

## Buddhism in Medieval Korea

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### Abstract

Buddhism was the dominant system of thought in Korean society from the first half of the ~~6th~~ sixth century to the latter half of the ~~14th~~ fourteenth century. Whereas ~~s~~ shamanism, that prevailed previously, professed ~~a view of the~~ that future ~~lives~~ life succeeding to the prior lifetimes, Buddhism preached a transmigratory view of the world beyond. Because ~~they~~ Buddhism believed that ~~man~~ people transmigrated in accordance with the principle of "causes and effects concomitant in their retribution" or *hetu-phala*, ~~the people of~~ the people of Unified Silla and Goryeo ~~people~~, hoping for happy future, ~~were~~ were intent upon accumulating ~~meritorious~~ meritorious Buddhist virtues. Buddhist clergy flourished as it was regarded as a "field of blessings" or *punnakkhetta*, from which seeds of well-being can be harvested.

Medieval Korean states enforced a policy of protecting but controlling Buddhism. ~~The~~ Rulers treated Buddhism preferentially, but kept a rein on the clergy by running a monk-administration system. The clergy was regarded as an entity sharing the same fate ~~with~~ as the state; the "protection of the ~~dharmma~~ dharma, i.e. Buddhism" and the "protection of the state" constituted a relationship like that of ~~the~~ two wheels of a bicycle. By formalizing Buddhist rituals into state festivals, the state prompted its protection of the ~~da~~ harma to enhance national interests. ~~The~~ Bulguksa temple, Seokguram grotto, Divine Bell of King Seongdeok, and Goryeo-Tripitaka Koreana are all world-renowned cultural treasures ~~and~~ the ~~legacies~~ of this period.

When Buddhist clergy became the hotbed of corruption and degradation in Goryeo's later years, ~~Neo~~ Neo-Confucian scholars demanded a drastic reform of the system. ~~In their view,~~ The protection ~~protecting of dharma or Buddhism, to them,~~ protected the state ~~Buddhism no longer protected the state~~ no longer, but rather precipitated its fall. ~~As they~~ Neo-Confucianists ~~eventually~~ helped usher in the Joseon dynasty, ~~and~~ suppressing Buddhism, ~~and~~ promoting Confucianism became Joseon's ~~state~~ policy. ~~While~~ Buddhism ~~denied~~ the independence of ~~any form of~~ an objective world ~~and argued that the world~~ transcended ~~ing~~ man's subjective cognition. ~~Confucianism,~~ By contrast, Confucianism ~~accepted~~ the independent existence of the objective world. The transition from Buddhism to Confucianism in Korea in the ~~fourteen~~ 14th century, accordingly, signifies the replacement of the dominant system of thought, ~~which had to~~ adapting to social changes.

Keywords: causes and effects concomitant in their retribution or the principle of *hetu-phala*, transmigration (~~or~~ samsara), Buddhist virtues ~~or~~ (guna), theory of "bodhisattva for ~~the~~ king" (*bosal wiyangseol*), monk-official (*seunggwon*), ~~hebeob~~ or the protection of the

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dharma (*hobeop*), ~~hoguk~~ or state-protection (*hoguk*).

## 1- Preface

~~Korea began to introduce~~ Buddhism was first introduced to Korea in the latter half of the ~~four~~4th century, and it was in the first half of the sixth century that the Three Kingdoms, Silla being the last among them, gave full official recognition to Buddhism. The Three Kingdoms introduced Buddhism, which was a ~~areligion more~~more universal religion than ~~sshamanism~~shamanism, from China, ~~that prevailed at the time~~when they were expanding~~ing~~ their territories and ~~competitively strengthening~~strengthening their political systems~~in competition~~. Buddhism Ggradually ~~taking took~~took roots in Korean society and ~~passing through~~experienced an accommodation period in the late Three Kingdoms era Buddhism~~until it~~ functioned as the dominant system of thought in Unified Silla and Goryeo. This period ~~represents is considered the~~ medieval era in Korean history.

