show this project was actually started by Cui's teacher Yin Shi.

The physical canon can be treated as a sacred object for veneration and sacrifice. Donors can adopt one title, or one fascicle, or even one booklet for offering over a one-year period, and such an adoption is renewable. During Buddhist holidays, the "Hall of Scripture Storage," which was designed for the purpose of veneration, was opened to these donors for worshipping (Bai 2001: 55–64). The canon was also regularly taken out of the cabinets to prevent it suffering from dampness. This practice was developed into the ceremony of "sunning the scriptures" (*shaijing*) for public display and veneration.

In the Buddhist tradition, texts have served an essential spiritual purpose for believers. The huge number of texts in the Buddhist canon have been used for ritual reading

and writing. Ritual reading of the entire Buddhist canon was developed when the canon was still in manuscript form. Commonly known as “turning the scriptures” (*zhuanjing*), the activity of ritual reading inspired the invention of the “Revolving Wheel Storage Cabinet” for symbolic reading of the entire canon. In the Ming dynasty, it was often referred to as “reading the whole canon in confinement” (*jinbu yuezang*), which involved solitude, worship, ablution, and even fasting. The devotees vowed to read the entire canon in three or four years for the purpose of “benefiting all sentient beings.”

Chinese Buddhists also piously devoted themselves to ritual writing of the scriptures contained in the canon. Many devotees were inspired to copy scriptures out of devotion. Wealthy donors commissioned manuscript copies written in gold and silver. Poor but zealous devotees paid for the carving of one block or the printing of one fascicle of a canonical text. Some even went to extreme of using their blood as ink (Kieschnick 2000). The Japanese invented a speedy method of copying the entire canon in one day by allotting the job to many devotees, who copied their assignments individually. In 1211, in the presence of Emperor Gotoba (1180–1239), 13,315 monks copied the entire canon in one day (Mizuno 1982: 171).

Social practices

The formation of the Chinese Buddhist canon was a complex social practice, because the whole process was facilitated by various social conditions and resources, such as the development of printing technology. By mobilizing all available social resources, the making of a canon became a social practice that involved private and official scriptoria, printing shops, imperial and gentry patronage, monastic and governmental organizations, and non-profit or commercial distribution. Through these processes, the Buddhist canon acquired a unique social character that reflected various dimensions of social relationships, among which I will emphasize the following three: the symbolic power of state authority, the use of printing technology, and the social chain of creation and distribution.

In the pre-modern era, the creation and distribution of the Chinese Buddhist canon was symbolically tied to state power. On the one hand, the compilation and printing of a canon could only be completed with governmental support due to the scale of the resources involved in the project. On the other hand, official support of the Buddhist canon symbolized the extension of the state’s power into the religious realm. Consequently, the inclusion of new items in the canon was subjected to state approval and subversive texts were censored. For example, as Nozawa Yoshimi notes, the creation of the *Southern Edition of the Yongle Period* was clearly a political move to eliminate the textual vestiges of Emperor Yongle’s (r. 1403–1424) predecessor Emperor Jianwen (r. 1399–1402), from whom he usurped the imperial throne (Nozawa 1998: 139–66; Long 2000). The Qing emperor Yongzheng interfered with the compilation of the *Dragon Edition* by excluding many texts he did not like (Wu 2008: 163–83). The access to and distribution of some editions of the canon were also restricted. The imperial editions were only bestowed on special occasions such as the emperor’s birthday.

Through its management of the production and reproduction of the Buddhist canon, the imperial government was successful in the control of meaning.

The use of printing technology was one of the most important social and technological aspects of the canon. The first printed edition was produced in Sichuan, an important publishing region during the Northern Song era, and the edition demonstrated the power of this new technology. In the following centuries, because of its efficiency the technique of block printing became the dominant means of producing the canon. Historical changes in the format of the book also influenced the creation of the Buddhist canon. For example, the *Jiaxing Edition* adopted the common book format of string-bound style, which greatly facilitated its circulation.

As a massive project that involved the creation of numerous physical objects, the Chinese Buddhist canon was situated at the center of a social chain of sponsorship, organization, production, and distribution. To create a canon, sophisticated institutions were first created to organize the project. The official edition was usually assigned to a special imperial agency to handle. The Ming government, for example, maintained an office controlled by eunuchs, “Scripture Factory” (*jingchang*), to manage the printing affairs. When an imperial canon was bestowed upon a monastery, its proper handling necessitated the involvement of many central and local administrations. In the late Ming, the Ministry of Rites in Nanjing was actively involved in creating rules for distributing the canon, and treated this as a government duty. In addition, thriving commercial printers, such as “scripture shops” (*jingpu*) and monastic printers, also played an important role in producing the canon through commissions (Long 2006: 329–51).

In the private domain, the organization of printing projects was even more complicated. For example, a sophisticated agency such as the “Scripture Bureau” (*jingju*) was set up for creating the *Chongning Edition* in the Southern Song. This agency divided responsibilities among various staff members, such as the sponsors, supporters, chief fundraisers, assistant fundraisers, chief monks for managing the canon, chief monks for managing print blocks, collators and proofreaders, carvers, printing workers, etc. When the canon was distributed, it was often treated as a valuable commodity, and thus formed its own “commodity chain” in which private printing shops, merchants, and local literati were often involved.

Textual practice

The Chinese Buddhist canon contributes to World Buddhism through its careful stewardship of Buddhist texts translated and written in Chinese. Over the centuries the compilation of the canon involved meticulous textual manipulation of thousands of Buddhist texts, which formed a distinct textual tradition. These textual practices include cataloguing, bibliographical study, philological and lexicographical study, annotations (including pronunciation notes), colophons with donor information, diagrams, illustrations, etc. These fundamental works allow easy access to Buddhist texts in Chinese and make the canon the center of Buddhist scholarship. These works also required collaboration among scholars, which prompted the formation of various scholarly communities devoted to the study of the canon.

The cataloguing practice stands out as one of the most significant textual practices and has attracted appropriate scholarly attention. As some bibliographers claim, Buddhist cataloguers were even more sophisticated than their Confucian counterparts. The Chinese Buddhist catalogues are not simply an enumerative list of titles, but are also historically descriptive and analytical. They include rich historical information. A typical catalogue often describes the origins of the catalogue, and it summarizes or even incorporates works by previous cataloguers. These catalogues pay special attention to different aspects of individual texts, such as the time and place of translation, the content of the text, and the history of its circulation. Many of them provide biographies of translators and prefaces to the translated texts as evidence. The records of translations are often arranged chronologically or according to the nature of the content, which might feature a distinction between Mahāyāna scriptures and Hīnayāna scriptures. Notes and discussions about the textual history and authenticity of the specific texts are also appended. Even those titles that the cataloguers never examined in person are documented for later research.

Texts written by Chinese authors, though not an area of emphasis among early cataloguers, are also marked and put in a separate category. Very often, a list of titles recommended to be included in the canon is also appended and supplied with essential information, such as titles, number of scrolls, number of sheets of paper, and, later, the assigned characters from the "Essay of Thousand Characters." The bibliographical taxonomy becomes extremely complicated and comprehensive, showing the sophistication of the cataloguing practice.

A more pressing issue was the authenticity of the "original" canonical texts, because "spurious" writings produced indigenously often pretended to be of foreign origin, claiming undeserved textual authority and authenticity. The issue of apocrypha has long been recognized by Buddhist cataloguers. Accordingly, it became a major task to identify the apocryphal scriptures and prevent them from being confused with the Buddha's authentic words. For Buddhist cataloguers, the categorization of "apocrypha" is obviously negative. It meant that texts labeled as such were to be excluded from the canon, or even barred from further circulation.

Generally, the category of "apocrypha" refers to any indigenously produced Buddhist texts (usually outside India) that claimed to be originally transmitted from India. Early cataloguers made judgments based on historical records about translation activities or the content of a scripture. For example, in Dao'an's catalogue, he had attempted to identify indigenous texts based on his knowledge about the history of translation in China. Another cataloguer, Sengyou, used the category of "suspicious and spurious scriptures" to distinguish the apocrypha based on internal evidence, such as style and content, and external evidence, such as authorship and textual provenance. Zhisheng's *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* set the goal of defending the authenticity of the canon, as he barred apocryphal scriptures from being included in the official edition (Tokuno 1990). In this sense, Buddhist cataloguers exercised notable "bibliographical control" over the received Buddhist texts.

The compilation of Buddhist lexicographical works, such as bilingual dictionaries and phonetic notes appended to the canon, is another fruitful textual practice closely related to the compilation of the canon. As early as the Northern Qi dynasty, the monk

Daohui compiled *Yiqiejing yin* (Sounds of All the Buddhist Scriptures) to explain the sound and meaning of difficult words that appear in the translated texts. Such works flourished during the Tang, as more editions of the canon were created. Xuanying's *Yiqiejing yinyi* (Sounds and Meanings of All the Buddhist Scriptures), compiled in 650, and *Dazang yinyi* or *Huilin yinyi* (Sounds and Meanings of the Canon), compiled in 810 by Bukong's (Amoghavajra, 705–774) disciple Huilin, are two representative works. Drawing on both Buddhist sources and secular Chinese dictionaries, these lexicographical works provide phonetic notations to words by using the back-cut (*fanqie*) method of phonetic notation, which employed two different Chinese characters to separately mark the given character's consonants and vowels.

Huilin's work was based on the scriptures listed in Zhisheng's *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*; it explained more than 6,000 characters that appeared in 1,300 Buddhist scriptures, totaling 5,700 fascicles. Moreover, to supplement his work, he widely consulted classical Chinese rhyme dictionaries. In later times, Buddhist monks continued this textual practice, especially during the Liao dynasty. Xingjun's *Longkan shoujing* (Dragon Shrine Character Manual), compiled in 997, is another masterpiece that not only provided phonetic notes but also listed the variant styles of standard Chinese characters. His work was a direct result of compiling a new canon during the Liao dynasty, which he used as a basis for his study. Results from these lexicographical studies were included in the canon itself, as it became a standard practice to incorporate a section on phonetic notation after each chapter of translated scriptures. The phonetic sections in later printed editions are all related to the *Chongning Edition* carved in Fuzhou, which might have been based on a lost lexicographical work compiled during the Southern Song dynasty (Yong and Peng 2008: 198–99, 207–08, 218–20, 369–75; Li and He 2003: 135–37, 217–19, 282–89).

Place of the Canon in the History of Chinese Buddhism

It has been observed that the Chinese Buddhist canon played a crucial role in the formation of East Asian Buddhism in general. For example, Kamata Shigeo calls East Asian Buddhism the “circle of Chinese Buddhism” (*Chūgoku bukkyōken*), as other East Asian countries sought and adopted the Chinese canon, which became the core of their textual tradition. Therefore, Buddhism throughout East Asia is connected by the Chinese Buddhist canon, which has a unique place in history (Kamata 1976).

So far, the study of the Chinese Buddhist canon in China, Japan, and Korea has focused on bibliographical aspects and empirical descriptions of various editions of the canon. Undoubtedly these fundamental studies provide the foundation for further research. However, it is less clear for scholars of Chinese religion and culture how the handling of such a massive body of canonical texts impacted Buddhist communities in China and beyond. To further the study of the Chinese Buddhist canon along these lines, I would like to suggest that the formation of the Chinese Buddhist canon has had the following roles in the history of Chinese Buddhism.

First, the Chinese Buddhist canon served as a symbolic capital in Buddhist communities, providing a means to connect with the origin of the tradition and its ultimate

scriptural authority. The entirety of the Buddhist collection was perceived as representing the ultimate teaching of Buddhism and the essence of the Dharma body (*dharmakāya*). In the process of its creation, imperial houses and government agencies attached extra significance to the canon. Therefore, ownership of a set of the canon would greatly enhance the prestige of the monastery that received it, facilitating the local revival of Buddhism by attracting more patronage. The symbolic nature of the canon also led to an increase in the number of commoners participating in its creation and the cultic practices related to it, as it encouraged donating and worshipping. The production, distribution, and maintenance of the canon, along with a series of ceremonial routines, became indispensable components of Chinese monastic life.

Second, the Chinese Buddhist canon is a non-sectarian textual repertoire of the whole heritage of Chinese Buddhism. New developments in Chinese Buddhism were reflected by the incorporation of new Buddhist writings into the canon. The main section of the canon, which is based on Zhisheng's catalogue, contains mostly translated texts. The new texts that were allowed to be included as supplements, however, reflect key sectarian developments at each stage of the history of Chinese Buddhism. For example, the discovery of the *Khitan Edition* showed us the vitality of Liao Buddhism; its contents also help explain the rise of Buddhist scholasticism represented by Quanxiao, Xilin, Xingjun, and Daochen, who were active in eleventh-century northern China.

Several new editions of the canon produced in the Song, which were sponsored and organized by Linji and Yunmen monks in Fuzhou, saw a large-scale inclusion of Chan genealogies and recorded sayings, such as the *Zongjing lu* (Record of Source-Mirror, 100 fascicles) by Yongming Yanshou (904–975), *Chuanxin fayao* (Essentials of Mind to Mind Transmission, 1 fascicle) and *Wanling lu* (Record of Wanling, 1 fascicle) by Huangbo Xiyun (d. 850?), *Jianzhong jingguo xudeng lu* (Supplementary Record of Lamp Transmission during the Jianzhong jingguo Period, 30 fascicles), *Chuanfa zhengzong* (The True Transmission of the Dharma) by Qisong (1007–1072), and *Dahui yulu* (Recorded Sayings of Dahui), etc. The inclusion of these Chan texts by imperial decrees reflected the rise of Chan Buddhism at that time. In all editions of the Chinese Buddhist canon, there are about 570 titles of Chan works, surpassing those of all other traditions and showing the momentum of the Chan tradition and its important place in Chinese history. Although sectarian preferences influenced the arrangement of the canon, the Chinese Buddhist canon was remarkably non-sectarian and remains a valuable resource for the study of all denominations.

Third, the production and reproduction of the Chinese Buddhist canon have facilitated ongoing religious transformations and Buddhist revivals, and have become ways of redefining religious and social identities. The formation of the Chinese Buddhist canon has involved textual and social processes that fostered the reification of various kinds of “textual communities,” in which members adopted a shared hermeneutic strategy that was formed in the process of reading and interpreting Buddhist texts. Out of these “textual communities,” various ways of interpreting ancient texts emerged, aimed at restoring the “way of antiquity.” As a direct result, declining Buddhist traditions, such as Chan Buddhism in the seventeenth century, were revived (Wu 2008: 245–56). The compilation of the canon became a powerful way of asserting a sectarian identity as well. The “heretical” White Cloud Sect (*Baiyunzong*) formed during the Song

era, for example, was eager to sponsor the publication of the *Puning Edition* of the canon, and through its publication the sect's new religious identity was recognized. In modern times, when new editions were produced in China and Japan, publication of the canon by the use of Western printing technology was largely motivated by the rise of nationalism in East Asia.

The Chinese Buddhist canon is still an important part of a living tradition, and nowadays some of its followers are quickly embracing the digital revolution. New efforts, such as the Chinese Buddhist Electronic Texts Association (CBETA) project in Taiwan and the Tripitaka Koreana project in Korea, have been made to digitize the entire canon, and to make its contents searchable and available online in a technically sophisticated way (see Morten Schlütter's chapter in this volume). Meanwhile, printed editions continue to play important roles in Buddhist communities, as in recent years more beautifully packaged facsimiles and reprints of rare editions are produced in mainland China. The new editions, in both digital and printed formats, meet the demands of a variety of readers, and are used for both scholarly research and devotional practice. We can anticipate that the tradition of the Chinese Buddhist canon will continue to evolve over time, while serving as the core of the Buddhist tradition, in China and beyond.

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CHAPTER 19

The Tibetan Buddhist Canon

Phillip Stanley

The Formal Buddhist Canonical Collections of Tibet

The canon of Tibetan Buddhism has often been described in academic literature as consisting of the Bka' 'gyur (pronounced Kangyur) or of the Bka' 'gyur and Bstan 'gyur together (pronounced Tengyur). The term Bka' 'gyur means "translations of the word [of the Buddhas]," which includes the exoteric sūtras, the esoteric tantras, and the root texts on monastic discipline that are attributed to the Buddhas. The term Bstan 'gyur means "translations of the treatises [on the word of the Buddhas]," which includes the commentaries and treatises by Indian masters. Both collections are intended to include texts translated from Indic languages. A few texts were translated from non-Indic languages, such as Chinese, Mongolian, and Uyghur, but these texts were presumed to have been translated from Indic originals. Treatises by Tibetan Buddhist masters were excluded from the Tengyurs, except for a small number of texts attributed to eighth–ninth century Tibetan masters of the Early Translation Period (see below).

The first Kangyurs and Tengyurs were produced in the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries CE during the Later Translation Period. These collections are referred to in the plural because they were never formally closed and no two editions are exactly alike, with individual collections sharing greater or lesser degrees of similarity or difference. Editors have made changes in the content and arrangement of these collections over the centuries, especially among the Kangyurs, but given the substantial similarities in the texts and textual categories included in the editions of both collections, one may speak of them as open but stabilized.

Some Tibetan masters of the New Schools (Tib. *gsar ma*) of the Later Translation Period have viewed the Kangyurs and Tengyurs as containing all the legitimate translations of Indic Buddhist texts. Other *Gsar ma* masters have accepted two additional textual collections of texts not included in the Kangyurs and Tengyurs as translations of canonical Indian texts. These collections consist of esoteric texts (Skt. *tantra*; Tib.

rgyud) of the Old School (Tib. *rnying ma*), whose roots go back to the Early Translation Period in pre-tenth century CE Tibet.

The Old School views these two additional types of collections as having a canonical status equal to that of the Kangyurs, if not higher. They are (1) the *Rnying ma rgyud 'bums* (*Collected Tantras of the Old School*) and (2) numerous collections of individual groups of *gter ma* (treasure texts). The former consist primarily of texts that they assert were translated from Indic originals during the Early Period. The latter consist of treasure texts they view as having been hidden by the Indian master Padmasambhava or others during the Early Period—hidden physically or in the mind streams of their disciples—to be rediscovered centuries later in Tibet by reincarnations of those very disciples when the time was appropriate for their teachings to be spread. There are Indian Mahāyāna exoteric sūtras and esoteric tantras, such as the *Pratyutpanna* sūtra and the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* tantra, that depict the recovery of such hidden texts or other objects, thus there are Indian roots for the Rnying ma tradition of rediscovering texts. The ongoing emergence of new forms of tantra in India indicates that the canons of these Indian traditions were fundamentally open and dynamic, and that the open creativity of the Rnying ma treasure texts was thus a continuation of this “orthodox” activity.

Broadly speaking, the masters who have accepted the Rnying ma collections as authentic have come from the range of larger and smaller traditions in Tibet, while masters who have not accepted them have tended to come from two of the larger traditions: the Sa skya and Dge lugs traditions. The Sa skya tradition played a major role in the process leading to the formation of the earliest Kangyurs and Tengyurs in the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries and a number of Sa skya and other masters were explicitly critical of these Old School texts as apocryphal. They thus contributed to the virtual exclusion of these texts from the Kangyurs. (A very small number are included in some Kangyurs.) The Dge lugs tradition, which was founded toward the later end of the fourteenth century, had a similar conservative orientation.

There is yet another controversial pair of formal canonical collections that belong to the Bon school, which is a heterodox mix of ancient religious traditions and Buddhist teachings. A prominent feature of these two Bon collections is that they consist almost entirely of rediscovered treasure texts. That applies not just for their esoteric tantras like the Rnying mas, but even for their exoteric sūtras and treatises. These Bon treasure texts began to emerge in the eleventh century—perhaps slightly before the first Rnying ma treasure texts of that century—and they coalesced into two Bon canonical collections by the late fourteenth to mid-fifteenth centuries, following the model of the Buddhist Kangyurs and Tengyurs that had emerged a century earlier. The fact that these heterodox texts were almost entirely treasure texts may have intensified the suspicions of the Sa skyas and others regarding the Rnying ma treasure texts during and after the period leading up to the formation of the first Kangyurs and Tengyurs.

There has been controversy, then, over which formal Tibetan canonical collections of Indic texts are legitimate. All schools of Tibetan Buddhism accepted the Kangyurs and Tengyurs, but for some these two collections could be used in a sectarian fashion if they were claimed to be the full extent of the formal canon, that is, they could be sectarian not for what they included but for what they excluded, namely, virtually all

of the texts in the two types of Rnying ma collections. (The Bon did not seek to have their texts viewed as suitable for inclusion in the Kangyur and Tengyur). It is thus incorrect to say that the Kangyurs and Tengyurs are “*the* formal canon” of Tibetan Buddhism. Rather, it is accurate to make the more limited statements that (1) the Kangyurs and Tengyurs are included in the formal canon of all Tibetan Buddhists and (2) they are the full extent of the formal canon only for some Tibetans.

There is still a further issue regarding the scope of the Tibetan Buddhist canon. The field of Buddhist studies has begun to explore the concept of a “practical canon” that differs in important ways from the concept of the “formal canon” that was presumed above. Practical canons consist of the texts actively used in a specific sectarian tradition. Two major features distinguish a practical canon from a formal canon: a practical canon includes (1) only a select portion of the texts in a given formal canon, which is called a “canon-within-the-canon” in the scholarship on the Christian canon, and (2) treatises written by regional Buddhist masters that are not included in the formal canons.

As with the New and Old Testaments of Christianity, the Kangyurs and Tengyurs contain doctrinal diversity, and thus to create a more-or-less consistent orthodoxy, a school must select such a canon-within-the-formal-canon. Different sectarian traditions that share the same formal canon will thus have different practical canons, because they may have different canons-within-the-canon and, in any case, will have their own treatises that stand outside the formal canon and interpret that canon in distinctive ways. These interpretive treatises are crucial to the sectarian identity of a tradition and will be among the most formative, authoritative, and revered texts of the tradition. While in theory they are subordinated to the sūtras, tantras, and treatises of the formal canon, in practice they may vie with them in terms of the reverence and studious attention they receive on a regular basis.

Finally, one may also speak of an “inclusive canon” that consists of all the texts known to a tradition that it accepts as Buddhist, even if it itself may not use them in its practical canon or include them in its formal canon. This is exemplified by the sympathetic acceptance of the treasure texts of the Rnying ma school by the Tibetan Bka’ rgyud school and by the Chinese imperial government’s creation and repeated reprintings of the Peking edition of the Tibetan Kangyur and Tengyur without including them in their formal Chinese canonical collections. While inclusive canons are the most expansive type of canon, they are nonetheless sectarian. For example, there are Sa skyas and Dge lugs pas who would not accept the Rnying ma treasure texts into their inclusive canon. In summary, it is proposed that understanding the “canon of Tibetan Buddhism” requires a consideration of three types of canons: formal, practical, and inclusive canons.

Overview of the Translation of the Kangyur and Tengyur Texts

The creation of the Kangyurs and Tengyurs, with the equivalent of over 230,000 Peking pages,¹ 5,200 texts, and 300 volumes, is among the great literary achievements of humanity. The *Rnying ma rgyud ‘bums* and the *Rin chen gter mdzod* (*Treasury of*

Precious Treasure Texts), a nineteenth-century collection of many of the Rnying ma treasure text collections, would add almost another 110,000 pages (equivalent to 72,000 or 31% more Peking pages) in 161 volumes. Though the transmission of Buddhism from India north to Tibet occurred quite late, by the mid-seventh century, the formal Tibetan Buddhist canon became the largest of the three extant Buddhist canonical collections: the Pāli (of Southeast Asia), Chinese, and Tibetan canons. Seven centuries earlier, in the first century BCE, Buddhism traveled along the Silk Route to the west of Tibet and into Central Asia north of Tibet, reaching China to the east by the first century CE (for the early history of Chinese Buddhism, see Mario Poceski's chapter in this volume). Buddhism arrived in areas southeast of Tibet, such as Myanmar and Thailand, in the third century BCE according to traditional sources.

Early Tibetan sources depict king Srong btsan sgam po (r. 629–650 CE) as inaugurating the spread of Buddhism in Tibet following his marriage to two Buddhist princesses, one from China and one from Nepal. While the historicity of the Nepalese princess Khri btsun is uncertain, the Chinese princess Munsheng Kongco (Ch. Wencheng Gongzhu), who married the king in 641, may well have encouraged the spread of Buddhism in Tibet. Buddhist masters may have entered Tibet before this period, but they left no discernible mark (for more on the early growth of Buddhism in Tibet, see James Apple's chapter in this volume).

The introduction of Buddhism came at a time of increased contact with other cultures due to the territorial expansion of Tibet under Songtsen Gampo. He is credited with inaugurating a cultural expansion within Tibet, ordering the creation of the written Tibetan language, the creation of the first set of written laws, and the translation of the first Buddhist texts. Though the tradition views him as Tibet's first Dharma King, there is no clear evidence that he had a personal commitment to Buddhism. Significant translation activity did not occur until over a hundred years later with the arrival of the Indian scholar-monk Śāntarakṣita around 760 CE. He founded the first monastery in Tibet in 779, named Bsam yas (Inconceivable), with the royal patronage of king Khri srong lde btsan (742–c. 797). This monastery became the center of translation activity during the remainder of the Early Period of Buddhism in Tibet.

The spread of Buddhism in Tibet is traditionally divided into three periods: the *snga dar* (Early Spread), an intermediate period of decline, and the *spyi dar* (Later Spread). The first period spanned two hundred years, from c. 641 to the collapse of the Tibetan empire following the assassination of King Glang dar ma in 842 due to his repressive actions against Buddhism that included the closing of monasteries, the centers of translation activity. However, the great bulk of the early translations were completed in a mere sixty-three years at the end of this period, between 779 and 842. The intermediate period of decline lasted about 144 years, from 842 to 986 CE, at which point king Ye shes 'od (c. 959–1036) of western Tibet exhorted his subjects to adopt Buddhism; most importantly for the history of translation, he supported the work of the great translator Rin chen bzang po (958–1055). The bulk of the later translations occurred in the three hundred years from 986 until the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries when the arrival of Indian Buddhist texts and translators began tapering off due to the Muslim conquest of northern and central India.

Three royal catalogues of the translations of Buddhist texts in Tibet were produced during the Early Spread, two of which are extant. The compilers of the catalogues arranged the growing body of texts into a single unified canonical collection. They used the Three Baskets (Tib. *sde snod gsum*; Pāli: *tipiṭaka*; Skt. *tripiṭaka*) for their overarching structure, arranged in the order of the Sūtra Piṭaka (Basket of the Discourses of the Buddhas), Vinaya Piṭaka (the Basket of Monastic Discipline), and Abhidharma Piṭaka (the Basket of Higher Teachings that systematized the teachings of the Discourses). The Three Baskets schema was to serve as a major organizing principle for the Kangyurs and Tengyurs of the Later Period as well.

This sequence of the Sūtra, Vinaya, and Abhidharma Baskets belongs to the northern Sanskritic schools of Foundational Buddhism, called the “Lesser Vehicle” (Tib. *theg dman*; Skt. *Hinayāna*) by the followers of the “Great Vehicle” (Tib. *theg chen*; Skt. *Mahāyāna*). The sequence used in the single surviving school of Foundational Buddhism, the southern Pāli school of the Theravāda, reverses the order of the first two baskets: Vinaya, Sūtras, and Abhidharma. The Chinese and Tibetan traditions inherited the sequence of the northern Sanskritic tradition, though some later Tibetan collections altered this sequence, which then paralleled the order used in the southern Theravāda tradition, though this was an indigenous Tibetan development with no evidence of influence from the Theravāda tradition. The Three Baskets have been a major organizing principle for all these canons.

Of the 232,000 pages found in the Kangyurs and Tengyurs, a conservative estimate suggests that a prodigious 103,000 pages, or 44% of the total, were translated during the Early Spread, primarily in the sixty-three years between 779 and 842. The other 125,000 pages, or 56%, were translated during the main 300-year period of the Later Spread or else their period of translation is unknown.

There are significant differences in the types of texts translated in the early and later periods, which can be summarized as follows, stated in terms of their relative number of pages:

- There was a tremendous quantity of exoteric Kangyur sūtras translated in the Early Period and virtually a complete absence of such translations in the Later Period.
- The quantity of esoteric Kangyur tantras translated in the Later Period was roughly twice the quantity translated in the Early Period.
- The quantity of exoteric Tengyur sūtra treatises and commentaries translated in the Later Period was modestly larger (33% more) than the quantity translated in the Early Period.
- There was virtually a complete absence of esoteric Tengyur tantric treatises and commentaries translated in the Early Period but an explosion in the translations of such texts in the Later Period.

The only common characteristic between the Early and Later Translations Periods in terms of these four categories is that a large quantity of Tengyur sūtra treatises and commentaries were translated during both periods. While commentaries, especially sūtra commentaries, held a prominent place in the early translations, the central role

of commentaries only intensified in the later translations, especially for tantra commentaries. A prominent feature of Tibetan Buddhism is its devotion to writing Tibetan commentaries and treatises on both exoteric and esoteric Indic commentaries and treatises, in contrast to the Chinese Buddhist masters who tended to write treatises directly on exoteric Indic sūtras. (The tantras had far less influence in China than in Tibet.) The Tibetan orientation to writing commentaries on Indian treatises reflects the scholastic culture they inherited from their Indian masters. Unlike China, Tibet did not have a literary culture of its own when Buddhism arrived, thus Tibetan literature was deeply shaped by the inherited Indic tradition.

With regard to the small number of tantras and tantric treatises translated in the Early Period, the kings who supported Buddhism were oriented to its exoteric forms, which they used to support the state in their political struggles with the noble families. This is exemplified in two edicts issued by king Khri srong lde btsan (r. 755–797 CE) to officially reestablish Buddhism and its moral order for the good of the land, after ministers had assassinated his father and banned Buddhism. The early royal caution toward tantric Buddhism is reflected in a royal decree in the *Sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa* ([*Treatise on*] *Word-Combination in Two Bam po*; Skt. *Madhyavyutpatti*) of c. 812, which stipulates that translators should receive royal permission before translating or even collecting tantras.

This restriction was not entirely effective since we have a number of tantras attributed to early translators in the later canonical collections that do not appear in the royal catalogues from the Early Period. The restrictions were effective in limiting the types of tantras included in the royal catalogues, which were overwhelmingly related to the less antinomian tantric form known as Action Tantra (Tib. *bya rgyud*; Skt. *kriyā*). However, the rising tide of Indic tantra texts and their related practices were enthusiastically embraced by the Tibetans over the subsequent centuries, achieving a prominent place in the public and private lives of the Tibetans, as well as in the formal canonical collections of the Kangyurs and Tengyurs.

Structure of the Canonical Collections of the Early Period: The Royal Catalogues

As noted above, three royal catalogues were produced during the Early Period, of which two are extant: the *Lhan dkar ma* of c. 812 and the *'Phang thang ma* of c. 843–881. They confirm that the Three Baskets in the northern Sanskrit order of Sūtra Piṭaka, Vinaya Piṭaka, and Abhidharma Piṭaka served as their main overarching organizational principle. The compilers of these catalogues had a highly developed, multileveled structure in mind when they created their catalogues, but they left virtually all the meta-categories unnamed. Instead, they formally labeled only the lowest, most granular levels of their hierarchy and these granular levels were at different levels of the hierarchical structure. The full structures of the two extant catalogues are thus not self-evident and it has sometimes been said that they are poorly structured.

Understanding the structure of the royal catalogues involves the identification of two recurring hierarchical typologies: (1) the dyad of Mahāyāna (Great Vehicle) and

Hīnayāna (Lesser Vehicle), and (2) the Three Wheels of Dharma (Tib. *chos kyi 'khor lo gsum*; Skt. *tridharmacakra*) with (a) the First Wheel consisting of the teachings of the Hīnayāna, (b) the Second Wheel consisting of the Mahāyāna teachings related to the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras (Perfection of Wisdom Discourses) and the Madhyamaka school (the Middle Way school), and (c) the Third Wheel consisting of the Mahāyāna teachings of the sūtras related to the Yogācāra school (Yogic Practice school) and the Buddha nature tradition. The Three Wheels typology presents the Third Wheel as the highest teaching, but this was naturally contested by proponents of the other two wheels, and the royal catalogues as well as the Kangyurs and Tengyurs consistently place the Second Wheel texts before the Third Wheel texts.

To describe the higher level schemas of the structure in the *Lhan dkar ma*, the Sūtra Basket is first, within which the exoteric Mahāyāna sūtras precede the Hīnayāna sūtras, which precede the esoteric Mahāyāna tantras and *dhāraṇīs* (texts which consist of long mantras). The esoteric Mahāyāna texts are followed by miscellaneous types of texts of praise, aspiration, and auspiciousness that conclude the Sūtra Basket. Then there is the short Vinaya Basket, followed by the Abhidharma Basket, within which Mahāyāna treatises are again first, then Hīnayāna treatises, followed by secular treatises on Logic, and finally texts attributed to the Tibetan king Khri strong lde btsan. At the very end are two categories of work in progress, namely, for translations that have not been fully edited and translations that are not complete. These last two categories indicate that this was a catalogue of an actual collection of texts.

There are a range of other structural principles used at lower levels in the *Lhan dkar ma* structure:

- Within the Sūtra Basket, Second Turning sūtras precede Third Turning and miscellaneous Mahāyāna sūtras, which precede First Turning sūtras. Also, Hīnayāna and tantra treatises are placed directly after their related sūtras and tantras, rather than being placed with the other treatises of the Abhidharma Basket, as would be the case later in the Tengyurs. Anomalously, treatises related to the Mahāyāna sūtras are placed at the very beginning of the Abhidharma Basket in the *Lhan dkar ma*, not after their Mahāyāna sūtras in the Sūtra Basket.
- Within the Vinaya Basket, ancillary Vinaya treatises are placed after their seven Vinaya root texts, rather than with the other treatises of the Abhidharma Basket, as again would be the case later in the Tengyurs.
- Within the Abhidharma Basket, within its Mahāyāna treatises, commentaries directly on the Mahāyāna sūtras precede other Mahāyāna treatises, and within those two subsections, Second Turning Mahāyāna treatises generally precede Third Turning and miscellaneous Mahāyāna treatises. All of these Mahāyāna treatises precede First Turning Hīnayāna treatises. Buddhist treatises precede non-Buddhist treatises (on logic), except for Buddhist texts by Tibetans.
- Within any given category, translations from Indian languages precede translations from Chinese.

It is evident that the *Lhan dkar ma* was intensely structured, though there are occasional inconsistencies. These schemas formed a canonical continuum of interlocking

hierarchical principles, with a gradually descending scale of authority and sacredness that included not just the sūtras and tantras of the Buddhas, but also the treatises by Indian and even Tibetan masters. The *‘Phang thang ma* catalogue was even more structurally complex, with seventy-eight named categories compared with thirty in the *Lhen dkar ma*.

Canonical Collections of the Later Period, Part I: The Kangyurs and Tengyurs

A distinctive feature of the Kangyurs and Tengyurs is their bifurcation of the Three Baskets, with the Kangyurs containing the expanded Mahāyāna version of the Sūtra Basket as well as a traditional Hīnayāna Vinaya Basket, and the Tengyurs containing the expanded Mahāyāna version of the Abhidharma Basket. This bifurcation retained the overarching structure of the Three Baskets, but it was now distributed across two distinct collections. One result of this separation was that pious donors funded numerous editions of the Kangyurs, while they funded far fewer editions of the Tengyurs.

After the collapse of the Tibetan empire, a large portion of the early translations were preserved, but the royal collections were broken up into their component parts, which then circulated separately in the Later Period, with new translations being added to them. The earliest Kangyurs and Tengyurs were made up out of these circulating groups of texts.

The Tibetan tradition holds that the first Kangyur and Tengyur were the Old Snar thang Kangyur and Tengyur created at Snar thang monastery in the decade after 1310 CE. However, the available evidence suggests that the first Kangyurs and Tengyurs were actually produced earlier, by the middle of the second half of the thirteenth century when the terms Kangyur and Tengyur first appear in texts (Schaeffer 2009: 9–32). There is a reference to a Kangyur at Sa skya monastery in 1278 and a reference to Tengyurs in the plural related to events of the late 1270s. There is an extant Tengyur-style catalogue by Bcom ldan ral gri (1227–1305), who received extensive training at Sa skya monastery and lived at Snar thang monastery for much of his adult life, though this is apparently not a catalogue of an actual physical collection. There is a reference to the *lung* (oral transmission) of an actual Kangyur and Tengyur at Sa skya monastery in 1304. This evidence suggests that the masters and institutions of the Sa skya school had a major role in the formation of the earliest Kangyurs and Tengyurs.

A number of conditions led to the development of the formal Kangyur and Tengyur collections in the late thirteenth century. As noted above, the arrival of Indian Buddhist texts and translators began tapering off in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries due to the Muslim conquest of northern and central India, making it possible to create comprehensive, stabilized canonical collections. In addition, after four hundred years of political decentralization that followed the assassination of King Glang dar ma in 842, the Sa skya tradition was granted political power over central Tibet in 1264 as representatives of their new Mongol overlords. The Sa skya rule lasted almost ninety years, until 1350. This centralization of political power brought increased wealth to the Sa skyas that they used to support large-scale textual projects. The Sa skyas also

had a sectarian motivation to create formal canonical collections at this particular time, namely, to restrict the Kangyurs and Tengyurs to translations of what they considered to be legitimate Indic texts, systematically excluding the growing number of esoteric texts of the Rnying mas that they viewed as suspect, as questionable creations of Tibetan authors. As a result, they followed the conservative principle of only including texts in the Kangyurs and Tengyurs for which there was proof that they were translations of authentic Indian texts, such as the existence of the Indic language originals.

This sectarian bias against these Rnying ma (and Bon) texts is evident in the writings of the major early Sa skya figure of Sa skya Paṇḍita (1182–1251), as well as others, such as Dbon Shes rab 'byung gnas (1187–1241), Chags lo tsā ba Chos rje dpal (1197–1265), and Bu ston Rin chen grub (abbreviated to bu ston) (1290–1364), the last of whom finalized the structure that was used in all five extant Tengyurs. However, a tiny number of such Rnying ma texts (two to six) were included in three Sa skya catalogues of the thirteenth century, which included the important *Gsang ba'i snying po* (*Tantra of the Secret Essence: Skt. Guhyagarbha tantra*) of Mahāyoga (see below), for which the original Sanskrit text is reported to have been seen (Schaeffer 2009: 50, 181). A group of eighteen or nineteen Rnying ma tantras were also included later in the Rnying rgyud (Old Tantras) section of the Kangyurs of the Tshal pa line and in the Ulan Bator manuscript Kangyur of the Them spans ma line (see below).

This distrust of the creativity of the Rnying mas or “Old School” was ironic since the commentarial traditions of the Gsar ma or “New Schools” that based their practical canons on the Kangyurs and Tengyurs—e.g., the Sa skya, Bka' rgyud, Dge lugs, and Jo nang schools—displayed significant interpretative creativity in their own divergent traditions, following the creation of the first Kangyurs and Tengyurs. It is as if the virtual closing of their formal canons led to a countervailing hermeneutical opening for creativity in their commentarial traditions that blossomed and matured during the fourteenth through mid-sixteenth centuries.

Structure of the Kangyurs and Tengyurs Compared with the Chinese and Pāli Canons

Since no two Kangyurs or Tengyurs are the same, the analysis of their structures will focus on major shared principles. As noted above, the Three Baskets have been an important schema in all three major canons, namely the Pāli, Chinese, and Tibetan canons. They are the explicit main structure for the canons of Foundational Buddhism. This is the case even for schools that add other baskets. The formal canons of the Mahāsāṃghikas, Dharmaguptas, and Bahuśrutīyas had five baskets, adding two subordinate baskets: the Saṃyukta (Mixed), Dhāraṇī, and/or Bodhisattva Piṭaka. While the Three Baskets of the Foundational schools contained only texts of Foundational Buddhism, the Chinese and Tibetan traditions expanded the scope of the Three Baskets to include both the exoteric sūtra texts and esoteric tantra texts of the Mahāyāna, as well as some non-Buddhist texts on subjects deemed useful, such as logic and medicine.

Chinese catalogues often arranged their texts according to the historical sequence of the translators and dynastic periods, but when they arranged the texts by their

content, they used one of two schemas as the primary structure: (1) the Three Baskets in the northern order of Sūtra, Vinaya, and Abhidharma, or (2) the two vehicles in the order of Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna (with the esoteric tantra texts spread among the exoteric sūtra texts of the Mahāyāna), while the other structure was commonly used as the secondary structure within each of the primary categories. This produced the following structures in Chinese catalogues:

Paradigm 1:

- I. Sūtra Basket
 - A. Mahāyāna Sūtras
 - B. Hīnayāna Sūtras
- II. Vinaya Basket
 - A. Mahāyāna Vinaya*
 - B. Hīnayāna Vinaya
- III. Abhidharma Basket
 - A. Mahāyāna Treatises
 - B. Hīnayāna Treatises

Paradigm 2:

- I. Mahāyāna
 - A. Sūtra Basket
 - B. Vinaya Basket*
 - C. Abhidharma Basket
- II. Hīnayāna
 - A. Sūtra Basket
 - B. Vinaya Basket
 - C. Abhidharma Basket

*The Mahāyāna Vinaya category was developed in China, but not in the Tibetan collections.

As with the Tibetan royal catalogues, Kangyurs, and Tengyurs, these meta-categories were not necessarily explicitly stated in the Chinese catalogues but can be inferred from the sequence of stated categories. Chinese Paradigm 1 with the Three Baskets as its main schema is fully present in the *Fajinglu mulu* of 594 CE. The *Lidai sanbao ji* of 597 CE fully embodies Paradigm 2, with the Two Vehicles as its main schema (Storch 1995: 41–44; Stanley 2009: 377–78).

The Tibetan royal catalogues and many Kangyurs–Tengyur pairs followed Paradigm 1, while some Kanjurs followed a major variant of Paradigm 1. Chinese Paradigm 1 with the northern Sanskritic sequence of Sūtra, Vinaya, and Abhidharma will be referred to as Tibetan Paradigm 1A. The major Tibetan variation in some Kangyurs reverses the first two baskets: Vinaya, Sūtra, and Abhidharma, as noted above. This will be called Tibetan Paradigm 1B. For the present, these two paradigms will be summarized as follows:

	Tibetan Paradigm 1A:	Tibetan Paradigm 1B:
* Kangyur	I. Sūtra Basket	I. Vinaya Basket: <u>Hīnayāna Only</u>
	II. <u>Vinaya Basket: Hīnayāna Only</u>	II. Sūtra Basket
* Tengyur:	III. Abhidharma Basket	III. Abhidharma Basket

It is straightforward to describe the structure of all five extant Tengyurs, since they follow the sequence of textual categories established by Bu ston Rin chen grub in his *Zhwa lu Tengyur* of 1334, though they vary somewhat in their total number of texts and their placement of texts within textual categories. It is not straightforward to describe the structures of the Kangyurs, since their compilers have continued to introduce

changes in their structure and content. That has produced further variations in both paradigms 1A and 1B, but these will not be dealt with here.

Kangyurs can be classified into three groups: (1) the stemma line from the Tshal pa Kangyur of 1347–1351, (2) the stemma line from the Them spangs ma Kangyur of 1431, and (3) independent local Kangyurs. The first and third groups include only handwritten manuscript editions. The second group includes all xylograph editions (editions printed from carved woodblocks), as well as manuscript editions. The Tibetan tradition holds that all the Kangyurs of the Tshal pa and Them spangs ma lines stem from the Old Snar thang Kangyur of circa 1310. Close textual analysis of texts in these two lines has revealed that they could not have descended from the same source and it is unclear if one of them actually descended from the Old Snar thang, which is not extant.

The Tshal pa Kangyur line has two main sub-lines: (1) the Peking Kangyur sub-line that began with the Yongle Kangyur of 1410, which was the first xylograph Kangyur, and (2) the ‘Phying ba stag rtse Kangyur line. The date of the original ‘Phying ba stag rtse Kangyur is unknown, but its earliest known descendent, the Li thang xylograph Kangyur, was produced in 1608–1614. There is additional complexity in the Tshal pa Kangyurs because some of them have been “contaminated” by an edition from a different stemma line or sub-line. For example, the editors of the Sde dge Kangyur of 1733, from Tshal pa’s ‘Phying ba stag rtse sub-line, consulted a seventeenth century Lho dzong edition of the separate Them spangs ma line.

The five extant Tengyurs that descended from Bu ston’s 1334 Zhwa lu Tengyur divide into two lines. Three of them stem from a mid-seventeenth century ‘Phying ba stag rtse Tengyur that is not extant: the Peking xylograph Tengyur of 1724, which is the oldest extant Tengyur, the Snar thang xylograph Tengyur of 1741–1742, and the Golden or Dga’ ldan manuscript Tengyur of the mid-eighteenth century. The other Tengyur line consists of the Sde dge Tengyur of 1737–1744 and its descendant, the Co ne Tengyur of 1753–1744. Four of these Tengyurs can be paired with Kangyurs from the same location, all of which are xylographs. Stated according to the completion dates of their Kangyurs, they are: the Peking Yongle Kangyur of 1410 and Tengyur of 1724, which are the oldest pair, the Co ne Kangyur of 1721–1731 and Tengyur of 1753–1772, the Snar thang Kangyur of 1730–1732 and Tengyur of 1741–1742, and the Sde dge Kangyur of 1733 and Tengyur of 1737–1744.