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~~Buddhism,~~ In India, Buddhism was originally a ~~is a teaching for~~teaching for truth seekers to forsakeing the world. In a bid to construct a state with a centralized power~~structure~~, however, secular rulers in East Asia preferentially ~~preferentially~~ treated Buddhism as a collaborator in the rule because it ~~had~~ influencea religion ~~influential~~among the people. At the same time, however, they ~~as a~~ while kept Buddhism under their tight control. ~~On the other hand~~By cooperating with secularism. Buddhism, ~~by cooperating with, rather than confronting,~~ secularism, enjoyed ~~the glory of being the~~ glory of becoming the a dominant system of thought ~~for a long time~~. The legacy of Buddhist culture, accounting for more than a half of Korea's state-designated cultural properties, vividly reminds us of the traces of the Korean Buddhist glorious past~~in the country~~.

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This article attempts to systematically discuss the structure and functions of Korean Buddhism when it secured the position of, a dominant ideology during ~~its the~~ medieval period. First, I will discuss ~~The~~ what Buddhist sentiments ~~that~~ dwelt deeply among the people in a most ~~most~~ deeply, persistently manner and for the longest period of time in Korean history ~~is discussed first~~. Needless to say, these sentiments constituted the base of Buddhism in medieval Korea. Next, I will discuss the superstructure of Buddhism, i.e. state's Buddhist policy and ~~and the~~ Buddhist Buddhist clergy's view of the state and king, ~~i.e.,~~ ~~the superstructure,~~ follow in two chapters. Lastly, I will discuss the ~~eo~~ relationship between hoguk (護國) ~~or~~ the

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“protection of the state” (*hoguk*), and the “protection of the dharma” (*hobeop*) ~~or the protection of the dharma is discussed~~ in the context of the debate on the nature of Buddhism in medieval Korea.

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## 2. Theory of Cause and Effect and Belief in Salvation through Buddhist Merit

Buddhism is a system of thought designed to ~~is a system of thought aimed for one to basically teach people to overcome their~~ ~~overcome one's~~ sufferings. According to Sakyamuni, no creation in the universe, including people, is ~~no~~ independent or of an inherent substance ~~exists in all creation including men~~, and the material world is not permanent ~~and~~ constant but ceaselessly changing. Being unable to see the changes, however, ~~men people~~ mistakenly ~~assume that the material world is them for being~~ constant and ~~are~~ ~~fixed~~ ~~ated~~ ~~T~~thereby. ~~c~~Contradictions arise between the changing material world and constant subjective cognizance, which in turn fills life with sufferings. ~~People become o~~bsessed with ~~an idea that~~ the idea of a fixed self or substance ~~exists~~, ~~furthermore~~ ~~and~~, ~~they make~~ engage in various karmic activities throughout their lives, ~~the which~~ accumulation ~~and of which dete~~ determines fates in future existence. ~~All sentient beings~~, including ~~men people~~, transmigrate between six paths of life (*yukdo*: heaven, ~~man~~humans, hell, hungry ghosts, shambles and beasts) like a ~~continuing constantly~~ spinning wheel; no path is free from sufferings. ~~different as the~~ ~~pathsy~~ are, ~~in degree~~. ~~If one wants t~~To break the chain of endless sufferings, Sakyamuni taught ~~that people must cut off their attachments to life and cultivate wisdom through ascetic training~~, ~~men~~, instead of offering sacrificial rites to gods or spirits, ~~must cut off their attachments to life and cultivate wisdom through ascetic training~~.

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In ~~contrast~~, shamanism, which had dominated Korean religious mentality, is based on a spirit-centered world-view that ~~sees people's men's~~ fortune or misfortune ~~is as~~ determined by ~~the~~ spirits ~~the spirits~~ of nature and ~~the~~ ancestors. ~~According to shamanism~~, ~~To~~ avert misfortune and gain fortune, ~~according to shamanism~~, one must offer sacrificial rites to ~~the~~ spirits. ~~Since a~~ ~~Only a~~ small number of specialized people monopolized rites, ~~they and people are~~ classified ~~men~~ into three groups: agents of spirits (*sinin*), ~~such as like~~ chief shamans; ordinary people, and ~~animal-like~~ lowly, ~~beast-like~~ people (*biin*). ~~And they~~ Shamans believed that life in the present world is repeated intact ~~in~~ future existence. ~~Tombs he from the~~ Three-

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Kingdoms-era tombs, preserved today, clearly tell preserved today, clearly demonstrate how the ruling class, who subscribed to this view of life after death, aspired to sustain their wealth and rank even after death-future life view of the then ruling class that aspired to sustain their wealth and rank even after death.