To return to Paradigms 1A and 1B in light of the three groups of Kangyurs, while a category of Hīnayāna sūtras is explicitly identified in the royal catalogues, they are not separately identified in the Kangyurs. However, nearly all of these sūtras were placed in the Mdo sde or Collected Sūtras category along with miscellaneous Mahāyāna sūtras. In the Kangyurs of both sub-lines of the Tshal pa line, these Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna sūtras are strictly separated from each other, with all the Mahāyāna sūtras placed before the Hīnayāna (Stanley 2009: 644–47, 666–70, 675). In the extant Them spangs ma Kangyurs and the independent Phug brag Kangyur, the Hīnayāna sūtras are scattered widely among the Mahāyāna sūtras in the Collected Sūtra category, though their distribution is weighted toward the end. The structural implications of this will become apparent shortly.

In addition, there is a major difference between Paradigms 1A and 1B regarding where they place the tantras in the Kangyur. In 1A, the tantras are placed at the very beginning with the Vinaya texts at the very end, whereas in 1B the position of the tantras and Vinaya texts are reversed. This results in following structures:

	Tibetan Paradigm 1A:	Tibetan Paradigm 1B:
* Kangyur	I. <u>Sūtra Basket</u> A. Mahāyāna: Esoteric Tantras B. Mahāyāna: Exoteric Sūtras C. Hīnayāna Sūtras II. <u>Vinaya Basket: Hīnayāna Only</u>	I. <u>Vinaya Basket: Hīnayāna Only</u> II. <u>Sūtra Basket</u> A. Mahāyāna: Exoteric Sūtras B. Hīnayāna Sūtras C. Mahāyāna: Esoteric Tantras
* Tengyur:	III. Abhidharma Basket A. Mahāyāna: Esoteric Treatises B. Mahāyāna: Exoteric Treatises C. Hīnayāna Treatises	III. Abhidharma Basket A. Mahāyāna: Esoteric Treatises B. Mahāyāna: Exoteric Treatises C. Hīnayāna Treatises

The royal catalogues follow 1A in placing the Sūtra Basket before the Vinaya Basket, though they have a similarity to 1B in placing the esoteric tantras after both the exoteric Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna sūtras, in that order, which reflects royal caution toward the tantras. In the Later Period, the tantras rose to preeminence. It is often stated that the tantras do not surpass the highest exoteric view within the Mahāyāna, but they are superior in their skillful means for realizing that view. This superior skillful means is apparently reflected in the 1A Kangyurs that place the tantras as their first category in both the Sūtra Basket and the entire collection, where they are followed in descending order by the exoteric Mahāyāna sūtras and then the Hīnayāna sūtras that round out the Sūtra Basket, which is then followed by the Hīnayāna Vinaya Basket. This descending structure of the 1A Kangyurs is well organized according the doctrinal principles of Tibetan Buddhism of the Later Period, with the Hīnayāna sūtras and Vinaya placed together at the end.

Paradigm 1B is not as well organized in terms of such doctrinal principles: the Hīnayāna Vinaya Basket is followed by the exoteric Mahāyāna sūtras, which then revert back to the Hīnayāna sūtras at the end of the Collected Sūtras, which is followed by another reversal to the esoteric Mahāyāna tantras. (Sometimes the Collected Sūtras category, with both sets of its miscellaneous Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna sūtras, was moved from the end of the Sūtra Basket toward the front of the Basket, nearer the Vinaya Basket but still among other Mahāyāna sūtras, which produced even more structural anomalies). The reason(s) why the compilers switched the placement of the Vinaya and tantra categories of the Kangyur is not clear, but placing the Vinaya first may reflect a desire to stress the importance of the Vinaya and to situate tantra within its overarching ethical framework.

The evidence from the Tibetan royal catalogues and both Chinese Paradigms 1 and 2 suggests that China and Tibet initially inherited a Sanskritic Indian paradigm that placed the Sūtra Basket before the Vinaya Basket, which is reflected in Tibetan Paradigm

1A. If this is correct, then Tibetan Paradigm 1B, which places the Vinaya first, would represent a later Tibetan development. Further support for this suggestion is provided by the structure of all five extant Tengyurs, which, after an initial auspicious category of texts of praise, place the tantric treatises before the exoteric Mahāyāna treatises, which are followed by the Hinayāna treatises with the Abhidharma treatises first and the Vinaya treatises last.

To correlate paradigms 1A and 1B with actual Kangyurs, the Peking sub-line of the Tshal pa Kangyurs follows Paradigm 1A precisely. The Stog or London Kangyur of the Them spangs ma line follows 1A except for an anomaly in its placement of the Collected Sūtras. The 'Phying ba stag rtse sub-line of the Tshal pa stemma (e.g. the sNar thang, Sde dge, Lha sa, and Li thang Kanjurs) follows Paradigm 1B, except its Co ne edition follows Paradigm 1A. However, Co ne and Li thang also have an anomaly in their treatment of the Collected Sūtras.

The oldest extant pair of Kangyurs and Tengyurs—the Yongle xylograph Kangyur of the Peking sub-line of the Tshal pa Kangyur stemma and the Peking xylograph Tengyur—exemplify Paradigm 1A exceptionally well. The original Tshal pa Kangyur of 1347–1351 was produced after Bu ston produced his Zhwa lu Tengyur in 1334, the latter of which supports 1A. It may not be an idle fact, then, that Bu ston was invited to the consecration of the Tshal pa Kangyur. It is possible that the structure of the Tshal pa Kangyur consciously complemented the structure of Bu ston's Tengyur in a manner consistent with the inherited Paradigm 1A. If so, then the Peking sub-line of the Tshal pa Kangyur stemma that exemplifies 1A may reflect the structure of the original Tshal pa Kangyur which is not extant, while the structure of the 'Phying ba stag rtse sub-line that exemplifies 1B would have been a later development.

Below is a table of the structure of the Peking Kangyur and Tengyur with Paradigm 1A fully implemented. It also shows how these collections continued to use many structural principles from the royal catalogues. In this table, levels of the structure that are unstated but inferred from the stated textual categories or from unnamed contiguous blocks of related texts are placed in square brackets: “[xxx].”

Canonical Collections of the Later Period, Part II: The Rnying mas and Bon

Controversy over the Rnying ma tantras began in the late tenth century, at the start of the Later Period. Initially, the controversy was over the perceived heterodox nature of the Rnying ma tantras that emerged from the prior “dark” period, which the Rnying mas presented as translations from Indian sources carried out in the Early Translation Period. Their critics claimed that at least some portions of these texts were Tibetan fabrications. This controversy only increased when the Rnying mas began to discover cycles of treasure texts in the early eleventh century. The Bon treasure texts began to appear then as well.

The Rnying mas began gathering these texts into their own collections in the twelfth century, before the emergence of the Kangyurs and Tengyurs. The *Vairo rgyud 'bum* (*The Collected Tantras of Vairo[cana]*) was an early Rnying ma collection, possibly from the

Structure of the Peking Kangyur and Tengyur

Explicit and Implicit Categories

Structure of the Peking Yongle Kangyur

I. Translated Word [of the Buddhas]

A. ["Sūtra" Basket]

1. [Mahāyāna]

a. Tantra

b. [Sūtra]

i. [Second Wheel:] Prajñāpāramitā

ii. [Third Wheel:] Avataṃsaka

iii. [Third Wheel & Miscellaneous:]

Ratnakūṭa

iv. [Third Wheel & Miscel:] Collected

Sūtras I

2. [Hīnayāna: First Wheel: Collected Sūtras II]

B.1. [Hīnayāna:] Vinaya [Basket]

2. [Aspiration Prayers and Auspicious verses]

Structure of the Peking Tengyur

II. Translated Treatises [on the Word of the Buddhas]

= C.[= "Abhidharma" Basket]

1. Praises

2. [Mahāyāna Treatises]

a. Tantra Commentaries

b. [Sūtra Treatises]

i. [Second Wheel Treatises]

(1) Prajñāpāramitā [Commentaries]

(2) Madhyamaka School

ii. [Third Wheel & Miscel. Mahāyāna Treatises]

(1) Comm. on Miscel. [& 3rd Wheel] Sūtras

(2) Cittamātra School

3. [Hīnayāna: First Wheel]

a. Abhidharma Treatises

b. Vinaya Commentaries

4. [Miscellaneous Buddhist Treatises]

a. Birth Stories

b. Letters

5. [Miscellaneous Non-Buddhist Treatises]

a. [Four Outer Sciences]

i. Logic

ii. Grammar

iii. Medicine

iv. Arts and Applied Crafts

b. Ethics and Statecraft

6. Marvelous Treatises (Includes texts by Tibetans)

Explicit Tibetan Categories

Bka' 'gyur

Rgyud

Sher phyin

Phal chen

Dkon brtsegs

Mdo sde I

[Mdo sde II]

'Dul ba

[Smon lam, bKra shis kyi

tshigs su bcad pa]

Bstan 'gyur

Bstod tshogs

Rgyud 'grel

Sher phyin

Dbu ma

Mdo tshogs 'grel pa

Sems tsam

Mngon pa'i bstan bcos

'Dul ba'i 'grel pa

Skyes rab

Spring yig

Tshad ma

Sgra rig pa

Gso ba rig pa

Bzo rig pa

Thung mong ba lugs kyi

bstan bcos

Ngo mtshar bstan bcos

twelfth century. It is extant and consists of eight volumes, 196 texts, and 4,023 pages. The first *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum* was probably created by Kun spangs grags rgyal between the 11th and 13th centuries, though his dates are uncertain. This collection is not extant.

As with the Kangyurs and Tengyurs, texts explicitly written by Tibetans were generally excluded from the *Rnying ma rgyud 'bums*, though some “visionary translations” by Tibetans, which were tantras authored by Rnying ma masters that appropriated new tantric teachings and techniques from translations of the Later Period by assimilating this new material with elements of their Rnying ma tradition, were included (Germano 2002). The *Rnying ma rgyud 'bums* also generally excluded treasure texts, which were included in their own treasure collections. Another *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum* was made in the thirteenth century by 'Gro mgon nam mkha' dpal ba, the son of Nyang ral nyi ma'i 'od zer (1136–1204), while another was made in the fourteenth century by Zur Bzang po dpal and another in the fifteenth century by Ratna gling pa (1403–1478) and son.

It is not clear how many texts these collections contained. The eighteenth-century Sde dge edition has 25 volumes, 447 texts, and 17,835 pages. The online catalogue of *Rnying ma rgyud 'bums* of the Tibetan and Himalayan Library, based on four editions, lists 1,017 texts and over 45,432 pages (equivalent to 30,125 Peking pages) and 50 volumes. The structure of these collections is based on the three highest classes of tantra of the distinctive nine vehicle doxographical system of the Rnying ma tradition, which are arranged in these collections in the descending order of Atiyoga or the Highest Yoga (Tib. *shin tu rnal 'byor*, also known as *rdzogs chen*, the Great Perfection), Anuyoga or the Subsequent Yoga (Tib. *rjes su rnal 'byor*), and Mahāyoga or the Great Yoga (Tib. *rnal 'byor chen po*).

Separate collections of treasure texts were also formed in the twelfth century, such as the collection of Zhang ston bkra shis rdo rje's (1097–1167). Treasure collections are typically devoted to the treasure texts of a specific treasure revealer or lineage. Nyang ral nyi ma 'od zer (1124/1136–1204) was the first major treasure revealer. Treasure texts have continued to be revealed in the Rnying ma tradition to this day. Of the large number of treasure revealers that have appeared over the centuries, five are raised up as the *gter ston rgyal po lnga*, the “Five Kings [among] the Treasure Revealers”: Nyang ral nyi ma 'od zer, Guru Chos kyi dbang phyug (1212–1270), Rdo rje gling pa (1346–1405), Pad ma gling pa (1450–1521), and 'Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i dbang po (1820–1892), all of whom are considered emanations of King Khri srong lde btsan. The first two of these five lived in the period of the twelfth through thirteenth centuries, before the formation of the first Kangyurs and Tengyurs, while the third lived afterward, in the fourteenth century. There was an explosion of treasure texts from the fourteenth century onward. There is no single collection that includes all the treasure texts, but the largest composite collection is the *Rin chen gter mdzod*, mentioned above, which was compiled by 'Jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas (1813–1899) and consists of 111 volumes and an estimated 63,746 pages (equivalent to 42,080 Peking pages).

As indicated above, to create an estimate of the Rnying ma tantras not included in the Kangyurs, one could add up all the volumes and pages of (1) the *Rnying ma rgyud*

'bums and (2) the *Rin chen gter mdzod*. If one converts the different page sizes to their equivalent in Peking pages based on average number of syllables per page, this yields 161 volumes and the equivalent of 72,205 Peking Kangyur pages. This is an underestimate of such Rnying ma texts, but they are still almost four times (3.9x) the size of all the tantras in the Kangyurs, which have the estimated equivalent of 30 Peking volumes and 18,402 Peking pages of tantras.

According to the catalogue by Nyi ma bstan 'dzin dbang sdud rgyal po (b. 1813), the Bon collection of the Bka' or the "Word [of the Buddha Shenrab]" had 113 texts in 175 volumes and the Bka' brten or "That which Relies on the Word [of the Buddha Shenrab]" had 293 texts in 131 volumes, for a total of 406 texts in 306 volumes. The Buddhist Kangyurs and Tengyurs have over 320 volumes and some 5,262 texts with 231,802 Peking pages, but we do not have number of pages and average number of syllables per page for the Bon collections to make a meaningful comparison with these numbers, other than to note that the Bon collections were clearly large. As with the Rnying ma tradition, the Bon tradition has continued to generate treasure texts; a new Bka' edition c. 1987 has 192 volumes, 1,262 texts, and 61,416 pages, while a Bka' brten edition of 1985–1988 consists of a remarkable 300 volumes, 8,246 texts, and 207,667 pages, for a total of 492 volumes, 9,508 texts, and 269,083 pages.

Role of Canonical Texts and Collections in Tibetan Society

Paradoxically, while the texts of the Kangyur are held in the highest esteem by Tibetan Buddhists, they are in fact rarely studied directly. The primary practical role of the Kangyurs is as a revered ritual object. The texts of the Kangyurs are placed on shrines as objects of reverence, whether as individual texts or as a complete collection. The Kangyur or, more rarely, both the Kangyur and Tengyur, are recited in their entirety on special occasions, multiple volumes being rapidly and simultaneously recited for the purpose of accumulating merit. Under these circumstances, comprehension of the texts is not the focus.

This is not to imply the activity is done mindlessly. Such recitations are a ritual affirmation of the entire canonical continuum that extends beyond the Kangyurs to the Tengyurs, and especially to the practical canon of the monastery in which the recitation is occurring. When the monks of a Dge lugs monastery engage in the ceremonial recitation of an entire Kangyur, the quintessential meaning of these sūtras, tantras, and treatises is understood as having been set forth in the works of their founder, Tsong kha pa (1357–1419), and in the works of the subsequent masters of their tradition. These Tibetan works are primarily oriented to expounding and adjudicating the meaning of select treatises in the Tengyurs, which, in turn, are understood as revealing the essential meaning of the sūtras and tantras in the Kangyurs. Reciting a Kangyur thus serves as an affirmation of the entire worldview of the Dge lugs tradition.

During times of personal difficulties, such as illness or injury, families might offer donations to monks to recite one or more sūtras, frequently from the Perfection of

Wisdom sūtras, or even an entire Kangyur, with the hope that the merit accumulated would alleviate their circumstances. A village community might sponsor a procession that carries the volumes of a Kangyur around their village and fields, again with the intent of accruing merit, whether to bring favorable conditions in a future life or to help alleviate or avert a communal calamity such as drought or armed conflict (Childs 2005: 41).

While these are typical roles of a Kangyur in Tibetan society, the texts of the Kangyurs retain their capacity as inspiring scriptures, as illustrated in the creative writings of Dol po pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan (1292–1361). In setting forth the “Empty of Other” (Tib. *gzhan stong*) tradition, Dol po pa went back to the sūtras and tantras in the Kangyurs to provide numerous quotes as the scriptural basis for what some masters viewed as a new, controversial vision of Buddhism. Such a scriptural basis was essential for establishing Dol po pa’s tradition in the face of the sharp criticisms and resistance toward his work. However, his extensive use of texts from the Kangyur represents the exception rather than the rule in Tibetan Buddhism.

As Tibetans made Buddhism their own, their understanding was shaped and transformed by an expanding body of indigenous Tibetan commentaries and treatises (and practice texts) that developed into an array of distinct Tibetan traditions. With the emergence of successive layers of Tibetan commentaries, the Indian texts receded ever more into the background (Wilson 1996: 128). The result of this increasing reliance on indigenous Tibetan texts has been that not only are the Kangyur texts rarely read, but even the reading of the Tengyur treatises has given way to the reading of indigenous Tibetan texts for all but the most advanced Tibetan scholars.

This is not to imply that the sūtras, tantras, and Indian treatises are without ongoing importance to the scholastic traditions. In the logic of scholastic treatises and commentaries, they derive their authority from the teachings they explicate in these very sūtras, tantras, and treatises. This is expressed by quoting such texts. However, the act of providing such quotations does not necessarily entail studying the sūtras and tantras themselves; the Indian treatises and their Tibetan successors provided a pool of essential, ready-at-hand quotations culled from the scriptures over centuries by learned masters.

Content of the Kangyurs and Tengyurs Compared with the Chinese and Pāli Canons

To compare the content of the three extant formal canonical collections from a Tibetan perspective of (1) the texts of the Hīnayāna, (2) the exoteric texts of the Mahāyāna, and (3) the tantra-related texts of the Vajrayāna or “Indestructible Vehicle” that are considered to be the esoteric texts of the Mahāyāna, we see that the Tibetan Kangyurs and Tengyurs collections have the smallest number of pages of Hīnayāna texts, but have the largest number of pages of both the exoteric and esoteric Mahāyāna texts, and constitute the largest canon overall. The Pāli formal canon of the Three Baskets is the smallest of the three canons. It consists solely of texts of Foundational Buddhism. The Chinese formal canon is second in overall size. It appears that it has more

Foundational Buddhist texts than the formal Pāli or Tibetan canons, but the Tibetan canon has more exoteric Mahāyāna and esoteric Vajrayāna texts. However, the Chinese canon has more exoteric Mahāyāna sūtras, while the Tibetan canon has more esoteric tantras and more treatises of both exoteric and esoteric Mahāyāna Buddhism.

The Pāli canon is the only complete surviving set of the Three Baskets from a single school of Foundational Buddhism. The Tibetan tradition did not translate a complete set of the Three Baskets of Foundational Buddhism. The Tibetan king Ral pa can (r. 815–838) decreed that translators should only translate Hīnayāna texts from the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition. The Tibetans translated all of the Vinaya Basket of this tradition in the Early Period. The treasure text of the *Pad ma bka' thang*, which is a hagiography of Padmasambhava discovered by O rgyan gling pa (c.1323–1360), states that the seven texts of the Abhidharma Piṭaka were translated during the reign of Khri srong lde btsan (r. 755–797). However, only one of these seven Abhidharma root texts, the *Prajñaptibhāṣya*, is included in the royal catalogues and the Tengyurs, where it is divided into three texts: *Lokaprajñapti*, *Kāraṇaprajñapti*, and *Karmaprajñapti* (see texts P5587–89 in the Peking Tengyur).

As for the Sūtra Basket, the *Pad ma bka' thang* also states that all four of its sūtra collections called Āgamas or “Transmitted Texts” (Tib. *lung*) were translated during the same reign. The *Ekottarikāgama* or “Numbered Discourses” is listed as translated in the *Lhan dkar ma* and the *'Phang thang ma* royal catalogues (DK274 and PT242) and an important historical document from the Early Period, the *Dbā' bzhed* (*Testimony of the Ba Clan*), which is a royal narrative about the history of Buddhism coming to Tibet, reports that the *Dirghāgama* or “Long Length Discourses” was translated in the Early Period as well. The Tibetans made a concerted effort to translate the Mahāyāna sūtras during the Early Period, which is when a remarkable 97.4% of the 51,576 Peking pages of all the sūtras contained in the Kangyurs of the Later Period were translated. It is thus quite possible that the early Tibetan translators had undertaken the translation of all four Āgamas of the Mūlasarvāstivāda Sūtra Basket, but, if so, none survived into the Later Period.

The Chinese canon apparently has more pages of Hīnayāna texts than the Pāli canon, but more research is needed on this point. Though the Pāli tradition reports more texts in its Sūtra Basket than does the Chinese tradition, this does not necessarily mean that these sūtras have more total pages than the Chinese sūtras. And though the Chinese canon does not contain a complete set of the Three Baskets from a single school, it contains the equivalent of more than a complete set because the Chinese translated multiple Vinayas and multiple Abhidharmas from different traditions, and at least one of each of the Āgamas of the Sūtra Basket. In any case, the Chinese canon is far larger than the Pāli canon because it contains large quantities of exoteric Mahāyāna and esoteric Vajrayāna texts.

A more precise comparison is possible for the Tibetan and Chinese canons. Overall, the Tibetan Kangyurs and Tengyurs have about 42% more pages of translations of Indic texts than the large early twentieth century Chinese Taishō edition (excluding its indigenous Chinese, Japanese, and Korean treatises).² The Taishō contain 56% more

pages of texts of Foundational Buddhism than the Tibetan collections (the equivalent of 55,760 versus 35,809 Tibetan Peking pages, respectively). This reflects the fact that the Chinese translation of Buddhist texts began over six hundred years before major translation work began in Tibetan, namely, in the mid-second century CE versus the later eighth century CE in Tibet. In the second century CE, multiple traditions of Foundational Buddhism flourished along the Silk Route, and a number of early masters who reached China belonged to these traditions. Virtually all the Indian masters who came to Tibet were Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna masters. Traditionally, texts of Foundational Buddhism are integral to studying the Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna, thus the Indian masters supported the translation of some texts of Foundational Buddhism in Tibet, but to a more limited extent than occurred in China.

Both the Chinese and Tibetans translated more pages of exoteric Mahāyāna works than of Hīnayāna works. The first major translator of Mahāyāna texts in China, Lokakṣema, worked between 168 and 188 CE, which was only twenty years after the first major Hīnayāna translator in China, An Shigao, who translated between 148 and 170 CE. Thus the Chinese began translating both Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna texts six hundred years earlier than the Tibetans. However, the Tibetans ended up translating 29% more pages of Mahāyāna sūtras and treatises than the Chinese (114,462 versus 88,809 Tibetan pages, respectively).

As for the esoteric Vajrayāna tantras and their related treatises, in the Taishō edition, Vajrayāna texts account for only 12% (19,136 Tibetan pages) of all its pages of Indic texts (163,705 total Tibetan pages). By contrast, in the combined Kangyurs and Tengyurs, Vajrayāna texts account for 35% (81,532 Tibetan pages) of the 231,802 total Tibetan pages in the combined Kangyurs and Tengyurs. The total number of pages of Vajrayāna texts in the Taishō thus equals only 23% of total pages of such texts in the combined Kangyurs and Tengyurs.

Another distinguishing feature between the Tibetan and Chinese canonical collections is that 72% of the total pages of Indic texts in the Taishō are sūtras and tantras and 28% are treatises and commentaries, whereas only 31% of the total pages of the Tibetan texts are sūtras and tantras and 69% are treatises and commentaries. The Chinese translated the equivalent of 64% more pages of sūtras and tantras than the Tibetans (118,430 vs. 72,345 Tibetan pages, respectively), whereas the Chinese only translated around 28% of the pages of treatises and commentaries translated by the Tibetans (45,274 vs. 159,458 in Tibetan pages, respectively).

Reflections on Canonicity, Scriptures, and Treatises in Buddhism

To summarize, formal Buddhist canons include not just the sūtras and tantras attributed to the Buddhas, but also the treatises and commentaries by subsequent Buddhist masters. This is the case for even the Pāli canon in which the Vinaya and Abhidharma Baskets are scholastic texts developed by Buddhist masters over centuries. The formal Tibetan and Chinese canons include treatises and commentaries by Buddhist Indian masters as well as some treatises by regional masters. They even include useful treatises

by non-Buddhist Indian masters. In the northern Sanskrit model of the Three Baskets, the texts of the formal canons are arranged in hierarchical order along a canonical continuum with the sūtras (and tantras) above the treatises. Other hierarchical principles used to further subdivide this canonical continuum in the various Tibetan and Chinese collections include the principle that tantras may be placed before sūtras, Mahāyāna texts before Hinayāna texts, Second Wheel texts before Third Wheel texts (before First Wheel texts), Buddhist Indian treatises before non-Buddhist Indian treatises, and so on. All of these treatises are included in the canonical continuum, though there is an increasingly attenuated sense of canonicity at the lower end.

This is a very different conception of the canon than found in Christianity, which has had at times an unconsciousness effect on scholars of Buddhist studies. Once the Christian canon was closed, perhaps as late as the fourth century CE, scripture and canon became virtual synonyms for that tradition. This entailed a sharp divide between the scriptures in the canon and all the religious texts outside the canon. The canon was understood to consist of just scriptures, all the scriptures were understood to have been included in the canon, and all other religious texts were thus neither scriptures nor canonical.

The books included in the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament are understood as having been directly inspired by God. The complex historical process through which these collections were closed, or at least stabilized, is traditionally viewed as having been guided by God. The texts included in these two collections are thus considered to be intrinsically different and separate from all other Christian works. Compared with Buddhist traditions, the Christian traditions have a much more attenuated sense of canonicity for the portions of their practical canons and inclusive canons that are outside their formal canons.

There is a doctrinal basis for these two different views of canonicity in Christianity and Buddhism. The general view in Buddhism is that all beings, not just humans, can eventually attain the highest state of realization, whether that realization is understood in terms of Arhatship or Buddhahood. It is proposed, then, that there is no fundamental doctrinal basis for drawing a sharp line between works attributed to the Buddhas and works by other Buddhist masters. Instead, there is a continuum of canonicity extending from the works of the Buddhas down through the works of Buddhist masters and even below them. By contrast, in the general Christian tradition, humans can aspire to be Christ-like, but they cannot become a Christ or a part of the Godhead that consists of the Trinity. This immutable distinction between humans and the divine is reflected in the sharp line between the Christian canonical scriptures inspired and selected by God and all other non-canonical religious texts.

This Buddhist doctrinal view is expressed in the classic Mahāyāna text of the *Uttaratantraśāstra* attributed to Maitreya. He states that treatises by appropriately trained masters are to be revered as if they were the word of the Buddha himself (for the Tibetan: Sde dge Tengyur text D4024, vol. Phi/123, 72.2.5–6):

Whatever has been explained by those with undistracted minds
Only in terms of the teachings of the Victorious Ones

[And that] accords with the path for attaining liberation,
That should be placed on the top of one's head as the word (*bka'*) of the Sages [i.e. the
Buddhas].

The reverence paid to the works of such Theravāda masters as Buddhaghosa and Buddhaddatta (fifth c.) that are outside the traditional Three Baskets of the Theravāda indicates that the canonical continuum of the Pāli tradition extends outside its formal canon as well. Their works are part of the Theravāda's practical canon.

In the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, Asaṅga articulates the expansive Mahāyāna view that its canon includes even non-Buddhist Indic works that are beneficial to beings. He states: "Without having striven in the five sciences/Even the supreme Noble Ones will not attain omniscience" (for the Tibetan: D4020, vol. Phi/123, 176.1.3). That is to say, to become enlightened, one must master the five sciences, which consist of the four outer sciences of logic, grammar, medicine, and the arts and applied crafts, along with the inner science of Buddhism. The logical extreme of this inclusive view of canonicity is reached in the Mahāyāna Sūtra of the *Adhyāśayasamcodana*, which states that "Whatever is well said (Skt. *subhāṣita*; Tib. *legs par smras ba*), has been spoken by the Buddha" (Gomez 1987: 535–36). This is a rephrasing of the traditional statement in Foundational Buddhism that "Whatever is said by the Buddha is well said" (*Aṅguttara Nikāya* IV 163).

If the term "scripture" is understood in the Christian sense of referring to the sacred texts inspired and chosen by God for inclusion in the Old and New Testaments, the analogous use of the term in Buddhism would be to apply it to the sūtras and tantras attributed to the Buddhas. When scholars refer to the Kangyur as "*the canon of Tibetan Buddhism*," it appears that they have implicitly accepted the Christian concept that the canon equals the scriptures and that the term "scripture" should be used in the restrictive sense of applying only to the texts attributed to the Buddha. However, the discussions above indicate that it is not appropriate to restrict the Buddhist canon solely to the texts attributed to the Buddha, since this leaves out the canonical treatises.

How then are we to use the three terms "scripture," "treatise," and "canon" in Buddhist contexts? There appear to be two options: (1) retain the Christian practice of treating "scripture" and "canon" as virtual synonyms, in which case "scripture" has to be redefined to include treatises as well as sūtras and tantras, or (2) retain the Christian sense of the term "scripture" as referring solely, in Buddhist contexts, to the sūtras and tantras attributed to the Buddha, in which case "scripture" and "canon" can no longer be treated as virtual synonyms. Option (1) is the more provocative approach because it includes treatises in the scriptures, and thus it might be more skillful in underscoring the differences between the Christian and Buddhist concepts of canonicity. There is at present no consistent usage of the terms scripture and canon in the field, or even awareness of the issue. Time will tell if a consensus will emerge.

With regard to what traditional Tibetan vocabulary might be analogous to the English terms canon, scripture, and treatise, Bu ston Rin chen grub's *History of Buddhism* deals extensively with categorizing Buddhist texts and the broadest term he sets forth for the verbal expression of the Buddhist teachings is *gsung rab* (highest

speech; Skt. *pravacana*). This term has three synonyms: *lung gi chos* (“dharma of transmitted words”; Skt. *āgamadharmā*), *bshad pa’i chos* (“dharma of explanation”; Skt. *deśanādharmā*), and *rjod byed* (“the means of expression”; Skt. *vācaka*). He divides “highest dharma” into two sub-classifications: (1) the *bka’* or “word” of the Buddhas (Skt. *ājñā*) which includes the sūtras and tantras and (2) the *bstan bcos* or “treatises” of other Buddhist masters (Skt. *śāstra*).

If “scripture” is understood broadly, per option (1), as virtually equivalent to “canon,” then it is suggested that “highest speech” or *gsung rab* could be used as analogous to the term “scripture,” while its synonyms such as “dharma of transmitted words” and “dharma of explanation,” could be used as analogous in meaning to “canon.” As for the term “treatise,” this is the actual meaning of the Tibetan term *bstan bcos*.

If “scripture” is used restrictively, per option (2), as applying to just the sūtras and tantras and not the treatises, then the term “word [of the Buddhas]” or *bka’* could be used as analogous in meaning to the term “scripture.” In that case, “highest speech” (and its equivalents) could be used as analogous to the broader category of “canon” that includes the treatises as well as the sūtras and tantras.

Modern Developments: Exposure to Other Traditions and to Electronic Resources

The expansion of world travel and communication in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries brought increased contact among and within the world’s religions. This manifested in dramatic fashion with the first Parliament of the World’s Religions held in 1893 in Chicago with representatives from the Buddhist Zen and Theravāda traditions, as well from the Indian Jain and Vedānta/Yoga traditions. Though the impact has been slow, such contact has begun to affect how the Buddhist traditions understand their canons, and has even begun to change the content and structure of some editions. Such cross-tradition contact was late in coming for the Tibetans, forced upon them by the Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1950 and the ensuing flight of many Tibetan masters from the country.

By the late twentieth century, some Tibetan masters had become aware that Tibetan Buddhism was being criticized by East Asian Mahāyāna Buddhists and their Western students for its reliance on commentaries rather than on the sūtras. Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche, who was the head abbot and leading scholar of the Karma Bka’ brgyud’s monastic university in the Diaspora, at Rumtek monastery in Sikkim, argued in defense of the Tibetan orientation to the treatises, concluding “Thus the treatises are more important than the words of the Buddha . . .” (Thrangu 2004: 95; 1992: 55–57). Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, also of the Rumtek monastic university, introduced the practice of directly studying sections of sūtras in his teaching.

The brilliant and unconventional master, Dge ‘dun chos ‘phel (1903–1951), translated the *Dhammapāda* from Pāli into Tibetan. Dharma Publishing then included his translation in its “Nyingma” edition of the Kangyur and Tengyur published in the United States in the early 1980s. This edition also demonstrated an increased interest in the Chinese canon by including nine Chinese texts: all seven root texts of the

Mūlasarvāstivāda Abhidharma Basket, only one of which is included in the Tengyurs as discussed above, plus the related *Mahāvibhāṣa* treatise and one Mahāyāna text, the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra* attributed to Nāgārjuna.

In 1949, the Chinese monk Fazun (1902–1980) completed the monumental task of translating the Chinese translation of the *Mahāvibhāṣa* into Tibetan, which was published separately in ten volumes in 2011. Fazun worked primarily as a translator and teacher of Tibetan Buddhist texts in Chinese, including works from the Tibetan formal canons and from major Tibetan masters, such as Tsong kha pa and Klong chen pa (1308–1363). This illustrates a new Chinese interest in the Tibetan canon.

This nascent mutual interest between traditions may lead to direct expansions of their formal, practical, and inclusive canons. Such an expanded inclusive canon is already a physical reality in the university libraries around the world that collect the formal and practical canons of Buddhism. The research of university scholars is also impacting how new editions of the canons are being formed. The compilers of the Chinese Taishō canon (1924–1934) used an innovative structure that placed Hīnayāna sūtras first, before the exoteric Mahāyāna sūtras, with esoteric tantras grouped separately afterward, based on a new understanding of their historical sequence of development. The compilers also included texts from the Dunhuang caves in Central Asia initially discovered by Western explorers, and they also expanded the number of indigenous Chinese, Korean, and Japanese treatises, illustrating again the Buddhist conception of canonicity as an inclusive continuum.

The inclusive canon is also becoming a virtual reality through electronic projects for the Buddhist canons that are eclipsing the university libraries. For the Tibetan tradition, there are electronic projects for multiple editions of the Kangyurs, Tengyurs, Rnying ma rgyud ‘bums, and texts by indigenous Tibetan masters. See the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center (<http://www.tbrc.org>), Catalogues of the Kangyur and Tengyur at the Tibetan and Himalayan Library (<http://www.thlib.org/encyclopedias/literary/canons/kt/>), Resources for Kanjur and Tanjur Studies (<http://www.istb.univie.ac.at/kanjur/>), and the Asian Classics Input Project (<http://www.asianclassics.org/>).

Such projects are also correlating their texts with texts across the canonical languages: Pāli, Sanskrit, Chinese, Tibetan, Mongolian, and so on. This will make it possible to link all the canons together in a single catalogue. Discussions are underway to link these projects through a single Union Catalogue of Buddhist Texts. It would then be possible to link all modern translations of these texts through such a catalogue. This collaborative work is the most expansive expression possible of the concept of an inclusive Buddhist canon.

There are also major projects to translate entire traditional canons into modern languages, especially English. The “84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha” project has a 100-year vision that includes translating the entire Kangyur and Tengyur into English and other modern languages (www.84000.co). There is a similar project for the Taishō (<http://www.bdk.or.jp/english/index.html>). Both projects are making their translations available online. Much of the formal Pāli canon is already translated into English. This creates the possibility of a comprehensive virtual Buddhist canon in English for all three of these canons. This could then lead to comprehensive projects to translate the canons into other languages, perhaps even back into canonical languages

such as Tibetan and Chinese. The Tibetan Buddhist canon is entering a new, dynamic phase that may enlarge it, but also absorb it into a global Buddhist canon.

Notes

- 1 The Peking page data reported here are estimates based on combining all the texts found in six Kangyurs (Peking, Co ne, Sde dge, Urga, Snar thang, and Lha sa) and four Tengyurs (Peking, Co ne, Sde dge, and Snar thang), with all page sizes converted to Peking pages based on an average page ratio for all texts each edition shares with the Peking edition. The Peking Kangyur and Tengyur page size was selected as the unit of measure for all texts because they are the only pair of collections that use the same page size. It is not expected that adding other editions would substantially change the findings presented here, since it is likely that their additional unique texts would be small in number and size.
- 2 The comparative number and percent of pages of Indic texts translated into Chinese and Tibetan were created by calculating the average number of Peking Kangyur and Tengyur pages per page of the Chinese Taishō edition for texts shared between the two editions, namely, 5.319 Tibetan Peking pages per 1.0 Chinese Taishō pages. Then the sizes of these Taishō texts were converted into their estimated equivalent number of Tibetan Peking pages. There are Chinese translations not included in the Taishō and Tibetan translations not included in the Peking Kangyur and Tengyur, both of which are not included in the numbers reported here; thus, this data can be refined further.

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CHAPTER 20

Buddhism and Poetry in East Asia

Beata Grant

In East Asia, poetry has, from the very beginning of recorded history up until the recent past, occupied the position of greatest respect and privilege among the various literary genres. Indeed, included among the so-called Classics of ancient China is the *Shijing* (Classic of Poetry), which includes poems dating from as far back as 1000 BCE. These poems, which include many love songs, were traditionally read as expressions of delight or despair over the state of society and human relations, and as such were regarded by Confucius as a useful addition to a scholar's program of moral cultivation. The shamanic-inspired verses of another important early anthology of poetry, the *Chuci* (Lyrics of Chu), was composed by poets mostly from southern China, and reflect a belief in the power of poetic language to invoke the presence of gods and goddesses, and in some cases, to lure back the souls of the dying or placate the spirits of the dead. In Japan as well, important early texts such as the *Man'yōshū* (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves), which while not compiled until the late eighth century, contain examples of much earlier oral poetry and song, many of which reflect a belief in the magical power of poetic language to please, placate, and persuade the spirits and the gods. Given this early association of poetry with religious ritual, as well as with moral and esthetic power, it is not surprising that, when Buddhism was introduced from India through Central Asia into China during the first century CE—and then subsequently from China into Japan in the sixth century CE—its teachings and experiences should eventually find their way into indigenous poetic expressions as well.

It makes sense as well to discuss the impact of Buddhism on Chinese and Japanese poetry in tandem, not only because Indian Buddhism entered Japan largely via China, but also because much, although by no means all, Japanese Buddhist poetry was actually written in classical Chinese. There is, however, an important caveat to be made, which is that while Japanese scholars have had no trouble at all acknowledging, and even celebrating, the influence of Buddhism on their literature, for the most part this

has not been true of the traditional Chinese educated elite, or even of modern-day scholars. The reasons for this are varied and complex, but it would seem that the elite's privileging of Confucian—and in more recent times, Marxist–Leninist—values has resulted in a certain reluctance to fully acknowledge the vital role played by Buddhism in the development of the literary arts.

Buddhism and Poetry: Beginnings in China

Indian Buddhist texts such as the 3,000-line *Buddhacarita* (Lives of the Buddha) of Aśvaghoṣa, translated into Chinese in the early fifth century, were masterpieces of Sanskrit epic poetry. Others, such as the *Lotus Sūtra*, first translated into Chinese in the third century CE, were known not only for their vivid and beautiful language, but also for their use of *gāthā* or “hymns” to summarize or reiterate in verse what had just been explicated in prose. While the traditional four-, five-, and seven-syllable lines of Chinese poetry were used when translating these *gāthā* (*jisong* in Chinese), there was no attempt to make them rhyme. By the Eastern Jin dynasty (317–420), inspired by the language, ideas, and imagery of these translated texts, Chinese poets began to write their own Buddhist poetry, including *gāthā*. In so doing, however, they made use of both the rhetoric and the styles of the Chinese poetic tradition, which included not only the use of rhyme, but also a preference for the lyrical over the epic.

The Eastern Jin was a period of great social and political upheaval, but also of rich cultural and religious ferment. Of particular importance was the intellectual movement known as *xuanxue* (literally, “arcane learning”) or Neo-Taoism, which not only radically reinterpreted many Confucian ideas, but also addressed many of the concerns of Daoist philosophy, especially as embodied in the *Laozi* and the *Zhuangzi*. These concerns often had to do with large metaphysical questions, such as the nature of ultimate reality. Because many of the Buddhist texts being translated into Chinese dealt with precisely these same questions, Buddhist doctrinal and philosophical ideas became an important component of this intellectual milieu. The elite of this period, both lay and monastic, engaged in lively discussions and intellectual debates known as *qingtan* or “pure conversation.” Many also explored these philosophical issues and ideas in their poetry. Just one such example is the scholar-monk Zhi Dun (314–366), one of the most eminent and influential Buddhist clerics of his day. A man of extensive learning, both religious and secular, Zhi Dun actively participated in the intellectual currents of his day. Although he wrote poems about Śākyamuni Buddha and various bodhisattvas that were manifestly influenced and inspired by Indian *gāthā*, much of his poetry reflects the combination of Buddhist and Daoist elements characteristic of *xuanxue*.

The Eastern Jin was also when Chinese landscape poetry (and painting) flourished, and here, too, both Buddhism and *xuanxue* were extremely important. As Tian Xiaofei has perceptively noted, during this period the concept of *xiang* (image) was central to both esthetic and religious thought (Tian 2006). Of special interest was the notion that one's perception of the physical world (including the landscape) as pure or impure, beautiful or ugly, was ultimately determined by one's inner mental state. Thus, one need not physically escape or avoid the sordidness of the world; rather, through the practices

of meditation and visualization (and poetry writing), one could purify the mind, and by so doing, see the world in its inherent purity as well.

We can see this notion in the poetry of Xie Lingyun (385–433), who while known primarily as the founder of Chinese *shanshui* (literally “mountains and rivers”) or landscape poetry, was also one of the most well-known Buddhist laymen of his time. He was widely read in Buddhist literature, and appears to have been particularly inspired by the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra*, with its strikingly poetic descriptions of ordinary experience as being little more than “bubbles, echoes, and reflections.” He also contributed a work of his own, entitled *Bian zong lun* (Discussion of Essentials), in which he elaborates in particular on the notion of sudden enlightenment. The mountain landscape in Xie Lingyun’s poetry is often imagined as a kind of Pure Land, located far from the political confusion and turmoil of the world: the withering and fall of spring flowers are expressions of the Buddhist truth of impermanence, the drifting white clouds of constant change, the view of the treetops from the vantage point of a mountain peak provides a glimpse of transcendence. Nor was it necessary to make these comparisons explicit: it was simply how one saw the world if one looked at it through enlightened eyes (Mather 1958).

Buddhism also flourished among the literati-elite during the long reign of Emperor Wu of Liang (Xiao Yan, r. 502–549), a figure traditionally regarded as one of its greatest patrons. A man of considerable learning and poetic talents, the emperor was also an enthusiastic patron of the arts, as were his two sons, Xiao Tong (501–531) and Xiao Gang (503–551). The latter is associated primarily with a genre of Chinese poetry known as *gongti shi* or palace poetry, usually composed during banquets or feasts to themes and topics having to do with objects associated with palace life, such as musical instruments or beautiful women. In the context of a Buddhist celebration, the description might be of the natural setting of the temple being visited, or of objects, such as mirrors or sculptures, found within the temple itself. Even when the topics featured in these poems were purely secular, however, the emphasis on careful and often quite nuanced description owed much to the practice of Buddhist meditation (Tian 2005).

Buddhist Poetry of the Tang (618–907) and Five Dynasties (907–960)

The Tang dynasty is traditionally thought of as the golden age of both Buddhism and poetry. Buddhist-inspired verse can be found in the oeuvre of many of the great poets of this period, including Du Fu (712–770) and Li Bo (701–762), although it is poets such as Wang Wei (699–759) and Bo Juyi (Letian, 772–846) who are most often thought of as Buddhist poets. There were also a number of important monk-poets, including Jiaoran (730–799), Guanxiu (832–812), and Qiji (fl. 881). In a category of their own are two elusive figures, Wang Fanzhi and the mountain recluse known as Hanshan or Cold Mountain, whose poetry makes deliberate use of straightforward colloquial language as opposed to the allusive style favored by many elite Tang poets.

Wang Wei, who came from a wealthy aristocratic family, never went so far as to completely retire from official life, although he often took refuge on his rambling estate outside of Chang’an, the landscape of which served as inspiration for his painting, as

well as for the lucidly quiet quatrains for which he is perhaps most famous. Wang was particularly drawn to Chan, which by this time had begun to emerge as a dominant tradition of Chinese elite Buddhism. He studied for at least a decade with the Chan master Daoguang (689–739), and after the death of his wife in 730, he pledged himself to a life of celibacy and had a monastery built on his estate.

Wang Wei's religious name was Mojie, the transliterated form of the name of Vimalakīrti, the principal protagonist of the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra*. This sūtra had undergone numerous translations into Chinese from the second century onward, the most widely used being the 406 translation by Kumārajīva. In this text, Vimalakīrti is portrayed as a wealthy layman who nevertheless fully realizes the truth of non-duality and emptiness. In a famous scene from the sūtra, he pretends to be ill in order to tempt a vast array of supposedly enlightened Buddhas and bodhisattvas to his sickroom. There he engages them in a gentle, humorous, but devastatingly penetrating debate about the nature of non-duality—and in one memorable case, bests his opponents by answering not in words, but with a silence that resonates like thunder. Not surprisingly, laymen like Wang Wei (and Xie Lingyun before him) were immensely attracted to the figure of Vimalakīrti, who served as a model of how to be in the world but not of it.

Although Wang Wei wrote explicitly religious poems replete with allusions to Buddhist texts and doctrines, the verses that are often thought of as most “Buddhist” do not mention Buddhism at all. Instead, they seek to convey, or rather embody, such basic Buddhist notions as emptiness, no-self, and impermanence. A noteworthy characteristic of Wang Wei's poetry is his frequent and nuanced use of the word *kong* or “empty,” as well as his obvious fondness for white clouds, which drift through the sky untethered by worldly concerns, and whose ultimate destination are the mountain peaks that, while rooted in the earth, rise far about it. Another characteristic of much of Wang Wei's poetry is the relative absence of an intrusive subjectivity, an “I” through which experience is filtered. This has often been interpreted as a reflection of Buddhist “egolessness,” or the purified mirror of the mind that reflects the world as it is. (For more on Wang Wei's poetry, see Yu 1980).

Unlike Wang Wei, Bo Juyi (also known as the Layman of Xiangshan) uses his poetry not to efface the self, but rather to explore, often in descriptive detail, his religious practices and experiences. If much of Wang Wei's poetry can be described as luminous but cool, concise, and detached, that of Bo Juyi is very much its opposite: personal, warm, engaged, humorous, and at times chatty and even loquacious. Like Wang Wei, however, Bo Juyi's primary religious affiliation was with the Chan school, although he also made generous use of practices and ideas associated with other strains of Tang Buddhism, as well as with Daoist and Confucian teachings (see Poceski 2007). Bo often visited temples and monasteries, and counted numerous monastics among his close friends and confidants. He was very well read in Buddhist texts, and was particularly fond of the *Lankāvatāra*, *Vimalakīrti*, and *Lotus* sūtras. His poetry also makes reference to different religious practices, including performing works of charity, actively participating in various types of religious rituals and fasts and, above all, the practice of seated meditation.

Lay Buddhist poets often express the tension they experience between the demands (and temptations) of family and society and the aspiration toward personal liberation

and world-transcendence. Bo Juyi was particularly open about his ongoing struggle between his religious aspirations and his love of wine and of poetry writing, both of which he describes as addictions. Above all, Bo comes across as a man of great feeling, which he poured into his writing, tried to channel with his meditation and other religious practices and, if all else failed, drowned with alcohol. Bo Juyi is the person also credited with the term *kuangyan jiyu* (Jp. *kyōgen kigo*), literally “crazy words and embroidered language,” to refer to poetry that, while it might attempt to point to Buddhist realization could, in the end, be no match for it. This tension between the self-referential nature of poetry and the supposedly self-transcendence of authentic spiritual enlightenment would continue to be a bone of contention among later poets and critics (for more on Bo’s poetry, see Watson 1988).

The monk-poets of the Tang were, like their predecessors, members of the educated elite who often boasted a solid Confucian education in addition to their Buddhist training. Perhaps the most well-known of these monks was Jiaoran, a descendent of Xie Lingyun, whose poetry was written primarily in the refined regulated-verse style made famous by Wang Wei and other poets of the High Tang. Many of Jiaoran’s poems evoke a quietly melancholic scene with underlying intimations of impermanence, and were thought of very highly by his contemporaries. However, it is ultimately Jiaoran’s works of literary criticism, which are not exclusively Buddhist in nature, that have exerted the greatest influence. In his *Shipin* (Poetic Criticism), Jiaoran was one of the first to argue that poetic images could be used to point to, or evoke, a higher non-tangible reality. This notion of a “dharma of poetry” which, if properly understood, could lead to enlightenment, would later become central to much of Chinese literary criticism.

The Buddhist monk-poet-painter Guanxiu, celebrated for his paintings of the sixteen *lohan* or arhats, was also highly acclaimed by his contemporaries for his poetry. He lived during a time of great disruption and upheaval, as the great Tang dynasty collapsed, to be followed by a half-century of disunion, known as the Five Dynasties period (907–960). Guanxiu served under a succession of different warlords and kings, ultimately ending up as court poet of the new kingdom of Shu (Sichuan), where he was honored with the title of Eminent Master Chanyue (Chan Moon). As Edward Schafer has noted, much of Guanxiu’s poetry uses a creative admixture of Buddhist, Daoist, and Confucian elements, not unlike what we have seen in the Buddhist poetry of the Eastern Jin period (Schafer 1958: 81). Guanxiu’s poems show a mastery of an array of styles and subjects, ranging from the limpidly lucid to the highly allusive. According to Schafer, however, Guanxiu was above all a visionary, whose poetry was “full of dream visions of nature, the seasons, earlier incarnations, and the divine world” (Schafer 1958: 86). It is perhaps because of the sometimes fantastical and exotic nature of his poetry that Guanxiu would later lose favor among literary critics.

Perhaps the most prolific and highly regarded monk-poet from this period was Qiji. Said to have been a precocious child who wrote his first poems on the backs of the cows he was sent to tend, after becoming a monk Qiji traveled widely, drawing poetic inspiration from the varied landscapes through which he passed. He was also fascinated by historical and legendary figures, and in his poetry he describes visits to sites associated with these, whether monasteries, abbeys, mountains, rivers, or ruins. A native of Hunan province, Qiji was particularly fond of the peaks and valleys of the spectacular

mountain range known as Nanyue or Southern Sacred Peak, and even went so far as to style himself the “Śramana (monk) of Hengyue (Nanyue).” Qiji’s poetry collection, entitled *Bailian ji* (White Lotus Collection) and compiled around 938, suggests a lively mind, a highly creative esthetic sensibility, and a gregarious disposition.

The poetry attributed to Wang Fanzhi and Hanshan is very different from that of either lay poets like Wang Wei or monk-poets like Jiaoran. The figure known as Wang Fanzhi is shrouded in legend, which is why it is perhaps best to speak of the Wang Fanzhi poems, many of which are found in manuscript versions among the numerous Tang dynasty texts excavated at Dunhuang in the early part of the twentieth century. The nearly four hundred extant poems attributed to Wang Fanzhi are written in simple, non-allusive, and colloquial language, and for the most part are explicitly didactic. Their overall tone is one of considerable melancholy, and they are characterized by an obsession with the themes of worldly vanity, impermanence, and death. They are important because of the glimpse they provide into the use of poetry among the non-elite.

Hanshan (Cold Mountain) is an elusive figure, neither monk nor layman, who has in recent decades come to epitomize Chinese Buddhist poetry in the minds of many non-Chinese speakers reading his poems in translation. There is considerable uncertainty as to the historical identity of the man called Hanshan, about whom we have very little information. It is even possible that the corpus of poems attributed to him were composed by more than one hand over a period of time ranging from the late seventh century to the early ninth century. Although it is risky to try to reconstruct a detailed biography on the basis of the poems, they do point to an early life as an educated farmer, the presence of a wife and a son, arduous study of the Confucian classics, and, finally, the decision to abandon family and official ambition to become a Buddhist recluse.

The Hanshan poems vary widely in terms of style and topic: some are bordering on what one might call religious doggerel, while others vividly evoke the ups and downs, the moments of inner ecstasy and despair, of a life lived on Cold Mountain. Some of these latter poems may be read as simple description, others as metaphorical depictions of the difficulties involved in achieving enlightenment, symbolized by reaching the cloud-swathed mountaintop. Perhaps one of the primary reasons for their appeal is their use of a fresh, unhackneyed, and often dramatically striking imagery that stands in contrast to the stock imagery and language so often found in classical Chinese poetry of this kind. In other words, and ironically given the fact that there may have never been a Hanshan as such, what often emerges from these poems is the voice of an authentic spiritual seeker.

Although traditional Chinese literary critics have never held the Hanshan poems in particularly high regard, one can find numerous poems written “in imitation of Han Shan” by monk-poets from the late Tang through the Ming-Qing period. Nor was Hanshan’s poetry entirely unappreciated by the literati elite: the influential Song poet-statesman Wang Anshi (1021–1086) ranked Hanshan among the greatest of all Tang poets. There is no question, however, that Hanshan has enjoyed great popularity among Western readers: since Arthur Waley’s translation of 1954, new English translations (some more scholarly than others) have continued to appear on a regular basis (see Watson 1970, Henricks 1990, and Red Pine 1983).

Buddhism and Poetry: The Song (960–1279) and Later Dynasties

It was not until the Song dynasty, and the rise of what has been termed “literary Chan,” that we find the creation of a largely text-based world of wise and sometimes wild Chan masters offering, and demanding, poems expressive of inner realization. It is during the Song as well that we see a reemergence of the *gāthā* or *jisong*, often in the form of poetic commentaries to recorded accounts of the encounters between the great Chan masters and their often bewildered students and interlocutors. Many of these appear scattered in the so-called “lamp records,” or Buddhist genealogical accounts that were published during this period; others can be found in collections of so-called “public cases” or *gong’an* (*kōan* in Japanese) such as the well-known *Biyān lu* (Blue Cliff Record, Japanese *Hekiganroku*), compiled by Chan master Yuanwu Keqin (1063–1135).

Yuanwu’s text was based on a selected anthology of 100 *gong’an* first compiled by Chan master Xuedou Zhongxian (980–1052), to which Yuanwu added his own annotations and commentaries, the latter often accompanied by an “appreciatory verse.” While the purpose of these verses was primarily religious, and indeed they were often decried by lay critics for being redolent of “sour bean paste,” many came to be appreciated (and emulated) for their literary qualities as well. Another type of religious verse found in the “lamp records” was the so-called “death verse,” a poem written by a master immediately before his (or, in rare cases, her) demise, said to embody the master’s realized mind and thus serve as a last teaching. A related form is the “dharma transmission verse,” which already appears in early Chan records composed during the Tang dynasty, by which time it began to be used instead of the traditional transfer of the robe and bowl from master to disciple as a religious “seal of approval.” Verses of this nature appear frequently in the lamp records from the Song dynasty onward.

Song dynasty Chan, however, in many ways emerged primarily in response to the needs and interests of lay literati rather than just monastics. Song-dynasty scholar-officials, like their Tang counterparts, often took excursions and spent time in temples and monasteries, discussing Buddhism and exchanging poems with monks, who were often as conversant in Confucian and Daoist texts and ideas as they were in Buddhist ones. One of the most representative examples of such literati-monks was Juefan Huihong (1071–1128), who is known particularly for his elaboration of the notion of *wenzi* Chan or “Chan of words and letters,” and later much appreciated by the Gozan (Five Mountain) monks of Japan. A prolific author in many genres, Huihong not only wrote poems; he also wrote a handbook on poetry writing as well as a work of poetry criticism entitled *Lengzhai yehua* (Night Words from the Cold Studio). Another important figure in this regard was Yan Yu (1258–1234), famous for his assertion that great poetry emerged from an enlightened (rather than simply educated) mind and vice-versa: “In general the Way of Chan is a matter of marvelous enlightenment (*miaowu*), and the Way of Poetry is also a matter of marvelous enlightenment.”

Buddhist ideas, language, and imagery can also be found in abundance in the poetry of some of the major Song dynasty poets, including the most well-known literary figure of all, Su Shi (1036–1101), and his contemporary, the lyricist and calligrapher, Huang Tingjian (1045–1105). Moreover, it was his engagement with Chan Buddhism that led

the poet Yang Wanli (1127–1206) to formulate a view of poetry as the expression of a spontaneous and intuitive realization, much like that said to characterize the experience of sudden enlightenment. Thematically, much of Yang Wanli's poetry touches upon the central Buddhist notions of illusion and reality. Like many other Buddhist poets, it is primarily in Yang Wanli's poetic descriptions and evocations of the natural world that we can best sense the impact of Chan Buddhist notions (for more on Yang, see Schmidt 1975).

While most scholarly work has focused on the influence of Chan Buddhism on poetry and poetics, it is important to note the existence of a considerable body of Buddhist poetry inspired primarily by Pure Land practices, imagery, and ideals. Pure Land in China was never a distinct Buddhist sect or school as it would become in Japan. It primarily referred to particular aspirations, in particular rebirth in the Western Pure Land presided over by the Amitābha Buddha (Jp. *Amida*), and a set of practices such as *nianfo* (Jp. *nembutsu*), the single-minded chanting or visualization of the name or figure of Amitābha. While Buddhists might emphasize one approach over the other (Chan over Pure Land or vice-versa), rarely did this mean excluding the other's practices. As we have seen, although the Tang dynasty poet Bo Juyi's primary involvement was with Chan Buddhism, for example, his poetry (especially the poetry written toward the end of his life) also includes poems that speak of the Pure Land.

By the Song dynasty, conscious efforts were being made by great monks such as Yongming Yanshou (904–975) to present Pure Land and Chan as being fundamentally complementary and basically leading to the same goal. This effort continued with even greater force during the Ming and Qing dynasties, a period marked by a considerable syncretic impulse, not only among proponents of the unity of the so-called "Three Teachings" (Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism), but in Buddhist circles as well, among the various Buddhist schools and teachings, including not only Pure Land and Chan, but also Huayan and Tiantai. Thus we find figures such as the monk Xufa Boting (1641–1728) and later the famous Buddhist layman Peng Shaosheng (1740–1790) exploring the idea that Amitābha Buddha was basically just another way of referring to one's own Buddha-nature. Accordingly, while the practice of *nianfo* might lead to rebirth in the Pure Land, it could also result in what they called *nianfo-samādhi*, or the realization that the Pure Land exists here and now in the mind. What one might call "Pure Land poetry" often reflects the amalgamation of Pure Land and Chan (or Huayan) just described: indeed, some of the best of this poetry was composed by Chan masters.

One can get a better idea of the inclusive, if not strictly syncretic, nature of Buddhist poetry by looking at the contents of an anthology published in 1886 entitled *Lianxu bidu* (Required Reading for Pure Land Practitioners). The texts collected in this anthology include, for example, poems by Hanshan, Bo Juyi, and Huang Tingjian. It also includes poems elaborating on the compatibility of Chan and Pure Land by Yongming Yanshou, poems celebrating the efficacy of the practice of *nianfo* by the Yuan dynasty Linji Chan monk Chushi Fanqi (1296–1370) and by eminent late Ming masters such as Yunqi Zhuhong (1535–1615), and verses from a popular work entitled *Quanxiu jingtu shi* (Poems Exhorting [People] to Cultivate the Pure Land) by the mid-Qing dynasty monk Sheng'an (1686–1785).

Another lacuna in the study of Buddhist poetry has been the contribution of women writers. While by no means as numerous, and certainly not as well-known as their male counterparts, Buddhist laywomen and nuns also wrote poetry of some merit. This is particularly true in the Ming-Qing dynasties, which saw an unprecedented growth in female literacy as well as the publication of women's writings. Elite women writers of this period often wrote on Buddhist themes; many of them emulated male literati and maintained poetic friendships with Buddhist nuns (see Grant 2001). In addition, a significant number of Buddhist nuns also acquired a reputation for their artistic and poetic talents. The official discourse records of eminent female Chan masters of the seventeenth century, for example, include large sections devoted to poetry.

One of these nuns, Jizong Xingche (b. 1606), was particularly well-known for her long sequences of poems celebrating the life of seclusion in the valleys and peaks of Nanyue, the mountain associated also with the Tang poet Qiji (for more on these nuns, see Grant 2008). The above-mentioned *Lianxiu bidu* also includes the religious poetry of the nun Daoqian Shichan (1733–1820), as well as the mid-19th century Buddhist abbess Lianghai Rude, whose collection of writings was entitled *Yinxiang ji* (Collection of Shadows and Echoes). Among Lianghai Rude's poems can be found a sequence of forty-eight verses (for the forty-eight vows taken by Amitābha Buddha) entitled simply *Jingtu shi* (Pure Land poems). In these verses, we repeatedly see expressed the notion that Amitābha's Pure Land is to be found here and now, in the enlightened mind. While this Buddhist poetry by women is in many ways indistinguishable both thematically and stylistically from that composed by men, it is often of equal quality.

Buddhist ideas and imagery continued to appear in the poetry of lay writers of the Republican period as well: examples include poetry by the Buddhist laywoman writer Lü Bicheng (1883–1943) and the poems of Su Manshu (1884–1918), a radical young revolutionary poet who, after he converted to Buddhism, became known as the “half-monk.” Among young Chinese scholars as well, there seems to have been a resurgence of interest in exploring Buddhist themes in classical Chinese poetry.

Buddhist Poetry in Japan

Although early examples of poems that mention the name of Śākyamuni Buddha appear in the *Man'yōshū* or *Collection of a Ten Thousand Leaves*, an important early collection of poetry, the contents of which date from between 347 and ca. 759 CE (when it was first compiled), it is not until the appearance of the *Senzaishū* or *Collection of a Thousand Years*, compiled around 1188, that we find an entire section devoted to *shakkyōka* or “Poems on Śākyamuni's Teaching.”

From the Heian period onward, it was quite common for members of the elite, including monks, to write verse in classical Chinese, called *kanshi* (Chinese *hanshi*), which was popular in elite circles from the early Heian up until modern times. *Kanshi* not only emulated the Chinese *lǔshi* or regulated verse form (5 to 7 syllables in 4 or 8 lines, all of which adhered to strictly prescribed tonal and rhyming patterns), but often also its subject matter, including Buddhism. Buddhist priests studied Chinese literature and poetry (Tang poets like Bo Juyi and texts like the *Daode jing* ranked among their

favorites), as well as Buddhist sūtras and commentaries that had been translated into Chinese, and the poetry they wrote was often informed by a more Chinese esthetic.

Buddhist poetry was also written in the native Japanese poetic genres, including 31-syllable *tanka*, the main form of *waka* (a term coined during the Heian period, meaning “Japanese poem” to distinguish it from the *kanshi*); *haikai no renga*, a form of 17- or 14-syllable linked verse, and its much later offshoot, *haiku* (a term that appears only in the early nineteenth century). Unlike the Chinese *lǔshi*, Japanese *waka* was not required to rhyme, nor did it emphasize end-stopped lines or strict parallelism. Thus, the poetic worlds created by these particular Japanese genres were quite different from the Chinese *kanshi*.

Buddhism and Poetry in Heian and Nara Japan (710–1192): Tendai and Shingon

In 804 the Japanese emperor sent an embassy to China that included two monks who would play an extraordinarily important role in the development of early Japanese Buddhism: Saichō (767–822) and Kūkai (774–835). Arriving on a different ship and landing in a different part of China to Kūkai, Saichō ended up studying primarily the form of Chinese Buddhism known as Tiantai, which had been founded in the sixth century by the famous monk Zhiyi (538–597), known for his argument that the proliferation of Buddhist teachings were in the end, all a single vehicle (*ekayāna*), an idea that was expressed in the *Lotus Sūtra* (see the chapter by Haiyan Shen in this volume). Kūkai, on the other hand, focused on the study of the esoteric form of Chinese Buddhism known as Zhenyan or “True Word” (the Chinese translation of the Sanskrit word *mantra*), which is usually referred to as a Chinese version of tantric or esoteric Buddhism. In China, he studied with the most eminent Chinese master of esoteric Buddhism, Huiguo (746–805), who introduced Kūkai to the central text of esoteric Buddhism, the *Mahāvairocana Sūtra*, which had been translated from the Sanskrit into Chinese in 724. After returning to Japan, Saichō, whose posthumous title was Dengyo Daishi, became the founder of the Tendai (Tiantai) sect of Japanese Buddhism, while Kūkai, whose posthumous title was Kōbō Daishi, became the founder of the Shingon (Zhenyan) sect. Tendai and Shingon were the most popular forms of Buddhism, especially in aristocratic circles, during the remainder of the Heian period.

Both Tendai and Shingon contributed in major ways to the development of a uniquely Japanese esthetics. Tendai, for example, postulated that since the phenomenal world was not in essence any different from the Buddhist Dharma, poetry could be seen as a means of attaining, or alternatively, giving expression to, the enlightened mind. While both Saichō and Kūkai composed poetry, Kūkai in particular was not only a prodigious scholar, he was also a noted calligrapher, painter, literary critic, and poet. It is significant that the *Manyōshū* was compiled in Nara when Kūkai was living there as a student, and later he himself contributed to a number of anthologies compiled during the Heian period.

Kūkai was interested not only in writing poetry but also in poetic theory. His *Bunkyo hifuron* (Thesis on The Mysterious District of the Mirror of Writing), inspired if not

influenced by the poetic criticism of the Chinese Tang dynasty monk-poet Jiaoran, is “an extensive compendium summarizing the major poetic theories and rhetorical strategies of classical Chinese literature and a work that had a lasting influence on the development of Japanese poetry and poetics” (Abe 1999: 104). Kūkai, like later Chinese literary critics such as Yan Yu, clearly believed that poetry could be regarded as both a vehicle and expression of Buddhist truth. In tantric Buddhism, mandala and mantra play a central ritual role, and for Kūkai poetry was, like mantra, “a sacred technology necessary for creating and maintaining cosmic order” (Abe 1999: 310).

For Kūkai poetry was a form of skillful means, which could be used both to describe and serve as a basis for meditative practice. This is reflected in the titles of some of his poems, such as “Poem on Contemplation of Ten Illusions” (Jp. *Jūyukan*) and “Poem on the Contemplation of Nine Appearances” (*Kosōshi*). Even more significantly, Kūkai’s Buddhist poetry differed from that being written in both Japan and China, in that it was composed in the Chinese *yuefu* (Jp. *gafu*) or ballad style, as well as the *gushi* (Jp. *koshi*) or “old style” of poetry styles which, as Paul Rouzer notes, “had not previously been employed in Buddhist-oriented poetry” (Rouzer 2004: 448). Unlike the usual *lǔshi* or regulated verse style, comprised of eight lines (or four if a quatrain), five or six syllables per line, and strict requirements as to rhyme and use of parallel couplets, the *yuefu* and *gushi* lacked prescribed rhyme and length (and often took the form of long narratives), placed little emphasis on formal parallelism, and often made use of semi-colloquial, even folksy language, along with the inclusion of repetition. In China, these styles were often used by literati poets such as Li Bo and others, “to signify a rejection of the social, regulated verse forms and consequently to create poetry independent of prescribed courtly exchange” (Rouzer 2004: 448). Kūkai, however, appears to have made use of the antisocial implications of these genres “to reinforce the significance of Buddhist belief against the trivialization of it that court poetry threatened” (Rouzer 2004: 448).

While many Japanese Buddhist monks wrote using Chinese poetic styles, there were also many others who wrote—sometimes primarily—in the Japanese classical verse style or *waka*. One such monk-poet was Saigyō (1118–1190). Born during the difficult transition between the Heian and Kamakura periods to a military family, as a very young man Saigyō served as a courtier and captain of an elite corps of guards protecting the imperial family. It was in this highly refined and aristocratic milieu that he learned to write poetry, often participating in household poetry contests and gatherings. At the age of twenty-three, however, Saigyō went to Mount Hiei, where he became a Tendai monk. He lived a largely reclusive life, often using the rigors of travel to test his attachment to the world, as well as his understanding of the nature of loneliness and solitude. When not traveling, he often spent time at Mt. Yoshino, a place famous for its cherry blossoms and its moon. In fact, Saigyō’s Buddhist meditation was to gaze at the moon and the blossoms. The moon has long been a Buddhist symbol of perfect and complete enlightenment, but for Saigyō it illuminated all of the wonders of the universe in a new and beautiful way.

The man that emerges from Saigyō’s poetry is a complex and contradictory seeker of truth, honest about his struggles and sometimes exultant in his moments of realization. Again and again he refers to the moon, the wind, and the trees as “tomo” or companions. He saw that he and the moon were actually interdependent on one

another in a deep metaphysical sense. As scholars such as La Fleur have pointed out, his nature was not always a calm one: he speaks too of bone-chilling rain and bleak winters, loneliness, and ultimately death (for more on Saigyō, see LaFleur 1973 and 1974). Saigyō's poems embody some of the well-known Japanese religious esthetic notions, such as *wabi-sabi*, difficult to define or translate adequately, but referring generally to the beauty that stems from that which is "imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete," all of which, according to Buddhism, are characteristic of everyday existence, as commonly understood. The cherry blossom, whose beauty is in large part attributable to its ephemerality, is one of the most common examples of this esthetic.

Zen Buddhism and Poetry during the Kamakura and Muromachi Periods (1192–1573)

If Tendai and Shingon were the most dominant forms of Buddhism in the Heian period, during the Kamakura period (1192–1333), it was Zen (the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese Chan) that began to achieve preeminence. This period corresponds to the Chinese Song (960–1279) and Yuan (1260–1368) dynasties when, as we saw earlier, Chan Buddhism, and in particular the notion of literary Chan espoused by men like Juefan Huihong, flourished in China. Beginning around 1200, not only did Japanese monks like Dōgen Kigen (1200–1253) travel to China to learn about Zen, Chinese monks also came to Japan to teach. Zen also attracted the patronage of the upper-class samurai and, from 1250 onward, of the imperial court as well. This led to the establishment of a state-sponsored institution known as Gozan, or "Five Mountains," based on an institution of the same name in China that ranked Chan monasteries hierarchically on the basis of their size and importance.

In Japan, the officially sponsored monks from the most important Gozan temples (which actually numbered more than five) contributed significantly to what is now thought of as Zen esthetics, which included painting, architecture, gardening, calligraphy, cooking and, of course, poetry and poetics. Gozan monks, who wrote primarily, although not exclusively, in *kanshi*, absorbed many of the poetics of Song dynasty poetry, in particular the privileging of a quality known in Chinese as *pingdan*, meaning flat and bland. Their favorite Song dynasty poets were men like Su Shi and Huang Tingjian, the former known in particular for his use of straightforward, even prosaic, poetic language (as opposed to the highly allusive, refined, and sometimes elaborate language of Tang poetry).

One of the most important Gozan monks (and one of the few who did not go to China) was Musō Soseki (1275–1351). Also known as the first and greatest of the Zen landscape gardeners, he left a substantial body of poetry, much of it written in *waka* form and designed to appeal to a wide and not necessarily educated audience. Another Gozan poet was Kokan Shiren (1278–1347), an eminent Rinzaï monk who served as abbot of many of the major Zen monasteries. He was an avid student of Chinese literature and culture, studied both poetry and calligraphy under Chinese masters residing in Japan, and is known, among other things, for his *kanshi*.

Kōzei Ryūha (1375–1446) and Ishō Tokugan (1360–1437) were Gozan monk-poets who modeled their poetry largely on Chinese models: the former primarily on the poetry of Huang Tingjian and the latter (said to have been someone who could actually think in Chinese) on that of Su Shi. With Kōzei, as well, “the idea that ‘poetry is Zen’ [became] the representative formulation of the relationship between these two practices in the Gozan” (Pollack 1985: 155). Perhaps the most famous, or infamous, Gozan poet was Ikkyū (1394–1481). Well known for his highly iconoclastic and unconventional behavior, Ikkyū spent much of his life as a peripatetic monk before being named the abbot of Daitokuji in Kyoto, one of the most important Zen temples in Japan. Ikkyū was relentless in his criticism of the hypocrisy he perceived in his monastic counterparts, and made use of both his writing and his actions not merely to shock, but also to shake both people and institutions out of their complacency. His most well-known collection of poetry, the *Kyōyunshū* (Crazy Cloud Anthology), is comprised of 1,000 *kanshi*, many of which extol the pleasurable bliss of sex, which, according to Ikkyū, is as much a manifestation of Zen as anything else. Mention must be made also of Dōgen (1200–1253), generally regarded as one of the most important Zen masters of his time, who wrote in both *waka* and *kanshi*. Dōgen spent several years in China, before returning to Japan where he established what would become known as the Sōtō sect of Japanese Zen. An energetic teacher and prolific writer, he is also known for his exquisite *waka*.

Buddhist Poetry after the Muromachi Period (1573 onward)

An important Japanese verse form that came to prominence in the seventeenth century was the *haikai no renga*, a popular form of *renga*, or linked verse. The opening seventeen-syllable verse of a verse sequence, known as the *hokku*, would in the late nineteenth century develop into the independent verse form well-known among Western readers: the *haiku*. One of the first, and greatest, poets who wrote in this form was Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694). Although he never took monastic ordination, Bashō would often don the robes of a Buddhist monk. Like Saigyō before him, he often went on long pilgrimages which allowed him not only to visit religious sites but also to meet with students who sought to learn from him the art of linked verse.

A Buddhist poet-monk generally acknowledged to be, along with Bashō and a few others, one of the greatest of all *haikai no renga* poets was Kobayashi Issa (1763–1828). He was an extremely prolific poet, and left behind over 9,000 verses. Unlike the poet-monks discussed earlier, Issa was a devotee of the Jōdoshin sect of Pure Land Buddhism, which as we noted earlier, was in Japan, unlike in China, seen as a distinct tradition of Buddhism. Thus, Issa writes not only on the shared themes of impermanence, but also on the more specifically Pure Land themes of trust in the grace of Amida (Amitābha) Buddha and the aspiration toward rebirth in his Pure Land. However, he also shares with many of his Japanese and Chinese Zen counterparts a delight in the bliss of “Pure Land” to be found in the here and now.

Ryōkan (1758–1831) is another famous poet, associated primarily with Zen Buddhism. Like the Chinese poet Hanshan, he is celebrated for his unconventional eccentricity, reflected in the literary name he selected for himself: Daigu or “Great Fool.” Born

to a well-off family living in a relatively remote part of Japan, Ryōkan appears to have had a fairly normal youth; although studious, he also enjoyed partying with friends. When he was only nineteen, however, he suddenly decided to take tonsure and become a Zen monk. (Recent research indicates that he may have married and had a child before entering the religious life.) Ryōkan studied for many years under the famous Sôtō Zen monk Kokusen. He studied not only Buddhist texts, but also the arts of *waka*, Chinese poetry, linked verse or *renga*, and calligraphy. Shortly before he died in 1791, Kokusen certified Ryōkan's enlightenment and named him his chief disciple.

After Kokusen's death, Ryōkan undertook an extended period of travel; after his father's suicide in 1795, he returned to his home village. There he moved into a hermitage, located deep in the nearby Mount Kūgami, where he lived for over forty years. It was during this last period of his life that he became known for spending time with the local farmers and villagers, joining in their simple pleasures and preaching not through words and sermons, but rather by his joyful expression of detached wisdom. It was toward the end of his life that Ryōkan met Teishin, a young widow-turned-nun, together with whom he spent the last years of his life writing poems and discussing literature and religion. After Ryōkan's death, Teishin compiled Ryōkan's poems into a collection entitled *Hasu no tsuyu* (Dewdrops on a Lotus Leaf).

Ryōkan wrote in many different poetic styles, including numerous Japanese-style poems, especially *waka*, and he left nearly 400 *kanshi*. He is known to have felt a deep kinship with the Chinese poet Hanshan, whose poems he often read; like Hanshan, many of Ryōkan's poems deal with his everyday life—playing with the village children, chatting with local farmers, and wandering through the hills and fields of the Mount Kūgami area. His language is simple and straightforward, and, again like Hanshan, he does not seem to have been overly concerned with adhering to classical patterns of verse, preferring a more spontaneous and unadorned style, whose seeming simplicity sometimes belies a deeper spiritual significance. As with Hanshan, there are many anecdotes about the holy fool Ryōkan, such as the time he cut holes in the floor of his veranda to allow the bamboo shoots pressing against it from below to continue their upward growth. These stories, some no doubt apocryphal, have become deeply imbedded in the Japanese cultural tradition, just as his poetry has remained immensely popular not only in Japan but, in translation, in many other parts of the world as well.

Women writers made an early appearance in Japan, although they were primarily known for their authorship of narrative fiction. The most famous of them was the early eleventh-century writer Murasaki Shikibu, author of *The Tale of Genji*, regarded as one of the major classics of Japanese literature, and as one of the first novels ever written of world literature as well. Both Buddhism and poetry play an integral role in this novel, as indeed they did in Heian court culture as a whole. Another woman poet active in this same period was Daisaiin Senshi (964–1035), a princess who was selected as a young girl to spend her life as a priestess at the imperial shrine of Kamo. Despite her public role as a Shinto priestess, Daisaiin privately nourished a deep Buddhist faith, which found expression in a collection of 55 *waka* later published as the *Hosshin wakashū* (A Collection of Japanese Poems for the Awakening of Faith). Each of these *waka* are preceded by passages in Chinese selected from Buddhist scriptures; the Japanese poems themselves are fairly impersonal although, as Edward Kamens shows in his

important study, they can be also read as reflecting a profound if private lyrical internalization and identification with the scriptural stories she cites (Kamens 1990).

Recent research has also begun to uncover the extent to which Buddhist nuns and laywomen, often from aristocratic or samurai families, and especially from the seventeenth century onward, excelled in both the literary and the visual arts. One of the most outstanding of these was the nun Otagaki Rengetsu (1791–1875). Adopted as an infant by Otagaki Terhisa, a lay priest at Chionji, the head temple of the Japanese Pure Land sect, she learned calligraphy and poetry (and even the martial arts) first from her adoptive father, then, after she went to serve as a palace attendant at the castle of a lord outside of Kyoto, she continued her classical samurai education until her marriage at age sixteen. Her first marriage was an unhappy one (she lost three children), and a second marriage, although happier, ended with the premature death of her husband. The thirty-three-year old Rengetsu then took her two daughters and became a nun at Chionji temple (which is when she took the religious name of Rengetsu or Lotus Moon). Not long after, both her adoptive father and her two children died, and Rengetsu, forced to leave the Chionji, spent the remainder of her life alone, supporting herself with her calligraphy, poetry, painting, and especially her *waka* poetry. She was, in fact, best known for her *waka* poems.

Rengetsu studied under a number of important male poets and writers, including Kagawa Kageki (1768–1843), who advocated the use of direct and simple language to express “authentic” feelings. Her *waka*, like those of male poets such as Ryōkan, celebrate her everyday life. And like her Chinese counterpart, the Pure Land Buddhist nun Lianghai Rude, Rengetsu also studied and practiced Zen, which she integrated into her life and art. She attained considerable renown in her own time, and both her pottery and her poems were immensely popular and circulated widely.

Perhaps because the modernization project in Japan did not, as in China, appear to require a radical rejection of the “feudal superstitions” of Buddhism, poets continued to draw on traditional Buddhist imagery and ideas to express more modern sensibilities, using modern poetic forms. One of the most popular of these poets (and indeed of all Japanese poets) is Miyazawa Kenji (1896–1933). Miyazawa, also known for his children’s stories and essays, wrote both traditional *tanka* and modern free-verse poetry. His poem “Ame ni mo makezu,” sometimes translated as “Be Not Defeated by the Rain,” has become perhaps one of the most well-loved of all Japanese poems, expressing in simple but moving language basic Buddhist values of restraint, compassion, and forbearance.

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CHAPTER 21

Buddhist Art and Architecture in East Asia

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The production of Buddhist images and architectural sites mirrors, in many ways, the transmission of Buddhism to China and beyond, as well as its further development in East Asia. The transmission of Buddhism resulted in the adaptation of artistic and architectural forms from India and Central Asia, as well as the creation of distinctively East Asian artistic expressions of the Buddhist faith. In certain cases, these transformations were due to the emergence of localized Buddhist schools and practices. In other cases, this was due to the availability of local materials, the development of local artistic and architectural idioms, and varied localized prerogatives.

In China, Korea, and Japan, Buddhist monasteries and rock-cut sites served not only as places of worship and pilgrimage, but also as important centers for artistic production and patronage. Buddhist imagery, in turn, served as the focus of worship and was a visible manifestation of the religious devotion of patrons. Due to limitations of space, this chapter is not intended to serve as a comprehensive survey of Buddhist art and architecture throughout East Asia. Rather, it highlights important examples of Buddhist art and architecture in East Asia, particularly those dating from the first millennium CE, which shed light upon the inception and transmission of artistic and architectural styles that accompanied the transmission of Buddhism across borders.

Some of the key issues addressed in this chapter pertain to how the introduction of Buddhism into China, Korea, and Japan was accompanied by the production and transmission of artworks, as well as the creation of sites that established the new religion in each cultural context. In the case of the transmission of Buddhism into China, the earliest objects that displayed Buddha-like images were not objects of Buddhist devotion, but rather were found in mortuary contexts. The transmission of Buddhism to Korea and Japan, in turn, was accompanied by the importation of Buddhist icons from China that likewise transmitted techniques and materials, as well as important architectural prototypes.

Another issue to be addressed is patronage, which played a key role in the acceptance of Buddhism in East Asia, as well as in the production of artworks and sites. Not only

was the production of artworks considered a merit-making activity, but it also served as a vehicle of political legitimation and an expression of imperial authority, as can be seen in the cases of the monumental Buddha sculptures at Longmen and Tōdaiji (discussed below). A final issue to be considered is how the transmission of Buddhist art across East Asia continued into Europe and the United States in the early twentieth century, thereby re-appropriating objects used for religious devotion and displacing them into the museum setting.

The Earliest Buddha Images in China

The earliest extant Buddha-like images in China, dating from the late second and the third centuries CE, are found in mortuary contexts. They represent not a fully-fledged conceptualization of standard Buddhist iconography, but rather a mingling with pre-established beliefs and material forms. By the mid-second century CE, organized monastic and translation centers had been established in Luoyang (Henan province) and Pengcheng (Jiangsu province). Chinese dynastic histories attest to a Buddhist shrine built by a local official in Pengcheng toward the end of the second century CE that contained a gilt bronze Buddha icon which served as the focus of worship. However, there is considerable debate regarding the correct dating of the earliest extant Buddha icons, with some scholars dating them to the late Eastern Han and others dating them to around the fourth or fifth centuries CE. The preservation of the mortuary objects, if in fact they substantially predate the earliest extant Buddha icons, may be attributed to the greater state of preservation of objects that were buried underground in tombs, rather than those actually deployed above ground for the purposes of Buddhist devotion. Nevertheless, the manner in which the earliest Buddha-like images appear raises interesting questions regarding the conceptualization of the imagined efficacy of these images and objects, which sparks further scholarly debate on these issues.

The forms in which the earliest Buddha-like figures are found include stone tomb carvings, bronze money trees, and ceramic vessels. The earliest of these appear in Sichuan province, predating the earliest historical records about organized Buddhism in the region. Stone tombs near the modern city of Leshan were carved deep into the mountains as long tunnel-like chambers. Within these tombs, relief carvings consisting of seated, frontally-facing figures bearing rudimentary aspects of Buddhist iconography—cross-legged seated position, halo, *uṣṇīṣa* or cranial protuberance signifying wisdom, and right hand raised in the fear-not gesture—generally appear in the antechamber or above the tomb entrance. The spatial position of the Buddha-like figures has caused speculation that they may have served an apotropaic function similar to monster figures that typically occupied the same position in tombs (Abe 2002: 30). Other scholars have suggested that the Buddha-like images may have been relevant to an established worship of two Chinese deities: the Queen Mother of the West and King Father of the East (Wu 1986: 267–69).

Another context in which the early Buddha-like figures are found is on the “money trees” of southwestern China. These bronze mortuary sculptures are so named because of the coins that dangle from their branches. Buddha-like images are found on the

ceramic bases into which the money trees were inserted, as well as on the tree trunks. Similar questions have emerged regarding whether or not these images should be considered as Daoist, or rather as apotropaic motifs (Abe 2002: 48–50). Moreover, interesting questions may be raised regarding the religious identities of the tomb occupants. Nevertheless, the appearance of Buddha-like images on mortuary objects in southwestern China was relatively unusual.

Along the southeastern coastal region of Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, Buddha-like images have been found on ceramic mortuary jars called *hunping*, dating from the late third century CE. Sometimes these images appear as single motifs, and in other instances as repeating motifs, mingling with other auspicious or apotropaic images. The *hunping* may have served as offerings for the living descendants of the deceased, an interpretation reinforced by inscriptions found on the vessels (Abe 2002: 93). At the same time, certain visual motifs on the *hunping* jars could be understood as Daoist in meaning and suggestive of a paradise associated with the afterlife (Wu 1986: 289–90). Other instances of the mingling of Buddhist and Daoist motifs may be seen at Mt. Kongwang in Jiangsu province, at which there are stone carvings on the mountain cliffs dating as early as the second and third centuries CE. The relief carvings include standing and seated Buddha figures, as well as a reclining figure that appears to represent a *parinirvāṇa* scene.

The earliest independent and fully recognizable Buddha images are gilt bronze seated Buddha sculptures, generally measuring between 10–20 cm. in height. Over thirty of these small sculptures have been found, and several were excavated in Hebei province. The general characteristics are a Buddha seated atop a pedestal with hands in the gesture of meditation, with two lions flanking either side of the base. The base may also contain a lotus blossom and worshipping donor figures. The Buddha's robe features drapery folds that fall gently from the neckline in a symmetrical fashion. These images are thought by some scholars to date from the fourth to fifth centuries, picking up where the earlier Buddha-like images left off (Abe 2002: 99). However, other scholars have argued that the sculptures date much earlier, based on archaeological evidence and formal analysis. Furthermore, persistent questions remain surrounding the provenance of these sculptures—including whether they are of Chinese or foreign manufacture.

A striking example of this type of sculpture is one from the Winthrop Collection in the Harvard Art Museums (Figure 21.1). This gilt bronze sculpture embodies the characteristics described above, with the addition of flames projecting from the shoulders, echoing examples from South and Central Asia. Unlike other known sculptures, the drapery folds across the torso fall not in a symmetrical fashion, but rather tend toward the right side of the body. The drapery around the neckline, on the other hand, thickens toward the left side of the body. The face bears the broad features and the mustache typically associated with Gandhāran sculpture. A vase in the center of the base contains a spray of lotus blossoms, and donor figures on the sides of the base wear non-Chinese garments.

Although the Harvard sculpture was previously dated to the fourth or fifth century on account of its Indianized features, particularly those indicating Gandhāran influence, revisionist scholarship based upon comparisons with Chinese, South Asian, and Central Asian works has suggested a second century dating (Rhie 1999: 71–94). One



Figure 21.1: Seated Buddha Shakyamuni in Meditation with Hands in Dhyana-Mudra and with Flaming Shoulders, 3rd–4th century. Gilt bronze, Gandhāra type, 32×24×13 cm. Harvard Art Museums/Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Bequest of Grenville L. Winthrop, 1943.53.80.A. Imaging Department © President and Fellows of Harvard College.

argument regarding the provenance of the image suggests that it originated from the Luoyang area, where foreign monks such as An Shigao (active second century CE) were engaged in translation activities and placed emphasis upon meditation practice, which could account for the meditative posture of the Buddha. Based upon stylistic comparisons that indicate specific variations on the Gandhāran style, the sculpture likely was based upon models from western Central Asia, the region of northern Bactria. Yet other scholars argue that the sculpture was of foreign manufacture, having likely been brought to China by foreign monks (Whitfield 2005: 87–88). Nevertheless, regardless of its origins, it is clear that this sculpture, and others of its type, represent a very different type of Buddha image from those that appeared initially within a mortuary context.

Rock-cut Architecture in China and Korea

Among the most distinctive forms of Buddhist architecture in India were rock-cut Buddhist cave sites. Caves cut out of living rock served as centers of both worship and habitation for Buddhist monastic communities. An important example of rock-cut Buddhist architecture in India is the Ajanta caves site, located in the state of Mahārāṣṭra

on the Deccan plateau, which experienced two main periods of activity: the second and first centuries BCE, and the fifth and sixth centuries CE. Among the twenty-nine caves at Ajanta, some were intended for worship (*caitya* halls) while others were designated as habitation caves (*vihāra*), with the two types differentiated by their plans. The *caitya* halls were apsidal in shape, and they contained a *stūpa* at the rear along with a columned path for circumambulation. The *vihāra* were rectangular in shape and contained individual cells for the monks. As we move to China, the significance of rock-cut architecture is also due to the fact that no free-standing timber-frame monasteries have survived in their entirety from before the Song dynasty (960–1279). Although there are significant differences between rock-cut and timber-frame sites, due to their longevity rock-cut Buddhist sites have preserved a wealth of knowledge not only about architecture, but also about Buddhist paintings and sculpture.

Besides India, the practice of rock-cut architecture also flourished in Central Asia and China, particularly along the northern and southern parts of the Silk Road, which circumvented the Taklamakan Desert and reunited at the Chinese military garrison of Dunhuang, in present-day Gansu province. Silk Road Buddhist cave sites served monastic communities as well as pilgrims and traders. The most well-known of these sites are located in the present-day Xinjiang Autonomous Uighur Region, as well as in Gansu. In Xinjiang, Buddhist rock-cut sites are located in Kucha, Turfan, and Kashgar. A number of sites in the Kucha area, most notably those at Kizil and Kumtura, housed flourishing monastic communities. The one at Kizil comprises a total of over two hundred rock-cut caves. A revised chronology for the site, ca. 300–650 CE, has been established; this predates the previous timeline, which posited that activity at Kizil had begun no earlier than 500 CE (Howard 1991: 68–69, 81).

Among the cave types present at the site are “central pillar” caves, monumental Buddha caves, habitation caves with fireplace and window, and square caves with domed or *lanterndecke* ceilings; the last of these resembles the receding wooden ceilings seen in Central Asian as well as northern Korean contexts. The domed ceiling, in particular, was characteristic of the cave temples of Afghanistan, including those at the site of Bamiyan. The central pillar cave type, in which a square pillar is connected to the ceiling and the floor, continued to be seen further east in Gansu sites, including the Mogao caves. The characteristic iconographic motifs at Kizil include *jātaka* tales and *avadāna* scenes, as well as depictions of Maitreya in Tuṣṭita heaven and the Buddha’s *parinirvāṇa*. As is well known, the kingdom of Kucha was an important center for Buddhist learning and translation. Many prominent monks, including Kumārajīva (344–413), Fotudeng (c. 232–348), and Dharmarakṣa (c. 266–308), spent time in Kucha.

Another important feature of the Xinjiang sites are mural paintings concerned with visualization practice, particularly the Toyok caves of the Turfan region. This group consists of forty-six caves dating from the fifth century, of which nine contain mural paintings. Paintings in Caves 20 and 42 depict scenes of images generated through the process of visualization, in some cases corresponding to certain lines in the *Visualization Sūtra* (*Guan wuliang shou fo jing*, T 365), suggesting that perhaps this and other related texts were composed locally. Cave 42 may date as early as the fifth century, around the time of the composition of the meditation texts, while Cave 20 is considered to date slightly later.