Buddhism, on the other hand, teaches that truth, not gods or spirits, but truth governs the world, and that all men-people are equal in principle before truth. One can change his or her future life through not reliance on gods or spirits but volitional deeds, not reliance on gods or spirits according to Buddhism.<sup>1</sup> By embracing Buddhism in the late Three Kingdoms era, Koreans, by embracing Buddhism, were able to cope with nature and history in a more subjective and positive and positive way. Since then, the BuddhistThe view of life--that --that men-people transmigrate between six kinds of livesfe under the principle of “causes and effects concomitant in their retributionretribution” (hetu-phala)--has --has since affected the lives of most-Korean sensibilities greatly. A Buddhist monk living in late Goryeo's later years created the images of Taejo, the founding king of Goryeo, transmigrating between nine sorts of lives.e. According to the monk'shis theory, Taejo, having accumulated Buddhist merits in his previous existence Buddhist merits-by living as a monk and a temple cow, Taejo eventually ascended the throne in his lifetime, and became a bodhisattva after death. Just as they farmersfarmed aspiring to good harvests, people then--accumulated merit in their lifetime in hope for a better future.s dreaming future well-being.

Good deeds done-by Buddhists are-is called “Buddhist merit” or guna. Construction of a temple, Buddhist statue and-or pagoda,s financial donations to the Buddhist establishment, road and bridge building, relief work for the poor, feeding and sheltering travellerstravelers, assisting the needy with medical care and finances,ial assistance to the needy all helped accumulate Buddhist meritsguna-or guna. Legend eloquently depicts the prevalent belief in “salvation through Buddhist merit” among all classes --poor and rich and high and low alike--by the 8eighth century at the latest. According to the legend, Aa poor mother and son, living near Gyeongju in the mid-eigh8th century heard were told by a monk-that a donation to the Buddhist clergy would give them rewardsreward them in turn with tens of thousands times the gift. --They-The mother and son donated a plot of land they were

1 On differences between shamanism and Buddhism and the process of Korea's embracing- of Buddhism, see Ko Ik-jin, “Chapter 2 “The “Samguk-ui bulgyo jeollae-wa jeongchak” (Introduction and Taking RootsEstablishment of Buddhism in the Three Kingdoms.”), chap. 2 in --Ko Ik-jin, 1989 --Hanguk godae bulgyo sasangsa (Buddhist Intellectual (The History of Ancient KoreaThoughts. )(Seoul: Dongguk

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cultivating, ~~wanted to live~~hoping for a happy life after death in return. Some time later, the son was born again as a ranking official's son and became a top government official. In a tribute to his parents in his former and present lives, he ~~had abuilt a~~ temple ~~built~~known as ~~That temple is~~ Bulguksa, accompanied by ~~the~~ Seokguram grotto, ~~vintage Unified Silla architecture~~ both of which are ~~vintage Unified Silla architecture~~ and UNESCO-registered world cultural heritage.<sup>2</sup> Such belief in "salvation through good deeds" prevailed in ~~the thoughts of Goryeo people,~~ from the king ~~on high and the population at large~~down to the masses. ~~The E~~evidence ~~can be is~~ often found in history books like ~~the~~ "~~Goryeosa~~" (History of Goryeo) ~~H~~History" and monument inscriptions. ~~King~~ Munjong, one of the most revered Goryeo kings ~~along with~~besides Taejo, for example, proclaimed he would bring fortunes to the country with the aid of Buddha's grace (*adhithana*).

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—The objects of worship in the accumulation of Buddhist merits were, ~~needless to say,~~ numerous Buddhas and bodhisattvas in Mahayana Buddhism and monks with outstanding attainments. Buddha originally ~~meant~~means "an enlightened person."<sup>1</sup> Mahayana Buddhism that came to Korea through China, however, deified ~~the~~ Buddha. According to documents on the introduction of Buddhism into Korea, ~~Koreans~~ from the outset, ~~Koreans~~ accepted ~~the~~ three treasures (*or trini-ratnani*) including Buddha as sacred beings with supernatural power. To Koreans of the medieval era, Buddhas meant ~~both were~~ "enlightened persons,"<sup>2</sup> ~~something~~ anyone could strive to become ~~by way of~~through ascetic training, and sacred beings with greater authority than spirits. ~~It goes without saying that~~S sacred beings satisfied ~~the~~ people's ~~religious~~ needs more than enlightened persons ~~did~~. Silla people held this belief from the beginning: "Each household worshipping Buddha enjoys ~~prosperity generation~~prosperity, ~~generation~~ after generation."<sup>3</sup>

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The objects of Buddhist merit such as Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and temples are called ~~the~~ "field of ~~b~~lessings" (*or punnakkhetta*) because ~~g~~~~Because~~ gaining fortune through the accumulation of good deeds is ~~like~~likened to sowing seeds on a field and harvesting grains from it. In Silla and Goryeo, euphemisms were usually used for distinguished monks. Uicheon (1055-1101), the fourth son of King Munjong, who represents the first half of the Goryeo era, became a monk ~~at the~~as ~~young~~ as ~~age of~~

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University Press, 1989).