In Gansu Province, among the better-studied rock-cut sites are the Mogao and Yulin caves, Binglingsi, and Maijishan. The Mogao caves site, located in Dunhuang, Gansu province, in northwestern China, flourished between the fourth and fourteenth centuries. Located strategically in the Hexi Corridor leading to what the Chinese called the Western Regions (namely India and Central Asia), Dunhuang was established as a military garrison in the second century BCE by Emperor Wu (r. 141–87 BCE) of the Western Han dynasty. Comprised of 735 caves carved into the eastern side of the Mingsha mountains, the nearly 500 caves in the southern group were painted and installed with sculptures, and the remaining caves, those in the northern group, served as habitation chambers and burial caves. The legendary origins of the site are ascribed to the monk Yuezun, who upon arriving in Dunhuang supposedly saw a golden light from which manifold Buddhas emanated. Afterward he excavated a meditation cave. Subsequently the monk Faliang built a cave adjacent to the cave of Yuezun.

Although the precise location of these original caves is unclear, they inaugurated a millennium of continuous activity at the site. In addition to the mural paintings and sculptures found inside the caves, a unique characteristic of the Mogao caves is that over 50,000 manuscripts and paintings were discovered sealed inside Cave 17, the so-called “library cave.” The “library cave” is thought to have been sealed ca. 1000 CE, and contained documents written mostly in Chinese and Tibetan, in addition to those written in Sogdian, Khotanese, Uighur, Sanskrit, and even Hebrew. The contents of the “library cave” were discovered in 1900 by the Daoist priest Wang Yuanlu (1849–1931). Subsequently, they were dispersed among libraries and museums worldwide, with important collections in London, Paris, Beijing, and St. Petersburg, among other locations.

The habitation caves were simple caves that were either square or rectangular in shape, sometimes with a meditation chamber. Among the caves in the southern group, which were square or rectangular, rather than apsidal in shape in the manner of the Indian *caitya* halls, a number of cave plans predominate: meditation caves, in which the plan was adapted from the Indian *vihāra*, “central pillar” caves in which a square pillar connected the ceiling and floor placed similarly to the *stūpa* of the Indian *caitya* hall, caves with a square main chamber and no central pillar, and finally, large caves installed with monumental Buddhas.

The Mogao caves site is distinguished, similar to the one in Kizil, by mural paintings. Most sculptures there were made not from the sandstone of the mountain, but rather out of unfired clay over a wood and straw support. The rough-hewn surfaces of the interior walls were prepared for painting by being smoothed over with a mixture of mud and dried straw, after which a preparatory ground was applied, on top of which an underpainting was drawn, and finally the mural painting was made with mineral and vegetable pigments.

The iconography of mural paintings from the Northern and Southern dynasties frequently focused upon *jātaka* tales, *avadāna* stories, and the life story of Śākyamuni Buddha. Cave 428 at Mogao, dating to the Northern Zhou era (557–588), juxtaposed the *Vessantara Jātaka* and the *Hungry Tigress Jātaka* on opposite sides of the door located in the center of the east wall. Individual scenes in the *jātaka* tales are separated from one another by means of a ring of colorful mountains that create space cells, and each

jātaka tale is arranged across three horizontal registers. Above the *jātaka* tales is the “thousand Buddhas” motif of seated Buddhas characteristic of the Mogao caves, and below are donor figures. The north and south walls present scenes of standing and seated Buddhas surrounded by bodhisattvas, and on the west or rear wall there are painted scenes from the life of Śākyamuni Buddha. The east-facing niche of the central pillar contains a sculptural Buddha pentad, with a seated Buddha surrounded by his two disciples Ananda and Mahākāśyapa inside the niche, flanked by two bodhisattvas outside the niche.

Cave 220, built during the Tang dynasty in the year 642, represents a new type of cave shrine that emerged during the early Tang dynasty, one that was dedicated and built by a single clan rather than multiple donors—a “family cave.” Cave 220 was built by the Zhai family, a prominent local clan, and represents the earliest identified family cave at the Mogao site. The name of the clan was written prominently under the main icon, unmistakably identifying the patrons of the cave shrine. After its initial construction, the cave was maintained by the Zhai family for several centuries.

Although subsequently undergoing periods of renovation and repainting, mostly under the Zhai family, the original iconographic program in Cave 220 represented another impetus of mural painting at the Mogao caves during the Tang dynasty, a shift in focus to Mahāyāna themes of the pure lands of various Buddhas. The painting on the north wall represents Bhaiṣajyaguru, the Buddha of healing, with differing interpretations as to whether it depicts the pure land of Bhaiṣajyaguru or a healing ritual based upon the *Bhaiṣajyaguru Sūtra* (see Ning 2004: 34–37). The painting on the south wall represents Amitābha Buddha in the Western Pure Land, although lacking the details of the Prince Ajātaśatru story on the left and right sides. The characteristic details of the Western Pure Land include the image of Amitābha Buddha seated on top of a lotus pedestal in the middle of a lotus pond and surrounded by bodhisattvas and other members of his heavenly retinue, within a prominent architectural setting of multistoried pavilions. This is distinct from the type of paintings that appeared in Toyok Caves 20 and 42, which focused upon monks in the act of meditative visualization and the images they visualized. The compositional formula of paintings of the Western Pure Land would be seen again in the Taima Mandara paintings and tapestries of Japan.

The mural paintings of the Mogao caves reflected not only religious developments, but also the changing political landscape of the region. Cave 61, dating to 945–957, is famous for the panoramic painting of Mt. Wutai in Shanxi province that stretches across the west, or rear wall, of the cave. The original sculptural icon, no longer extant, was the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī seated atop a lion. The main donor of the cave was Cao Yuanzhong, who served as the Military Commander of the Return to Allegiance Army between 944 and 974. The Tibetan occupation of Dunhuang (ca. 781–848) ended with Zhang Yichao’s ouster of the Tibetans, after which Zhang was named in 851 as the first Military Commander of the Return to Allegiance Army by Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712–756) of the Tang dynasty. The position of Military Commander was eventually assumed by the Cao clan, which secured its position by intermarrying with the Uighurs and Khotanese. The prominent Uighur and Khotanese donor images of the cave, also a family cave like Cave 220, therefore express the complex interstate and interethnic marriage alliances that were forged during this period. The choice of Mt. Wutai for the

west wall painting reinforces the prominence of the main icon Mañjuśrī, as this was the earthly abode of the bodhisattva. The manner in which the peaks of Mt. Wutai unfold does not correspond to geographic reality, but rather to the experience of a pilgrim who approaches the peaks from the southeast. The five peaks, important monasteries, pagodas, and other buildings, in addition to sites associated with miraculous appearances and happenings, are labeled with cartouches, identifying the geographic, physical, and spiritual topography of the mountain peaks.

Buddhist cave shrines in central and northern China flourished under the patronage of the Xianbei rulers of the Northern Wei dynasty (386–534). Following the disastrous Buddhist persecution of 446–452 under Emperor Taiwu (r. 424–452), the Buddhist superintendent Tanyao (active mid-5th century CE) oversaw the excavation of five monumental Buddha sculptures at Yungang located in northern Shanxi province, measuring up to eighteen meters in height, during the reign of Taiwu's successor Emperor Wencheng (r. 452–466), who restored the Buddhist establishment. Construction of the five caves, numbered 16–20, began in 460 CE and continued for nearly a decade. The impetus behind the excavation of the caves was likely due to a number of factors, including reinforcing the association of the Northern Wei court with Buddhism, as well as atoning for the bad karma created by the Buddhist persecution. Between 460 and 494, when the Northern Wei capital was moved from Pingcheng to Luoyang, in Henan province, twenty major caves, including the Tanyao caves, were completed. The site is characterized by sculptures and relief carvings, which were painted with brightly colored pigments. Official histories record successive imperial visits to the site for religious observances. Due to its imperial aura, aristocrats and wealthy citizens were also attracted to the site and sponsored the later caves.

After the move of the Northern Wei capital from Pingcheng, near modern-day Datong, to Luoyang, imperial patronage under the Xianbei continued at yet another Buddhist cave site, the Longmen caves located in the limestone cliffs on the banks of the Yi River in Luoyang. The earliest excavations at Longmen date to the late fifth century, and the building of new caves continued for another 250 years. One distinctive characteristic of Longmen, unlike Yungang, is the proliferation of contemporaneous dedicatory inscriptions that have contributed to scholarship about the site (see, for example, McNair 2007, especially 160–65, for epigraphic interest in the Longmen inscriptions). The inscriptions have allowed scholars to closely study patterns of patronage at the site, which included members of the royal family and the Xianbei aristocracy, members of the Buddhist establishment, and finally, members of lay Buddhist associations, with some indications of the broadening of patronage toward the end of the sixth century. The Sinification of the Xianbei court is also indicated in the style of dress of certain Buddha sculptures. For example, the seated Buddha in the early sixth century Binyang Central Cave is clad in a belted robe similar to Chinese court dress, rather than the Central Asian style in which one shoulder is left bare.

One of the most important caves at Longmen is the Fengxiansi or Great Vairocana Image Shrine, dedicated by Emperor Gaozong (r. 650–683) and Empress Wu (624–705, r. 690–705) in 676 CE, during the Tang dynasty. The main icon is Vairocana Buddha, the cosmic Buddha prominently featured in the immensely popular *Avatamsaka Sūtra* (*Huayan jing*), measuring over seventeen meters in height. The identification of

the sculpture is confirmed both by an inscription on the pedestal as well as by images of seated Buddhas in the lotus petals of the southern side of the throne, which corresponds to the description of Vairocana in the *Brahma's Net Sūtra* (*Fanwang jing*). The issue of whether the main patron was Emperor Gaozong or Empress Wu is contested. Nevertheless, Empress Wu's interest in Huayan Buddhism is well known. Empress Wu's devotion to the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, the main scriptural basis of Huayan Buddhism, was abetted by the famous monk Fazang (643–712), the third Huayan patriarch, who had Sogdian ancestry. Empress Wu's support culminated in her commission of a new translation of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, which was completed in 698 CE.

Following the introduction of Buddhism from China to the Korean kingdoms of Koguryō (37 BCE–668 CE) and Paekche (18 BCE–660 CE) in the late fourth century, and to Silla (57 BCE–935 CE) in the sixth century, the patronage of Buddhist sites, including the rock-cut site of Sōkkuram, commenced. Sōkkuram was built from granite blocks and is located at the Pulguksa monastic complex, southeast of Kyōngju, the capital of Silla. The building of Sōkkuram was likely commissioned in the year 751 by Prime Minister Kim Taesōng (700–774), during a period of large-scale Buddhist commissions, which took place under the reign of King Kyōngdōk (r. 742–765) of Unified Silla. The temple was built as a rectangular antechamber connected by a corridor to a circular main chamber. The main icon is a seated figure of Śākyamuni making the gesture of the earth-fulfilling vow, similar to the image enshrined within the Mahābodhi Temple in Bodhgayā, India. This, in turn, relates the image to the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, as according to tradition this important scripture was preached by Śākyamuni directly after his enlightenment under the bodhi tree. The *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* was transmitted to Korea and Japan from Tang China, and it came to exert enormous influence on Korean Buddhism. Examination of the dimensions of the sculpture suggests that it was made after the original image in the Mahābodhi Temple, and thus, in a sense, was meant to recreate the site of Śākyamuni's enlightenment in Korea.

Although no Buddhist cave shrine sites of the type seen in China exist in Japan, there syncretic mountain asceticism or *shugendō* combined aspects of animism, folk religion, and mountain worship with Daoism and esoteric Buddhism. Practitioners practiced austerities and engaged in mountain pilgrimages in order to achieve long life and magical powers. One such pilgrimage site, among many others, is Mount Fuji, which was believed to have been ascended by the legendary founder of *shugendō*, En no Gyōja, around 699 CE. The reverence accorded to mountains in *shugendō*, in turn, relates more broadly to notions of sacred mountains across Asia.

In the early twentieth century, Buddhist cave sites in northwestern China became the focus of intense interest and acquisitions by foreign explorers, among them Marc Aurel Stein (1862–1943) of Great Britain, who was born in Hungary, and Paul Pelliot (1878–1945) of France. Subsequently, large numbers of manuscripts, portable paintings, and textiles, along with some sculptures, entered museum and library collections abroad, to be united once again digitally under the efforts of the International Dunhuang Project based at the British Library. The recovery of sculptural fragments from the Xiangtangshan caves located in Hebei province and the early twentieth-century transformation of Buddhist objects into “fine art” served as the focus of recent study by the Xiangtangshan Caves Project and a subsequent traveling exhibition. Because of

its distance from large cities and the chaotic political circumstances in China, the site was easily plundered, and sculptural fragments subsequently entered many private and museum collections in the early twentieth century. In this case as well, technology was used to recreate the effect of the original site, reconstructing an entire cave within a single room for the exhibition “Echoes of the Past: The Buddhist Cave Temples of Xiangtangshan” (see Tsiang 2010).

Monastic Architecture and its Development across East Asia

According to traditional accounts, the relics of Śākyamuni Buddha were divided after his cremation and deposited under stūpas, or earthen reliquary mounds. Especially in the period before iconic representations of the Buddha were popularized under the Kuṣāṇas, the stūpa served as the focus for worship within the early Buddhist community. In East Asia, the Indian stūpa was transformed into the pagoda, a multistoried wooden or brick tower with overhanging tile eaves, or less commonly, a stone structure, which became a distinctive feature of Buddhist monastic architecture. Following the introduction of Buddhism to China in the mid-first century CE, the earliest known Buddhist monastery, the White Horse Monastery (Baimasi), was built in Luoyang during the Eastern Han dynasty (see Mario Poceski’s chapter in this volume). Although none of the original structures still exist, a pagoda was likely incorporated into the monastery plan, in a similar manner to the inclusion of the stūpa in an Indian monastic complex.

The earliest monasteries likely borrowed aspects of preexisting Chinese architecture in their adaptation of the Indian form. One example of this is the *mingtang*, or bright hall, an architectural prototype from pre-Buddhist China that although described differently in different sources, generally consisted of a multistory structure with a square base topped by circular upper levels. Similar to the Buddhist stūpa, the *mingtang* also embodied concepts associated with the *axis mundi*. When the emperor performed sacrifices at the *mingtang*, he circumambulated throughout the site, in a manner similar to the circumambulation of Buddhist stūpas. Another possible prototype is the square *que* watchtower, of which Han dynasty examples exist in the form of ceramic funerary models and stone architecture. Early Chinese representations of the characteristic East Asian pagoda appear in relief carvings at Yungang, as well as in the central pillars of rock-cut caves. Until the tenth century, freestanding pagodas were generally square in shape, similar to the central pillars of rock-cut caves.

The Yongningsi in Luoyang, which is no longer standing, was built in the early sixth century. From archaeological excavations, scholars have been able to ascertain the monastery plan, which included a nine-story wooden pagoda in the center of the compound. From comparative studies with other sources, such as relief carvings and mural paintings from Buddhist cave shrines, it is possible to conclude that the south, east, and west sides of the pagoda contained niches for Buddhist images, and that the north side contained a staircase for access to the upper levels. In China, the focus of worship shifted from the pagoda to a separate building known as a Buddha hall or image hall, in which images of Buddhist deities were installed. At Yongningsi, the pagoda and the Buddha hall behind it stood along a single north–south axis, surrounded by a single wall.

The single axis and single courtyard plan continued into the Tang dynasty. The same plan was followed by the builders of Qinglongsi in Chang'an, which is one of the monasteries associated with Kūkai's (774–835) period of study in China (see Heather Blair's chapter in this volume). Another monastery plan emerged during the Tang dynasty, in which multiple courtyards housed individual halls, each established and named for its own function. The courtyards were themselves demarcated by roofed corridors and punctuated by gates, and the largest courtyard was reserved for the Buddha hall. This type of temple plan took its precedent from secular palace architecture, and is substantiated by paintings from the Mogao caves. Another shift which took place during the Tang dynasty was the establishment of twin pagodas, which disrupted the single axis plan. The pagodas were now located in front and on either side of the Buddha hall. Smaller funerary pagodas were also built on monastery grounds, such as the forest of pagodas at Shaolinsi in Henan province. At Shaolinsi there are over 200 brick and stone pagodas, dating from the Tang and later periods—the largest such assemblage of pagodas—that commemorate members of the monastic community.

The Great Wild Goose Pagoda (Dayanta), built during the eighth century, is one of the most famous extant pagodas from the Tang dynasty. This brick pagoda is located at Ci'ensi in Chang'an (modern-day Xi'an), a monastery that was expanded by the future Emperor Gaozong (r. 650–683) before his ascension to the throne in commemoration of his deceased mother. The pagoda was built in the mid-seventh century in order to house the many sūtras brought back to China by Xuanzang (602–664); it was here that the famous monk carried out translation work for almost twenty years. The pagoda is now the only original structure of the monastery still standing. It has undergone numerous renovations over the centuries, and now stands seven stories tall. The pagoda is notable for the calligraphic and pictorial Tang-era engravings located adjacent to the doors of the pagoda's base.

The other paradigmatic monastic building type, the Buddha hall (also known as the image hall or golden hall), may be represented by the Main Hall of Nanchansi and the East Hall of Foguangsi, both located near Mt. Wutai in Shanxi province. These structures are two of only four wooden buildings from the Tang dynasty that are still extant. The relative dearth of wooden buildings that predate the tenth century may be at least partially attributed to the Huichang persecution of Buddhism in 845, which resulted in a large-scale destruction of Buddhist architecture. The Main Hall of Nanchansi dates to 782, while the East Hall of Foguangsi was built in 857. These single-story wooden structures were supported internally by a timber frame consisting of pillars and cross-beams, and externally by a complex system of interlocking brackets that distributed the weight of the overhanging roof eaves. As befitting their function, both halls contained altars for the display of Buddhist icons. In particular, the East Hall of Foguangsi corresponds most closely to the textual description of architectural standards as laid out in the *Yingzao fashi* (Treatise on Architectural Standards) of 1103. According to its ranking of Tang timber-frame architectural standards, the East Hall may be considered a high-ranking hall (see Steinhardt 2004 for an account of the reception of the East Hall in architectural history).

The Liao dynasty (916–1127), which was ruled by the Qidan people, oversaw some of the most important achievements in Buddhist architecture, and particularly in

pagoda construction. For example, the tallest extant wooden pagoda, which is also the tallest extant wooden building in China, the Timber Pagoda (Muta) of Fogongsi in Shanxi province, was built in 1056 under the Liao. From the exterior, the octagonal structure appears to have five stories, but in fact is a nine-story building with four additional interior levels, rising to a total height of 67.31 meters. The pagoda was located along the main north–south axis of the monastery, in front of the main image hall. The intricacy and soundness of the timber-frame construction and the bracketing system ensured the longevity of the pagoda, with continued repairs, despite its height and exposure to numerous natural and man-made disasters.

The octagonal pagoda was a major contribution of the Liao to Buddhist architecture. Until that time, pagodas were generally square in shape. One explanation for this may have been the Liao preference for esoteric Buddhism, exemplified by the correlating groups of eight esoteric deities that appear as relief carvings on the external surfaces of the pagoda shaft. An example of this formulation is the brick Great Pagoda (Data) of Datasi in Inner Mongolia. There the main deity, Vairocana Buddha, is situated on the south-facing side.

Another structure that gained importance in monastery plans during the Liao was the pavilion (*ge*), or multistory hall. With the exception of pagodas, Chinese buildings were generally single-story structures. The Qidan Liao, however, displayed an emphasis upon multistoried structures in their Buddhist monastery plans. The Guanyin Pavilion of Dulesi in Hebei province is the earliest extant wooden pavilion in China, dated 984. The rectangular two-story structure has an additional interior level, and houses a sixteen-meter-tall wooden sculpture of Guanyin. The typical Liao monastery plan consisted of a towering pagoda situated along the main axis, sometimes flanked by a Buddha hall. When a pavilion appeared, it often did so on the main axis as well, where, as was likely the case with the Guanyin Pavilion, it functioned as the central focus of the monastery.

Buddhist monastic planning in Korea during the later part of the Three Kingdoms period (57 BCE–668 CE), and in Japan during the Asuka (538–645), Hakuho (645–710), and Nara (710–794) periods, reflected precedents from China as well as new innovations, particularly regarding the placement and the numbers of the pagodas and the Buddha halls. After Buddhism reached Japan in the sixth century, Buddhist monasteries were similarly built under royal and aristocratic patronage. Buddhism was accepted in Japan and Korea first among the highest levels of society. In Japan, the placement of the pagoda and the Buddha hall were of paramount concern and reflected continental precedents, particularly the single axis plan that is known from Paekche, which may be seen in Shitennoji and Ikarugadera. The twin pagodas plan of Yakushiji is also seen in monasteries from Unified Silla, for example Kamunsa. This represents the final stage of a development in which the pagoda and the Buddha hall were initially placed on an east–west axis. With the introduction of the twin pagodas, the focus fully shifted to the Buddha hall and the icons within. The similarities between Yakushiji and Kamunsa suggest contacts between Yamato and Unified Silla.

Another important Korean monastery is Hwangnyongsa, located in Kyongju province, on which original construction was completed in 569. The monastery, the largest in Silla, was converted by King Chinhung (r. 540–576) from a palace into a monastery.

Although destroyed during the Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century, archaeological excavations and historical sources have revealed a plan that likely initially consisted of a single pagoda and a Buddha hall, which was renovated to a more complex plan consisting of three Buddha halls by the late sixth century. A wooden nine-story pagoda was built by craftsmen from Paekche in 645, an indication of the communication not only between Korea and Japan, but also among the Three Kingdoms. The main Buddha hall was built to house a sixteen “foot” gilt bronze Buddha sculpture. The plan of a central Buddha hall flanked by two smaller Buddha halls is unusual, and may suggest influences either from Northern Wei China or elsewhere in the Three Kingdoms. Certain Koguryŏ and Paekche monasteries also had three image halls, but the placement and differentiation of enclosed courtyards was different. Whatever its origins, the monastery plan consisting of three Buddha halls became a standard for Silla during the Three Kingdoms era, particularly for large monasteries built under state patronage.

In the Unified Silla period (668–935), an important characteristic of monastery planning was the inclusion of paired pagodas, the significance of which was noted earlier. Pulguksa, also located in Kyŏngju province, was originally built in 528 and renovated in 751 by Kim Taesŏng, the patron of Sŏkkuram and a descendant of the royal family. Whereas Sŏkkuram is located on top of Mt. T’oham facing the Eastern Sea, Pulguksa is located at its foot. According to the *Samguk yusa*, Sŏkkuram was built in honor of Kim Taesŏng’s parents in his previous lives, and Pulguksa was built for his parents in the current life. Pulguksa is distinguished by its twin stone pagodas, the four-story Sokkatap, or Śākyamuni Pagoda, and the three-story Tabotap, or Many Treasures Pagoda, which make reference to the *Lotus Sūtra*. A Buddha hall originally stood in the center, one of the more than eighty wooden structures destroyed during the late sixteenth century invasion from Japan and rebuilt in 1973. Other points of interest are the two pairs of stone bridges; along with the stone pagodas, these are among the few original extant structures on the site. In a separate courtyard originally stood multiple image halls, each for a specific Buddha or bodhisattva.

Another famous monastery of the Unified Silla containing twin pagodas is the previously mentioned Kamŭnsa, built in 682 on the shore of the Eastern Sea. Construction began during the reign of King Munmu (r. 661–681) and was completed after his death by his son King Sinmun (r. 681–691). The paired stone pagodas are among the earliest extant stone pagodas in Korea. Unlike the paired pagodas of Pulguksa, these are identical in size and shape, and are not named.

Koguryŏ monasteries were characterized by one pagoda flanked by two Buddha halls, which eventually led to the addition of a third Buddha hall placed to the north of the pagoda. Monasteries in Paekche, on the other hand, were distinguished by a single pagoda and Buddha hall plan on a north–south axis, as well as the introduction of stone pagodas in addition to those built of wood. The construction of stone pagodas continued through the Unified Silla period, as can be seen in the twin pagodas of Pulguksa and Kamŭnsa. Nevertheless, despite the distinctions between monastery plans of the Three Kingdoms, there were also similarities among them, which makes it difficult or problematic to clearly articulate proprietary plans belonging to each kingdom.

The transmission of Buddhism to Japan, as well as the building of Buddhist monasteries and the production of paintings and sculptures, was facilitated by contacts with Three Kingdoms Korea, especially Paekche. For example, Asukadera, founded in 588 in Asuka under the patronage of Soga no Umako (551–626), was built by craftsmen from Paekche. Similarly, Hōryūji, completed by 711 and adjacent to the site of Prince Shōtoku's (574–622) Wakakusadera, also involved the work of continental artisans. Nevertheless, there were clearly instances of innovations and divergences from continental monastic plans. Wakakusadera had been built so that the pagoda and the Buddha hall stood on the central axis, as had been the case elsewhere in China and Korea. However, Hōryūji introduced a new plan, in which the pagoda and the Buddha hall stood side by side, perpendicular to the central axis. The same innovation is also seen in Hokkiji, built ca. 706 in Ikaruga, Nara prefecture. This plan, seen only in Japan, is as yet unexplained and appears to have no precedent in Korean monastic plans. Shitennōji, also sponsored by Prince Shōtoku at around the same time as Wakakusadera, preserved the standard Paekche plan, in which the image hall was placed behind the pagoda on the central axis. Therefore, there was a shift in the intervening century from the plans of Wakakusadera and Shitennōji, built by the early seventh century, to that of Hōryūji.

The significance of Hōryūji to the study of early Buddhist art and architecture in Japan, as well as to early Buddhist architecture in China, cannot be overstated. Hōryūji preserves four of the oldest wooden buildings in East Asia. The western precinct of Hōryūji is comprised of a roofed corridor with a gate enclosing a pagoda, Golden Hall, and lecture hall. After Wakakusadera was burned down around 670, Hōryūji was built according to the new, asymmetrical plan. The Golden Hall was completed first, followed by the pagoda to its west, then the gate and corridor. The buildings are characterized by cloud-shaped brackets that appear not to have contemporary precedents in China, but which may represent older continental styles.

The Tamamushi Shrine from the Asuka period, which is kept in the treasure house of Hōryūji, presents additional early evidence for the continental style of architecture in Japan, as well as preserving seventh-century painting styles. The name of the shrine is derived from the iridescent wings of the *tamamushi* beetle that were placed underneath the openwork metal decoration that frames each side of the shrine. The shrine is composed of a miniaturized image hall atop a pedestal. Constructed from cypress wood, the exterior surfaces of the shrine are painted with images including *jātaka* tales on a ground of black lacquer. The cloud-shaped brackets of the shrine echo those of the actual Golden Hall, and the ridgepole of the roof is decorated at either end with distinctive curving fishtail-like decorations, an Asuka period architectural style unseen among the reconstructed Hōryūji buildings that are later in date.

The contrast between older and newer architectural styles is also evident at Tōdaji, located in Nara, which was built under the patronage of Emperor Shōmu (r. 724–749) as the main temple of the *kokubunji* provincial temple system. The Great Buddha Hall, measuring 57 meters wide and 50.5 meters deep, is the largest extant wooden structure in the world. The original plan additionally allowed for twin seven-story pagodas located in front of the Great Buddha Hall, each enclosed within its own courtyard, but now no

longer extant. In times of turmoil, the Great Buddha Hall was a target for destruction, once during the twelfth century, and again in the sixteenth century. The structure that stands today is an Edo-period reconstruction, dating to the eighteenth century, which preserves only a fraction of the size of the original building.

Whereas the Great Buddha Hall reflects continental architectural styles, the treasure hall, or Shōsōin, is built in the *azekura* style of a traditional raised storehouse. Such storehouses were commonly attached to Buddhist monasteries or government offices. The construction consists of interlocking logs that are smoothed on the interior and raised on the exterior. The Shōsōin is the oldest extant *azekura* storehouse in Japan and consists of two storehouses joined together. Built during the Heian period (794–1185), the Shōsōin served as the repository for personal items of Emperor Shōmu, donated after his death to the temple by Empress Kōmyō in 756.

Buddhist Sculpture and Paintings

The materials used to make Buddhist sculptures in East Asia ranged from the living rock and unfired clay of rock-cut sites, to freestanding sculptures made in metal, stone, wood, and lacquer. As discussed previously, the earliest independent images of the Buddha in China were shrines made of gilt bronze. Materiality is of paramount importance to the study of Buddhist sculpture, because the materials used to produce Buddhist sculptures both mirror the process of religious transmission as well as reinforce the sacrality of the objects. In addition to the use of bronze for Buddhist sculptures in China, the use of stone was also popular, perhaps due to the important role that stone already played in commemorative sculpture. Along with the relief sculptures at rock-cut sites such as Longmen and Yungang, freestanding stone sculptures and Buddhist stelae were also created.

The use of bronze, clay, and dry lacquer accompanied the spread of Buddhism to Korea and Japan. Once again, Hōryūji presents an excellent example of the culmination of the transmission of artistic techniques and materials. The main icon of the Golden Hall at Hōryūji is a gilt bronze triad consisting of Śākyamuni (Shaka) Buddha flanked by two bodhisattvas. The inscription on the sculpture states that the reason for its production was to pray for the health of the ailing Prince Shōtoku (574–622) and identifies the sculptor as Tori Busshi (active early 7th century), whose grandfather Shiba Tattō is believed to have been an artisan from southern China. Upon his arrival in Japan in the sixth century, Shiba Tattō became the head of the saddlemakers' guild. In the early seventh century, Tori Busshi had become the principal sculptor of Buddhist icons, to the extent of receiving a court rank from Empress Suikō (593–629). In addition to the Shaka triad of Hōryūji, Tori Busshi was also responsible for making the images of Shaka Buddha for Asukadera and of Yakushi Buddha for Wakakusadera. The Shaka triad of Hōryūji is marked visually by its archaistic interpretation of Northern Wei stylistic idioms, which may have been mediated through the sculptor's presumed knowledge of the Korean icons that were brought from Paekche and Silla, rather than direct knowledge of contemporary Buddhist icons from China, which would have otherwise reflected the developing Tang style.

The five-story pagoda of Hōryūji contains a tableaux sculpted out of clay on each side of the first floor. The sculptures, which were completed in 711, demonstrate the interest in clay as a sculptural medium during the Hakuho and Nara periods. The sculptures were modeled over a wood and metal armature, the plasticity of the material rendering a high degree of expressiveness, as can be seen in the north-facing *parinirvāṇa* tableaux. The use of clay for Buddhist sculptures originated in China, and literary accounts attest to the use of this material during the Northern and Southern dynasties. This technique is closely related to the dry lacquer technique, also originally from China, in which multiple layers of lacquer-soaked cloth were placed over the surface of the clay. After the lacquer dried, the clay was removed, and in some cases the armature as well, rendering the finished product lightweight and sturdy.

Tōdaiji, located in Nara, was initially a provincial temple, but it was later designated as the central temple of the *kokubunji* system. Construction of the Daibutsuden (Great Buddha Hall) was initiated by Emperor Shōmu (r. 724–749) in 743. The main icon of the Daibutsuden is the monumental gilt bronze Great Buddha, which was completed in 757. Similar to the Daibutsuden, the Great Buddha was restored once in the twelfth century and again in 1692. The sculpture alone stands 14.73 meters, with the original sculpture having stood one meter taller. Even at the diminished proportions, the sculpture is the largest bronze sculpture in the world today.

The Tōdaiji sculpture is a representation of Vairocana; as such, parallels may be drawn between the sculpture and the Kegon or Huayan concepts behind the sculptures of Vairocana Buddha at Fengxiansi and Sōkkuram. The Lotus Treasure World was carved onto the surfaces of the petals of the lotus pedestal, corresponding to the description of the Lotus Matrix Realm in the *Brahma's Net Sūtra*, in which Vairocana is surrounded by one thousand petals, each containing an emanation of Vairocana in the form of Śākyamuni. Each of the thousand worlds in turn further contains ten billion worlds, in each of which Śākyamuni preaches the *Brahma's Net Sūtra*. Thus, the sculpture realized in three-dimensional form the centralized hierarchy that was reinforced by the *kokubunji* system. The eye-opening ceremony of 752, in turn, drew an international assembly of thousands of monks. Despite the political intentions behind the making of the Vairocana sculpture, the scale of its production taxed the nation's resources and led to political turmoil and the disenfranchisement of Emperor Shōmu's branch of the imperial family, as well as the decreased power of the Buddhist establishment.

Wood, so plentiful in Japan, became a more popular material for Buddhist sculpture by the late eighth century. Moreover, the material resonated with the first image ever created of the Buddha, the so-called Udayana image, which was made of sandalwood upon the commission of King Udayana of Kauśāmbī during the Buddha's lifetime. As a result of this, unpainted wooden sculptures of the Buddha known in Japan as *danzō*, accounts of which reached East Asia in the form of travelogues written by Chinese monk pilgrims, were endowed with a special aura of sanctity and authenticity. The Shaka sculpture of Seiryōji, brought to Japan by the monk Chōnen (938–1016) in the year 987, was believed to have been the very sculpture commissioned by King Udayana, although it was of Chinese manufacture.

During the Heian period, the preference for wood as a material continued, and with it came new technical developments that addressed the shortcomings of earlier

woodcarving techniques. Whereas wooden sculptures of the Nara and early Heian periods were commonly carved of a single block of wood in the *ichiboku zukuri* method, the multiple block *yosegi zukuri* method was introduced in order to redress the problem of the outer surface of the wood drying out more quickly than the core, and therefore creating unsightly surface cracks. With the new method, multiple hollowed-out blocks of wood were carved, then fitted together to produce the finished product. The piecemeal nature of this technique also enabled the quick restoration or recreation of damaged sculptures.

The *yosegi zukuri* method is closely associated with, among others, the sculptor Jōchō (d. 1057), whose only extant work is the sculpture of Amitābha (Amida) Buddha installed in the Phoenix Hall of Byōdōin, dated 1053—timed to the perceived date of *mappō* (the final age of the Dharma's demise), which was 1052. Located in Uji, Byōdōin was founded by Fujiwara no Yorimichi (992–1074). Its Phoenix Hall with sculpture simulated the experience of encountering the Western Pure Land of Amida Buddha, when viewed from across the pond upon whose edge it was constructed. The sculpture is notable for its proportions, which were studied by other sculptors. That helped the spread of Jōchō's style far beyond the capital and reinforced the cultural efflorescence of the Heian court (see Morse 1993).

The emergence of distinct Buddhist schools in East Asia led to the production of mural and portable paintings that were used for religious and ritual purposes, as well as those that demonstrated the extent of intellectual and religious interactions between the monastic establishment and the lay community. Moreover, as in the cases of architecture and sculpture, the materials used demonstrated the religious and artistic transmission of Buddhism throughout East Asia. Once again, Hōryūji serves as a case study for the importation of artistic techniques and materials related to Buddhist art. The Golden Hall of Hōryūji contains the oldest Buddhist mural paintings in Japan, with a probable completion date of no later than 711 CE. The destruction caused by an accidental fire in 1949 damaged or destroyed much of the paintings, yet they remain an important subject for study. The walls of the Golden Hall were divided into twelve panels, with the four largest panels containing paintings of different Buddhas and their assemblies, and the eight smaller panels containing paintings of bodhisattvas.

It is suggested that the practice of mural paintings was uncommon in Japanese temples, and that the use of embroidered wall hangings was more common. However, the presence of mural paintings in Chinese temples is well known from literary sources, so the practice may have been transplanted to Japan under the greater internationalism of seventh-century Asia (Wong 2008: 143). Not only was the practice of mural painting transmitted from China, but the direct source of the Hōryūji paintings was likely stencils imported from China. The use of stencils and sketches, in turn, is well known from the material evidence of Mogao Cave 17 (the “library cave”) at Dunhuang (see Fraser 2004). The Indianized appearance of the attendant bodhisattvas in the mural paintings alludes to the renewed contacts between Tang China and India after the defeat of the Eastern Turks in 630 CE.

The inherent portability of hanging scrolls, on the other hand, enabled their circulation in a manner similar to the stencils that likely contributed to the paintings of the Golden Hall of Hōryūji. The famous twelfth-century set of one hundred hanging scrolls

depicting the *Five Hundred Luohan*, now distributed between the monastery Daitokuji in Kyoto, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, aptly demonstrates not only the movement of Buddhist artworks across international borders, but also their re-appropriation in new monastic and institutional contexts. The one hundred scrolls each depict five *luohan* (or *arhats*) engaged in a variety of prosaic, spiritual, or even supernatural actions. It was generally presumed that paintings of this type, originating from the professional ateliers of Ningbo in Zhejiang province, were intended for overseas export, due to the fact that extant examples were generally known only from Japanese collections. However, it is now clear that the set was produced originally for use in a Chinese monastery, before being imported to Japan, and finally to the United States.

The production of the scrolls commenced under the direction of the monk Yishao (active late twelfth century) of Hui'anyuan monastery, located southeast of Ningbo, who solicited donations from local clans, as well as from monks and nuns. The scrolls were painted between 1178 and 1188 by Lin Tinggui and Zhou Jichang, both active in the latter part of the twelfth century. Based upon geographic proximity, the paintings were likely made for the performance of Water-Land Assembly rituals in the region, particularly within a Tiantai context (for a concise summary of recent scholarship on Ningbo painting, see Lippit 2009).

From China, the paintings were brought to Japan within two centuries of their production. There they found their way to Daitokuji in Kyoto by the late sixteenth century, although the exact circumstances remain unclear. In Daitokuji, an important Zen monastery, the paintings are hung to commemorate the annual memorial for the founder of the monastery, held on the 22nd day of the twelfth month. The next step of their journey took place in 1894–1895, when Ernest Fennollosa (1853–1908) organized a special exhibition of forty-four scrolls in the Museum of Fine Arts and other venues in the northeastern United States. The final stage of their institutional transformation occurred when ten of the scrolls were acquired permanently by the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and an additional two were acquired by Charles Lang Freer (1856–1919), which are now kept in the Freer Gallery of Art. Intriguingly, contemporaneous documentary evidence indicates that the sale of the paintings was facilitated by Fennollosa in order to ameliorate the dire financial straits of Daitokuji (Levine 2005: 305–09). After their tour of the United States, twelve of the scrolls returned to Japan, where they were designated National Treasures in 1908. The scrolls that remained in the United States were copied, and the copies joined the original twelfth-century paintings in Japan.

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Part VI

Buddhism in the Modern World

CHAPTER 22

Buddhism in Modern Japan

Melissa Anne-Marie Curley

It is sometimes remarked that when Japan becomes modern, it does so in an unusually swift, systematic way. Japanese Buddhism, however, is often criticized for not keeping up. In his seminal *Of Heretics and Martyrs*, James Ketelaar gives us the following report from Ichiki Shōuemon (1828–1903), a metallurgist for the Satsuma domain:

Many of my generation were convinced that the vast majority of priests and temples, having failed to keep pace with the times, were useless and that in these times priests should, in fact, be forced to devote themselves to labor for the sake of the nation (Ketelaar 1990: 55).

A century later, the situation seems unchanged. Buddhist scholar Minoru Kiyota—by any measure a more sympathetic reporter than the Satsuma official—offers this assessment of postwar Buddhism in Japan:

Buddhism . . . actually offers no vitality or spiritual satisfaction to the critical mind; the temples, infested with self-conceited dogmatists who carry on rites and ceremonies in boredom, expose the corruption of the Buddhist institutions; the priesthood, incapable of grasping the character of the modern mentality, represents nothing but anachronism (Kiyota 1969: 129–30).

For at least a hundred years then, Japanese Buddhism has, apparently, been in the throes of a failure to become modern. If we take seriously the popular representation of contemporary Japanese Buddhism as concerned primarily with the business of funerals (*sōshiki bukkyō*), the failure continues to this day.

The most striking aspect of this failure is its duration: how can it be that for a century and a half moderns have steadfastly carried on being Buddhist, despite the tradition's putative inability to modernize? I would propose that the repeated calls for Buddhism to bring itself up to speed are not descriptive but strategic. They are part and parcel of

the complex development of secular Japanese modernity, and in some cases, in fact, direct expressions of a particular style of Japanese Buddhist modernism which understands that sometimes the most modern thing a Japanese Buddhist can do is decry the anachronism of Japanese Buddhism. In this chapter, I will try to account for how it is that Buddhism comes to be positioned as the nation's other, and describe four turns Buddhists make as they work to create a place for Buddhism in modern Japan.

The Early Modern Period

One way of telling the story of Japanese Buddhism has been as a narrative of degeneration, with the innovative teachings of the great patriarchs of the Kamakura period (1185–1333) collapsing under the weight of the sectarian institutions built on top of them. On this view, the lifelessness of modern Japanese Buddhism can be explained as following from Buddhism's slow death over the course of the Tokugawa period (1603–1868). As described by historian Tsuji Zennosuke (1877–1955), Tokugawa Buddhism is defined by a drift into unreflective ritual formalism (*keishikika*) on the part of Buddhist institutions that are both coddled and controlled by the state. This institutional torpor is attended by a corruption of the priesthood (*sōryō no daraku*): priests grow increasingly lazy with respect to the precepts, eating meat and engaging in love affairs, while also becoming increasingly inventive in finding ways to use the priestly office as an avenue for acquiring worldly prestige and power. In Tsuji's estimation, the Tokugawa priesthood retains only the external trappings of traditional monastic renunciation, while in fact being fully immersed in secular concerns.

Recent scholarship on Japanese Buddhism, however, has vigorously disputed this narrative of degeneration. Actually, the Tokugawa period sees the development of a vibrant popular Buddhist culture, both in urban centers and across the countryside: itinerant preachers develop new interpretations of doctrine, while Buddhist teachings are circulated through new forms of mass media; there is surging interest in pilgrimage and the growth of centrally organized forms of mountain asceticism (Shūgendō); and the emerging bourgeoisie backs a number of millenarian movements. Meanwhile, within the temples, reform movements are taking shape. In fact, Tsuji's corruption theory is anticipated by Tokugawa-era claims that Buddhist institutions have become degenerate. Rather than straightforwardly describing any real state of affairs, this rhetoric of corruption is used by priests interested in marshaling support for precept-revival movements, sometimes at the prompting of state-issued edicts urging the recovery of the teachings of illustrious founders. All of this suggests that the Tokugawa era was not actually a period of torpor—on the contrary, it is under the Tokugawa regime that we see the creation of a Buddhist Japan.

Acknowledging the vitality of early modern Buddhism makes the events that surround the Meiji Restoration seem both less and more dramatic. On one hand, the reform movements undertaken by Meiji Buddhists are in this light not so radically new—in some ways they continue a process initiated by their Tokugawa-period predecessors. On the other hand, when the Meiji state moves against Buddhism, it is acting not on a half-dead institution but on a vibrant system that informs both elite and popular worldviews. This

makes the consequences of such a move potentially more profound. In this sense, the significant events that took place during the early years of the Meiji era might be understood as a profound trauma, around which modern Japanese Buddhism is compelled to organize itself.

Separating Shinto and Buddhism

When the Meiji government embarks on its campaign to modernize the Japanese state, one of the tasks it undertakes is the reinvention of Shinto as a rationalized, secularized religion, with interests identical to those of the nation-state. As a first step toward the unification of Shinto and the state (*saisei itchi*), the government moves to purify Shinto by separating it from Buddhism; that also involves disentangling the *kami* from the Buddhas (*shinbutsu bunri*). In the first year of the Meiji era, the state issues an official proclamation, ordering that henceforth the *kami* and the Buddhas must be clearly distinguished from one another (*shinbutsu hanzenrei*). Given the proliferation of combinatory sites (that incorporate both Shinto and Buddhist elements), and the dominant understanding of the border between *kami* and Buddhas as a porous one, this takes some doing: properties important to Shinto held at combinatory sites have to be seized; persons ordained as Buddhist monks who had been serving the *kami* at combinatory sites have to be defrocked; *kami* with Buddhist titles have to be given new titles; and secret Buddha images housed within shrines have to be rooted out. As Shinto takes its place at the center, Buddhism is pushed to the margins, reimagined as foreign and inassimilable. At the same time, in the interests of rationalizing the mechanisms through which the state interacts with the citizenry, the parish system that had underwritten Buddhist temples during the Tokugawa period is dismantled, and land reforms strip temples of many of their landholdings.

The state's policy of separation is also considered by some to have authorized the persecution of Buddhism (*haibutsu kishaku*) in some parts of Japan. In Mito, the project of tidying up the Buddhist temples was already underway by the mid-nineteenth century, with close to half of the territory's temples closed by order of the territorial government, and subsequently demolished or sold for private use (Ketelaar 1990: 49). In Satsuma, the regional government undertakes a survey of Buddhist temples located within its limits, with the express aim of eliminating the temples and returning all priests to lay life; by 1870, it is reported that every one of the area's 1,066 temples has been destroyed (Ketelaar 1990: 56). In the early 1870s, there are further outbreaks of anti-Buddhist violence, even in the old Buddhist strongholds of Kyoto and Nara, with riots at the Hie Shrine on Mount Hiei and book-burnings at Kōfukuji.

The state reverses course on *shinbutsu bunri* in 1870, and incidents of *haibutsu kishaku* are on the wane by 1872. But that same year, the government makes another attempt to rationalize religion through a series of policies set forth by the new Ministry of Doctrine (Kyōbushō). Over the course of the year, the ministry promulgates the *nikujiki saitai* law, making it legal for monks to eat, marry, and forego tonsure, as well as to wear ordinary clothes when not specifically engaged in activities related to the dharma. The state also mandates identical funeral and mourning practices for monks

and lay people; it creates the position of chief abbot (*kyōdōshoku*), bringing formerly independent branch temples under the jurisdiction of a sectarian head temple; it bans alms-begging; it orders the demolition of all unoccupied temples; and it outlaws any Shugendō practice not regulated by a sectarian head temple. The effect of all this legislation is to affirm that the state ultimately has control over the way Buddhism is organized, and to assert that in the eyes of the state, Buddhist priests are ordinary citizens, subject to the same laws and duties as everybody else.

In less than five years, then, Buddhist institutions in Japan—elite and popular, urban and rural—are upended. There is resistance to the new state policies: calculated misinterpretations of state-prescribed rituals; stories of Buddha images hidden in the forests for safekeeping; and organized protests against the ministry, including nationwide protests over the implementation of the *nikujiki saitai* statutes. Nonetheless, the events of the early Meiji era have a lasting effect on Japanese Buddhism. Even when combinatory practice returns, it returns with the understanding that its elements are borrowed from discrete categories, as we see below. For instance, it is commonplace to assume that Shinto is for handling happy occasions and Buddhism for sad ones. In this sense, promotion of the notion of *shinbutsu bunri*, which draws sharp distinction between the *kami* and the Buddhas, creates the conditions under which Japanese Buddhists articulate what Buddhism ought to become.

Separating Church and State

During the Meiji era, Buddhism begins to assert a space for itself in relation to the modern regime in a somewhat counter-intuitive manner, by calling for another round of separation. The Jōdoshū (Pure Land Sect) reformer and precept-master Fukuda Gyōkai (1809–1888), for example, suggests that the suppression of Buddhism has as its root cause the degeneracy of Buddhist institutions themselves (Ketelaar 1990: 14). According to Fukuda, the loss of temple lands, material wealth, and secular influence can only have salutary effects: for a long time Japanese Buddhists have been neglecting the proper concerns of Buddhism, which are transcendent rather than worldly, and spiritual rather than material. Kōnyo (1798–1871), chief abbot of the Jōdo Shinshū's (True Pure Land Sect) Honganji branch, expresses much the same view regarding what constitutes the religion's proper sphere. In his pastoral letter of 1871, Kōnyo instructs his followers to obey the imperial law (*ōbō*) in this life, and to maintain the Buddhist law (*buppō*) deep within their hearts (*naishin*). The imperial law governs this world, while the Buddhist law governs the transcendent realm of the Pure Land. Consequently, the Buddhist law registers in this world strictly internally, at the level of personal faith.

The same division of labor is suggested by thinkers associated with the so-called Buddhist Enlightenment. The Shinshū intellectual Inoue Enryō (1858–1919), for example, presses for a distinction between false mystery or superstition (*kakai*) and the true mystery of the absolute (*shinkai*). Superstition is to be eliminated from religious belief through the careful application of reason. That implies rejection of all utilitarian strategies that traditional Buddhism offers for managing worldly affairs—charms, oracles, faith-healing, etc. What is left over is the absolute: superrational and supramundane,

neither restricted by the reason that governs this world nor interfering with it. The task for the modern Buddhist, in Inoue's view, is to debunk superstition, and to generate a purified, abstracted Buddhism that does not interfere with the concerns of the secular state. Shinshū priest and political thinker Shimaji Mokurai (1838–1911) likewise insists that religion and politics belong to separate spheres. He calls for a separation of church and state (*seikyō bunri*) in a way that ultimately destabilizes the relationship between Shinto and the state, and affirms the autonomy of Buddhist institutions.

Here the suppression of Buddhism in the name of producing a modern nation-state is rewritten as an opportunity for Buddhists to recover a separate sphere for themselves, under the banner of religion. Whereas for the pre-modern Buddhist the relationship between imperial law and Buddhist law was one of identity, for the modern Buddhist, it is ideally one of difference: two laws, governing separate spheres, each serving as the guarantor of the other's independence.

This way of dividing politics and religion eventually makes its way into the 1890 Meiji Constitution's Article 28, which guarantees Japanese citizens freedom of religion, "within limits not prejudicial to peace and order, and not antagonistic to their duties as subjects." In a note on Article 28, Itō Hirobumi (1841–1909)—who, with Inoue Kowashi (1843–1895), was one of the constitution's chief authors, and who had ties to Shimaji—explains that this freedom is restricted to the sphere proper to religion, namely that of "inner" belief, and will not extend to any "outer" behavior deemed to violate state law (Moriya 2005: 287). Inoue similarly proposes that only internal religious sentiment (*naisō*) is to be unrestricted; secular law still governs external manifestation of this sentiment (*gaiken*) (Moriya 2005: 287). The Meiji separation of church and state thus ratifies a view already advanced by Buddhist intellectuals: this-worldly, sociopolitical concerns are to be governed by state law; supramundane, spiritual concerns are to be governed by religious law.

This arrangement preserves the possibility of state intervention in religious matters, an option that the state takes advantage of over the following decades, as it struggles to control ideology. The government mandates, for example, the removal of phrases embarrassing to the imperial family from the Shinshū canon. Similarly, it orders removal of the names of imperial *kami* from the Nichirenshū's *gohonzon*, a central object of worship in this influential Buddhist tradition. But the formal separation of religion and politics also enables Buddhist institutions to serve as guarantors for state projects, an important turn that modern Buddhism takes in Japan.

Buddhism for the State

Throughout the Meiji period and into the twentieth century, Buddhist institutions and ideologues lend their support to state projects, throwing themselves into efforts at nation-building within Japan, and the colonizing of border regions and imperialist expansion into the greater East Asia. In some ways, this would seem to continue a long tradition of Buddhist participation in state activities. Post-*haibutsu* Buddhist support of the state, however, has at least one strikingly modern feature: it requires a separation

of sectarian interests from secular interests, so that the best Buddhist becomes the one most able to bracket his identity as a Buddhist.

We see this kind of bracketing at work in the Buddhist participation in the Great Promulgation Campaign (Taikyō Senpu Undō). The campaign was intended to inculcate in the Japanese people a new understanding of themselves as citizens of the nation-state, or as members of the emperor's extended family. To this end, the Ministry of Doctrine enlisted the services of not only Shinto priests, but also Buddhist priests, itinerant performers, and representatives of the new religions. The ministry sent all of them across the country as national evangelists (*kyōdōshoku*), to promulgate the Three Great Teachings (Sanjō kyōsoku): demonstrating respect for the *kami* and love for the country; understanding the laws of Heaven and man; and abiding by the will of the emperor and his regime. These are the fundamentals of state Shinto, but they are transmitted largely by Buddhist priests.

The majority of evangelists employed by the state are Buddhists, until the mass resignation of Shinshū participants in 1875 precipitates the collapse of the ministry and a restructuring of the campaign. Moreover, the headquarters of the campaign is a refitted Jōdoshū temple, and at least some Buddhists rise close to the top of the evangelical ranks. From this position, they sometimes protest state intervention in Buddhist practice, but they also sometimes press for *more* state intervention. That is the case with erstwhile Sōtō priest Ōtori Sessō (1814–1904), for example, who was one of the chief voices within the ministry calling for the decriminalization of meat-eating and marriage, motivated by his sense that “distinctive Buddhist practices . . . hampered the dissemination of the National Teaching and the strengthening of Japan” (Jaffe 2001: 113). As a good modern Buddhist, Ōtori sought to minimize the public appearance of Buddhist difference, and to “staunch intrasectarian tensions in various Buddhist and Shinto denominations,” holding fast to the belief that “the national interest overrode petty sectarian concerns” (Jaffe 2001: 113).

During this period Buddhists also make major contributions to the colonization of Hokkaido. Their presence in the north is framed as a religious mission, but on the ground they take on the ideological task of explaining to colonial subjects that they are now Japanese citizens. They also undertake the concrete task of building up infrastructure: Buddhist missions to Hokkaido reclaim wasteland, construct roads and military fortifications, and engage in public service projects for the benefit of the nation (*kokueki*). Hokkaido constitutes a field on which Buddhists can demonstrate their ability to contribute to the state. It is also a field on which sectarian institutions are forced to reconfigure their relationships with each other. On one hand, the Buddhist sects are in some sense competing with each other to prove their patriotism. On the other hand, sectarian loyalty itself is seen as unpatriotic. Thus one of the ways sects are called upon to demonstrate their enthusiasm for state projects is by disavowing sectarian interests and working in cooperation with each other. Accordingly, says Zen lay teacher Ōuchi Seiran (1845–1918), the mission to Hokkaido “is not an issue merely for individual branches or sects; rather, it is a concern for all offices of Buddhism. It is a problem of sectarian unity” (Ketelaar 1997: 546). Again, participation in the projects of the nation-state requires a version of Buddhism that is both private and non-particular.

This dynamic also drives Buddhist participation in the Japanese imperialist expansion into East Asia. Buddhists offer ideological support for imperialism from the standpoint of the absolute, by asserting that whatever benefits the Japanese nation-state ultimately serves the universal principles of peace and justice. When Japan enters into military conflicts, Buddhists likewise offer ideological support for militarism from the standpoint of the absolute, as can be seen in the Shinshū scholar-priest Nanjō Bun'yū's exhortation in the lead-up to the Russo-Japanese war: "To die would be bliss (*gokuraku*)" (Ishikawa 1998: 93). Buddhist missions in occupied China and Korea provide other opportunities to overcome sectarian difference, this time by correcting "deviations" that have developed in East Asian Buddhism. The effort to reform Chinese and Korean iterations of Buddhism serves Japanese imperial interests, and also furthers a particularly modern understanding of Buddhism as a totalized whole.

A rhetoric of universalism can serve to guarantee the state's interests, even when the thinker in question seems to have his eyes trained on the world, as we see in the case of the Zen priest Shaku Sōen (1859–1919). In the 1880s, Sōen spends three years in South Asia, ordaining as a Theravāda novice. In 1893, Sōen heads to Chicago as part of the Japanese delegation to the World Parliament of Religions. In the years in between, Sōen joins the Buddhist Transsectarian Society (*Bukkyō kakushū kyōkai*), and with three other society members—including Shimaji Mokurai—produces a five-volume set titled *Essentials of the Buddhist Teachings*, which aims to identify the fundamental truths on which all Buddhists should agree. Sōen's talking points at the World Parliament are eminently universalist: he presses for a recognition of Buddhism as a world religion that can transcend sectarian differences, harmonize with science, and reveal a supramundane absolute. At the same time, Sōen is a staunch nationalist, insisting on the uniqueness of the Japanese spirit and offering a Buddhist imprimatur for Japanese militarism:

War is an evil and a great one, indeed. But war against evils must be unflinchingly prosecuted till we attain the final aim. In the present hostilities, into which Japan has entered with great reluctance, she pursues no egotistic purpose, but seeks the subjugation of evils hostile to civilization, peace, and enlightenment (Soyen 1906: 201).

Some contemporary readers have suggested that Sōen's nationalism betrays a blind spot in his cosmopolitanism. I think this assessment misses the way in which the ideal of a trans-sectarian, universalized Buddhism is in fact born out of an intense desire to accommodate the demands of the modern Japanese nation-state.

There are, however, also some complications that arise from the relocation of Buddhism to the transcendent sphere of religion. On the one hand, positioning Buddhism as the state's moral guarantor requires that Buddhists themselves conceive of Buddhism as having no direct participation in the world—all worldly activity has to be mediated by the state. Buddhism alone, according to this view, can never be enough. We see this complication play itself out, I think, in the development of imperial-way Buddhism. A Meiji nationalist like Ōuchi Seiran insists on sectarian unity in order to guard both state and religious interests. But the 1930s ultranationalist Sugimoto Gorō—a lay disciple of Rinzai Zen abbot Yamazaki Ekijū—proposes something else:

Buddhists say that one should have faith in the Buddha, or Mahāvairocana, or Amida Buddha . . . such faith is one that is limited to religion alone. Japanese Buddhism must be centered on the emperor; for if it were not, it would have no place in Japan, it would not be living Buddhism. Buddhism, including Śākyamuni's teachings, must conform to the national polity of Japan (cited in Victoria 2006: 122).

Sugimoto has taken on board the injunction to overcome sectarian differences. Even his Zen, he says, is not sectarian Zen. He has also absorbed the modernist understanding of religion as properly belonging outside the political sphere. But he has followed this understanding through to the point of rendering religion inert. He thus makes a move that would have alarmed Meiji modernists: he rejects not only sectarian Buddhism, but universal Buddhism too. He is pushing instead for a new Buddhism that, like state Shintō, can be particular rather than universal, public rather than private, and secular rather than religious. In following the logic of *bunri* to its end, Sugimoto ends up overturning that logic.

Buddhism Over and Against the State

Then again, when separated from the state, Buddhism might also be understood as something other than an instrument of the state. Following the logic of *bunri* (or separation) in this direction opens the possibility of modern Buddhism asserting itself over and against the state. This is another important turn that modern Buddhism takes in Japan. Perhaps the mildest version of this can be seen in the ways that Buddhists move into the bourgeois public sphere. Without abandoning the modernist understanding of religion and the state as properly separate, some elite Japanese Buddhists identify the bourgeois public sphere—that space where private citizens come together to form a public—as an arena in which they can undertake public welfare projects not sponsored by the state. We might think here of the Buddhist sponsorship of Tokyo's first private orphanage in the 1870s, the formation of Buddhist temperance societies throughout the nineteenth century, and the Buddhist Adachi Kenchū's service as director of the Tokyo Poor House. Or, in the twentieth century, of the lay New Buddhist movement (Shin Bukkyō) that grows out of an early puritan society, and its leader Takashima Beihō's (1875–1949) campaign against licenced prostitution; or the emergence of theories of social work drawing on the concept of “working *nenbutsu*” (*gyōmu nenbutsu*).

Unsurprisingly, the social work projects pursued by Buddhist elites often align with state interests, and so could be easily assimilated by the state. We see this, for instance, in the ready accommodation of former national evangelists as volunteer prison chaplains (*kyōkaishi*) at the turn of the century. Nonetheless, we can maintain that there is an important possibility available to the Buddhist acting in the bourgeois public sphere, which is not available to the Buddhist acting in the service of the state, namely that of attempting to regulate the state. Takashima and the New Buddhists do precisely this (Kashiwahara 1990: 327ff.). Some of their projects are aimed at subordinating subaltern interests. For this reason, I think it is probably incorrect to characterize them as

progressives. At the same time, some of their projects are plainly critical of the state. New Buddhists oppose the Russo-Japanese War—Inoue Shūten writes that “advocates of peace should stand between the warring nations to promote peace for the people” (cited in Moriya 2005, 294). They also agitate for freedom of speech, and enjoy close relationships with their socialist contemporaries (Kashiwahara 1990: 350–73). In this sense, they seem to initiate a pattern of modern Buddhist engagement with the state that is carried on in the postwar period by engaged Buddhist groups like the Buddhist Peace Council, the Religionists’ Network for Peace, and the Tendai Light Up Your Corner Movement. These groups rely on an understanding of the civil sphere as an arena not wholly subject to state authority, in which the ideals of cosmopolitan or global citizenship can be realized.

We see an even more complex relation to the nation develop in the context of pan-Asianism. Consider for example Shaku Kōzen (1849–1924), nephew of the Shingon precept-master Shaku Unshō and the first Japanese monastic to take on full ordination as a Theravāda monk. Kōzen and Sōen travel to South Asia during the same period—in fact they meet in Sri Lanka—but while Sōen returns to Japan confident in Japan’s hold on the Buddhist tradition, Kōzen returns as “for all intents and purposes, a convert” (Jaffe 2004: 84). He rebuilds his home temple with an Indian-style image of Śākyamuni at the center, continues to maintain the Theravāda precepts, and introduces a Theravāda liturgical calendar. He also develops a new pilgrimage route, installing images of Śākyamuni in thirty-two temples around Yokohama. Where Sugimoto Gorō insists that even Śākyamuni must submit to the living Buddhism of Japan, Kōzen insists on the primacy of Śākyamuni:

There is no true Buddhism that sets Śākyamuni’s teachings aside. Therefore in order to make clear the true teachings of a Buddhism that is really Buddhism, one must, at all costs, return to the living Buddhism of Śākyamuni (cited in Jaffe 2004: 91).

Kōzen’s mission would thus seem to represent a different dimension of pan-Asianism than the missions we considered earlier, one in which religious identity operates over and against national identity, in what Prasenjit Duara has termed a transnational spiritualism.

A sense of Buddhist identity as transcending national identity also informs Buddhist forays into radical internationalist politics. The Shinshū priest Takagi Kenmyō (1864–1914) characterizes Śākyamuni as “a great socialist of the spiritual realm,” Buddhism as “the mother of the common people and the enemy of nobility,” and Shinran as “without a doubt, a socialist” (Takagi 2001: 56–57). Takagi is at pains to distinguish his socialism from the secular version—“I consider socialism to be related much more deeply to religion than to politics,” he writes (Takagi 2001: 55)—but the two share at least one important feature, namely that they call for solidarity on the basis of class rather than nationality. Thus Takagi criticizes the contemporary Japanese nation-state, characterizing it as one in which “the common people in general are sacrificed for the fame, peerage, and medals of one small group of people” (Takagi 2001: 58). Takagi positions himself as inheriting a long tradition of Buddhist socialism, starting with Śākyamuni and carried on by the Pure Land patriarchs Hōnen, Shinran, and Rennyo.

But his interpretation of Pure Land doctrine rests on his creative alignment of the traditional Buddhist category of common people (*bonbu*) with the modern category of the proletariat, and a modern appeal to universal equality as attained through the overcoming of unequal distribution of wealth.

The Sōtō Zen priest Uchiyama Gudō (1874–1911) likewise draws on internationalist politics in his interpretation of the Buddhist tradition. Like Takagi, Gudō insists on universal equality, understood not in the traditional Buddhist sense as a natural complementarity between rich and poor, but in the modern sense of liberation of the poor from poverty. To this end, he calls for strikes by tenant farmers, a rejection of the emperor system, and an end to military conscription. For Gudō, there is no gap between Buddhism and socialism: as he describes it, he discovered that the ideals of Buddhism—namely the doctrines of interdependence and universal Buddha-nature—“match exactly with the maxims of socialism, and so I became a believer in socialism” (cited in Ishikawa 1998: 100).

The 1930s see another wave of Buddhist radicalism, centered on Seno'o Girō (1889–1961) and his New Buddhist Youth League (Shinkō Bukkyō Seinen Dōmei). The chief tenets of Seno'o's new Buddhism are twofold. First, “To negate all established religious sects to date; and to take refuge directly in the historical Buddha himself,” and second, “In accordance with the wisdom and compassion of the Buddha, to deny the capitalist economic system and promote instead a society based on common property and common prosperity” (Lai 1984: 33). Seno'o is convinced enough of the correctness of these tenets that he breaks ties with his own Nichirenshū, and throws the support of the Youth League behind the socialist leader Katō Kanjū (1892–1978), buoying up the popular front against fascism. In 1936, Seno'o himself runs for office as a popular front candidate. While Seno'o's earlier thought reflected a relatively orthodox Nichirenshū vision of harmonizing *ōbō* and *buppō* (imperial and Buddhist law) in order to realize a Buddha-land on earth, by the 1930s, he is positioning the interests of the existing state as basically antagonistic to the absolutes of the dharma: internationalism is the future, while nationalism is already an anachronism (Lai 1984: 37). Nichiren himself realized this much, writes Seno'o, and so set aside the self-interests of the state, judging it against the absolute law of the dharma (Lai 1984: 38).

Takagi and Gudō are both arrested in 1910 in connection with the High Treason Incident (Taigyaku Jiken), which signals the beginning of a long period of state repression. Gudō is executed in 1911, while Takagi dies in prison in 1914. Seno'o is arrested in 1936 for violating the terms of the Peace Preservation Law (Chian'ijihō). Following months of interrogation, he confesses to the charges against him and repudiates his own leftist beliefs (*tenkō*). In the wake of his confession, the state dismantles the Youth League, arresting some two hundred members and ultimately convicting twenty-seven. Seno'o reverses his *tenkō* following his release from prison at the end of the war, forming the Buddhist Socialist League (Bukkyō Shakaishugi Dōmei), and later the National Buddhist Liberal Alliance (Zenkoku Bukkyō Kakushin Renmei). However, he is unable to gain much traction with sectarian institutions increasingly tending toward social justice projects that can be readily undertaken in the civil sphere.

Postwar Japanese historiography has concerned itself in part with the question of war responsibility and an accounting of who qualifies as either a collaborator or a dis-

senter. Contemporary Buddhist institutions too have undertaken a process of historical reckoning (sometimes under pressure from activist groups within the institution). In some instances, institutions have made formal apologies for their collaboration in colonial and imperial projects, and have made efforts to fix the fact of collaboration in institutional memory by including regular memorial services for the victims of Japanese imperialism in their ritual calendars. Institutions and individuals within institutions have also made efforts to recover the memory of dissenters. Gudō, for example, who was expelled from the Sōtō sect following his arrest, had his priestly status posthumously restored in 1993, at the request of the head priest of Gudō's former temple.

Recent scholarship on Japanese Buddhism has likewise taken up the difficult question of war responsibility, sometimes framing collaboration and resistance as diametrically opposed: the nationalist Shaku Sōen versus the internationalist Shaku Kōzen, or the ultra-nationalist Sugimoto Gorō versus the radical Takagi Kenmyō. This approach can tend to support the totalizing claim that the authentic, traditional Buddhist choice is always and only dissent, or perhaps contrarily that traditional Buddhism conceals at its base a fundamental moral flaw that modern Buddhism must somehow overcome. It seems to me more illuminating to pay attention instead to the ways in which modernism itself enables both collaboration and dissent, so that "different conclusions" can be reached by "figures who shared the common foundational experience of the modern period and who reacted, each in his own way, to the new winds of rationalism" (Ishikawa 1998: 106).

The agonistic potential present in the logic of separation bubbles up again a century later in Critical Buddhism (Hihan Bukkyō), an intellectual movement centered on the work of Buddhist scholars Hakamaya Noriaki and Matsumoto Shirō. Hakamaya and Matsumoto identify Japanese Buddhism as characterized by the unorthodox belief that all phenomena are instantiations of a substantive Buddha-nature, and that all phenomena are therefore originally enlightened (*hongaku shisō*). As a result, an enlightened attitude is one of absolute non-contention, epitomized in the Japanese ideal of harmony (*wa*).

Because belief in a substantive basis for phenomena is precisely what the historical Buddha is supposed to have rejected, Critical Buddhism effectively holds the position that "most, if not all, of Japanese Buddhism is not Buddhist" (Hubbard and Swanson 1997: 116). To be truly Buddhist means to reject the notion of Buddha-nature, the doctrine of original enlightenment, and the Japanese ideal of *wa*. Matsumoto writes that as a Japanese person, "I experience Japan as an extension of my own mind and body; just as I love my own body, so do I love Japan" (Hubbard and Swanson 1997: 373). This love of country, which Matsumoto characterizes as a kind of narcissism, is to be resisted as much as possible—"the teaching of the Buddha is absolute, which leaves me no other choice than to conclude: *A Buddhist must not love Japan*" (Hubbard and Swanson 1997: 373).

Critical Buddhism has been criticized as intellectually conservative, but it seems to me tightly bound to a modern insistence on religion as absolute, to a modern logic of separation of church and state, to a modern critique of contemporary Buddhism as anachronistic, and even to a modern identification of Buddhism as an essentially foreign religion. Where the Buddhist reformers of the nineteenth and twentieth

centuries work to find ways in which Buddhism can support the state while maintaining a respectful distance. Critical Buddhism fully embraces the aporia produced by *shinbutsu bunri*: being a Japanese Buddhist means critically grappling with the impossibility of being both Buddhist and Japanese, making the Japanese Buddhist necessarily a critic of the nation-state.

The Inward Turn

When Buddhism is expelled from the state, it has two places to go: the transcendental realm of universal absolutes or the internal realm of personal experience. These are complementary spheres, but it is certainly possible to emphasize one over the other, to differing effect. While Meiji reformers emphasizing Buddhism's universal dimension are imagining trans-sectarian networks, others are retreating into interiority. This tendency becomes particularly pronounced in the early twentieth century, as a cultural trend toward mysticism makes it "cutting-edge intellectually to be 'faithful' and indeed, 'religious'" (Nirei 2007: 164), bringing us to a third turn that Buddhism takes in modern Japan: an inward turn.

In Shinshū, this leads to something of a heresy boom. At the turn of the century, Ōtani-ha priest Kiyozawa Manshi (1863–1903) and his circle begin publishing a journal devoted to exploring Kiyozawa's philosophy of spiritualism (*seishinshugi*). *Seishinshugi* starts from a familiar position: religion, properly understood, deals with the supramundane realm—the infinite world (*mugenkai*)—and so does not interfere with either conventional morality or the imperial law, which together govern this world. Kiyozawa even goes along with the orthodox position that the Buddhist law is to be observed deep within the heart. But Kiyozawa pursues the logic of interiority further than Kōnyo could have anticipated—"Religion," Kiyozawa writes, "is a subjective reality. As a subjective reality, we can only seek the truth of it each within one own heart" (Kiyozawa 2002: 283). This forms the basis for Kiyozawa's assertion that the things of religions have no objective existence:

We do not believe in *kami* and Buddhas because they exist. *Kami* and Buddhas exist for us because we believe in them. Again, we do not believe in the hells or the Western paradise because they exist. When we believe in them, the hells and the Western paradise exist for us (Kiyozawa 2002: 284).

Kiyozawa's students Soga Ryōjin (1875–1971) and Kaneko Daiei (1881–1976) reiterate this understanding, asserting that the Tathāgata is none other than the self, and that religious truth can only be reached through introspection (*naikan*). Meanwhile, the Honganji-ha priest Nonomura Naotarō (1871–1946) is developing a similar view, arguing in his 1923 *Critique of the Pure Land Teaching* that the traditional view of the Pure Land is no longer sustainable and needs to be demythologized in order to resonate with modern believers. For modern people, Amida and his Pure Land have to be understood as existing within the heart, not as something external.

The legacy of these thinkers is complex, perhaps particularly so on the Ōtani side, where—despite having been censured and excommunicated in the early days—Kiyozawa and his disciples come to exert a major influence. Kiyozawa's interiority is criticized by some as politically inert. Seno'o Girō charges Kiyozawa with ignoring the material world (Lai 1984: 37), while Sueki Fumihiko suggests that by repeating Shimaji's call for a separation of church and state, *seishinshugi* passively affirms the interests of the imperial state (Sueki 2005: 558–59). But Seno'o's own religious program required “perpetual self-remonstrance (*hansei*)” (Lai 1984: 22–23). Here he is in fact following Kiyozawa's traces—what is modern about *seishinshugi* is its taking up of a modern sense of the internal self as a locus of authority, and therefore as a ground on which the individual can confront institutional power. This is a destabilizing gesture that ripples throughout Shinshū thought over the course of the twentieth century. We see it in Kaneko's assertion that the knowledge produced by Buddhist scholasticism is not ultimately sufficient; in the Dōbōkai movement, which grows out of the thought of Kiyozawa's disciple Akegarasu Haya (1877–1967) and its positioning of Shinshū as properly realized only as a confraternity of equals; and in popular interpretations like that of Kino Kazuyoshi, who holds that any reader can distinguish a true text from a false one by following gut instinct, making “each person his or her own standard of orthodoxy” (Tanabe 2004: 294).

An emphasis on interiority marks the development of modern Zen as well. According to D.T. Suzuki, from its beginnings in the Tang period, Zen has been uniquely “directed towards the growth of self-maturing of inner experience” (Suzuki 1938: 54–55); according to the Sanbōkyōdan teacher Eido Shimano, Zen awakening experiences “have a unique, universal, and eternal unity despite their infinite individual variety and unfathomable consequences” and “only personal experience will illuminate with certitude the difference between enlightenment and all other states of existence” (Shimano and Douglas 1975: 1301). This inward turn has some of the same effects on Zen that it has on Shinshū. It supports demythologization, reading as mythic symbols things that might traditionally have been understood as historical facts. It also supports deritualization, emphasizing direct experience over ritual training, and laicization, which implies organizing the community around charismatic teachers rather than ritual specialists.

This version of Zen is brought to the West with great success. The appeal to religion as grounded on ineffable personal experience supports an understanding of “Zen” as something that overleaps the boundaries of nation, culture, and even religion. As Suzuki puts it, Zen is after only what “every true religion” is after—“direct experience of Reality” (Suzuki 1938: 49). This ultimately undergirds an understanding of orthodoxy as an individual matter, as can be seen in this account from the pop reader *The Zen Experience*: “genuine Zen insights can arise only from individual experience . . . it cannot be transmitted or shared . . . Zen can only clear the way to our deeper consciousness. The rest is up to us” (Hoover 1980: np). There would seem to be a historical distortion taking place here, with the particular characteristics and concerns of modern Zen projected into the past, producing the confounding effect of making one of the most distinctive forms of modern Japanese Buddhism appear to be thoroughly traditional.

Understandings of Zen and Shinshū as offering techniques for navigating the interior realm also blossom outside of Buddhism proper, informing two of Japan's major contributions to psychotherapy: Morita therapy (named after the psychiatrist Morita Shōma) and *naikan* therapy. Morita therapy, said to have been inspired by Morita's own Zen training, prescribes a short period of withdrawal, followed by a long period of manual labor—chopping wood, digging holes, cleaning toilets—that is intended to allow patients to recover their “pure mind” or “original nature.” Acting on the basis of pure mind, the patient becomes liberated from particular likes and dislikes, and capable of free, spontaneous activity. *Naikan* (introspection), which is inspired by Shinshū, is a secularized practice of *hansei* (self-reflection), based on an exhaustive accounting of everything the patient has received from others, everything the patient has given to others, and every way in which the patient has caused difficulty for others. The practice of *naikan* aims to produce a therapeutically beneficial awareness of the extent to which the patient is sustained by and dependent upon other people, and to generate feelings of indebtedness (figured positively) and gratitude.

As both therapies seem to orient patients away from their own interests, they are sometimes criticized for serving the conservative function of resocialization rather than the liberatory function of individuation. The end result of either one, according to this view, is to affirm social harmony above all else. Both practices, however, tend to suggest that it is in some vast interior realm that the self's difficulties are both created and resolved. While they affirm the self as relational and dependent, they are also meant to produce self-possession and self-reliance. Their final aim is to grant both self and others full subjectivity. Like their religious counterparts, these practices seem to me to be caught up in another of modernity's aporias: if the retreat into interiority can be compensatory, allowing individuals to continue subordinating their own interests to the interests of the group, it can also be confrontational, allowing individuals to draw others into new sets of social and even political relations.

Shin Bukkyō versus Shin Shūkyō

We have now considered three varieties of Buddhist modernism that follow from a logic of separation: Buddhism operating as religious guarantor of the secular state, Buddhism operating in the realm of the universal set over and potentially against the state, and Buddhism operating in the realm of inner experience set over and potentially against the state. Let's bring the chapter to a close by considering a final variety of Buddhist modernism which tends toward hybridity instead of separation: the new religions.

The modern and postmodern periods see the emergence of a number of new religions that derive in some way from established forms of Buddhism: from esoteric Buddhism, Shinnyoen and Agonshū; from Mahāyāna broadly construed, Ittōen; from Nichiren-shū, Honmon Butsuryūshū and Reiyūkai (and from Reiyūkai, Risshō Kōseikai and Sōka Gakkai). Their fellow moderns have shown some disdain for the new religions—in the 1930s, Takashima Beihō calls on the state to wage a campaign against “pseudo-religions” (*ruiji shūkyō*); decades later, the Shinshū institution despairs that

the success of the new new religions (*shin shin shūkyō*) reveals “a frustration, vulgarization, and retrogression in late twentieth-century Japanese religious sensibilities” (Amstutz 1996: 168).

The language of retrogression here suggests that the problem with the new religions is how old-fashioned they are. This is consistent with the prevailing view of new religious movements as “part of a cultural reaction against modernity . . . nonrational or even irrational acts of collective resistance to the onslaught of societal rationalization” (Dawson 2001: 342). Lorne Dawson holds that this view fails to capture “the dialectical play of religious and secular, and pre-modern and modern elements” that characterizes new religious movements. It strikes me that it is precisely this dialectical play that other moderns are trying scrupulously to avoid, and that this may go some way toward explaining why the new religions make other moderns anxious.

If, for example, we compare the ideals of Shin Bukkyō to the features of the *shin shūkyō*, we find many points of contact. The new religions are typically founded by and for lay practitioners. They tend toward a liberal view of the self as more or less capable of determining one’s own destiny and improving one’s circumstances through self-discipline and moral virtue. While presenting themselves as returning to the source of Buddhist tradition, they also cultivate democratic ideals, critiquing the ritual hierarchies of traditional Buddhism and proving without exception to be active in the civil sphere—all of the new religions listed above position themselves as participants in local social welfare projects and transnational philanthropic initiatives. In some respects, the new religions seem in fact to be realizing the ideals of new Buddhism. And yet, the new religions typically refuse the separation of spheres that other forms of modern Buddhism emphasize—to paraphrase Winston Davis, they like to mix. Let’s consider just two examples: faith healing and faith-based politics.

Faith healing is an element in a number of the new religions that develop out of sectarian Buddhism. In the context of these practices, a modernist, rationalized understanding of the body is sometimes invoked—consider, for instance, the suggestion within Ittōen that the scientific mechanism underlying the laying on of hands might involve a naturally occurring ultraviolet radiation that comes out of the fingertips (Davis 1975: 300). But a non-modern, moralized understanding of the body is also invoked—in Ittōen, both healer and patient are required to pray for a readiness to accept death as a prerequisite for the therapy to work; in Shinnyoen, medical conditions are cured through the cultivation of moral virtues like generosity and self-sacrifice, evidence of which prompts the ancestor spirits to intervene in the course of the illness. We are told that the results of these practices can be observed but not explained by doctors—in other words, faith healing produces a miraculous body that surpasses the understanding of modern science. Where the modernist gaze conquers the pre-modern body then, this new hybrid body eludes it.

We can tell that this hybridity upsets other modern Buddhists, because they characterize it as superstition and quackery. And we can tell that it upsets the state because of the effort to regulate it: during a 1956 campaign targeting the new religions (Risshō Kōseikai in particular), four different branches of the government initiate investigations of healing practices within the new religions, looking for “possible pharmaceutical and medical irregularities” and “misconduct in the areas of faith healing and such practices

as massage, acupuncture, and chiropractic" (Morioka 1994: 292). During the course of the campaign, a government representative affirms "the control of religious freedom [as] necessary for the sake of public welfare" (Morioka 1994: 297)—faced with hybridity, the state returns with a vengeance to a Meiji logic of separation.

Perhaps as unsettling is the entry of the new religions into the political arena. Sōka Gakkai is certainly the preeminent example of this, having established its own political party—the Kōmeitō, or Clean Government Party—in 1964. From the beginning, the Kōmeitō stands in an ambiguous relationship to the Gakkai: in some respects, the existence of the Kōmeitō seems to allow the leadership of the Gakkai to pursue a wholly religious mission, delegating political projects to the party. In other respects though, the Kōmeitō seems to be a stand in for the Gakkai in the political sphere. In 1965, for instance, Gakkai president Ikeda Daisaku suggests that *kōsen rufu*—which in Nichirenshū has the sense of universally proclaiming the teachings of the *Lotus Sūtra*, and in early Gakkai thought has the sense of universal conversion—will be accomplished if one third of the Japanese population converts to Sōka Gakkai and another third supports the Kōmeitō (McLaughlin 2009: 93). The same year, Ikeda publishes *Politics and Religion*, in which he explains that the aim of the Kōmeitō is not to introduce Nichirenshū as the state religion, but rather to bring about a new form of democracy: Buddhist democracy (*buppō minshushugi*). This is, I think, intended to be reassuring—the Sōka Gakkai is not looking to reintroduce any kind of feudal theocracy.

But what Ikeda is proposing—a brand new hybrid of modern religion and modern politics—turns out to be disturbing to state authority as well. As the 1960s come to a close, media scandals rock the Gakkai. In 1970 Ikeda is driven to formally separate the Gakkai from the Kōmeitō, announcing that the Gakkai will henceforth maintain a policy of *seikyō bunri*, or separation of church and state. On the ground, however, Gakkai members and non-Gakkai members alike continue to understand the Kōmeitō as a Gakkai party, and popular suspicion continues to dog the Gakkai.

Here I think Levi McLaughlin's suggestion that we understand Sōka Gakkai as forming an "adjunct nation" is illuminating: on this view, the Gakkai is "not a state within a state, or an institution seeking to separate from the social mainstream, but a nation-like apparatus that replicates the morphological features of the modern nation" (McLaughlin 2009: 22). Other forms of modern Buddhism, starting from the position that they have to be something *other* than the nation-state, have struggled to articulate compelling ways in which they might supplement or transcend the national project. Sōka Gakkai members can instead imagine themselves as building the best possible version of the nation. It is little wonder then, McLaughlin argues, that the Gakkai attracts moderns raised to believe in the transformative potential of nations; little wonder, either, that the Gakkai's success is nerve-wracking for modern Buddhists who have ceded the public sphere to the nation.

Conclusion

We should not end this chapter without mentioning perhaps the most modern of all Buddhist subjects: the temple wife. It seems clear that some Buddhist priests were taking

wives long before the Meiji, but it is *nikujiki saitai* that produces the temple wife as a legal subject, while the modernist language of citizenship and human rights offers her a way to represent her own interests. Within Buddhist institutions, however, temple wives face a set of structural problems that are only exacerbated by their new legal status. Kawahashi Noriko explains that given the contradiction between state law and the Buddhist precepts, temple wives—who were “not supposed to be present in the first place”—have been “invisible both doctrinally and institutionally” (Kawahashi 2003: 295).

Kawahashi is a religious anthropologist and also a priest’s wife herself; it is from this intersection that she calls for the establishment of a trans-sectarian network of Japanese Buddhist women (and ultimately of Asian women) that can act in the interests of a Buddhism that seems almost incapable of “put[ting] its own house in order” (Kawahashi 2003: 297), bringing it back to life “by their own efforts” (Kawahashi 2003: 299). This is to be enabled by a return to Śākyamuni—who himself, Kawahashi writes, did not discriminate, and whose teachings reveal the baselessness of all discrimination (Kawahashi 2003: 303)—and will also require an internalization of the feminist critique on the part of Buddhist men, who must find in themselves “the courage to undertake self-reform” and reimagine relationships based on submission as relationships between equals (Kawahashi 2003: 308). If it fails in this effort, Kawahashi says, Japan’s “present-day Buddhist community, structured to deprive just one of the sexes of their rights, can have no prospect of a future” (Kawahashi 2003: 308).

A remarkable number of elements from the history of modern Japanese Buddhism are being activated here: we see a Meiji-style critique of Buddhist institutions as anachronistic and in dire need of reform. We see a Shin-Bukkyō-style vision of dismantling existing institutional hierarchies. We see a call for trans-sectarian unity, for a return to Śākyamuni, for an alignment of traditional Buddhist teachings with contemporary notions of equality, for self-critical *hansei* by Buddhist men, and for activist political engagement in the civil sphere by Buddhist women. And all of this transformative work is to be instigated by a group of people who were “not supposed to be there in the first place.”

The ambiguous position of the temple wife in the Buddhist institution seems to me to parallel the ambiguous position of Buddhism in the modern nation-state. The expulsion of Buddhism—however temporary—is a pivotal element in the production of modern Japan, shaping all later efforts to understand how Buddhism as religion can meaningfully relate to Japan as nation. At the same time, it seems to me that there is a power in ambiguity. Kawahashi’s radical reform program takes advantage of her own ambiguous position—she presses for change as an outsider working from the inside, at once an inheritor of Śākyamuni’s tradition and an overturner of traditional orthodoxy.

Because Buddhism is precisely what does not belong in the modern nation-state, modern Japanese Buddhism faces aporias at every turn: the more it succeeds at being the bearer of Japanese religious tradition, the more it becomes something for the modern nation to overcome; the more it succeeds at being an abstracted, universalized world religion, the less recognizable it is as Japanese; and the more it succeeds at reproducing the features of the modern nation-state, the less recognizable it is as religion.

These aporias produce an interpretive problem: wherever Buddhist thought is thriving in Japan, it is doing so in ways that make it difficult to recognize as modern Japanese Buddhism. But these are also sites of potential transformation. In order to appreciate the liveliness of Buddhism in modern Japan, we have to become attuned to the way in which reports of its death can be a sign of life.

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CHAPTER 23

Buddhism in Modern Korea

Pori Park

The current Chogyŏ Order, the dominant tradition of Buddhism in contemporary Korea, was established as a Sŏn (Ch. Chan) sect during the so-called Purification Movement, which began in 1954 and lasted for well over fifteen years. The Purification Movement is thus significant for understanding the volatile emergence of the Chogyŏ Order and the main conflicts that surrounded Korean Buddhism thereafter. The leaders of the Purification Movement accused “monk marriage,” which became a popular practice among Korean monks during the colonial era (1910–1945), of being the most significant remnant of collaboration with colonial Japan. Accordingly, the leaders divided Korean Buddhists into two main camps—the pro-Japanese camp, namely the married “monks,” and the anti-Japanese led by the celibate monks. The targeting of the married clergy as traitors was possible because of the nationalist fervor that developed among the Korean population after many years of colonization by Japan.

By highlighting clerical marriage as the most serious issue of de-colonization within the context of Buddhism, the leaders of the celibate clergy were successful in driving the powerful married faction away from the Sangha. While focusing on the hegemonic fight with the married faction, the celibate camp changed the basic direction of the Sangha. The first priority of the Sangha during the colonial period was to modernize Buddhist practices by imitating Christian missionaries and Japanese Buddhists. At that time monks were encouraged to receive modern (Western) education and to reach out to the laity, largely by developing charity work and implementing propagation tactics. In contrast, by cleansing the colonial past associated with the married clergy, the celibates attempted to get rid of everything that Buddhism of the colonial period had tried to accomplish. Instead of modern reforms, the celibate leaders wanted to rebuild traditional monasticism as a means to return to the time of Śākyamuni Buddha. Accordingly, they advocated withdrawal from the world, in order to be faithful to the original spirit of the founder of Buddhism. It was under these circumstances that the Chogyŏ Order was formed, as the Sangha purportedly reclaimed itself from Japanese collaborators and returned to the fundamentals of Buddhism.

The arbitrary nature of targeting the married clergy as traitors, along with the celibate leaders going against the stream of modernity, resulted in a factional fight that generated a plethora of problems. Years of bloodshed and court fights consumed the financial resources of the Sangha and ruined the reputation of Buddhism among the Korean public. Even after the married faction separated from the celibates by forming the T'aego Order, the Chogyŏ Order endured years of internal conflicts and violent confrontations. Moreover, it was initially impossible for the celibate monks, who were in the minority, to start a fight against the majority faction without political support (Park 2007). Accordingly, the celibates became dependent upon political support, and to a large measure owed their victory to the Korean government. This political dependence, in turn, became a focal point of criticisms voiced by young monks, as the democracy movement in the 1980s developed in response to a series of authoritative governments. These internal challenges added to the conflicts within the Sangha, which already was divided among many Dharma families and various interest groups.

This chapter examines the history of Buddhism in modern Korea, from the Japanese colonial period to the present, by using the Purification Movement as the lens through which to look at that history. This movement provides a means for understanding colonial history, the internal conflicts within the Sangha, the relationship between Buddhism and politics, and the key challenges that shaped the emergence of a form of Buddhism that is socially engaged and globally relevant.

The Colonial Background

The most urgent task for Korean Buddhists during the colonial period was to redress the negative effects of five hundred years of persecution under the staunchly Confucian Chosŏn dynasty (1392–1910). The long-term political oppression of the Chosŏn era depleted the financial and human resources of the Buddhist order (for the Chosŏn persecution, see Park 2009: 14–22). Under the Chosŏn regime, Buddhism fell into a period of internal exile, as monks hid in remote mountains and lived incognito (Kim Yŏngt'ae 1984: 183–84). With the abolition of sectarian distinctions, the Buddhist order was left without structure and the distinctive traits of Dharma lineages became blurred. There was no central Sangha system that ensured the education of monks and the enforcement of monastic discipline. Monks had limited ways of networking among themselves, and thus existed on the margins, without public roles. As a result of the persecution, the Buddhist order lost its social prestige and leadership. Buddhist monks fell into one of the lowest social strata. In the end, after long years of political persecution, Chosŏn Buddhism earned several epithets: mountain Buddhism, Buddhism for monks, Buddhism for women, and Buddhism for securing worldly desires.

To reconnect with the Korean people and restore the formal societal standing of Buddhism as state religion, during the colonial period Buddhist leaders emphasized “modern” reforms and tried to make Buddhism accessible to the public (for the modern reforms, see Park 2005: 87–113). The main areas of reform were monastic education and methods of propagation. The monastic curriculum came to include

secular subjects, in order to make Buddhist monks conversant with general society. The Sangha also attempted to co-opt the models of social activities used by Christian missionaries as a means to develop a sense of connection among the Sangha, the laity, and the wider society.

The Korean Sangha attempted to implement a modern educational system for Buddhist monks at the onset of colonial rule. By 1915, the Sangha appeared to have completed a three-step modern education system that included primary schools, local preparatory schools, and a central post-secondary school, which served as the highest educational institution in Seoul (Nam 1988: 255). In addition to attending their own Buddhist schools, some young monks went to public secondary schools in Seoul, as well as to colleges in foreign countries, mainly Japan.

Along with modern education, proselytization was a major concern within the reformation agenda of the Sangha. To make the religion accessible to the general public, each monastery district opened branch stations for proselytization (*p'ogyo-so*) in local villages and towns. By the end of 1924, there were 72 *p'ogyo-so* that included 72 propagation monks and 200,000 lay people.¹ In 1930, there were 117 *p'ogyo-so*, with 122 propagation monks.² These numbers demonstrate the Buddhists' efforts to reach out to wider society. While pursuing modern reforms, Korean monks rapidly adopted the practice of clerical marriage from Japanese Buddhism, as a convenient way to make Buddhism accessible to the laity. Clerical marriages already had become prevalent even before they were officially approved by the colonial government in 1926. Such marriages planted the seeds of intrasectarian strife after liberation, which is discussed below.