<sup>2</sup> ~~Gang Kang U~~W-bang, "Bulguksa-wa seokbulsu-ui gongdeokju" (The Man Who Built ~~the~~ Bulguksa and Seokbulsu Temples), ~~Misul jaryo~~ (Fine Art ~~Art Materials~~Documents) 여기서 공덕주란 무엇을 말하는 것입니까?; (National Museum of Korea) Vol. 66. 여기서는 불국사와 석굴암을 ~~1q~~ 창건한 김대성을 가리킵니다. ~~National Museum of Korea.~~

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eleven years of age under King Munjong's instruction that he become a field of blessings and benefit the nation.

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The "cause and effect" principle and belief in "salvation through good deed," both agree with the principles of farming, such as "Men do not gather grapes from thorns" and "You reap as you have sown." Unified Silla and Goryeo Koreans truly believed that farming principles were directly relevant in the life of Buddhist faith in Buddhism. And they gladly sowed the seeds of hope in the field of blessings for future happiness. Expecting to reap fortunes in future, they willingly sowed seeds of hope on fields of blessings. Buddhism, originally a product of commercial civilization, was thus well adapted well suited both agricultural societies of Silla and Goryeo both agricultural societies. Buddhism promised the people a future of well-being well-being to the people, in return for which it flourished by winning religious devotion and material donations from the population.

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### 3. State's State Buddhism Policy: Protection and Control

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For medieval rulers, seeking a centralized power structure with the king at the helm, it was essential to control Buddhism, which had become dominant over public supportsentiments. Goguryeo and Baekje, that had accepted Buddhism as early as the late fourth century, Goguryeo and Baekje, that introduced Buddhism first, had royal edicts instructing the people to "practisepractice Buddhism, and thus seek well-being." A Silla king in the early sixth century ordered the construction of a temple for the purpose of "ridding the state of sin and nurturing well-being." The Three Kingdoms thus embraced Buddhism with the explicit objective of seeking well-being under state encouragement.<sup>3</sup> As a result, the belief of that seeking well-being well-being by accumulating good worksmerit could was able to spread wide.

King Taejo's thoughts well reflect how secular power viewed Buddhism at the time is well expressed in the remarks of Taejo, the founding monarch of Goryeo. He confided divulged his thoughts to his one of his Confucian-official confidants, a

3 Yi Gi-baek, 1986. "Samguk sidae bulgyo suyong-gwa geu sahoejeok uiui" (Reception of Buddhism and Its Social Significance during the Three Kingdoms Period), in *Silla bulgyo sasangsa yeongu* (A Study of Accommodation of Buddhism and Its Social Significance, (A Study of History of Silla Buddhist Thought History) (Seoul: Ilchokak Publishing, 1986).

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Confucian official.<sup>4</sup> He noted that Buddhist thoughts are so deeply embedded in the thoughts of Silla people that they believe that one's life or death, and fortune or misfortune depends entirely on Buddha, he noted. King Taejo advised against a tactless attempt to reform Buddhism, saying that having only just completed unification of the Three Kingdoms, On grounds that Goryeo was had yet to secure public acceptance, in the wake of unifying the Three Kingdoms, he advised against a tactless attempt to reform Buddhism. A lesson must be learned, he added, from the fact that the proliferation of monasteries precipitated the fall of Silla. In his deathbed injunctions, King Taejo instructed that the state must "protect but control" Buddhism, reasoning that decision-making on matters of great interest to the state requires the help from of the "power of Buddha." This constituted the basic line of Goryeo's Buddhist policy. Eventually, the idea that a notion spread that Buddhism and the state nation share are entities of a common fate sharing rise or fall, prosperity or decay became widespread. It is said at The main Buddha statue at Wangnyunsa Temple (one, one of the ten temples built in Gaeseong in during the second year of Taejo's second year of reign), with which the court maintained a special relationship, the main Buddha statue miraculously sweat in distress, thus forewarning people that was said to have shed tears in warning when disasters was to befall the state.