Before the March First Independence Movement in 1919, which attempted unsuccessfully to overthrow the colonial regime, the prime goals of Buddhist reform were the survival of the Sangha and protection of the Sangha's interests. The colonial government encouraged Buddhist reforms, so that Korean Buddhism would become strong enough to support its policies on the peninsula. The Japanese government tried to use Korean Buddhists, who had suffered many years of anti-Buddhist policies during the Chosŏn dynasty, to rule Korea by making them a group favorable to Japan, which still in many ways was a Buddhist country.

The Japanese regime implemented the "temple ordinance" policy as soon as it annexed Korea. The Japanese government announced the seven articles of the "temple ordinance" policy in June of 1911; the following month it declared the "regulations for administering the 'temple ordinance.'" The colonial regime claimed that this ordinance was intended to secure the sustenance of Korean Buddhism and to protect Buddhist monasteries and properties (Takahashi 1973: 887–88).

After the independence movement in 1919, however, the youth movement among Korean monks added a political dimension to the reforms, through the youths' joining of the nationalist march for the restoration of Korean sovereignty. After the nationwide protests against Japanese rule, the colonial regime changed its coercive policy to a so-called cultural policy, and granted Koreans some political freedoms, albeit of a limited scope. Under these circumstances, young monks formed Buddhist youth associations and embarked on a campaign against the "temple ordinance" policy by demanding self-government of the Sangha.

The young monks also confronted the abbots of main monasteries about the direction of the Sangha administration and insisted on the practice of Buddhism for the masses (*minjung Pulgyo*). Through the advocacy of *minjung Pulgyo*, they attempted to sever their religion's long liaison with the government, and to extend the religion to wider segments of society. In addition, they tried to establish their sectarian name and identity, which had become lost during the Chosŏn dynasty, by tracing their lineage back through history. This movement to establish a sectarian identity continued with the effort to institute a central organization to unify the Sangha. The centralization movement, in turn, was a form of resistance against the government's intervention in the affair of the religion. In 1941, the Sangha was finally unified under central monastery headquarters, located at T'aego-sa, and adopted the name Chogye-jong.

Overall, the viability of Korean Buddhism during the colonial era depended largely on the capability and willingness of Buddhists to participate in a nationwide march toward co-opting Western modernity. Buddhist monks adopted particular social and nationalistic stances to prove the utility of Buddhism. However, in the process of modernization, Korean Buddhism became secularized and mired in power relations with the Japanese state. The "temple ordinance" policy and the government's intervention in the affairs of the Sangha persisted until the end of Japanese rule in 1945.

Purification Movement and Purging of the Colonial Past

After the end of World War II and the liberation of Korea in 1945, Korean Buddhists focused on cleansing the religion of all vestiges from the colonial past. The elevated anti-Japanese sentiments among Koreans helped the Sangha liquidate the remnants of colonialism, which they accomplished by identifying and punishing the so-called traitors and eliminating the Japanese creation of "temple ordinance."³ The central administration of the Sangha voluntarily resigned on August 19, 1945, in order for the Sangha to start anew. A temporary interim administration was soon established. Then there was an election of new administration, which, in turn, passed the constitution of Korean Buddhism in March 1946. That was accompanied with a change of sectarian name for the Buddhist order, from Chogye-jong to Chosŏn Pulgyo.

The new administration, however, was criticized for its lukewarm reform effort. Most of the collaborators with the colonial government were sneakily brought back into important positions within the Sangha. Moreover, the abbots of the thirty main monasteries, who were active during colonial rule, were not affected by any investigation. Voluntary reform groups, such as the Korean Buddhist Youth League, Alliance of Revolutionary Buddhists, Korean Buddhist Reform Association, and Buddhist Women League, which were formed by Buddhist monks and lay people, insisted on a thorough purge of colonial Buddhism, and by extension on social reforms. The central Buddhist administration, in turn, accused the reform groups of being socialist.

Before long, the tensions between the central administration and the reform groups grew into open conflict. In December 1946 the reform organizations consolidated into the General League of Buddhist Reforms, and in May 1947 they held a nationwide conference of Buddhism. They also established their own administration headquarters,

Ch'ongbonwŏns, which implied a denial of the central administration's authority. This division of the Buddhist order lasted until early 1948. The right-left polarization of postwar Korean society also became a crucial element in the conflict within Buddhism. General League members wanted wholesale land reforms, as advocated by the left, which involved an equal redistribution of the land to the people, without compensation for the old landowners. In contrast, the central administration wanted the redistributions of land to include compensation. The ideological confrontation and political chaos, which characterized the period immediately following liberation, frustrated the Sangha's initial effort of cleansing the Buddhist order. To further complicate matters, Korea was divided into two countries by the "liberating" forces of the Soviet Union and the United States, and the nation was soon engulfed in civil war, which lasted from 1950 to 1953.

The Purification Movement was the second round of purging the Buddhist order, initiated by the first president of the newly established government of South Korea, Yi Sŭngman (Syngman Rhee, r. 1948–1960), who abruptly ordered the married clergy's resignation in 1954. This time, the process of cleansing the Sangha from remnants of the colonial past was restricted to the issue of clerical marriage. The celibate monks embarked on a campaign to get rid of the married clergy, and accused the institution of "married monks" of being a product of Japanized Buddhism. I would argue that this accusation misdirected the central issue of overcoming colonization, and that the celibates used the rhetoric of purge for their own cause, namely, the restoration of the celibate tradition of the Sangha (for more on the Purification Movement, see Park 2007).

Initially the celibate monks numbered only six hundred, and they fought against the married clerics who numbered seven thousand. Due to being greatly outnumbered, the celibate camp resorted to the government for help. The government, in turn, sided with the celibate monks in eliminating the powerful and resourceful married faction. President Yi Sŭngman issued the first order against the married clerics on May 20, 1954. He not only ignited a fight, but also became the main force, throughout his presidency, behind the prolonged battle between these two factions, by repeatedly issuing presidential orders. Yi wanted to use the rhetoric of cleansing the colonial past to boost his weak political foundation. He regarded the purging of the married clerics as a way of rectifying colonial wrongdoings. In addition, he intended to divert Korean people's attention away from the unlawful revision of the national constitution, which happened in November 1954. Instead, the public's attention shifted to the unusual battle among Buddhist monks, with the president igniting and fostering the fight (Kang 2000: 104–05).

As a consequence, all married clerics came to be regarded as Japanese collaborators. The celibates incorporated this reductionism into their war against the violators of Buddhist precepts. The celibate leaders, who were mostly Sŏn meditation monks, as opposed to the so-called "doctrinal" monks, emerged as the leading group within the Purification Movement. Given that during the colonial period they were alienated by the powerful married clerics, and also given that they lost retreat places for their Sŏn practice, the grievances of the celibate leaders against the power holders had been accumulating for quite a long time.

The celibates used religious justification for the restoration of celibacy in the Sangha. They accused the married clerics of neglecting their public duties toward the Sangha, such as educating disciples and protecting the Sangha's properties, due to their private focus on family responsibilities. Yi Ch'öngdam (1902–1971), the de-facto leader of the Purification Movement, saw the movement as a "Dharma war" (*pöpchön*) between good and evil. He saw the restoration of celibacy as equivalent to returning to the truth. He thus gave an absolute value to this Dharma war, stating that the truth is beyond the boundaries of time and space, and therefore is not made by consensus among people.⁴ Accordingly, celibacy must be established as a mandatory step to becoming a Buddhist cleric. Finding themselves in a defensive position, the married clerics argued that they practiced Buddhism for the general public (*taejung/minjung Pulgyo*) and presented themselves as proponents of modern Buddhism. In fact, up until the eruption of the married vs. celibate conflict, the promotion of *taejung Pulgyo* had topped the priority list of the Sangha.

With the unswerving support of President Yi, the celibate faction continued the "holy war" against the priestly majority. The majority, however, did not yield without putting up a fight. The celibates insisted that married clerics should be removed from the monk registry, and instead be known as Dharma Protectors. The married clergy would then only take care of the official duties of the Sangha for the public. The celibates also decided that they would assume the administrative power, and that the married clergy would have to leave the monasteries within the timespan of ten years (*Choson Ilbo*, November 28, 1954). The married faction, however, denounced the celibates' agenda. Asserting that they could not be just Dharma Protectors, the married clergy decided to establish a separate sect of Buddhism.

President Yi continued to issue presidential orders that supported the minority celibates: a second order on November 4, 1954, a third order on November 19, 1954, and a fourth order on June 16, 1955. The government also directly intervened by mediating between the two factions. On February 4, 1955, the Minister of Education arranged a meeting among a total of ten delegates, which included clergy from both camps. As a result of this meeting, the two factions agreed on the eight conditions of Buddhist clerics, which included shaving one's head, wearing monk robes, maintaining a single life, abstaining from meat and liquor, communal living, and being more than twenty-five years of age (*Tonga Ilbo*, February 6, 1955). This agreement, however, was never implemented, due to the resistance of the married clerics, who thought that these measures threatened their survival within the monastic order.

As the conflict escalated into physical fights, the National Assembly also intervened. The Assembly interrogated the Minister of Education and Minister of the Interior regarding their handling of the conflict. The Assembly raised the issue of governmental intervention in Buddhist affairs, declaring it an infringement on the freedom of religion. It also criticized the biased and illegal handling of the situation by government ministers, who allegedly followed the presidential order mechanically, without thinking about the consequences. Apparently, the Assembly was more sympathetic to the married clergy. The Assembly finally recommended that the government do not intervene in religious affairs, and that from then on the Assembly would no longer discuss the matter (*Choson Ilbo*, June 16, 1955).

The talks between the two parties kept breaking off, with no compromises being made by either side. With the ultimate support of the president, on August 12, 1955, the celibates gathered at Chogye-sa, a major monastery in Seoul, and passed a new constitution of the Sangha. They also elected fifty-six members of the Sangha assembly and filled the administrative positions of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The celibate faction filled all ecclesiastical positions with its own members. The celibates then began the takeover of major monasteries. This process of seizing monasteries was difficult, due to the resistance of the married clerics who operated them. However, with the help of the police, the celibates were able to force out the married clergy. Those who were kicked out of the temple residences then became a social problem, not just symbols of Buddhist strife, as many ended living on the streets. By October 1955, the celibates had taken over from the married faction about 450 out of a total of 1,000 monasteries. In the remaining monasteries, they gave the right of operation only to married clerics who agreed with the Purification Movement.

Against the backdrop of the physical takeover of monasteries, the married faction resorted to the judicial system and began filing lawsuits. More importantly, the majority did not give up the operation of enterprises, schools, companies, and Buddhist foundations. In June 1956, the married clerics won a victory in the district court. The court announced that the Sangha constitution proclaimed by the celibates was not legal. In July 1956, the married clerics also won their lawsuit against T'aego-sa. With these judgments, the married clerics won the initial legal battle. In response, the celibate monks appealed to a high court of justice, and they won their lawsuit on September 17, 1957. Additionally, in August 1956 the district court recalled its earlier decision regarding the ownership of T'aego-sa. Accordingly, the situation again was favorable to the celibates. In the end, both the government and the judicial system protected and sided with the celibates.

The married faction, however, began to reoccupy monasteries after Yi Sŭngman's regime was toppled by student and popular protests on April 19, 1960. On April 27 of the same year, married clerics attempted to retake Chogye-sa, and a bloody fight ensued. In May 1960, the married clerics reassumed control of a number of major monasteries, including Haein-sa, Hwaŏm-sa, Sŏnam-sa, T'ongdo-sa, as well as ten others. With the change in government, the judicial system became unfavorable to the celibates. The Supreme Court sent the case in which the married faction went against the decision of the Conference of Buddhist Clerics, held in August 1955, back to the high court. The case returned to the high court and was still pending when, on May 16, 1961, a faction of the military elite staged a successful coup. A young general, Pak Chŏnghui (r. 1961–1980), rose to power via the military coup.

The celibate faction decided to aid the military coup and to end the purging of the Sangha. It handed a petition to the interim government, which asked for the government's assistance in completing the takeover of the Buddhist order (Taehan Pulgyo Chogyejong Kyoyukwŏn 2001: 217). General Pak issued a directive twice, urging the Buddhists to reach a prompt agreement and to end the social disturbance caused by their infighting. Pressed by the government to end the conflict, the members of the two rival Buddhist factions abandoned their infighting and agreed to adopt the constitution of the Sangha, leaving the final revision of parts of the constitution that deal with

monk qualification issues to the government. On March 25, 1962, the Sangha finally passed the revised constitution, and on April 11, 1962, the unified Sangha was officially inaugurated.

The unified Sangha, however, soon faced another conflict, in regard to the ratio of representatives from the two factions among the members of the Buddhist Assembly. By this time, the celibate faction outnumbered the married faction thirty-two to eighteen. The married faction wished to be represented equally, but its opinion was ignored. Further, the government backed the celibates in the selections of the Sangha's leadership (Taehan Pulgyo Chogyejong Kyoyukwŏn 2001: 225). In October 1969, the Supreme Court dropped the appeal of the married faction regarding the legitimacy of the celibate order. This final court decision facilitated further submission of the married clerics to the celibate order. To protect the few monasteries that belonged to them, the married faction decided to create a new denomination, which they registered as T'aegojong in May 1970. The two administrations then went their separate ways, and after more than two decades the long and fierce battle officially ended. Nevertheless, various disputes over local monasteries continued long after the official separation of the two factions.

With the aid of dictatorial governments, the celibates pursued the hegemonic fight with the married faction, and eventually they were able to achieve a final victory. They paid a price, however, for their close relationship with the government. Immediately after the formation of the unified administration that incorporated the two factions, in May 1962, the government announced the Law for the Control of Buddhist Property. This law provided the government with the means to supervise the appointment of abbots and the management of Buddhist property. The law functioned exactly like the "temple ordinance" instituted by the Japanese regime. Consequently, the Chogye order found itself under heavy political control, and was not able to independently operate the Sangha and its institutions. In addition, due its close ties with the dictatorial regimes, the Sangha was often scorned by the general public.

Establishment of the Chogye Order and Reinstitution of Monasticism

As a result of the successful Purification Movement, present-day Korean Buddhism is primarily represented by the celibate Chogye order. The leaders of the celibate faction were meditation (Sŏn) masters such as Ch'ŏngdam, Kŭmo, Tongsan, and Hyobong, who restructured the Chogye into a celibate Sŏn order. In contrast, the married faction was represented by doctrinal (Kyo) monks. In addition to its advocacy of meditation practice, the celibate faction also focused on restoring the Vinaya precepts and rewriting the daily rituals of the Sangha.

The first attempt to restore monasticism among Sŏn masters during the post-colonial period, which failed due to the onset of the Korean War, was the formation of the Pongam-sa Society. The society was formed in 1947 by Ch'ŏngdam, Sŏngch'ŏl, Chaun, Wŏlsan, and Hyanggok, most of whom later became leaders of the Purification Movement (for more on the Pongam-sa Society, see Taehan Pulgyo Chogyejong Kyoyukwŏn 2008a). The aim of this society was to return to the teachings of "original" Buddhism

by observing strict monastic rules and practicing Sŏn meditation. Its members also engaged in the destruction of non-Buddhist places of pilgrimage, such as the shrines for mountain gods and the Seven Stars, and refused to perform rituals for the dead on behalf of the laity. Instead, they emphasized the monks' physical labor as a means for the realization of monastic self-sufficiency. They also redesigned the monks' robes, and rewrote and simplified the daily rituals. All of these later became the basis of the new Chogye order.

The rejection of various "folk" practices, which for a long time had been incorporated into Korean Buddhist practice, was very similar to what the Buddhist reformers proposed during the early years of the colonial period. But the colonial-era reforms were directed at modernizing Buddhism, while the Pongam-sa reforms were primarily concerned with returning to the teachings of original Buddhism. In other words, the Pongam-sa Society was highly critical of modern reforms, which tried to move temples to villages and cities, and instead guided monks to return to the mountains to recover traditional monasticism.

Although the activity of the Pongam-sa Society was disrupted in 1950 by the onset of the Korean War, the fundamental ideas of reinstituting the monastic tradition continued with the establishment of ecumenical centers (*ch'ongnim*), beginning with Haein *ch'ongnim* in 1967 and Chogye *ch'ongnim* in 1969. A *ch'ongnim* was designed to serve as a general center for monastic training. It included meditation halls, a doctrinal school, a disciplinary center, and Pure Land halls. Even before establishment of the Haein *ch'ongnim* at Haein-sa, there was already an earlier *ch'ongnim* from 1946 to 1950, also at Haein-sa, known as Kaya *ch'ongnim*, which closed due to the Korean War. Sŏn Master Sŏngch'ŏl (1912–1993), one of the founding members of the Pongam-sa Society, was the leading figure in the establishment of the Haein *ch'ongnim*, and he also became very influential in determining the future direction of the Chogye order. Starting on December 2, 1967, for one hundred days in a row Sŏngch'ŏl gave Dharma talks on the founding ideas of the *ch'ongnim*, the fundamental teachings of the Chogye order, and the basic teachings of Buddhism. While Sŏngch'ŏl provided the backbone for the rebuilding of the monastic tradition of the Chogye order, he did not join the actual fights of the Purification Movement because he opposed the violent confrontations between the two opposing factions.

The Chogye *ch'ongnim* was formed at Songgwang-sa, another important monastery where sixteen national masters, including Chinul (1158–1210), were produced during the Koryŏ dynasty (918–1392). The Chogye *ch'ongnim* was led by Sŏn Master Kusan (1909–1883). Puril-hoe was formed in 1969 as a lay organization to support the Chogye *ch'ongnim*. In the same year, the construction of Susŏnsa, a meditation hall, was completed with the financial support of Puril-hoe. With the building of the Haein and Chogye *ch'ongnim*, the Chogye order was able to offer doctrinal teachings and regular meditation retreats to its monastic members. Later more *ch'ongnim* appeared: Yongch'uk at T'ongdo-sa (1985), Toksung *ch'ongnim* (1985) at Sudok-sa, and Kobul *ch'ongnim* (1996) at Paegyang-sa.

Although all the ecumenical centers were established and inhabited by monks, Korean nuns also began to establish their own monasteries after the inception of the Purification Movement (for the modern history of Korean nuns, see Park 2011). In

the course of the factional fights, almost all nuns, except for the elderly and the sick, participated in the meetings and confrontations with the married faction. The celibate leaders asked the nuns to join the movement, and the nuns came to Seoul whenever major events occurred. Some of them even stayed in Seoul as assistants to the celibate faction.

Consequently, the nuns were able to obtain a share of temples, after the celibate faction began taking over the temples of the married faction in October 1955. The main nunneries in contemporary Korea were assigned to nuns around this time. Three principle Sŏn nunneries (*Sŏnwŏn*) were established during the 1950s. Chŏng Suok (1902–1966) was appointed to lead Naewŏnsa in South Kyŏnsang Province in 1955, Kim Pobil (1904–1991) was appointed as the abbess of Taewŏn-sa on Mount Chiri in South Chŏlla Province in September 1955, and Inhong (1908–1997) was appointed to lead Sŏngnam-sa in South Kyŏngsang in 1957. These three nun leaders were close friends, and they decided to share the great task of building monastic compounds for nuns' practice.

Around the same period the major nunneries for doctrinal studies (*Kangwŏn*) were also established. An Kwangho (1915–1989) was appointed to lead Tonghak-sa at Kyeryong Mountain in South Ch'ungch'ŏng in 1956. Chŏng Kŭmryong (1892–1965) was appointed to Unmun-sa in North Kyŏngsang in 1955 as the first abbess; Yu Suin (1899–1997) was appointed to Unmun-sa as the second abbess in August 1955. Pak Hyeok (1901–1969) was appointed to lead Ch'ŏngam-sa in Kimch'ŏn in North Kyŏngbuk in 1956; later, in 1987, this nunnery developed into a doctrinal school.

During the Korean War, most Buddhist monasteries and temple structures were burned down. The monasteries that were assigned to the nuns, in particular, were in the worst condition. After the war, the nuns started building and repairing the monasteries on their own. As the nunneries emerged as important centers for the monastic training and education of nuns, the nuns order began to produce its own doctrinal teachers and Sŏn masters. Accordingly, the nuns became less dependent on the monks for their studies and training, and finally they became a self-sufficient group.

Cycle of Violence and Hegemonic Strife in the Post-Purification Era

Even after the triumph of the Purification Movement, the victorious monks could not distance themselves from power struggles, although this time the fights occurred among the monks themselves. In the course of the battle against the married clergy, the celibate monks banded together around their own Dharma families. The major families were formed around prominent monastic leaders, such as Ch'ŏngdam, Tongsan, Kŭmo, and Hyobong (Yŏ 1985: 396–97). The two most powerful Dharma families, the Pŏmŏsa and the Togsung, came from Tongsan and Kŭmo, respectively. As a reward for their bloody engagement in the Purification Movement, these Dharma families took control of numerous major monasteries. But even after that, they repeated the pattern of resorting to violence, court battles, and collective actions that incorporated monk rallies, similar to what the previous generation had used in their battle with the married faction.

After the Purification Movement, the Chogye order was divided over the issue of leadership, namely who—or which faction—would represent the Sangha. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, a conflict erupted between two prominent monks, Ch'ongdam and Kyöngsan, who were backed by their respective Dharma lineages, those of Tögsung and T'ongdo-sa. In the mid-1970s, the Supreme Patriarch of Korean Buddhism, Söong, caused conflict by strengthening his own position through revising the Sangha constitution. The monks Wölsan and Hyejöng of the powerful Kūmo (Tögsung) family sided with the Supreme Patriarch, while Wölju and Wölsö, two prominent monks from the same Dharma family, were opposed to this abrupt usurpation of power. The powerful Kūmo lineage was thus divided, resulting in the establishment of two administrative offices in Seoul, one at Chogye-sa and the other at Kaeun-sa. Each party appealed its case to the secular courts. Finally, the Kaeun-sa faction won in the Supreme Court in 1980.

The two factions then came to an agreement regarding the formation of united Sangha, but the setting up of the newly established Sangha administration was abruptly interrupted in 1980 by the famous October 27 incident. At the time a military Junta emerged after the assassination of President Pak in October 1979. After Pak's death, the Junta, headed by military general Chön Tuwhan (Chun Doo Hwan, r. 1981–1987), usurped the government in December 1979. Its troops then ruthlessly cracked down on the Kwangju People's Uprising in the southwest region of Korea, where in May 1980 people stood up against the martial law regime. The military massacre killed between six hundred and two thousand citizens of Kwangju. Under the pretext of searching for Communist sympathizers and criminals hidden in monasteries, the army and the police raided the compounds of three thousand monasteries before dawn on October 27, 1980.

In connection with this assault, the military Junta was encouraged by anonymous letters sent by monks—said to have numbered a thousand—who were involved in a number of disputes (Kim Kwangsik 2000: 372). Moreover, the prolonged internal divisions within the Sangha gave enough impetus to the Junta, which planned social reforms, to try to cover the lack of legitimacy for its military takeover. The soldiers searched the temple compounds, including the Buddha halls and the clerics' living quarters, brutally awakening everyone in the compounds. According to a military report, fifty-five monks and lay Buddhists were taken in for interrogation, and eighteen were arrested, including ten monks (Taehan Pulgyo Chogyejong Kyoyukwön 2001: 254–56). In fact, an even greater number of Buddhists was subjected to torture and imprisonment. In February 1981, Chön announced his presidency.

Under the new military dictatorship the Sangha experienced another round of bitter internal conflict. Within a year of the October incident, the Executive Director of Administration was replaced four times (Tonguk taehak Söngnim tongmun hoe 1997: 58–59). On the surface, the conflict was between the central Sangha administration and the main local monasteries. But underneath, the main driving forces were conflicts motivated by particular lineage interests. The central administration passed a law, submitting several financially important monasteries—primarily due to their function as tourist attractions—such as Pulguk-sa, Wöljong-sa, and Sinhüng-sa, to its direct

control. This action brought about violent resistance from the members of the local monasteries, who wanted their own Dharma families to run their monasteries.

The most serious confrontation was over Pulguk-sa, a historically important monastery situated at the site of the ancient Silla capital, Kyŏngju, which is a major tourist destination. Pulguk-sa soon appealed its case to the local court and won. As a result, the central administration had to give up its control of Pulguk-sa and Woljŏng-sa. Similar confrontations also broke out at Sinhŭng-sa in 1983, which pitted the local monks against monks associated with the abbot, who was appointed by the central administration (Tonguk taehak Songnim tongmun hoe 1997: 60–61). As the fight turned violent, one monk was murdered, six were seriously injured, and nineteen were arrested by the secular authorities.

The series of conflicts elicited concerns among progressive younger monks and led to protests. Consequently, a thousand monks gathered at Chogyŏ-sa, demanding reform of the Sangha administration. In 1984, a reformist council announced reform proposals that reflected the demands of the progressive monks, including abolition of the main-monastery system, opening of the management of temple finances to the laity, and inclusion of lay propagators of Buddhism as Sangha members (Taehan Pulgyo Chogyŏjong Kyoyukwŏn 2001: 261–64). These progressive measures were, however, bitterly opposed by the Supreme Patriarch Sŏngch'ŏl, who resigned from his official position. This opposition generated another violent confrontation, and frustrated the ongoing efforts toward change.

Internal conflicts of interest continued to plague the Sangha. In 1988, the Sangha was divided again over the appointment of the abbot at Pongŭn-sa, a monastery in south Seoul (Taehan Pulgyo Chogyŏjong Kyoyukwŏn 2001: 274–75). The central administration appointed a new abbot for Pongŭn-sa, but its old abbot, Mirun, did not accede to the new appointment. Instead, he established a separate administration at Pongŭn-sa, in defiance of the Chogyŏ-sa headquarters. Then the two factions invaded each other's headquarters, armed with iron pipes and baseball bats. This violent confrontation was ended when the two groups agreed upon making certain compromises. In the early 1990s, the Sangha was again divided over the election of the Supreme Patriarch. Two major Dharma families, those of Pŏmŏ and Tŏgsung, supported their own candidates: Pŏmŏ was for Sŏngch'ŏl, while Tŏgsung was for Wŏlsan. The two groups established two separate headquarters, one in north Seoul, at Chogyŏ-sa, and the other in south Seoul, at Pongŭn-sa. They also engaged in legal battles, as had repeatedly happened before. In 1992, the Chogyŏ-sa headquarters won the court battle.

To redress this situation, a new generation of young and reform-minded monks banded together, with the aim of rescuing the conflict-ridden Sangha. For example, the Cleric Association for Engaged Buddhism began a movement to gather signatures for Sangha reformation (Tonguk taehak Songnim tongmun hoe 1997: 74–76). This movement was soon supported by seven other clerical associations, including the Sŏngnim Association of the Buddhist-affiliated Tongguk University, the university's Alumni Association, the Student Association of the Central Sangha College, and the Alumni Association of the college, Sŏnu Toryang. The progressive clerics formed the Executive Council for the Sangha Reforms, and criticized the corruption of the central administration. In April 1994, a rally that involved two thousand five hundred clerics and one thousand

lay people was held at Chogye-sa. The central administration fought back, with the support of the Seoul police. After three days of confrontation, the police withdrew. The rally resulted in the dissolution of the Central Council, which was replaced with the Reform Council. The Reform Council promised drastic administrative changes, emphasizing the independence of the Sangha from government, the democratic operation of the Sangha, and the restoration of “purity” of the monastic order.

Buddhists had high hopes for the reformed Sangha administration, but once again their hopes were dashed in 1998 and 1999, with another round of incidents of Sangha conflict. As the term of Director Wölju was ending in 1998, the Sangha was divided again, between those who supported Wölju’s reelection and those who opposed it, including Supreme Patriarch Wörha (Taehan Pulgyo Chogyejong Kyoyukwŏn 2001: 318–323). The opposition camp held a rally at Chogye-sa, and then it went on to forcefully occupy the Sangha headquarters. The Sangha administration appealed its case to the court and asked for the government’s aid. It took forty-three days, and the intervention of five thousand policemen, to restore order at the Sangha headquarters. In 1999, the Sangha again became a focus of media attention. This time, the court ruled that the newly elected director, Kosan, was not qualified for the position, and gave a legal victory to another candidate who was supported by the opposition group. This legal judgment pushed the Sangha into battle once again, and led to the resignation of Kosan.

Hegemonic strife among the various Dharma families was largely responsible for the main conflicts that shook Korean Buddhism: between the Supreme Patriarch and the Director of Administration, between the administration and the council, and between the administration and the main monasteries. The fate of the Sangha was largely dependent on the legal decisions of secular courts, as the Buddhist clerics could not find ways to resolve their conflict among themselves.

Multifaceted Buddhist Responses after the Democracy Movement

As its internal chaos continued, the Sangha became further subordinated to the Korean government. During Park’s regime, which was the main force that secured the final victory of the celibate faction, the Sangha became a willing partner of the dictatorial government. For example, it aided governmental policies by participating in rallies against the North Korean communist regime, supporting constitutional changes for extending the presidential terms, participating in the government-initiated new village movement, and establishing patriotic monk armies.⁵ As a result, the concept of “Buddhism for the State” (*Hoguk Pulgyo*) was brought into the public spotlight in the 1970s (for the construction of this concept, see Kim Jongmyung 2001: 279–81). With support from the government, a large body of scholarly works on *Hoguk Pulgyo* was produced, which made *Hoguk Pulgyo* a salient feature of both traditional and contemporary Korean Buddhism. Consequently, as a close partner of the authoritarian regime, Korean Buddhism enjoyed the status of nationalistic religion.

In response to the rise of *Hoguk Pulgyo*, a new generation of Buddhists developed a new socially conscious movement. They formed allegiances with the growing anti-

government movements among intellectuals, college students, and the general populace. The younger generation of clerics and lay Buddhists began to address the people's political and economic plights. To that end, they re-appropriated the term *minjung Pulgyo* (Buddhism for the masses) as a catchword for their movement. Like the young clerics of the colonial period, who advocated this kind of populist Buddhism as a way to oppose the dominant bureaucratic Buddhism and the Japanese regime that stood behind it, the new generation of Buddhists attempted to challenge the basic idea of *Hoguk Pulgyo* and the dictatorial regime that supported it.

In the mid-1980s, the progressive Buddhist movement began to gain momentum. In May 1985, lay and clerical Buddhists together formed the League for the Promotion of *Minjung* Buddhism (Taehan Pulgyo Chogyejong Kyoyukwŏn 2001: 267–73). The most important founding members of this association were Yŏ Iku, Ko Ŭn and the monks Chin'gwan, Sŏng'yŏn, and Hyŏn'gi. The league vowed to participate in democratization and anti-government movements, and to advance the cause of *minjung Pulgyo*. In 1989 the government accused the league of being sympathetic to socialism, due to its involvement in labor issues and anti-government protests. The league was finally dissolved in 1991.

Inspired by the activities of the league, progressive clerics established their own associations, as a way to join the broader social movement. In June 1986, twenty-two progressive monks formed the National Association of Buddhist Clerics for the Realization of the Pure Land. The association aimed at promoting engaged Buddhism and the political independence of the Sangha. Some of its members resigned due to differences in political views, and in 1988 they formed the Cleric Association of Mahayana Buddhism. In 1993, the Cleric Association for Engaged Buddhism unified the two associations. Clerics associated with these associations also attempted to intervene in the internal affairs of the Sangha, as progressive clerics had done in 1984 and 1994. The 1984 reform failed due to its overly drastic measures, but the 1994 intervention was successful. The reform proposals were incorporated into the Sangha policies, and progressive clerics came to occupy important positions in the central administration. Yet, as can be seen from the 1998 to 1999 incidents described above, even these reforms could not be easily implemented.

The *minjung Pulgyo* ideology helped repair the damaged image of the Sangha, which had maintained close ties with authoritative regimes, by participating in a broader social movement for democratization. In 1988, the government yielded to Buddhist objections and abolished the Law for the Control of Buddhist Property, which had effectively controlled Buddhist institutions since 1962. The government instead passed the Law for the Preservation of Traditional Monasteries, which purported to guarantee independent religious activities for those that did not belong to the so-called traditional monasteries, which numbered about nine hundred (Tonguk taehak Songnim tongmun hoe 1997: 86).

Despite a number of social and political gains made by the proponents of politically engaged Buddhism, *minjung Pulgyo* could not be fully accepted by the conservative Sangha. Moreover, because of its excessive involvement in worldly politics, it became a target for criticism. Korean Buddhists began to question the mere espousal of the *minjung* ideology, criticizing the progressive monks for their political ambitions. Such

critiques meant that the factions of the younger monks were not too different from others that sought hegemony within the order. More recently, *minjung Pulgyo* lost much of its ideological ground, as Korea faced a number of political changes, beginning in 1988 and culminating in the presidencies of Kim Yöngsam (1993–1997) and Kim Taejung (1998–2002), both of whom had been leader of the opposition before their assumption of power.

In response to the changing political circumstances, Buddhists began to redirect their engagement with political justice to a broader form of social engagement. Among the various Buddhist activities, the meditation and community movements became popular among the laity. City temples and countryside monasteries started to offer daily or seasonal meditation programs, whose popularity skyrocketed as increasing number of individuals became focused on personal wellbeing, health, and quality of life. People sought relief from the stress of urban living by going to refreshing mountain sites, and tried to restore a sense of balance in their lives through participation in meditation courses.

Buddhist temples also initiated the Temple Stay programs (www.templestay.com), which are also open to non-Buddhists and foreigners. Temple Stay programs were initiated when Korea was co-hosting the 2002 World Cup soccer games, as a way to accommodate the numerous foreign visitors and to introduce them to traditional Korean culture. Since then, these programs have steadily attracted both foreign and Korean visitors. Remote monasteries situated in beautiful mountain sites, in particular, offer sanctuaries with diverse programs, including meditation, tea ceremony, hiking, and bird watching. During the summer vacation season, the monasteries that offer these programs are especially popular destinations for people who want to get away from the cities. The monasteries, in turn, use these programs to promote Buddhist teachings to a wider population.

Beginning in the mid-1980s, urban mega-temples, such as Nüng'in Sönwön, Hanmaüm Sönwön, Yöngnam Pulgyo Taehak, and An'guk Sönwön, started to appear on the Buddhist scene, and they met with unprecedented success in attracting members (Yun 2007: 189). Buddhist centers of this kind have memberships that range from 50,000 to 200,000 people. They offer not only religious activities, but also services related to various aspects of daily life, including day care, kindergarten, banking, organic food markets, medical clinics, weddings, and funerals. Consequently, these centers became leaders in creating a new form of Buddhist culture for city dwellers. Many Buddhists formed a sense of belonging by establishing such communities, in which not only religious needs, but also economic and social functions, are fulfilled. In other words, the Sangha is eager to develop ways to connect with the lay people, and the laity is an important participant in these enterprises.

While Buddhist institutions and activities of that kind helped increase the numbers of lay followers and elevate the social status of Buddhism, they also started assuming the form of capitalistic operations, charging money for retreats and other programs, and constantly soliciting donations for their ongoing expansions and increasing maintenance costs. Many temples compete with one another with new construction projects, including the building of museums with large statues of Buddhas and bodhisattvas. The most popular sites, which attract hundreds of busloads of people every day, are

showered with donations from the worshippers, many of whom seek healing and other worldly blessings.

Among the various movements and practices of contemporary Buddhism—including meditation for lay people, prayers and offerings to Buddhist deities, and multifaceted activities of urban communities, where Buddhists support each other in daily life and expand their concerns outwardly, toward those who are marginalized in society and toward environmental conservation—two movements stand out. They are the Jungto Society and the Indra's Net Community. Both of them were established by visionary monks: the Jungto Society by Pömnynun (b. 1953) in 1988, and the Indra's Net by Toböp (b. 1949) in 1999. Although headed by monks, the two organizations are primarily lay movements, as the majority of their members are lay people, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist. The two began as grassroots communities based on Buddhist principles, and both attempted to develop values congruent with life in the twenty-first century. The two movements seek alternative ways of thinking and living, in response to contemporary society's emphasis on mass production, mass consumption, commercialism, competition, and exploitation of natural resources (for more on the two movements, see Park 2010).

The urban-based Jungto Society is different from other Buddhist organizations due to its 100% non-paid volunteer-run social work programs, especially its work toward helping marginalized people by building schools and medical clinics in impoverished areas of the world. Jungto means Pure Land, which stands for a special place whose residents are depicted as cultivating their minds and living peacefully in a beautiful and natural environment. The objectives of the Jungto Society are represented by the motto of Pure Minds, Good Friends, and Clean Land (Pömnynun 2002: 58–59). Jungto began as an ecological organization within the Korean Buddhist Academy of Social Education, which was founded in 1988; it was renamed the Buddhist Academy for Ecological Awakening in 1994, when it became an official non-governmental organization (NGO). It took its present name, Ecobuddha, in 2005 (www.ecobuddha.org).

Jungto now has two main NGOs that carry out its aid activities in developing countries: the Join Together Society (JTS), established in 1993, and Good Friends, established in 1999. These global activities have become the hallmark of Jungto and have received international recognition. Jungto members participate in aid programs that ease the most urgent problems of famine, illiteracy, and disease among the world's poorest people. JTS has established a solid ground of trust and respect among people in South Korea and other nations, which are joined together in their good work. As JTS's reputation for integrity has grown over the years, many people, regardless of religious affiliation, have happily donated money and participated in JTS activities. The members took a vow to create a Pure Land in this world by committing to their cause for ten thousand days (about the length of one generation); the halfway point, roughly fifteen years, was passed in 2008.

The rural-based Indra's Net community has, as its hub, Silsang-sa monastery, situated in the beautiful Chiri Mountains, on the southwest side of the Korean peninsula. It has built a school for alternative education, and a community-based NGO for helping local residents as well as organic farmers. The community ensures that local farmers use environmentally responsible methods to provide healthy food for consumers in the cities.

By extending its program to city dwellers and creating urban-farming communities, the community has sought to establish direct channels between producers and consumers.

The ideas of the Indra's Net community have also spread nationwide through the Life and Peace movement, which began with a five-year peace walk throughout South Korea, with the simple message of respecting life and valuing peace. With the slogan, "Let me be peace first," the first pilgrims embarked on their peace walk in March 2004. On December 14, 2008, the peace walk ended. By then, the pilgrims had walked 12,000 km and had met 80,000 people (*Han'guk Daily*, December 11, 2008). The pilgrims' message of peace, sharing, and ecological preservation spread as they walked and met increasing numbers of people. As a grassroots movement, the Indra's Net continues to expand widely among farmers, local residents, teachers, parents, students, and city consumers.

Although they were started by monks, both Jungto and the Indra's Net are, as I have said, essentially lay movements. The main staff and volunteers of Jungto are lay people. While Silsang-sa provides its land and temple compound to the Indra's Net community, the main activities are performed by lay people, while the monks provide spiritual guidance through meditation retreats for members and visitors. In this way, the dilemma of engaged Buddhism regarding its relation to Buddhism's traditional focus on monasticism was resolved, by making lay people the main participants in the two movements. In addition, the movements successfully support Buddhist practice in the daily lives of lay people.

Concluding Remarks

The Chogye Order emerged during the Purification Movement as a celibate order centered on Sŏn Buddhism. In the course of the protracted fight that pitted the celibate monks against the majority married faction, however, Korean Buddhists paid a high price, as they involved themselves in complicated conflicts of interests. That led to a vicious cycle of violence, court battles, and public humiliations. In due course, the Sangha was at the mercy of political powers, as it received support from the authoritative governments of South Korea.

The prolonged conflict was more about a hegemonic strife between the two camps than a cleansing of the colonial past and starting anew in the post-colonial era. Instead of the modernization of Buddhism, which was the prime interest of the Sangha during the colonial period, a form of Buddhist fundamentalism sought to restore the Vinaya precepts and the practices of traditional monasticism. The celibate Sangha aspired to a putative return to the pristine time of the Buddha. That meant a total reversal of the ethos that was prevalent during the colonial period, when Korean Buddhists worked toward the modernization of Buddhism.

With its espousal of the *hoguk* ideology, the Sangha offered support to its political allies, the authoritarian Yi and Park regimes, thereby further damaging the social image of Buddhism. Moreover, the Sangha was deeply divided into different Dharma families and factions, which in turn resulted in continued internal skirmishes and fights over hegemonic power. In response, some young monks and lay people rose to challenge the divided Sangha. By using the *minjung* ideology, they urged the Sangha to be con-

cerned about the plight of the common people, instead of pursuing internal fights and serving the government.

After the frustrated democracy movements of the 1970s and 1980s gained momentum, especially after the fall of Chŏn Tuwhan's regime, Korean Buddhism entered a new phase of development. In lieu of the *hoguk* and *minjung* ideologies, there were new opportunities to meet societal needs and to engage the laity in more diverse ways. Temples and monasteries started to vie to offer daily meditation programs and retreats for the general public. Currently, urban mega-temples offer a variety of programs for city dwellers. Socially active groups, such as the Jungto Society and the Indra's Net, were also formed during this period. They focus on environmental preservation, organic farming, social justice, unification of North and South Korea, and global aid programs for the needy. Overall, these groups try to create Buddhist versions of community involvement. They also offer diverse ways for lay people to participate, while fulfilling their religious aspirations. Amidst these diverse accommodations to the needs of the laity, the members of the Korean Sangha still face the issue of modernization, while also trying to maintain the unique features of their religion.

Notes

- 1 The accuracy of lay numbers is said to be doubtful, because lay people registered their names at three or four temples simultaneously; *Pulgyo* 21 (1926): 9–10.
- 2 A statistical list of numbers of *p'ogyo-so* and clerics between 1917 and 1930 is provided in *Han'guk kŭnse Pulgyo paengnyŏn*, v. 2, Part 2: P'ogyo p'yŏnnyŏn, 34–36.
- 3 For more on Korean Buddhism from 1945 to 1950, see the following publications: Kang 2000: 82–99 and Taehan Pulgyo Chogyejong Kyoyukwŏn 2001: 157–74.
- 4 *Donga Daily*, 20 August 1963; cited in *Sinmun ŭro pon Han'guk Pulgyo kŭnhyŏndaesa*, 381.
- 5 Kim Kwangsik 2000: 370–71. For more on the relationship between Korean Buddhism and the state, see also Sorensen 1999: 127–52.

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CHAPTER 24

Buddhism in Contemporary Europe

Inken Prohl

Who or what is “Buddhist?”

Twenty-first century Europe is a place where Buddhist photographs and statues, depictions of famous Buddhist leaders, meditation cushions, Zen gardens, and relaxing cosmetics seem omnipresent. The material presence of Buddhism in Europe goes hand in hand with a rising number of Buddhist groups and centers, as well as the spread of a range of Buddhist-inspired orientations and practices, especially within fields such as health care, leisure activities, education, psychotherapy, and physiotherapy. Can we thus conclude that parts of Europe are about to “turn Buddhist?”

To approach this question in a constructive manner, we have to take into consideration the highly dynamic and constantly changing religious landscape of contemporary Europe. Whereas the Catholic and Protestant churches—still the two major, federally supported religious providers in large parts of Europe—are losing members by the day, new religious groups are entering the religious marketplace. Within that context, there is highly visible interest and ardor for Asian religions, while the buzzword “spirituality” seems to be gaining ground at tremendous speed as a descriptive tool for a large number of religious protagonists. Syncretism, hybridization, and innovation appear to be appropriate theoretical tools for describing much of the contemporary religious landscape in Europe. Traditional and exclusive affiliations with particular religious groups or providers are clearly diminishing. They are being slowly replaced by a stroll through a religious marketplace that offers multiple affiliations, along with selective use of demand-oriented religious goods and services. This scenario was perhaps best described by Grace Davie, who introduced the notion of “believing without belonging” (Davie 2002).

In light of these far-reaching changes within the religious landscape of contemporary Europe, an overview of Buddhism in this geopolitical region may be deemed a rather modest venture. Current religious studies are foremost focusing on individual

religious protagonists, but perhaps we first have to clarify what (or which) protagonists might be called “Buddhist.” Purchasing a Buddha-statue or reading a book authored by the Dalai Lama obviously does not make a particular person a Buddhist. It is worth mentioning that a rising number of Europeans who accept Buddhist teachings and practices, or who surround themselves with Buddhist esthetics, do not belong to a Buddhist organization of any kind.

One could argue that being Buddhist entails being affiliated with some kind of Buddhist organization. However, even among members of such organizations one can find numerous actors who do not call themselves Buddhists. According to a study about Buddhist groups in Germany, only 80% of the interviewees actually called or identified themselves as “Buddhist” (Prohl and Rakow 2008). To complicate matters even further, many religious goods and services offered in the field of Buddhism are not necessarily closely tied to a particular organization, or they do not presuppose any specific form of institutional affiliation.

Another possible way of giving a realistic account of Buddhism in contemporary Europe might be to list groups, organizations, and Buddhist centers. Within a dynamic religious field, however, these kinds of institutions come and go much faster than “directories are reedited” (Koné 2001: 4). Yet another way of deciding whom to call Buddhist could be based on analysis of specific protagonists and their cognitive orientations and practices. That, however, is also not unproblematic. On the one hand, in the past, among the main reasons for Buddhism’s success in becoming a widely distributed religious tradition throughout much of Asia was its extreme adaptability to existing conditions, and its readiness to embrace and transform highly distinctive religious or ideological concepts. On the other hand, global transcultural flows, especially within the last 150 years, have led to numerous new forms of Buddhism. These new forms are highly dynamic conglomerates that incorporate traditional Buddhist orientations and practices, paradigms of democracy and capitalism, modern notions of selfhood, and central Protestant concepts or notions about religion. That kind of “Buddhist Modernism” was nurtured by the very “engagement with the dominant cultural and intellectual forces of modernity” (McMahan 2008), and it centers on meditation, individual experience, and the compatibility of Buddhism with science, democracy, and classical humanistic ideals.

The above-mentioned difficulties in deciding what and who should properly be called “Buddhist” lead to a rather complicated and sometimes speculative way of quantifying Buddhism in Europe. Depending on the sources consulted, there exist between one and three million Buddhists in Europe. The majority of these Buddhists are Asian immigrants, who are quite active in establishing Buddhist temples. According to some estimates, in England there are about 180,000 Asian Buddhists, and about 50,000 to 60,000 European or “converted Buddhists” (Baumann 2002; Bluck 2006: 14–15). The numerical ratio between Asian Buddhists and European Buddhists is quite similar in other European countries. According to Martin Baumann’s estimates, there are about 170,000 Buddhists in Germany, of which probably about 120,000 are Asian immigrants. Similar two-thirds to one-third ratios can also be found among the Buddhists in the Benelux, Scandinavia, and Southern Europe.

However, the influence and distribution of Buddhist orientations and practices in Europe should not be tied to these numbers. As was noted above, in contemporary Europe a religion such as Buddhism is not restricted to institutionalized groups and organizations, but is also highly visible within diverse fields such as health care, leisure activities, education, psychotherapy, and physiotherapy. Accordingly, I suggest that we do not describe or define Buddhism in Europe narrowly, by applying rigid categories such as institutional adherence, doctrine, or ritual practice. Instead, we should use the concept of a Buddhist field. This field is a dynamic network or cluster of different orientations and practices, and it is constantly shifting. If this approach is adopted, it is crucial that this kind of *perpetuum mobile* is considered and accepted as a Buddhist field, by a particular society and at a certain point in time. In the context of contemporary Europe, this kind of acceptance can be derived from explicit references to several Buddhist traditions of Asian origin, the practice of sitting still (often considered a form of meditation), the reception of Buddhist teachings, and the affinity with different material objects associated with Buddhism.

I will start my survey of Buddhism in Europe by emphasizing the importance of Europe as a contact zone between two fields, an Asian Buddhist and a “Western” one, especially up until about the 1950s. From then on, some Europeans started not only to devote themselves to Buddhist writings and teachings, but they also became especially engaged with Buddhist practices. The second part of the chapter therefore deals with the reception and transformation of these teachings and practices, and sheds light on the key developments in different European countries. Then I shift the focus of my discussion away from past developments, and provide a substantial description of the Buddhist field within contemporary Europe. I also analyze some important fields of practice, in which Buddhist concepts and esthetics come to play an increasingly decisive role. I conclude the chapter by taking a final look at some of the central features of the Buddhist field within European societies.

Transcultural Flows between Europe and “Buddhism”

The early encounter between Asian Buddhists and “Europeans” during antiquity did not have major consequences for what later came to be known as Europe. Up until the beginning of colonialism, Buddhism was nearly unknown in most parts of the European continent. However, with the beginning of the nineteenth century and the so-called “Oriental renaissance,” many intellectuals started to show interest in non-European philosophical concepts and intellectual paradigms, especially those of India and its religions. This early and rather romantic search for genuine Buddhist philosophy and ethics was largely based on Orientalist presuppositions. Buddhism was to a large degree a philosophical playground of sorts for European thinkers such as Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), who readily used Buddhist concepts to justify their own philosophical approaches and ideas. Schopenhauer—who was prone to have strong opinions on a range of different issues, and was not willing to hide these from his environment—even placed a statue of the Buddha in his office, but he did that mainly in order to provoke his priest.

Nevertheless, the rather limited and highly specialized reception of Buddhist concepts within academic circles started to seep through, to be received by a broader European audience interested in the exotic wisdom coming from the East. Whereas in the beginning the only written sources about Buddhist philosophy and ethics were randomly collected Mahāyāna texts, from the 1880s onward these were joined by the Pāli texts of the Theravāda tradition (Baumann 2002). Slowly but steadily Buddhism came to be considered as a religion, especially among those who were highly critical of traditional Christian concepts, teachings, and practices. One of the first European pioneers to seek conversion to Buddhism was Allan Bennett McGregor (1872–1923) from Great Britain. He went to Sri Lanka and Burma, where in 1901 he was ordained as a novice. A year later he became a Buddhist monk named Ananda Metteyya.

The first German to become ordained as a Buddhist monk was the violinist Anton Gueth (1878–1957). He was strongly influenced by the first German Buddhist textbook, titled *Buddhistischer Katechismus* (*Buddhist Catechism*, by Friedrich Albert Oswald Zimmermann), published in 1888. Under the monastic name Nyanatiloka he continued to dedicate his life to the teachings of Buddhism. He spent most of his life in Sri Lanka, where in 1911 he founded the famous Island Hermitage on Polgasduwa, which became a popular retreat for Western Buddhists. A visit to Sri Lanka was also crucial for another important European interpreter of Asian Buddhism: the famous German-Swiss writer Hermann Hesse (1877–1962). Hesse was disgusted by the harsh social reality of Sri Lankan Buddhism, “where the beautiful and bright Buddhism has degenerated into a true rarity of idolatry” (Hermann Hesse, *Aus Indien (From India)*, Frankfurt am Main, 1980, translated by Inken Prohl).

Hesse and Gueth can serve as good examples for the highly heteronomous reception and evaluation of Buddhism by Westerners during the first half of the twentieth century. Hesse was repelled by everyday life in a Buddhist monastery, whereas Gueth dedicated his whole life to what the famous writer could only see as a perverted form of some kind of authentic and pure Buddhism. According to Hesse, “true Buddhism” could only be found in ancient Buddhist texts, brought to him by the writings and translations of European philologists, not in everyday life in Sri Lanka (Zotz 2000). His own account of Buddhism, namely his bestselling novel from 1922, *Siddhartha: Eine indische Erzählung* (usually abbreviated to *Siddhartha*), was largely based on European translations of Buddhist writings and philosophical treatises, which ignored the lived reality of Asian Buddhism. The main character of Hesse’s classic, *Siddhartha*, who meets the historical Buddha Gautama in the course of the novel, could be described as a modern European individualist, highly critical of all kinds of institutions and dogmatic teachings.

Siddhartha’s quest to break free from his own self could be considered a central theme of Buddhist thought, but in Hesse’s novel it is presented as an individual enterprise that has to be experienced in isolation and without the help of any external reference point. Teachings or instructors are portrayed as mere shackles on the way to spiritual freedom and self-realization. Hesse thus ignores some of the fundamental premises of Buddhism, namely value of the Dharma and the importance of genealogy. In 1922 *Siddhartha* catered—and it still does—to the needs and interests of a European audience, with its own ideas about individual salvation and personal self-realization.

One could argue that Hesse presents these fairly familiar themes to his readers, but he does so by wrapping an exotic and esthetically attractive package around his narrative. Hesse's novel had a very strong influence on succeeding generations and their notions about Buddhism, which was routinely portrayed as a highly individual religion of personal experience that had nothing to do with dogmatic teaching, institutionalized faith, or external constraints of any kind.

The lecture tours and informal visits of influential Asian Buddhists, such as the Sinhalese Buddhist reformer Anagārika Dharmapāla (1864–1933) and the Japanese lay Buddhist Masaharu Anesaki (1873–1949), could be considered as important transcultural flows of persons. Dharmapāla was the founder of the Mahā Bodhi Society, which was established in 1891 in order to revive Buddhism in India. Subsequently the society also established branches in Germany (1911) and England (1926). Anesaki, who spent several years in Germany and England, where he studied under Hermann Oldenberg (1854–1920) and T. W. Rhys Davids (1843–1922), later became the founder of religious studies in his native Japan. His European teachers were very influential in translating and editing Pāli sources, presented to a wider public in order to deepen its knowledge about the Buddha and his Sangha. Oldenberg's famous study *Buddha*, published in 1881, can still be considered a standard work for Buddhist studies, whereas Rhys Davids became famous due to his founding of the Pāli Text Society, also in 1881.

Although the Buddhism of Rhys Davids, Oldenberg, and other European intellectuals, philologists, or philosophers was to a certain degree influenced by Asian Buddhists, it is crucial to emphasize the historical and intellectual frameworks within which these allegedly authentic Buddhists formulated their notions about Buddhism. The concepts that Dharmapāla, Anesaki, and other Asians brought to Europe had already been influenced, shaped, and sometimes even created, by contacts and confrontations with Christian ideas, concepts, and categories, which were brought to their countries by Western colonial nations. These early encounters between Asian Buddhists and their Western audiences can thus be seen as dynamic processes of transcultural hybridization. These moments of contact transformed basic notions about Buddhism among Westerners and Asian Buddhists alike, and led to an ongoing process of transcultural flows and conceptual synthesis that involved Europe, Asia, and other parts of the world. The kind of Buddhism that at the beginning of the twentieth century emerged from these personal, conceptual, and material encounters could be described as a religious tradition that placed emphasis on personal experience and was allegedly compatible with modern (natural) science. Consequently, Buddhism could serve as an ideal example of the concept of "world religion."

The first German Buddhist organization, called Buddhistischer Missionsverein für Deutschland (Buddhist Missionary Association of Germany), was founded in Leipzig in 1906 by the Indologist Karl Seidenstücker (1876–1936), but it was disbanded in 1911. Besides Seidenstücker's short-lasting organization, there were other groups opposed to World War I in Germany that were devoted to Buddhist studies, but most of them perished fairly quickly. However, after the end of the war in 1918, numerous more successful and longer-lasting organizations were established, which started to integrate Buddhist teachings and practices into their programs. In the 1920s the so-called Bund für Buddhistisches Leben (Association for Buddhist Living), which was based on the

Theravāda tradition, became one of the most influential Buddhist groups in Germany. Potential members had to officially proclaim their commitment by taking refuge in the Three Jewels: the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. Despite the organization's success in recruiting new members and broadening its base, there were also some controversies among its most ardent supporters. For instance, an argument between Paul Dahlke (1865–1928), a medical doctor from Berlin, and Georg Grimm (1868–1945), who worked as a counselor for the county court, regarding the doctrine of *anattā* (“non-self”), left deep marks on the community and led to the departure of many members. After this incident, Grimm and the above-mentioned Seidenstücker joined forces to establish the Buddhistische Gemeinde Deutschland (Buddhist Community of Germany). Grimm's lectures and presentations drew in large audiences—sometimes more than a thousand people would show up—whereas Dahlke moved to Berlin to establish the Buddhistische Haus (Buddhist House) in 1924. This place served as a meeting space for German Buddhists, and could be visited in order to seek advice from a Theravāda monk who lived there.

In Great Britain, the Buddhist Society of Great Britain and Ireland, established in 1907, hardly attracted any members and supporters. In contrast, the Buddhist Lodge of the Theosophical Society, founded in 1924—which in 1943 changed its name to the Buddhist Society, London—was able to use its patrons' influence and networking skills, and acquired a broad membership base that was eager to study every possible kind of Buddhism. Its founder, Christmas Humphreys (1901–1983), placed a lot of emphasis on the holding of regular lectures, the practice of meditation (especially since 1930), and the publication of the journal *Buddhism in England*. The journal, still published under the title *Middle Way*, is England's largest circulation journal for supradenominational Buddhism (Bluck 2006). At the beginning of the twentieth century, England and Germany thus were the liveliest centers of Buddhist life within Europe. Apart from a handful of communities of Mongolian Kalmyks, most Buddhists at that time were European converts, as there was still no noteworthy immigration from Asian countries.

From Reading to Practice

European interest in Buddhism after World War II was influenced by a rejection of earlier interpretations that exclusively focused on the writings and teachings of Theravāda Buddhism. In post-World War II Europe there was a slow but steady acknowledgment of the existence of a variety of traditions, spokespersons, and sources for the study of Buddhism. In England, the Buddhist Society remained at the center of Buddhist activities. The society dedicated itself to organizing weekly meetings, summer schools, exhibitions, and lectures that featured highly influential figures such as D. T. Suzuki (1870–1966) and Edward Conze (1904–1979). Humphreys, as the president of the Buddhist Society, wrote a book titled *Buddhism*, which was published by Penguin. The book turned out to be a huge success, selling more than 100,000 copies within a few years. Together with Edward Conze's *Buddhism: Its Essence and Developments*, Humphrey's publication was designed to reach a wide audience.

These books helped spark an interest in Buddhism, especially among young people in Great Britain (Bluck 2006: 9). This generation, which came of age during the 1950s and 1960s, sought new forms of freedom and was interested in alternative lifestyles. People like D. T. Suzuki, Alan Watts (1915–1973), and the Beat poets responded to these needs and interests by dedicating their writing to themes like Zen Buddhism, spiritual self-realization, and the breaking free from seemingly oppressive ways of living. With increased travel opportunities, many young Europeans were able to go to Asia, while famous Buddhists could journey to England and continental Europe. For instance, Alan Watts, an Englishman who left his home country for the USA in 1938, held lectures at the Buddhist Society in London. He also joined forces with Irmgard Schlögl (1921–2007), who established a Zen group within the society in the 1960s. Schlögl, who had spent some time at Daitokuji in Kyoto, was one of the first practicing Zen Buddhists in England. In 1979 she founded the Zen Centre in London, which now has numerous local offshoots.

Mahāyāna Buddhism also became popular in Germany after World War II. In 1952 Hans-Ulrich Rieker (1920–1979) founded the first German branch of the religious order Arya Maitreya Mandala (AMM). This community was originally established by Ernst Lothar Hoffmann (1898–1985), who earned fame around the world under the name of Anagārika Govinda. Govinda had spent some time in Sri Lanka studying Theravāda Buddhism, before he began his studies with the Tibetan lama Tomo Geshe Rinpoche. One of AMM's central aims was the teaching of a modern and practical version of Buddhism that could reach a broad audience, especially in Western industrialized nations. The order placed focus on the dynamic development of Buddhism and on Bodhisattva Maitreya, the Buddha of the future. Some of AMM's members took leading roles in the foundation and administration of the Deutsche Buddhistische Gesellschaft (German Buddhist Society), which saw the light of day in 1955. The society was rather small back in 1955, and Munich, Hamburg, and Berlin were among the first communities to join it. However, in 1958 it received a new name that is still used today—Deutsche Buddhistische Union (German Buddhist Union)—along with new opportunities for the development of a prospering institution (Baumann 1995).

Eugen Herrigel (1884–1955), another central protagonist in the development of Western Buddhism during the twentieth century, published a very important book in 1948 that reached a wide audience: *Zen in der Kunst des Bogenschießens* (translated into English as *Zen in the Art of Archery*). Like many of his contemporaries, Herrigel had a huge interest in mysticism. He accepted a guest professorship in Japan, at Tohoku University in Sendai, where he was supposed to teach philosophy. According to Herrigel, Zen Buddhism is an exceptionally mystical religion, whose mysteries can be revealed by gaining insights into the traditional art of archery. Herrigel started to study archery under Kenzo Awa. In his book he combined the lessons he learned with his own romantic ideas about Zen Buddhism as an individualistic religion of personal experience.

Herrigel's German audience was excited about the ideas presented in his book, even though the author's depiction of Zen had nothing to do with the actual practice of Zen in Japan during the 1920s. Herrigel presented his European readership with an intriguing depiction of Zen, which was designed to provide modern Westerners with concrete strategies for solving their existential problems (Prohl 2010). These strategies were

directed toward common problems and used familiar rhetorical devices, even as they were presented as a long-lost way to personal salvation. Herrigel's work was translated into numerous languages and became a major bestseller. Consequently, its problematic notions about Zen had (and probably still do have) a huge impact on European ways of conceptualizing Japanese Buddhism.

Besides Herrigel's book, many other depictions of Zen Buddhism were translated into European languages. In nearly all of them Zen is described as a mysterious experience of enlightenment, a pure philosophy of mind, and an activity that can only be properly conducted by spiritually superior masters. But what did the actual practice of Zen, especially seated meditation (*zazen*), really look like? Does one really just have to sit still in order to meditate? Was it permissible to sit on a chair, or did one have to use a special meditation cushion? What is to be done about the cramps in one's legs?

The Austrian Fritz Hungerleider (1920–1998) was among the first Buddhist practitioners in Europe to convey practical techniques for proper meditation and the carrying out of *sesshin* (special Zen courses that last for several days). Hungerleider had been to Japan for eight months before he started a Zen apprenticeship at Daitokuji, the famous monastery in Kyoto, and he also studied at different Japanese universities. Hungerleider was in charge of the first *sesshin* on German soil, at the Haus der Stille (House of Silence) in Roseburg, near Hamburg, in 1964. This event laid the groundwork for a widespread enthusiasm for meditation techniques in Europe. Young people were especially eager to learn more about meditation practices in order to gain new religious insights, enjoy highly personal religious experiences, or find some help in overcoming their sense of self.

Taisen Deshimaru (1914–1982) was another key figure in the spread of Zen Buddhism. He came from Japan to Europe in the 1960s, and began teaching meditation techniques and Zen practice. Deshimaru, a Japanese priest with neither money nor French language skills, traveled to Paris in 1967 on the trans-Siberian railway. His sparse luggage included a *kesa*, a Buddhist outer garment that signaled for many people his ability to pass along the Buddhist teachings, some notebooks, and a few other items that his master had given him back in Japan. Deshimaru had worked as a businessman before he met Kodo Sawaki (1880–1965), a famous Zen master of the Sōtō school. After he became a follower of Zen Buddhism, Deshimaru was ordained by Sawaki. Initially Deshimaru, whose students consider him Sawaki's spiritual successor, was able to cover his living expenses in Paris by doing shiatsu massage and acupuncture, and by living a very modest life. We are told that he ate rice soup and devoted himself to writing. He also gave calligraphies of his poems to his numerous visitors, who were impressed by his humbleness, language, directness, humor, and compassion toward his fellow human beings. Deshimaru gradually developed a reputation, especially among artists and scientists, and from 1968 onward he gave many lectures and conducted daily *zazen* sessions.

Shortly after his arrival in Paris, Deshimaru arranged his first *sesshin* in France, which was attended by about thirty people. The *sesshin* lasted for several days and consisted of different *zazen* sessions, which lasted from five to seven hours. The periods of meditation were only interrupted by lectures, tea ceremonies, and *samu*, communal

work done in the house or outside in the garden. When Deshimaru's first *sesshin* drew to a close, he finished the retreat by hosting the first lay ordination in Europe. As their number grew steadily, Deshimaru's followers built a *dōjō* (literally a "place of the way") in Paris, to be able to practice *zazen* just like in Japanese monasteries. The European followers of Zen made enormous efforts to build as many *dōjō* as possible, in order to have suitable places to practice *zazen*. These buildings, designed to look like their Japanese counterparts, increasingly became the centers of European Zen activities, and they were used to designate different Zen communities.

Deshimaru's unique personality—exotic, but also plain and humble—attracted a lot of European followers, who paid close attention to his teachings about the proper practice of *zazen*: to simply sit still. The Japanese priest and his followers were successful in building a number of *dōjō*s in France, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, Spain, and Italy, which were instrumental in spreading the teachings of Deshimaru throughout Europe. Some disciples also established branch centers in Canada and the USA. The organization of summer *sesshin*—large Zen retreats held on an annual basis, which has been taking place in France since 1973—is just one example of Deshimaru's attempts to slowly introduce his European followers to the strict rules of Japanese Zen monasteries. For the daily morning and evening ceremonies, held during these retreats, he ordered traditional priests' attire, incense, and other items needed to carry out Zen Buddhist ceremonies; he also taught his students about Japanese etiquette.

Many contemporary *dōjō* in Western countries have their own Zen boutiques, in which they offer a rich selection of teas, traditional Zen eating bowls, bells, and many other Japanese items. Deshimaru also continued his translation of central Zen texts into European languages, and he had his students sew meditation cushions for *zazen* and Japanese dungarees used for *samu* (Prohl 2010). His insistence on Zen students' correct practice, etiquette, and daily life made him a central authority, especially in regard to preserving the traditions of his homeland among his European disciples. It also granted him nearly the same status as that of his famous countryman Suzuki Shunryū (1904–1971), who was instrumental in popularizing Zen practice in the USA.

The 1970s were another busy decade for Deshimaru and his supporters. Besides founding AZI (Association Zen Internationale) in 1970, Deshimaru established the first Zen monastery in the vicinity of Avallon. He then set out to purchase a manor called La Gendronnière, which from then on has served (and still serves) as the main temple of AZI. However, in February 1982 Deshimaru fell ill. He then left France for Japan, where he passed away two months later. His farewell statement in 1982 was not different from earlier parting words he used before going on trips: "Continue to do *zazen*!" Subsequently his organization would suffer heavily from the loss of its founder, as many members left AZI after bitter arguments and numerous schisms.

Deshimaru had refrained from naming a successor. After his death, that caused confusion and gave rise to ruthless ambitions among his students, who left AZI in droves to establish new groups and organizations. Fausto Guareschi, for example, founded a Zen institute (Shobozan Fudenji) in Italy that offered *zazen* lessons and introductory courses on the central teachings of Zen Buddhism. Francisco Villalba went to Valencia,

Spain, to establish the Zen temple Luz Serena. Ludger Tenbreul, originally from Germany, founded a foundation named Zen Vereinigung Deutschland e. V. (German Zen Association), which is one of the biggest Buddhist organizations in Germany, with more than six hundred members and twenty-five regional sub-groups. Whereas most of the association's *sesshin* take place in Schönböken (Schleswig-Holstein), Tenbreul is in charge of the *dōjō* in Berlin, which is home to eighty members and offers daily *zazen* sessions. Although in Schönböken and other European Zen centers one can find some monks and nuns that adhere to strict monastic laws and regulations, the large majority of members do not give up their status as lay persons. This feature can also be found frequently when analyzing the organizations of Tibetan Buddhism in Europe. Most of their members are more or less looking for ways to integrate Buddhist teachings and practices into their secular, everyday lives.

Regarding Deshimaru's legacy, it is important to emphasize the consequences of his death and his failure to name a Dharma successor. Without an officially appointed leader, the Japanese Sōtō school refused to acknowledge Deshimaru's many European students as legitimate successors of their teacher's legacy. As an immediate reaction to an official statement issued by the Sōtō school, some former students of Deshimaru went to Japan in order to legitimately acquire a "Dharma transmission." This decision led them onto a long and winding road to being officially recognized as Zen students, after which they could be confirmed as "Dharma successors."

Whereas during the 1980s many Sōtō teachers from Japan were highly critical of Western practitioners of Zen, more recently the Sōtō central agency actively started to reach out to Western Zen centers. In 2002 the central agency supported the foundation of a new general office for Sōtō Zen in Milan, which shortly afterward moved to Paris. It has also been organizing special seminars for foreign priests in Japan. Some of these priests are able to receive Dharma transmission; in addition, they are rewarded—after successfully passing all training courses—with the title *dendō kyōshi* ("priest who spreads the teachings"). After that, they are allowed to ordain their own students as Zen priests. The first of these seminars outside of Japan was hosted at the main temple of AZI, at La Gendronnière (France), in 2007—exactly forty years after Taisen Deshimaru came to France to teach Zen. More than five hundred people from all over the world showed up to honor Deshimaru and celebrate his "implantation" of the seed of Zen Buddhism in Europe.

A closer look at Taisen Deshimaru and his teaching of Zen in Europe helps reveal some of the major trends in the formation and development of "Western" Buddhism. Although traditional Buddhist teachings play an important role in the spread of Buddhism on the European continent, the main focus of charismatic, esteemed, and (seemingly) spiritually mature Asian teachers such as Deshimaru, as well as of their followers, revolves around Zen practice. European Zen adepts take great pains to ensure that the central ritual procedures of Zen, such as *zazen*, reciting of *sūtras*, ceremonies, and *sesshin* are all performed correctly and in appropriate environments. These practices confront practitioners with unique and highly attractive esthetic dimensions. They potentially cater to the cognitive needs of those who are involved with them, and also to their sensual, bodily, and material needs.

There are some striking parallels between the spread of Zen in Europe and the growth of Tibetan forms of Buddhism in Western settings. For the proper performance of many Tibetan rituals, houses and rooms have to be turned into temples and shrine rooms; certain accessories, like meditation cushions, scrolls, and altar items are also mandatory. Apparently being a practitioner of Buddhism in the Western world requires a large amount of time, dedication, and money. Practical organizing skills are also extremely important when it comes to fundraising and promotion, as well as when taking care of various administrative tasks that are essential for the running of Buddhist organizations. Regarding Deshimaru's former students, they have largely succeeded in moving beyond their teacher's original goals. They have effectively established a successful Buddhist brand called "Deshimaru Zen," without the direct help of their teacher, who passed away nearly thirty years ago.

This example of the transcultural flow of Zen into Europe could almost be considered a paradigm for other similar cases, in which former European students moved beyond their Japanese or Tibetan masters, who left their countries in the 1960s and established influential Buddhist organizations in contemporary Europe. Whereas the 1960s saw the birth of Zen Buddhism within Europe, the 1970s was a period of rapid and substantial growth for the Japanese tradition. Besides the above-mentioned arrival of Sôtô Zen, Rinzai Zen was also transplanted from Japan to different European countries. During this period some students of Peggy Jiyu Kennett (1924–1996) founded Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey, which became the headquarters of the biggest Zen group in England, the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives (Kay 2004). In 1971, Klaus Zernickow (born in 1940) from Germany dedicated himself to the foundation of Mumonkai (Gateless Society) in Berlin, whereas a handful of students of Philip Kapleau (1912–2004), the famous author of *The Three Pillars of Zen* (1956), joined forces to establish Zen groups in various European cities.

During the same period France became the epicenter of the many activities of Vietnamese Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh (born in 1926), who became a global authority on Buddhist thought and practice. Thich Nhat Hanh escaped from his home country shortly after he had founded the Order of Interbeing, an association for socially engaged Buddhists, and he came to France in 1969. There he formed the Unified Buddhist Church, which before long became the intellectual center for both European and Vietnamese Buddhists. Then in 1982 he went on to build the popular Plum Village. This institution serves as a meditation center that is visited by thousands of people each year. It helped—along with other things—to strengthen its founder's reputation as a social reformer and an influential advocate for the practice of mindfulness.

These examples illustrate the rapid growth of Buddhist organizations of various kinds in Western Europe during the 1970s. Whereas Bluck mentions the existence of twenty-two Buddhist groups and associations in 1966, he counts twice as many by the mid-1970s (Bluck 2006: 12). He describes a European situation that was mirrored in Germany (Baumann 1995) and Austria, where the Buddhistische Zentrum Scheibbs (The Buddhist Center of Scheibbs) was founded in 1975. Another notable development that took place during the 1970s was the increasing popularity of Tibetan Buddhism.

Growth of Tibetan Buddhism in Europe

After several Tibetan Buddhists arrived in Europe in the mid-1960s, during the 1970s Tibetan Buddhism was tremendously successful in acquiring new students and followers. Undoubtedly the highly charismatic and world-famous 14th Dalai Lama, who made many trips to Europe, had a major impact on the soaring popularity of Tibetan Buddhism in the 1970s. Waves of immigration from Tibet, whose populace left their home country in droves after the Chinese army's violent suppression of the Tibetan revolt in 1959, also had a major impact on the development of Buddhism in both Europe and the USA. Among the Tibetan exiles there were many Buddhist monks and teachers who, having left their homes, temples, and properties behind, had no other choice than to start anew in the USA or Europe. One of the most important protagonists among these exiles was Chögyam Trungpa (1939–1987), a *tulku* in the Karma Kagyu tradition from east Tibet.

Together with Akong Rinpoche (1939–2013), Trungpa arrived in England in 1963 to attend university. Aged thirteen at the time, he was recognized as a *tulku*, a reincarnation of a famous lama who was a teacher of the 16th Karmapa, the head of the Karma Kagyu school. As Trungpa began his studies of religion, philosophy, and history at Oxford University, he became not only acquainted with the intellectual pillars of Western civilization, but also gained insights into contemporary discussions about Orientalism, including Western conceptualizations of Buddhism and Tibet. During that time, as Trungpa familiarized himself with Western constructs of Tibetan Buddhism, he also became aware of genuine European desires for an exotic but highly useful wisdom from the East (Rakow 2010).

With the support of the English Sangha Vihara, Trungpa was able to turn the Johnstone House in Dumfriesshire (Scotland) into a Buddhist center. He also started to formulate his teachings according to Western ideas about Tibetan Buddhism. In 1967 Trungpa and Akong renamed their recently acquired purchase the Samye Ling Meditation Centre, thereby establishing the first institution of Tibetan Buddhism in England, which still retains its influence. The choice of name for Trungpa's institution illustrates some dominant trends within the Western reception of Buddhism. "Samye Ling" refers to the first Buddhist monastery in Tibet, which was called Samye, and thus puts an emphasis on the new center's authenticity and the ancient tradition on which it is based. At the same time, the designation "Meditation Centre" illustrates an important "practical turn" within Western Buddhism that developed from the 1960s onward.

In spite of the institution's initial success and growing influence, tensions had risen between Akong and Trungpa. That eventually led to Trungpa's rejection of his vow of renunciation as a Buddhist monk. After a serious car accident in 1969, Trungpa tried to turn away from his many followers, whose ways of portraying him as a Tibetan lama, and thus exoticizing him, suddenly started to repel him (Rakow 2010). Nevertheless, he remained highly influential as a charismatic spokesman for Tibetan Buddhism. In 1970 he traveled to the USA to establish new Buddhist centers, which become parts of Vajradhātu, the umbrella organization he founded in 1972.

After touring through England and the USA, where he founded numerous regional centers, each of them called Dharmadhātu, in the 1980s Trungpa also traveled to continental Europe, where he established several Dharmadhātus. His son Sakyong Mipham, who took over Trungpa's responsibilities after the latter's death in 1987, changed the name of his father's organization from Vajradhātu to Shambhala International. Currently there are more than a hundred centers affiliated with Shambhala International throughout Europe; the centers concentrate on meditation techniques and contemplative practices. Most of these institutions, whose teachings are also influenced by Californian styles of Zen practice, can be found in Germany, Holland, and France.

In addition to Chögyam Trungpa's efforts at spreading Tibetan Buddhism, it is necessary to point to the influence of Hannah (1946–2007) and Ole Nydahl (born 1941) on the Western field of Buddhism. The two Danes went to Nepal in 1969, met the 16th Karmapa, and were accepted by him as some of his earliest Western students. The Nydahls then went back to Europe, and they lost no time in founding the first Karma Kagyu center in Denmark. Following the example of the Danish center established by the Nydahls, who considered their institution to belong to Diamond Way Buddhism, many more offshoots were founded in other parts of continental Europe. Ole Nydahl's teaching style can be described as down-to-earth. During his lectures he wears jeans and a plain shirt. He also uses everyday language and readily comprehensible metaphors to explain the teachings and practices of Buddhism, and tries to help his listeners with their daily problems and challenges.

The peculiar and highly successful combination that came to characterize much of Western Buddhism, which blended the aforementioned "practical turn" with the traditional authority of Asian Buddhists like Trungpa, Deshimaru, and the 16th Karmapa (who visited Europe and the USA in 1974 and 1975), can further be illustrated by analyzing the rapid rise of numerous Buddhist organizations after the Karmapa's stay at the Haus der Stille (House of Silence) near Hamburg. The famous Tibetan teacher came to Germany in 1974 to celebrate New Year's Eve with his students in Roseburg. He carried out of the "ceremony of the black hat" on December 31 in Germany, and a little later at Samye Ling in England. These left notable impressions on his Western audiences, and inspired the foundation of many more Buddhist centers (Golzio 1997: 201): The German Buddhist community, for example, witnessed the formation of more than thirty new centers and other institutions.

Lamas of the Karma Kagyu school were not alone in their efforts at spreading Buddhist teachings in Europe. In 1968 Geshe Rabten (1920–1986), a Gelugpa lama and a personal counselor of the 14th Dalai Lama, became head of the Klösterliche-Tibetische Institut Rikon (Tibet Institute Rikon) in Switzerland. In 1977 he went to Hamburg, where he consecrated the Tibetische Zentrum e.V. (Tibetan Center), whose influence on German Buddhism should not be underestimated.

Gelugpa lamas were also active in England. Thubten Yeshe (1935–1984) and Zopa Rinpoche (born in 1946) established the Manjushri Institute, an important offshoot of the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahāyāna Tradition (FPMT). Later they were supported by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso (born 1931), who came to England in order to guide the institute. Gyatso is an important figure within the field of Western

Buddhism, because after leaving the Manjushri Institute he became the founder of the New Kadampa Tradition. This new tradition soon adopted a controversial position toward the tutelary god Dorje Shugden, became highly critical of the 14th Dalai Lama, and claimed to be the only true legitimate representative of Buddhism. Despite the provocative stance of the New Kadampa—or perhaps because of it—numerically the organization is among the most vital and influential Buddhist organizations in Europe (Kay 2004).

To complete the picture of the main protagonists within the European field of Buddhism, we also need to mention the most influential teacher of the Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism in Europe: Sogyal Rinpoche (born in 1948). This Buddhist leader is the founder of Rigpa, an influential organization established in Munich in 1986, which now has a presence in many European cities. Sogyal Rinpoche is a famous spokesman for the Rime movement (impartial or unbound), which was formed in Tibet in the nineteenth century. The ecumenical movement aims at overcoming traditional boundaries that separate the different Buddhist schools, including their distinct doctrinal orientations. Compared to many of their Western students, Asian teachers such as Sogyal Rinpoche—along with other Tibetan and Zen teachers—do not put a lot of emphasis on doctrinal differences among the various schools of Buddhism. In contrast to their teachers, however, many European Buddhists seem much more inclined to distance themselves from those they perceive to be wrong-headed Buddhists.

Some Important Buddhist Groups and the Contemporary Situation in Europe

The most vital fields of European Buddhism presently can be found in Germany, England, and France, and to a lesser degree in Switzerland, Austria, Holland, Scandinavia, and South and East Europe. London, Paris, and Berlin are home to a rich variety of Buddhist groups and organizations, nearly all of which see themselves as belonging to a particular tradition of Asian Buddhism. Whereas Japanese Zen and Tibetan Buddhism are the most prominent and influential traditions, the growing popularity of Vipassana meditation has led to increasing interest in Therāvada Buddhism among Europeans, who also flock to numerous supra-denominational associations, seminars, and initiatives.

This highly dynamic field of Buddhism in Europe is further stimulated by the presence of other Buddhist traditions. One such example is Chinese Chan, popularized by John Cook, head of the Western Chan Fellowship in England, and Ton Lathouwers from Holland. The 1980s and 1990s also saw the emergence of new Zen groups, created by Europeans who got acquainted with Zen in the USA. There was also the formation of Christian Zen, whose numerous followers try to live according to the rules and teachings of Hugo Makibi Enomiya-Lassalle (1898–1990). This former Christian missionary went to Japan to study Zen and practice *zazen*, as a way of experiencing God. One of his best-known students is Willigis Jäger (born in 1925), who has been teaching Christian Zen throughout Europe since the 1980s.

One of the biggest and most influential Buddhist groups in Europe is Sōka Gakkai, the so-called new religious movement from Japan that claims Nichiren Buddhism as its doctrinal foundation. Sōka Gakkai emphasizes chanting of the *Lotus Sūtra* and recitation of the sūtra's title, the Daimoku. According to this successful organization, which managed to attract numerous non-Japanese followers throughout Europe by actively spreading the teachings of Nichiren Buddhism, chanting of the Daimoku produces manifold religious and mundane benefits for its practitioners.

Let us have another look at the situation in different European countries, with reference to the variety and numerical strength of Buddhist institutions. According to Bluck, the biggest Buddhist organizations in England are Sōka Gakkai, the New Kadampa Tradition, the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order, the Karma Kagyu tradition, the Forest Sangha, the Serene Reflection Meditation tradition, the Sōtō Zen tradition, and the Samatha Trust (Bluck 2006: 3). The following groups are the most influential Buddhist organizations in Germany: Diamantweg Buddhismus (Diamond Way Buddhism), the New Kadampa Tradition, Sōka Gakkai, and the Zen Vereinigung Deutschland e.V. (German Zen Association). Besides these four organizations, many other Buddhist groups can be found in Germany. Mostly they consider themselves as belonging to Zen, Chan, or one of the traditions of Tibetan Buddhism.

On the homepage of the Buddhist Union in Switzerland there is an impressive list of more than a hundred groups from various Buddhist traditions. Among the Alpine states, highly dynamic Buddhist fields can also be found in Austria, Italy, and Slovenia. Buddhism is a federally recognized religious tradition in Austria. Italy—as well as Greece and Spain—is home to a number of organizations associated with Zen or Tibetan Buddhism. Most of them are offshoots of Taisen Deshimaru's network of institutions or belong to Diamond Way Buddhism. Apart from Scandinavia, Ole Nydahl and his followers are also a major Buddhist force in Poland, the Baltic States, Slovenia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and the Czech Republic, where there are between one thousand and five thousand Buddhists. In addition to Buddhist traditions imported from Japan, Tibet, and China, there is also a modern tradition of Korean Zen, originally established in America. Its founder, Seung Sahn (1927–2004), started to travel throughout Europe in the 1970s, and was able to attract many European supporters and followers. His Polish-born disciple Jacob Wu Bong Perl founded the first Zen center in Poland in 1978. Perl was recognized as a Zen master in the mid-1990s, which helped to broaden the influence of Zen in Eastern Europe.

Tibetan Buddhism initially came to Russia via the immigration of the Kalmyks, who had left the Mongolian steppe behind to settle west of the Ural Mountains. As early as 1741, Russia officially recognized and accepted Buddhism as a religion. During the reign of Stalin, however, the Kalmyks were persecuted. Consequently, they left Russia in droves to seek refuge in other European countries (den Hoet 2001). With the fall of the Soviet Union, many Buddhist organizations, especially in St. Petersburg, gained new publicity, stepping out of the shadows of a more-or-less hidden and private existence (Ostrovskaya 2004).

In spite of the considerable size of Sōka Gakkai, the New Kadampa Tradition, and Diamond Way Buddhism, these groups do not belong to any national umbrella organizations that bring together various Buddhist institutions. One could argue that these

groups' exclusivist claims, of being the only true, authentic, and legitimate Buddhist tradition, prevent them from working together with other Buddhist groups or associations. However, it is crucial to emphasize that these kinds of claims about Buddhist institutions are hardly limited to adherents of Western forms of Buddhism. The often normative work of theologians and sociologists has led many Europeans to believe that exclusivist claims about Buddhist authenticity, as well as an overt concern with worldly benefits, are Western corruptions of a somehow pure Asian tradition. These two qualities are in fact central to many traditions of Asian Buddhism. They should not be seen as symptoms of a corrupting and degenerating Western environment, which supposedly does not offer proper conditions for the flourishing of the pure and intrinsically good Buddhism of Asia.

According to Charles Prebish, it is useful to acknowledge the existence of two Buddhisms in the Western world (Prebish 1993). The second half of the twentieth century brought massive waves of Asian immigrants to the West, who devoted themselves to building temples in their new countries of residence. The Asian immigrants stayed largely separated from European Buddhists, and they used the temples mainly for the preservation of their cultural identity, which included various celebrations, feasts, and other traditional rituals. To further illustrate Prebish's paradigm of the "two Buddhisms," one can point out that Asian Buddhists largely conduct their ritual practices within the family, whereas the majority of European Buddhists concentrate on individual meditation and instruction. Although presently there seems to be a rather clear-cut separation between Buddhists from Asia and their European counterparts, it remains to be seen if these two fairly independent fields of Buddhist practice will start to overlap within the next decade or so.

Although most immigrants from Asia are Buddhists, they do not seem to be keen on establishing umbrella organizations to pursue common interests. One is thus tempted to reject the notion of an inter-Buddhist dialogue among Asian Buddhists (Baumann 2002: 95). The European Buddhist Union, founded in Paris in 1975, could be described as an assembly for consultations among mostly European Buddhists. It consists of about fifty members from sixteen European countries, and aims at bringing together different Buddhist traditions and protagonists. However, at the grass-roots level most Buddhist institutions are focused on their own agendas, especially their teachings and practices. Accordingly, they do not push for active engagement and steady flow of communication between their own members and those of other organizations within the same area (Sindemann 2007: 219).

Buddhist Practice and New Thematic Perspectives

As is demonstrated by Prohl's and Rakow's study of Buddhist groups in Berlin, European students of Buddhism place a lot of emphasis on meditation techniques, whereas reading of Buddhist texts, studying of doctrine, or participating in rituals are only of marginal interest to them (Prohl and Rakow 2008). Many practitioners look for the beneficial aspects of meditation, and are interested in how contemplative activity can have positive effects on their everyday problems and challenges (Tweed 2006). One of

the main existential problems—which is also a central theme in many different Buddhist traditions in Asia—is dealing with death and the transience of life (Cuevas and Stone 2007). Various institutions in contemporary Europe, such as hospices and other places of care for the dying, have slowly but steadily started to integrate Buddhist ideas and practices into their treatments, design, and work philosophy. Besides the Bodhicharya Deutschland e.V. (Bodhicharya Germany; see www.bodhicharya.de) in Germany, there are many other global providers of Buddhist terminal care, such as the Spiritual Care Center Dzogchen Beara in Ireland, which is closely tied to Rigpa, a Tibetan Buddhist network (see www.dzogchenbeara.org).

Besides the growing influence of Buddhist concepts and practices in the delivery of terminal care, various ideas from different Buddhist traditions are also beginning to play important roles in other fields of contemporary European life, including education, alternative healthcare, business administration, psychotherapy, and interior decoration. The last decade has seen the rise of numerous training centers for Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction therapy, especially in northwestern Europe, and the growing influence of techniques derived from Zen Buddhism in the field of cognitive behavior therapy. There is also the prominent use of Buddhist icons (including the face of the Buddha), mandalas, or other related items in advertising, as well as for the promotion of alternative, healthy, and more relaxed lifestyles, which seem to be desired by many people living in modern metropolitan areas. Many of the self-help or “improve your life” type guidebooks, which have been inundating the European book market over the last decade or so, employ Buddhist concepts, metaphors, esthetics, and practices, and they deserve to be subjected to rigorous empirical analyses, from a religious studies perspective.

Concluding Remarks

Over the last couple of decades a number of critical studies have explored the fundamental transformation of ideas and attitudes toward Buddhist meditation practices, which are closely tied to specific Buddhist traditions such as Zen and Vipassana (Sharf 1995; Bretfeld 2008). The critical altering or reevaluation of existing paradigms of meditation can be interpreted in relation to a general process of modernization within Asian Buddhist traditions. That has often led to highlighting of the practice of meditation, relaxation, stress management, self-discovery, and truth-seeking as core aspects of Buddhism.

These central topoi of Asian Buddhism, which are encountered by European audiences interested in physical and religious practices that cater to the needs of the body, can be seen as prerequisites for Buddhism’s success in contemporary Europe. Whereas Protestantism, and to a lesser degree Catholicism, do not seem to put a lot of emphasis on actions, sensory perceptions, and the body, Buddhism seems capable of offering many Europeans more than just abstract doctrinal teachings. It seems to provide numerous people with practices that are embedded within unique esthetic settings, which combine sensory perception with the cognitive acquisition of specific teachings. To devote oneself to the meditative practice of “sitting still,” for example, does not

require any precognition; consequently, it can be seen as a “ready-made” religious product or activity, with a large potential audience.

Many European Buddhist practitioners constantly highlight the search for “enlightenment,” “a sense of life,” and “their true self” as major reasons for their interest in Buddhism. However, they also refer to concerns about “preparing for death,” “escape from the cycle of suffering (samsara),” and “need for moral and ethical guidance” as major pillars of their Buddhist faith. This leads them to the practice of Buddhist meditation, which helps them to “relax and lead a balanced life” and experience “new forms of wellbeing.” Many practitioners that were interviewed for a recent study emphasized the importance of Buddhist ethics, as well as Buddhism’s seeming disregard of static dogmas and rigid teachings (Prohl and Rakow 2008). Practitioners often felt encouraged to make individual and self-determined choices, from the many different practical and doctrinal offerings of Buddhism.

Many European practitioners see Buddhist ethics as a useful way of dealing with their own emotions, hopes, and expectations, as well as with personal problems and conflicts (Rimke 2000). The notion that such an ethical basis should serve as a normative set of rules for interpersonal relations might be up for debate, even as many people seem to turn toward Buddhist practices in search of ways for dealing with personal crises. In light of that, it is not surprising that Buddhist teachings and practices have become influential in the field of terminal care and in healthcare programs (Tweed 2006). However, most European Buddhists do not show an active interest in the cultural backgrounds of different Buddhist traditions. They seem to consider Buddhism as an ahistorical, supra-contextual conglomerate of teachings and practices, whose efficacy is totally independent from regional, historical, or political circumstances.

Buddhism is primarily seen by many Europeans as a practical means for diminishing one’s personal level of suffering, rather than as a highly complex and heterogeneous cultural phenomenon (Saalfrank 1997). During the many informal conversations I have shared with Buddhist practitioners in Europe, I have noted the presence of strong Orientalist presuppositions. Many of them see Asia as a haven of composure, meditative serenity, and harmonious interpersonal relations. At the same time, they consider European Buddhism to be a more authentic and purer version of “true” Buddhism, since it supposedly solely focuses on the high art of meditation, and does not get lost in the superficiality, decadence, and profanity of Asian everyday reality.

Although many Western Buddhist groups try to imitate the meditation techniques, the interior architecture, and the use of particular religious items in Asian Buddhism, they focus almost exclusively on the needs and wishes of their European or American followers. Accordingly, European Buddhism is significantly different from its Asian counterpart, especially concerning the role of meditation, the relationship between ordained monks and lay people, and the social relevance of Buddhist ethics. In spite of these differences, both fields can be described as “Buddhist.” They are intertwined in a number of key areas: the reciprocal dynamics of tradition and adaptation, the promise of salvation, and the close relationship between the cognitive and esthetic spheres.