To "protect but control" Buddhism, the state placed Buddhist community under the secular control of secular power, and as a result the king exercised both secular and religious authority at once. The state administered the Buddhist personnel and financial resources were controlled through the monk administration system and monastery monastic economy finances. The monk administration system Emerging was created during in the late Three Kingdoms period, underwent changes conforming to changing times and was later years, the monk administration system was finally institutionalized in Goryeo, after undergoing a series of alterations.<sup>5</sup> The state established a semi-bureaucratic centralized monk

4 Han Gi-mun, "Goryeo taejo-ui bulgyo jeongchaek—changgeon sawon-eul jungsim-euro' (Goryeo King Taejo's Buddhism Policy in the Goryeo period: Focusing on, the Temples Built by King Taejo of Goryeo Centered on—창건사원은 무엇을 말하는 것입니까? 고려태조가 창건한 사원을 의미합니다 under His Orders, ), Daegu sahak (A Study of the History of Daegu) (1983) Vol. 22. —; Sem Vermeersch, "The Power of Buddha: The Ideological and Institutional Role of Buddhism in the Koryo Dynasty," (an unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, diss., of the University of London, 2001).

5 In the late Three Kingdoms period, monk-officials played the key role in the monk administration system (or g (僧政) system, that emerged in the late years of Three Kingdoms, were initially monk officials (僧官). In Unified Silla, however, they were replaced by secular officials (俗官). —Toward the end of the Silla dynasty, the role was shared by monk and secular officials. Goryeo's monk administration system was a

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administration structure, a semi-bureaucratic agency, to exercise control not only over the clergy-religious institution as a whole but also over individual monks and even their ideological inclinations. Goguryeo and Baekje, that had, as mentioned earlier, already accepted Buddhism earlier than Silla in the fourth century before Silla, had such a monastic control agency set up royal edicts instructing the public "to seek well-being by practising Buddhism" as early as the late 4th century. In the provinces as well as in the capital. After this, such agencies were Jeongbeobjeon (Buddhist Administration Office) in Unified Silla and the Seungnoksaja (Buddhist Registration Office) in Goryeo, headed by were established as a monk administration agency, with *guktong* (national patriarch) and the *d-guktong* (國統) and *doseungnok* (head of Seungnoksaja) serving as the highest post, respectively. An ordinary Each temple had three posts: *sangjwa* (-abbot), *juji* (head priest), and *yuna* (junior priest). Through most of medieval Korea, the kings exercised managing power over them. personnel power over the clergy.

Besides the religious institutions organized of monks, institutions organized of Separate from monk officials, laymen posed another channel for the control of Buddhism. These laymen officials were placed in charge of after a wide scope of clergy administration; ranging from monks' renouncing the world, ordination, quitting the priesthood, reception of the precepts, appointment of chief monks, execution of funerals and memorial services, etc. The state administered the monk register, and monks' the transfer of monks to sects other than those they were originally assigned to required royal approval. At first, the responsibility of punishment for crimes lay with the religious institutions, with the exception of murder, which was punished by secular law; but with time, secular law took responsibility over punishing all Punishment of crimes involving monks was left to the clergy at the outset except for murder, but later on all cleric crimes were dealt with under the secular law.

The state established an examination for the Buddhist clergy, on the model of the state civil service examination. Successful candidates who passed these exams successfully were assigned different ranks according to their Gyo (Textual) or Seon (Meditation) sect, potential elite clerics, were assigned different ranks by sect and placed in leadership positions. In the Goryeo period, Monk hierarchy in Goguryeo

developed version of the Silla system. See Nam Dong-shin "Silla-ui seungjeong gigu-wa seungjeong jedo" (2000 "Monk Administration System of Silla"), *Godaesa nonchong* ("A Collection of Writings on Ancient History"), Vol. 9, pp. 145-176).

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was ranks were divided into six levels; the Gyo School was headed by graded into six ranks, headed by patriarch position (~~or~~ *seungton*) in Textual School and the Seon sect was headed by great Seon mentor (~~or~~ *daeseonsa*) in Seon (Zen) School. Theoretically, the highest spiritual leaders in each sect, the national preceptor (~~or~~ *guksa*) and royal preceptor (~~or~~ *wangsa*), were both above superior to the king nominally, but in reality the king was free to ~~or~~ were also appointed or dismiss men to these positions.<sup>6</sup>

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Because the state ~~placed~~ controlled the Buddhist clergy institution in its entirety under its control, the clergy was ~~lost~~ deprived of the ~~or~~ extraterritorial rights it that their counterparts enjoyed, for example, was granted in India. As a result, monks would ~~called~~ identify themselves to the king before the king as his "Youroyal subject so and so. ~~so and so.~~" The two men in superior positions, the national preceptor ~~or~~ and royal preceptor, were free of the identification as "royal subjects," but this too was a privilege granted by the king. of course enjoyed the privilege of not having to identify themselves as "Your subject;" a privilege granted by the ruler, however.<sup>7</sup>

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In medieval Korea, the state regarded the ~~Because~~ medieval Korean dynasties treated Buddhism as collaborator to rule and offered it preferential treatment, and therefore ~~in~~ the preferentially, Buddhist clergy provided ~~served~~ as a ladder of for social advancement equal to that of secular, ~~no less favorable than~~ bureaucracy. While there were people ~~Some who chose~~ took the Buddhist mission upon themselves as a sincere calling, Buddhist ordination to perform their proper religious duties, but many ~~opted~~ turned to Buddhism for it as a means of ~~gaining~~ obtaining honor, power and wealth. ~~Such~~ This ~~is~~ trend was conspicuous ~~in~~ especially during the Goryeo dynasty, during which, ~~that~~ treated Buddhism enjoyed its status as ~~as~~ a state religion. Indeed, the custom of sending the eldest son to become a monk was common to all of Northeast Asia, exemplified ~~As seen in Ryo~~ as seen in Yao and Yuan of China, the practice of making one's eldest son a monk was common in East Asia at the time. To ~~dampen~~ reduce the ~~the boom of taking order~~ excessive exodus of young men into monasteries, ~~accordingly~~, Goryeo ~~in~~ had to place a quota in the ~~e~~ mid-~~11th~~ eleventh

6 Heo HeungYong-shik, 1986 "Goryeo sidae-ui guksa wansa-wa geu gineung" (National and Royal Preceptors and Their Functions in Goryeo), in *Goryeo bulgyosa yeongu* (-and Their Functions, "A Study of the Goryeo Buddhist History of Goryeo Buddhism), (Seoul: Hye-gak Ilchokak Publishing, 1986); "Goryeo sidae seunggwa jedo-wa geu gineung: (Monk Official Examination System and Its Function during the Goryeo Period), in *Goryeo bulgyosa yeongu*.

7 Nam Dong-shin, 1997 "Bulgyo-ui sahoegwan-gwa gukgagwan" (Buddhist View of 'Views of Society and the State,') in *Hanguk sasangsa-ui quwahakjeok ihae-reul wihayeo* (For a Scientific Understanding Approach of the to the Korean Intellectual History Thoughts,") (Seoul: Cheongnyeong-sa, 1997).

century introduced a quarter system limiting monk ordination to one out of four sons per family. This quota was eased later in the capital ~~KGaegyeong~~ and other provincial cities. With the system somewhat eased later, households were permitting one out of three sons per family in Gaeseong and several other provincial cities. For commoners, who were obligated to ~~serve~~ fulfill corvée labor duties from the age of ~~sixteen~~<sup>6</sup>, they could begin ~~thea~~ temples' five-year ~~monk~~ training course at age ~~fifteen~~<sup>5</sup>, and monks were ordained upon the course's completion at the age of ~~twenty~~<sup>6</sup>, ordination coming upon its completion. The state administered all the processes, and the law dealt severely with those attempting to become monks in any other way; no one was allowed to become a monk through other channels.

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In both China and Korea, Buddhism relied on ~~For Buddhism in Korea as well as China, meanwhile,~~ land constituted as its the main economic foundation.<sup>8</sup> The state allotted land to registered monks, just as they allotted land to, as was the case with bureaucrats. Goryeo allotted 40 *gyeol*<sup>9</sup> of farmland and 10 *gyeol* of forests to a monks of the highest rank, 35 *gyeol* of farmland and 8 *gyeol* of forests to one of the second highest ranking monk, and 30 *gyeol* of farmland to one of the lowest ranking monks. The Joseon dynasty later ~~Reducing~~ drastically cut the size amount of real estate land given to monks, allocated merely drastically, the Joseon dynasty allocated one *gyeol* of farmland and one serf per monk.