Although it is possible to generalize about various features of Buddhism in Europe, it is also useful to differentiate between the Buddhist fields of northwestern Europe and those in the southern and eastern parts of the continent. Researchers need to pay close

attention to specific social factors, political conditions, and the role of the media, as they try to construct a nuanced and comprehensive picture of Buddhism in Europe. Additionally, individuals who enter the religious marketplace can freely choose from various elements of the Buddhist field. They can thus create their own personal version of Buddhism, a sort of “experimental Buddhism,” which is made up of many different ingredients that most suit their “collector” (Nelson 2010).

At a conference held in Stockholm in 1993, the general discussion revolved around the question of “whether one could appraise the emergence of a distinctly European Zen practice” (Koné 2001). The ensuing discussion in Stockholm made it clear that there is no such thing as “European Zen,” or a homogeneous and all-encompassing “European Buddhism.” One should rather speak of Buddhism from a global perspective, and pay close attention to the transcultural flows, contextual conditions (national, geographical, social, historical, political, etc.), and specific mechanism of modernity in describing a range of different Buddhisms throughout the world. Whereas within traditional forms of Buddhism, like those followed by many Asian immigrants, there is a lot of emphasis on collective rituals, feasts, and everyday concerns, in some highly industrialized nations we seem to be witnessing the rise of “Buddhist Modernism” (McMahan 2008). In Japan, South Korea, Singapore, and other parts of Asia, as well as in Europe and the rest of the so-called “Western world,” there is a growing number of people who experiment with parts or areas of the Buddhist field in order to find suitable solutions to their personal problems, needs, and desires.

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Buddhism in the Digital World

Morten Schlütter

Over the past decade the digital revolution has transformed much of the world in dramatic ways, and religion has also been profoundly affected by these developments. After sex, religion may be the most widely searched and popular topic for discussion on the Internet (Dawson and Cowan 2004), and many people are now engaging with religion through their computers and other digital devices. It is therefore not surprising that many aspects of both the study and practice of Buddhism have been deeply influenced, and in some ways fundamentally changed, by the availability of digital resources. But just as it is fair to say that we do not fully comprehend the impact of the digital revolution on our world in general, nor we know where exactly it is leading us (see Lanier 2010), any attempt to provide a full account of “Buddhism in the digital world” would be an impossible undertaking, especially in a short chapter like this.¹

This chapter provides an overview of Buddhism in the digital world as it is relevant to three different audiences: (1) those with a non-committal interest in Buddhism seeking information about the religion; (2) practitioners of various East Asian (Chinese, Japanese, and Korean) and Tibetan Buddhist traditions; and (3) scholars of Buddhism and others with an academic interest in various areas of Buddhist studies. Although there can be considerable overlaps between the membership of these groups, and also between the digital Buddhist resources that each group may use, this distinction can help us bring some structure to a very amorphous topic. Although I occasionally touch upon the impact the digital world has had on Buddhist practice and study in parts of Asia, this chapter is further limited mainly to resources that are accessible in English and are primarily relevant to a Western audience. I concentrate on East Asian and Tibetan forms of Buddhism, although occasionally I also briefly address other forms of Buddhism as well.

Regarding the main topics addressed in this essay, “digital” increasingly has come to mean “Internet-based,” and is mostly associated with websites. Accordingly, throughout the chapter I often refer to specific websites (although it should be remembered that

websites are “organic” entities that can quickly change their contents or their addresses, or disappear altogether).² However, some important Buddhist digital resources are still only available on recorded media such as CDs and DVDs, and other digital technologies, such as Twitter, or e-readers like the Kindle or the Nook, also are having an impact on the world of Buddhism.

Religion, Authority, and the Internet

From the perspective of established religious organizations, it is clear that the Internet poses as much a challenge as an opportunity. Religions have traditionally been engaged in a mostly one-way form of communication: the center of orthodoxy will address itself to followers/members, usually by reinforcing the belief system, encouraging proper practice, and perhaps suggesting how to apply its teachings to everyday life or how to counter the religious claims of other traditions. Thus the official websites of major religious organizations such as the Catholic Church (www.vatican.va), the Presbyterian Church USA (www.pcusa.org), or any of the Japanese Buddhist denominations like the True Pure Land sect (www.hongwanji.or.jp/english), all tend to replicate the kind of information that one could previously find (and in most cases still can) in official publications, newsletters, and bulletin boards. For such organizations, the Internet facilitates communication but does not significantly alter the relationship between believers and the orthodox center.

On the other hand, the Internet has made it possible for religious believers (and unbelievers) to communicate with each other in blogs, discussion forums, and chat rooms to an unprecedented extent, and for anyone to publicly question or outright attack the teachings upheld by religious centers of orthodoxy. This has in some ways led to a crisis of authority for many religious institutions (see Campbell 2010). Thus in a 2002 Vatican report on the Internet, the authors lament the attacks on the Catholic Church that one can find online (an evil that is compared to pornography), but then go on to describe a different sort of problem:

... church-related groups should be creatively present on the Internet; and well-motivated, well-informed individuals and unofficial groups acting on their own initiative are entitled to be there as well. But it is confusing, to say the least, not to distinguish eccentric doctrinal interpretations, idiosyncratic devotional practices, and ideological advocacy bearing a “Catholic” label from the authentic positions of the Church.

(www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_doc_20020228_church-internet_en.html).

In other words, the issue here is one of control or rather lack thereof: the Internet has made it possible and quite easy for alternative and dissenting voices to make themselves widely heard, and the orthodox center is pretty much powerless to stop them.

This is also an issue for Buddhism in many parts of Asia (for example, see Fukamizu 2011), but Buddhism in the West, being a relatively recent import, has from the beginning been rather unstructured and has lacked a clear center of authority.³ Individual

Buddhist groups in the West often operate very much under their own authority, and many Westerners who define themselves as “Buddhist” are not members of any group at all, or may practice with several different groups (see Inken Prohl’s chapter in this volume). These facts are important to keep in mind in the following discussion.

Digital Informational Resources on Buddhism

Currently, there are literally millions of freely accessible websites in English offering various kinds of information about Buddhism. Based on an initial examination, it seems useful to distinguish between sites that are run by Buddhist groups or individuals, and those that are not (although this is not always obvious). Among those that do not have any Buddhist affiliation, a few are run by other religious groups—mostly Christian—that seek to show the inferiority of Buddhism to their own religion. Most sites of this kind, however, are “objective” sites that aspire to give unbiased information—although, as I will show in the following, they are rarely successfully in doing that.

A search of the term “Buddhism” in any Internet search engine invariably and unsurprisingly brings up the website of Wikipedia first (en.wikipedia.org). In fact (as of August 2011), the English-language version of Wikipedia has over ten thousand articles on Buddhist topics, and more are added every month. Its placement at the top of various search engines’ ranking makes it clear that many people who are seeking information about Buddhism look here first. Wikipedia is, of course, a collective and anonymous effort, and individual articles—which anyone can modify—represent a kind of consensus among those who have taken an interest in contributing to them, a situation that some would call a sort of mob rule (see Muller 2010). The articles in Wikipedia therefore generally reflect a popular Western understanding of Buddhism. Thus, they tend to accept traditional Buddhist historical accounts, and they also usually emphasize the aspects of Buddhism that are especially appealing in the West, like meditation and enlightenment. Buddhism is here almost always presented primarily as a vehicle of spiritual transformation, and there is usually little discussion of issues like *karma* and the acquisition of merit or Buddhist worship, in spite of the crucial roles that these teachings and their associated practices play in Asian Buddhist communities.

One also finds misleading statements and outright mistakes in many Wikipedia articles on Buddhism, although it should also be noted that some of the articles are, in fact, very good and sometimes reflect up-to-date scholarship on Buddhism. The problem is, of course, that it is almost impossible for the non-specialist to distinguish the good from the bad, that is, to judge the quality of the articles. This is also true of similar sites, such as the Dharma Dictionary, which is mostly specific to Tibetan Buddhism (rywiki.tsadra.org/index.php/Main_Page), on which Jan-Ulrich Sobisch of the University of Copenhagen comments: “. . . like its cousin Wikipedia it is a mishmash of garbage and interesting stuff, i.e. poison for the student; sometimes helpful for the experienced Tibetologist” (personal communication, 6/17/10).

The same issues characterize other “objective” sites offering information about Buddhism, such as religionfacts.com or religioustolerance.org. Even widely trusted sources that give the impression that their articles are based on modern scholarship, such as

the Public Broadcasting Service (pbs.org) or the British Broadcasting Corporation (bbc.co.uk), have information about Buddhism that can be misleading or mistaken. All of these sites also have very good material on Buddhism that can be very useful to someone seeking basic information, but clearly they must be used with extreme care.

Although there are many websites without any religious affiliation that offer information about Buddhism, there are at least an equal number operated by Buddhist groups or individual Buddhist believers who do not claim to give a scholarly account of Buddhism (in fact, scholars are sometimes criticized on such sites for failing to understand the true “essence” of Buddhism). Many of the most prominent of these Buddhist websites present themselves as spaces for the Buddhist tradition as a whole, without any sectarian bias. From a scholarly perspective, such a claim to an unbiased representation of Buddhism seems rather suspect, since Buddhism as a religion is extremely diverse and no single set of beliefs and practices is agreed upon by all Buddhists as being the most central or important. It is thus not surprising that, on further examination, such sites seem to be almost invariably informed by a particular vision of Buddhism, in spite of the claims to be non-sectarian.

For example, the prominent website BuddhaNet states that “BuddhaNet is a non-sectarian organization, offering its services to all Buddhist traditions” (buddhanet.net/about_bn.htm). However, the site itself is maintained by an Australian Theravāda Buddhist organization and is clearly oriented toward a modern intellectualized Theravāda outlook. This orientation is made clear by statements such as this: “Buddhists sometimes pay respect to images of the Buddha, [but] not in worship, nor to ask for favors” (buddhanet.net/e-learning/5minbud.htm). But, of course, in most of the Buddhist world the Buddha is in fact worshipped, together with a host of other Buddhas and bodhisattvas. Although BuddhaNet does contain a number of valuable resources pertaining to different traditions of Buddhism, it would be difficult for a non-specialist to gain a comprehensive and unbiased picture of Buddhism in its many forms from this particular site.

Friends of the Western Buddhist Order (also known as the Triratna Buddhist Community) is another organization whose website comes out near the top in web searches of “what is Buddhism” (fwbo.org). However, it would take a casual reader considerable effort to realize that this group is teaching an innovative mix of Theravāda Buddhism and many other forms of Buddhism, including practices inspired by the Tibetan Tantric tradition.

This is, of course, not to suggest that these groups and their associated sites do not present perfectly valid versions of Buddhism, but they do not make it easy for outsiders to get a general understanding of the whole world of Buddhism, in all its complexity and diversity. On the other hand, once a user knows something about Buddhist history and different branches of Buddhist thought, the websites of both BuddhaNet and the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order can be rich sources of information.

Websites run by specific groups that make clear their Buddhist affiliations can in many ways be fairly interesting and useful to both the casual reader and the more dedicated researcher. From such websites the visitor knows that she will get a particular perspective on Buddhism, and there are many websites associated with various forms of Buddhism that can be very helpful to someone seeking information about a specific

Buddhist tradition or group. Examples of this are websites maintained by schools of Japanese Buddhism like Sōtō Zen (global.sotozen-net.or.jp), Rinzai and Ōbaku Zen (<http://zen.rinnou.net>), and True Pure Land Buddhism (www.hongwanji.or.jp/english), or the Theravāda Buddhist site Access to Insight ([accesstoinight.org](http://www.accesstoinight.org)). Also, many websites maintained by smaller Buddhist groups have interesting information about their beliefs and practices.

Not surprisingly, the numerous websites run by Christian and other non-Buddhist religious groups that have information about Buddhism rarely contain much that is reliable or useful for the study of Buddhism.

Therefore, although there are many resources about Buddhism online, it must be concluded that it is difficult to find good and unbiased introductions to basic Buddhist history and doctrine on the Internet, although for the more advanced student the Internet offers many highly useful resources. Most people will probably be better off by first turning to one of the excellent overviews of Buddhism available in book form. Some such books are available in electronic format, although not for free (the few introductions to Buddhism that are available for free in electronic format are generally very old and cannot be recommended). One textbook that is published online is *Buddhism—The eBook: An Online Introduction*, by Charles Prebish and Damien Keown (www.jbeonlinebooks.org/eBooks/buddhism). Other excellent introductory books are also available in e-book formats, such as *The Foundations of Buddhism* by Rupert Gethin (Oxford, 1998), and *Mahayana Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations* by Paul Williams (Routledge, 2008).

English Translations of Buddhist Texts

For anyone interested in learning more about Buddhism, good-quality translated texts are obviously extremely valuable. A great number of Buddhist texts translated into English are available in digital form, and most of them can be freely downloaded from various websites. The Theravāda (Pāli) canon is especially well represented. The aforementioned website of Access to Insight ([accesstoinight.org](http://www.accesstoinight.org)) probably has the largest online collection of Pāli texts in English translation. The site is very well organized and the translations are in general of high quality. In some cases, several different translations of the same text are available, which can help those who do not read Pāli get a better sense of the range of meanings that can be found in the original.

East and Inner Asian Buddhism belong to the broad category of Mahāyāna, and it is Mahāyāna texts that have had by far the greatest impact on the development of Buddhism in the region. A number of important sūtras translated from the Chinese Buddhist canon, the canon used in all of East Asia, are available online. One example is the *Lotus Sūtra*, an extremely influential Mahāyāna sūtra, which is available at several websites in Burton Watson's readable translation from the Chinese (e.g., <http://nichiren.info/buddhism/lotussutra/>). A nineteenth-century translation of the Sanskrit text of the *Lotus Sūtra* by H. Kern is also available online (www.sacred-texts.com/bud/lotus/index.htm).

Recently the Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai (Society for the Promotion of Buddhism) has sponsored translations from the Chinese of a number of Buddhist texts. That includes new translations of important and previously translated sūtras, such as *The Vimalakīrti Sutra* (by John McRae), *The Sutra of Queen Śrīmālā of the Lion's Roar* (by Diana Paul), and the three main Pure Land sūtras (by Hisao Inagaki). These and other Buddhist texts are available for free download at the Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai's webpage (<http://www.bdkamerica.org>). Links to a number of other translations of Mahāyāna sūtras can be found at a webpage titled "Mahayana Buddhist Sutras in English" (www4.bayarea.net/~mtlee), although some of the links there no longer work. Other translated East Asian Buddhist texts, including texts that are not classified as sūtras, can also be found on the Internet. That is especially the case with texts associated with the Chan/Zen tradition, such as writings by the famous Japanese founder of Sōtō Zen, Dōgen (1200–1253), translated by the scholars of the ongoing Sōtō Zen Text Project (<http://scbs.stanford.edu/sztp3/index.html>).

The Tibetan Buddhist tradition has historically placed less emphasis on the study of sūtras; instead, it has focused on commentaries and treatises composed by Indian and Tibetan masters. Therefore, translated Tibetan Buddhist texts that are available in digital form are mostly traditional commentaries and writings by contemporary masters. A number of translations can be found at the website of the Lotsawa House (<http://www.lotsawahouse.org/free-translations-tibetan-buddhist-texts>). The Nālanda Translation Committee also offer some translations online (nalandatranslation.org/offerings/translations-and-commentaries), although the bulk of their translations are for purchase only (in hardcopy, it seems). The 84000 translation project (www.buddhistliteraryheritage.org) currently has a few translations available, but it is an ambitious project involving a number of well-known academics that aims, within twenty-five years, to have facilitated the "translation and widespread accessibility of all of the Kangyur and related volumes of the Tengyur" (84000.co/about/vision). It should be noted that some translations of Tibetan Buddhist texts, including those posted online, are restricted to persons who have received the appropriate training and transmissions.

In spite of the many fine translations available online, the majority of reliable modern translations of Buddhist texts are published in book form and are usually not available (at least legally) online. Several good collections of translations from primary Buddhist sources are available in e-book formats, such as *Buddhist Scriptures* edited by Donald Lopez (Penguin, 2004), or *Sayings of the Buddha: New Translations from the Pali Nikayas* by Rupert Gethin (Oxford, 2008).

Being a Digital Buddhist

As noted above, there are easily tens of thousands of websites, blogs, and discussion forums associated with diverse arrays of Buddhist groups, centers, and individuals. The range is exceptionally vast: some websites are operated by well-established Buddhist groups such as the San Francisco Zen Center (www.sfzc.org) or the major sects of Japanese Buddhism, while other websites are run by small meditation groups, or by a single

individual Buddhist who may or may not have any formal affiliation with Buddhism. The websites run by large Buddhist groups are usually the ones that have much information about their particular tradition, as discussed above, although websites run by smaller groups also often contain some information for interested outsiders. However, in this section I want to focus on websites or aspects of websites that cater specifically to Buddhist practitioners, or at least to those who consider themselves to be Buddhists. Here, we may distinguish two types: websites run by traditional (in the sense of “pre-digital”) Buddhist centers, with a physical space where members can meet for talks, meditation sessions, and services; and websites that mainly cater to an Internet community, a wholly new kind of cyber-sangha where participants rarely if ever meet face-to-face.

Websites run by traditional groups tend to function mainly as clearing houses for member-related information, and they also provide information for prospective members. Well-established Buddhist groups often have extensive websites that have much information directed to members about their teachings and practices; Buddhist websites also usually aim at spreading the Buddhist teachings and recruiting new members. Smaller Buddhist groups, such as the Iowa City Zen Center (iowacityzen-center.org), usually have more basic websites that give simple information about their location, schedule, and up-coming events.

Many larger Buddhist centers run blogs, where typically a resident teacher writes notes about Buddhist lifestyle and practice, or relays member news (e.g. kuzanzen.org). Most such blogs also offer the possibility for readers to comment on particular posts. Some Buddhist groups go beyond websites and have Twitter feeds, with pithy thoughts from the teacher, sometimes with links to longer blog entries. Some also make sermons and lectures available as audio podcasts. Many Buddhist groups also have Facebook pages (facebook.com), where members and others can follow news and engage in discussions.

Video is a medium that is increasingly present on the Internet, as a result of ever-higher bandwidths. Many Buddhist sites have begun to offer video recordings of talks by specific teachers, and a great number of videos of Buddhist sermons and rituals, as well as interviews with Buddhist masters and various types of documentaries, can be found on YouTube (youtube.com). This is an especially interesting development, since it may point to a future where the Internet will be increasingly visual, and move away from its current textual dominance.

The use of electronic media certainly makes it easier for Buddhist groups to spread information to their members and the outside world, but the greatest innovation here appears to be in the interactive possibilities that are offered by new digital technologies. One of the most exciting aspects of religion in the digital age may thus be the entirely new forms of interaction and community-forming, which have become possible for those who wish to engage on a personal level. Especially in the West, this has affected Buddhist practice in profound ways. For traditional Buddhist groups, new forms of interaction facilitated by the Internet mean that not only can the students receive regular communications from their Buddhist teacher, the students themselves can communicate with their teacher and other students via various blogs and Facebook pages. A number of Zen groups even offer *dokusan* (personal meetings with a Zen

master) through Internet video conferencing, making it much easier for busy members or those who live far away to engage in this traditional practice.

Even as interactive media can facilitate and enhance interactions between members of a Buddhist group, they also open up new possibilities for forming temporary or continuing communities that only exist in cyberspace. For example, in October 2010 Shambhala Publications, a publisher of Buddhist and other religious literature, organized an online retreat with the popular Buddhist teacher Pema Chödrön. The fee-paying participants watched real-time video streaming of dharma talks and meditation instruction given during the retreat, and could interact with Pema Chödrön and each other in chat rooms. Thus the retreat created a gathering that only existed in cyberspace and the actual physical location of the participants was of no importance, thereby enabling far-flung participants to come together with little expense or effort. While the organizers have not provided information about the exact number of participants, the fact that the same retreat was repeated again in October 2011 presumably indicates that the first one was reasonably successful. For similar current Shambhala online courses see <http://www.shambhala.com/courses.html>.

Buddhist practitioners can now readily participate in even more dramatic forms of virtual reality. Perhaps the most innovative and even startling application of new digital technology for Buddhist practice is the use of an MMO (massively multiplayer online) game environment. MMOs are games where large numbers of players can interact simultaneously in a digitally created world, through an Internet-connected computer or game console. A well-known MMO is Second Life, which is not really a game at all, but an electronic environment where users can build their own “worlds” and invite other users/players into them (secondlife.com). Each player is represented through an “avatar” (a small computer-generated cartoon figure); in the program the avatar can interact with other avatars who are also representative of real people. Second Life has several user-created Buddhist sites, where members can meet and listen to Dharma talks, meditate, hold discussions, and so on.

One of the most active Buddhist sites on Second Life is the Kannonji Zendo (a.k.a. Kannonji Zen Retreat), which in spite of its name regularly hosts teachers from several different Buddhist traditions. The Kannonji has an active schedule, with usually four or five guided meditation sessions a day and frequent Dharma talks (<http://kannonjiretreat.com>). Participants, or rather their avatars, enter a virtual meditation hall, and through a certain command seat themselves on meditation cushions. The meditation leader or Dharma teacher can address herself to the participants either in writing that appears on the bottom on the screen or—as is usual for longer talks—through her computer microphone, and the interaction can be surprisingly realistic. The kind of “deep” virtual reality that is offered by Second Life will likely become increasingly realistic in the future, and it will be interesting to see the degree to which such virtual reality can supplant or supplement actual human interaction.

There are also many Buddhist discussion boards or forums on the Internet. This may be the most common form of online interaction in which Buddhist practitioners and other people interested in Buddhist practice and thought participate. Such forums are usually open to all, although they tend to be moderated and posts that are deemed abusive or otherwise unsuitable are often deleted. Some forums, as far as it is possible

to determine, do not seem to have any direct connection with any Buddhist group or denomination (e.g. newbuddhist.com), while others have a specifically stated sectarian affiliation (e.g. www.dhammadownload.com). It appears that most participants on Buddhist forums do not know each other in the real world, and most use an anonymous moniker. The discussions in Buddhist forums are often very lively, and perhaps less restrained than real-life interactions might be. Since, in the West, Buddhism often is understood to be mainly about personal insights and experiences, many people consider themselves qualified to make pronouncements about Buddhist thought and practice. This sometimes leads to rather caustic debates in discussion forums, when people with different understandings launch personal attacks on each other.

The nature of the Internet also enables controversies within the Buddhist community to spread faster and more widely than ever before. This was evidenced in the fall and winter of 2010, when Eido Roshī (b. 1932), a senior teacher in the American Zen community, was publicly accused of many years of sexual abuse of his students (see www.nytimes.com/2010/08/21/us/21beliefs.html?_r=4&pagewanted=all). Eido Roshī chose to resign from his leadership position, but a lively and acrimonious debate about his future and his relationship to his old Zen center is still raging online (see www.shimanoarchive.com). Other recent acknowledged and alleged scandals in Western Buddhist communities, such as the one surrounding Dennis Genpo Merzel (b. 1944), yet another Zen teacher, have also been brought into the open via the Internet (for instance, see <http://sweepingzen.com/category/articles/genpo-merzel-archive/>). Thus it can be argued that the Internet is forcing a greater openness within the Western Buddhist community, while at the same time it can function as an accelerated rumor mill that will allow any accusation to spread quickly.

The Internet can also be a dangerous place for Buddhist websites. For instance, when debates about Buddhism have become overly personal, some people have turned to hacking attacks. On the large Buddhist website named E-Sangha (e-sangha.org), which is billed as non-sectarian, there were a number of separate forums on different branches of Buddhism, such as Theravāda, Zen, Tibetan Buddhism, and also on engaged Buddhism, Women in Buddhism, and so on. The discussions were thriving, but sometimes got very combative. In such cases, site-appointed moderators would step in and stop the discussion, and reprimand or even block users who were deemed abusive. But, it seems, the site administrators also would enforce a kind of ideological purity on the various forums. Posted statements that were considered to be in conflict with certain Buddhist values were censored, while the users posting them were sometimes blocked permanently from the site. Anyone known to be affiliated with the New Kadampa Tradition (see Kadampa.org), which was considered heretical by the E-Sangha administrators, was banned.

These policies led unhappy (and mostly former) users to create their own websites, like E-Sangha Watch (<http://esanghalert.wordpress.com>), where they complained about the perceived intolerance. In the fall of 2009, the entire E-Sangha domain was hacked and to a large degree destroyed; years later, the site has not quite recovered (<http://directory.e-sangha.com>). Nobody has accepted responsibility for the hacking, but unhappy former users are prime suspects (along with hackers affiliated with the Chinese government, since the Tibet forum often had anti-Chinese statements).

This kind of attack has also happened in Asia. The website of Shaolin si, a famous Chinese Buddhist monastery popularly associated with the martial arts, also experienced an incident of hacking in the fall of 2009, which appears connected to a religious dispute. Shaolin monastery has become a major tourist site, generating a large income. The corporate approach of the current abbot has caused some criticisms, especially from people who believe that the ancient religious site has become too commercialized. In the incident, hackers broke into the Shaolin monastery's website (shaolin.org.cn) and posted a fabricated apology from the abbot, in which he expresses remorse for gaining "fame for Shaolin Temple and myself at the price of the purity and holiness of the Buddhist temple," as well as for corruption (blogs.wsj.com/digits/2009/11/13/shaolin-temple-under-hacker-attack). The letter was quickly taken down, and the police are reportedly investigating the hacking incident.

Finally, as cell phones are becoming more powerful mini-computer devices (so-called "smartphones"), it is not surprising that there are a number of phone applications that teach Buddhist meditation, contain Buddhist prayers, or preach Buddhist wisdom. More than a hundred such applications can be found at the iPhone store, and about an equal number exist for Android phones.

Interestingly, Buddhists groups and teachers typically seem to consider digital technology a way to enhance and spread "traditional" Buddhist practices, rather than a new way of being Buddhist. This is even the case with various cyber-sanghas, which only exist on the Internet. As the aforementioned Kannonji Zen Retreat on Second Life describes itself:

Kannonji Zen Retreat is an invaluable resource for individuals living with disabilities or in isolated areas with no local sangha for support. . . . We are not virtually practicing Buddhism. Rather, we are practicing Buddhism using virtual technology. There is a big difference.

The introduction at the Kannonji website further explains:

OK, so maybe it all sounds a bit weird to you. How can Buddhism, let alone Zen, be practiced virtually? The short answer? It isn't really. We are real people sitting in front of our computer. They probably should have just called the platform First Life, as it would have cleared up a lot of confusion. Our stance is that, well, wherever you go in life is practice (kannonjiretreat.com/2010/08/09/kannonji-zendo).

Digital Resources for the Academic Study of Buddhism

While the digital age has perhaps not really made it easier to learn about basic Buddhism, at least from the perspective of modern scholarship—and the nature of its impact on Buddhist practice is still difficult to gauge—a number of extremely valuable digital resources have dramatically transformed the advanced study of Buddhism. Below I survey four different kinds of digital resources for academic Buddhist studies:

(1) digital online access to scholarly journals and an increasing number of books; (2) online discussion groups as mediums for exchanges among scholars; (3) digital dictionaries and encyclopedias; and (4) the digitization of original Buddhist texts and other primary sources useful for the study of Buddhism. I have arranged these according to how much knowledge of Buddhist canonical languages one needs to access them. Other categories of digital resources could have also been included, such as databases of place or person names or GIS (geo-information systems) databases, but in the interests of space only these four categories are discussed.

Digitized journals, books, and bibliographies

Most scholarly journals in English are now available online in digital format, usually through a subscribing university library; an increasing number of books are also becoming available in the same way. This is not just a matter of convenience (although the day when no one will ever have to go to a physical library cannot be far away), it also makes it possible to find relevant articles and books much more quickly and efficiently than before, which is especially important as scholarship increases in volume. Academic journals and, to a lesser degree, books in various Asian languages are also becoming increasingly available in digital format.

A very useful general-access database of scholarship on Buddhism in a number of European and Asian languages is hosted at the National Taiwan University (buddhism.lib.ntu.edu.tw/BDLM/en/index.htm). Also essential to Buddhist studies is the Indian and Buddhist Studies Treatise Database (www.inbuds.net), which allows for searches in Chinese, English, Japanese, and Korean. The Bibliography of Asian Studies (quod.lib.umich.edu/b/bas) is also very useful in locating both books and journal articles in English, but it is only accessible through subscribing libraries. A large bibliography of books and articles, with about 40,000 entries relating to Tibetan Buddhism, is hosted by Erwan Temple (www.bibliographietibet.org). A highly useful, and occasionally updated, reference guide to East Asian Buddhist studies, compiled by William Bodiford and Robert Buswell, is also available online (www.alc.ucla.edu/refguide/refguide.htm).

Online discussion groups

Online discussion groups have become an important medium for scholarly exchange. The H-Net Discussion Networks (www.h-net.org/lists) are especially valuable for research purposes because they are moderated and restricted to those with a scholarly interest. H-Buddhism currently has more than 1,500 members and functions as a clearing house, where members can pose questions, announce publications and conferences, and so on, and where reviews of new scholarly works on Buddhism are regularly posted (www.h-net.org/~buddhism).

Digital dictionaries, encyclopedias, and indexes

Dictionaries and encyclopedias are resources that are especially enhanced by being digitized and made searchable. In addition to dictionaries and encyclopedias that are fully digital, electronic indexes of reference works can be very helpful as well. There are a few digital dictionaries and encyclopedias specific to Buddhism. Foremost among English-language resources is the *Digital Dictionary of Buddhism* (www.buddhism-dict.net/ddb), an ongoing collaborative project led by Charles Muller of Tokyo University. This dictionary has become a major resource for scholars of East Asian Buddhism, and its volume and coverage continue to expand. The DDB is essentially a database of Buddhist Chinese terms, but it is possible to search it in English. The database is really a cross between a dictionary and an encyclopedia, because a number of entries are very substantial and give extensive overviews of specific topics. Anyone can access the dictionary as a guest, but guests can only perform ten searches in a 24-hour period. Individuals and university libraries can subscribe to gain unlimited access. The DDB also functions as an index to a wide range of mostly Chinese and Japanese dictionaries, even for terms that have no entries in the DDB (see www.buddhism-dict.net/ddb/allindex-intro.html). The DDB's sister project, the *CJKV-English Dictionary*, described as "A Dictionary of Sinitic Characters and Compounds Related to East Asian Cultural, Political, and Intellectual History" (www.buddhism-dict.net/dealt), is also useful to anyone working in East Asian Buddhism.

Another English-language dictionary of Buddhism is available in digital format online: *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, by W.E. Soothill and L. Hodous, first published in 1937 and digitized by Charles Muller in 2003 (mahajana.net/texts/kopia_lokalna/soothill-hodous.html). However, the content of the dictionary has been incorporated into the DDB, and in any case the dictionary is quite dated (although it is still sold at bookstores). Other resources in English that can be useful for the research of Buddhism include the freely accessible *The Chinese-English Dictionary of Modern Usage* (humanum.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/Lexis/Lindict), compiled by the famous scholar Lin Yutang (1895–1976).

A number of other important digital dictionaries are only available in Asian languages. Very important for East Asian Buddhist studies is the *Foguang Buddhist Dictionary* (*Foguang da cidian*), a highly comprehensive and extremely useful dictionary in Chinese that is freely accessible online (etext.fgs.org.tw/etext6/search-1.htm). An older Chinese Buddhist dictionary by Ding Fubao (1874–1952), originally from 1922, can also be accessed online for free (for example, cbs.ntu.edu.tw/dict/dfb/data), but like the Soothill and Hodous dictionary, it is rather outdated (but also still in print).

The single most important dictionary for any scholar working with Chinese texts, including Buddhist ones, is no doubt the *Hanyu da cidian*, the largest-scale Chinese dictionary ever compiled, which is now available on CD-ROM (Windows Vista/XP/2000). However, the CD version is somewhat abbreviated and does not contain everything from the print volume (for comparison, see Wilkinson 2000: 69–73, and www.cheng-tsui.com/store/products/hanyu_da_cidian_cdrom; the information on the CD-ROM in Wilkinson seems mistaken).

For research in Tibetan Buddhism, the Tibetan and Himalayan Library project (thlib.org) functions as a portal to a number of different dictionaries (www.thlib.org/reference/dictionaries/tibetan-dictionary/index.php). Especially useful is The Tibetan to English Translation Tool (www.thlib.org/reference/dictionaries/tibetan-dictionary/translate.php). Also useful for scholars and students of Buddhism in general is Damien Keown's *A Dictionary of Buddhism*, which is available online through Oxford Reference Online (www.oxfordreference.com) via subscribing libraries. This work has 2,000 entries of varying length, covering the history and doctrines of major Buddhist schools, the spread of Buddhism in Asia and the West, and a variety of contemporary topics and issues, such as human rights, abortion, euthanasia, engaged Buddhism, and the role of women.

Digitized Buddhist texts and other primary sources

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of the digital age for scholars has been the digitization of texts. For the study of Buddhism, this has meant that an enormous body of both Buddhist and non-Buddhist texts in various languages now can be searched in seconds, thus making possible hitherto virtually inconceivable research projects. For most scholars of East Asian Buddhism, the most important collection of digitized traditional Buddhist texts is the CBETA project. CBETA stands for Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association, a group associated with the Dharma Drum Buddhist College, established by the late Taiwanese Buddhist leader Sheng Yen (1930–2009). For more than ten years, the group has worked on digitizing the Chinese Buddhist canon in a fully searchable format, and making it widely available free of cost. The initial efforts were directed at the Chinese parts of the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* (usually referred to as the Taishō canon) and the *Dai Nihon zokuzōkyō* (known as the *Zokuzōkyō* or *Xuzang jing*), but in recent years CBETA has moved on to less accessible Chinese Buddhist texts. The input project can be searched online at cbeta.org, but even more useful is the PC Windows-based database and search tool that can be downloaded at the website, or obtained on a CD. Smart phone and tablet versions have also recently been added.

Another important Buddhist input and web-delivered database project is the SAT Daizōkyō Text Database, based at Tokyo University, which has the full text of all eighty-five volumes of the Taishō canon. That includes the Japanese section of the Taishō canon, which is not incorporated into the CBETA project. The SAT database is available online (21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT). Furthermore, a large number of texts from the Japanese True Pure Land school, many of them not included in the Taishō canon, can be read and searched online (crs.hongwanji.or.jp/kensaku).

The Korean Buddhist canon that was carved in the thirteenth century and kept at the famous Korean monastery, Haeinsa, has also been digitized. This is essentially an early version of the Chinese Buddhist canon, but it also contains some texts unique to the Korean Buddhist tradition (see kb.sutra.re.kr). Published under the name *Tripitaka Koreana*, this was the first complete digital version of the Chinese portion of the East Asian canon. The electronic version includes photographs of the original woodblock prints, an extremely valuable feature that makes it possible to check for input mistakes

and original layout. Furthermore, a collection of a wide range of Buddhist texts produced in Korea over the centuries can be found in the *Hanguk bulgyo chonso*, which has been digitized (for access, see ebti.dongguk.ac.kr). This collection is very important for the study of Korean Buddhist history; it also contains much that pertains to Chinese Buddhism.

A number of Tibetan Buddhist canonical texts and commentaries have also been digitized. The Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center, under the leadership of the recently deceased E. Gene Smith, has sponsored many high-quality digital editions of Tibetan texts. They are available to subscribing institutions at the webpage of the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center (tbrc.org). The Asian Classics Input Project (www.asianclassics.org) also makes a large number of texts available, and a number of smaller textual collections can be found on several other websites. As noted earlier, many of these texts are available only to users who have completed the traditional requirements for studying them.

Furthermore, a large number of non-Buddhist primary sources relating to East Asian and Tibetan history and culture have been digitized. Buddhist studies cannot, of course, confine itself to Buddhist sources only, and databases of secular sources can be extremely useful in the study of Buddhism. There are currently four major databases of Chinese historical primary sources available online, although each of them requires institutional subscription for full access. The database most commonly subscribed to by universities is the *Wenyuange Siku quanshu dianziban* (www.sikuquanshu.com), a collection of 3,471 Chinese texts that were originally compiled under imperial directive in 1782. In addition to being fully digitized, in the “professional edition” each page from the original has been photographically reproduced, so that users can check the original (and find page numbers). The collection is very useful, but the original compilation was quite careless and there are many mistakes in the texts. The *Scripta Sinica* (hanji.sinica.edu.tw) from the Academia Sinica in Taiwan offers access to a number of texts not included in the *Siku quanshu*. Some text collections can be accessed for free (most notably the twenty-five dynastic histories); the bulk of the database, however, is for subscribers only.

The *Guoxue baodian* (www.guoxue.com) is a subscriber database that is somewhat larger than the *Siku quanshu*. Texts included in it have modern punctuation and are in simplified characters; there are no page numbers or references to print editions. CD-ROMs with select collections are sold separately (PC only). A subset of the database is available for free at the website, although it is difficult to search individual texts, or even to find them. Some collections important for Chinese Buddhist studies are included, such as the *Quan Tang wen* (www.guoxue.com/wenxian/wxji/qtw/ml.htm). Finally, the *Zhongguo jiben guji ku* (http://www.learningmall.com.hk/News/China_Guji.html), developed at Beijing University, is by far the most comprehensive collection of pre-modern Chinese texts: with 10,000 individual works and collections, it is three times larger than the *Siku quanshu*. The *Zhongguo jiben guji ku* includes photographic images of the original texts as well as full-text search capabilities, and it appears to be based on early print editions. Unfortunately, access to the database is quite expensive, and currently only a few US and European educational institutions subscribe to it.

There are a number of databases of Japanese historical sources that are available to search for free (for a list, see hcl.harvard.edu/research/guides/japanese/part8.html#history). The Historiographical Institute at the University of Tokyo maintains a large collection of databases (accessible at wwwap.hi.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ships/db-e.html). The Japan Knowledge database gives subscribers access to an entire reference library of Japanese sources, but it is by subscription only (www.jkn21.com/top/corpdisplay).

A number of databases offer digitized Korean primary sources (for a comprehensive description, see hcl.harvard.edu/research/guides/korean/index.html). Several that are useful for research on Buddhism are freely available; for instance, the National Digital Library's Korean History Online search engine allows the cross-searching of thirteen Korean history databases (db.history.go.kr/). The Korean Classics Research Institute also maintains a database that includes more than 1,330 volumes of Korean classics (www.minchu.or.kr). KRpia is a collection of over 70 full-text databases with a broad coverage of primary resources on Korean Studies (www.krpia.co.kr). It contains the image files of the original texts in classical Chinese and has searchable Korean translations. However, it is available to subscribing libraries only.

Outside the texts relevant to Tibetan history that are included in the Tibetan Buddhist canon, Tibetan historical sources have not been extensively digitized. However, the Digitized Tibetan Archives Material at Bonn University has created databases of several collections of historical documents (www.dtab.uni-bonn.de/tibdoc/index1.htm).

Concluding Reflections on Buddhism in the Digital World

It is clear that both the practice and study of Buddhism have in many ways been transformed by the Internet and digitalization. New and exciting possibilities for interacting with people and texts continue to develop. It is difficult and probably impossible to predict how these developments will influence the study and practice of Buddhism and other religions in the future. Nevertheless, in this concluding section I take a closer look at some of the changes that are happening already, and try to evaluate their effects and the direction in which they are taking us. There is little doubt that in many ways digitization has had a highly positive impact on the academic study of Buddhism, and has made Buddhist teachings more accessible. However, we should not be blind to possibly less positive aspects of the increasing digitalization within the world of Buddhism.

I have already pointed out how much of the information about Buddhism found on the Internet can be unreliable or biased in one way or the other. It might be added that studies show that people searching for information on the Internet often will only spend a few minutes trying to get an answer; even if in-depth information is available, online users will rarely take the time to read it (Carr 2010). At the same time, individuals used to the speed and convenience of the Internet may well be disinclined to seek out information in print. In this way, general knowledge of Buddhism may overall become less accurate, even if more widespread.

This connects with another pertinent issue. Once a text is made available in digital form, especially if that is done at no cost, it is unlikely that it will ever appear in print again. It is easy to imagine that in the future the Taishō canon, for example, will no

longer be reprinted, since now anyone can obtain the CBETA or SAT files of it for free. At the very least, we can be certain that in the future there will be many fewer printed copies of the Buddhist canon, in all languages, in circulation. The same is true for other collections of Buddhist texts. However, the reliance on electronic text and digital media could endanger the long-term survival of these texts.

The world's oldest datable printed text is a Chinese edition of a Buddhist sūtra from 868 CE, and a great number of very ancient Buddhist books and manuscripts in several languages are still extant. More are likely to be found in the future, stashed away in graves, temple walls, or discovered in ancient libraries. To the degree that the original paper (or sometimes stone) is preserved, these texts are just as readable now as when they were first created, hundreds or even over a thousand years ago. However, we know now that digital media, like DVD-ROMs, hard drives, or flash drives, have rather short physical lifespans, probably less than a few decades. What is more, the technology behind them changes even more rapidly, and it can be almost impossible to read a file that is just five or ten years old with recent computer software. This means that collections of digital texts or databases of various kinds have to be continuously updated to be usable. It may be too optimistic to believe that this will indeed happen for the next thousand years. Consequently, many Buddhist texts could be lost for distant future generations as a direct result of digitization.

In many ways digitization has been a democratizing force in the study of Buddhism, at any level, since much of the electronic information and many of the resources are available for free to anyone with a computer and an Internet connection. However, this does in fact exclude much of the world's population, illustrating the so-called digital divide. Under 30% of the population of Asia use the Internet, and in Africa just over 15% are Internet users. More than 20% of North Americans still do not use the Internet, while in Europe non-users make up almost 40% (www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm, data as of June 30, 2012). The issue is not just one of unequal access: as we have seen, because the availability of many resources online is causing print editions to largely cease, fewer resources are going to be available to those without Internet access.

Likewise, for academics, the proliferation of digitized source materials relevant to Buddhist studies has served to equalize the field, but also to make it more stratified. The Buddhist primary sources that have been digitized have in general been free, and scholars no longer need access to the library of an elite research institution to use these texts. But other databases crucial to the modern study of Buddhism are not free; they are often prohibitively expensive for individuals, and scholars who do not have access to a major research library that can afford such resources are at a distinct disadvantage. Whereas rare or expensive books usually can be borrowed through interlibrary loan, there is no mechanism in place for the "loan" of electronic materials, which can usually only be accessed through the Internet via the subscribing institution.

The widespread availability of digitized primary sources brings up what may be the most interesting and difficult question of all: Does interacting with digital texts make us think differently about a topic than if we were working with the same texts in print versions? As was already mentioned, it seems that Internet users are being

conditioned to seek fast answers online, which discourages in-depth exploration of a topic. Interestingly, recent research also suggests that people remember the content of newspapers read online less well than when reading a print copy (img.slate.com/media/66/MediumMatters.pdf; <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=reading-paper-screens>).

In the same way, the ability to search large collections of texts may sometimes lead to scholarship that sacrifices depth for breadth. The ability to search within the entire Buddhist canon gives scholars increased opportunities to trace the development of ideas and concepts across the broad spectrum of Buddhism. Databases of secular sources also make it possible to locate many different kinds of data that can help scholars greatly enrich and expand the current understanding of Buddhist teachings and history. On the other hand, this ability to search a large number of texts with many “hits” may also lead to a somewhat superficial interaction with the texts. There is a danger of ending up “plucking” bits and pieces of useful information from these texts, without really knowing the relevant contexts, and gravitating toward passages that confirm preconceived ideas. Digital text on a computer screen seems as if it is floating in space, and it is difficult to get a sense of orientation within the work one is researching.

The age of digitized source materials seems unlikely to produce the kind of scholarship that focuses on a thorough analysis of just a few texts. But such scholarship is of course important too (and, in fact, can also benefit from the databases of digitized texts). It seems crucial for the future of Buddhist studies that scholars continue to support a wide range of different approaches to Buddhist scholarship, and not allow the availability of digital text bracket or constrain their research.

The above discussion of digitized resources for interested non-specialists, Buddhist practitioners, and scholars of Buddhism is by no means complete, and by its very nature it is going to be at least partially outdated by the time this chapter is published. A few decades ago, no one could have accurately predicted what Buddhism in the digital world would look like today, and it would be naïve to think that it is possible to predict what will happen over the next few decades. But the contours of the future can at least be dimly perceived. It seems likely that online resources for Buddhist practitioners are going to expand and become increasingly interactive and “life-like.” On the other hand, it may take a long time and considerable technical development before people will consider this kind of interaction as desirable and as satisfying as actual flesh-and-blood interaction.

In the publishing arena, electronic publications are going to be increasingly common, often supplanting print publications; more and more translated e-texts about Buddhism will become available, many of them for free. Printed versions of the Buddhist canon and other Buddhist texts are likely to be discontinued and will no longer be available for purchase, or will become prohibitively expensive. Scholars will use new collections of texts in digitized formats, as well as new databases, dictionaries, and other reference works, and even the most expensive of these will eventually be widely available. It seems certain that as the ongoing digital revolution continues to amaze and startle us, it will present new opportunities and challenges to both Buddhist scholarship and Buddhist practice.

Notes

- 1 In writing this essay, I have received help and suggestions from several people; I would especially like to thank my former graduate student Matthew Wilhite for his helpful feedback, and Jan-Ulrich Sobisch and Jakob Leschly for their help with identifying Tibetan resources.
- 2 For reasons of space, I will not follow the convention of noting the date of access when I refer to websites.
- 3 In this chapter I only address “convert” Buddhism in the West. The situation with “immigrant” Buddhism is often quite different; see Prebish and Tanaka 1998 for a discussion of this distinction.

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