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In addition to the real estate allotted by the state, monasteries ~~could~~ were able to possess a huge quantity of farmland. Because monks were exempt from tax and corvée labor duties, all-most anyone with the economic means in society attempted to utilize ~~them~~ temples as ~~their economic~~ their financial hideouts. Those in power, from royalty to the ruling classes, attempted to administer their wealth by ~~The ruling class including~~ the royal house tried to consigning their properties to ~~them~~ temples; and the ruled subjects attempted to gain economic protection by donating their properties to monasteries. However, the concept that Koreans at the time had a perception that "all land belongs to the king," was deeply rooted in Korean society, and already in the mid-seven<sup>7</sup>th century under which the state banned unauthorized land contribution to temples as early as the mid-7th century. Even when monks intended to donate his private landly-owned land to a monastery, they could not

8 Yi Byeong-hui, "Goryeo hugi sawon gyeongje-ui yeongu" (A Study of Monastic Economy in the Later Years of Goryeo,") (a Ph.D. dissertation of Seoul National University, 1992).

9 It is not clear what the precise dimensions of No authentic records are available on the area of one *gyeol* are, but it is generally assumed that one *gyeol* of farmland was equivalent was a size adequate enough to support a five-member family a year, equivalent roughly to one hectare in Western society, a size adequate enough to support a five-member family a year.

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escape the formalities of ~~had to~~ obtaining ~~an official~~ approval ~~from the state from the state.~~

In addition to land cultivation, monasteries increased their wealth ~~still more by~~ ~~by engaging in profitable~~ ~~conducting profit making bus~~ ~~businesses~~ such as ~~loaning money~~ ~~loaning~~, commerce, ~~wine-making~~ ~~winemaking~~, salt manufacture and printing. ~~During Under G~~ ~~Koryeo's reign~~, monasteries near Gaegyeong cultivated ~~such~~ ~~smelly vegetables as onions and garlics~~ ~~onion and garlic~~, vegetables traditionally ~~banned in Buddhism for their smell~~, ~~banned under the Buddhist commandments~~, and even raised livestock. Despite chronic food shortage ~~among in the general~~ ~~population~~ ~~the people~~, monasteries boosted their ~~wealth~~ ~~riches~~ by reinvesting ~~their~~ ~~capital by grain~~ ~~practicing in~~ usury and wine-making. ~~Wine-making~~ ~~Winemaking~~ was so rampant in Goryeo that ~~rules the rule~~ about abstinence from alcoholic ~~drink~~, one of the five Buddhist commandments, ~~were was for all purposes ignored~~ ~~all but dead~~ ~~letters~~. Even ~~p~~ ~~Palgwanhoe~~ (Festival of the Eight Vows), a national Buddhist ritual, became ~~a~~ ~~a~~ ~~lavishly~~ ~~entertainment~~ ~~entertaining~~ ~~celebration~~ for the king and aristocrats, ~~that lasting~~ ~~ed well into until late in~~ the night; ~~in fact, many~~. ~~Not a few~~ ~~over drunk~~ officials were reprimanded ~~later~~ for their ~~drunken~~ misbehavior at the festival. ~~In search for inspiration,~~ ~~p~~ ~~Men of letters~~ ~~oets~~ would frequent visited monasteries ~~to appreciate~~ ~~for their~~ superb scenery and excellent ~~liquor~~ ~~wine~~, which ~~stimulated their poetic sentiment~~.<sup>10</sup> ~~As a consequence, the~~ ~~In order to maintain~~ ~~stability in provision of grain, the~~ state ~~enacted~~ ~~tried to strictly regulate a law~~ ~~banning~~ ~~monasteries' wine-making~~ ~~winemaking in the temples~~, but these laws were enforced only loosely, which wasn't enforced strictly, however.

~~Buddhist clergy~~ ~~Buddhism~~ in medieval Korea was thus incorporated into the ~~powerful and uniform~~ ~~all-controlling~~ ~~power of~~ ~~control by~~ secular authority. Instead of ~~e~~ ~~hecking~~ ~~curbing~~ ~~acts of~~ ~~the~~ malevolence ~~on the part~~ of secular power as an entity seeking universal truth, Buddhism ~~consequently offered~~ ~~consequently exhibited~~ ~~an~~ ~~system ideology of thoughts~~ justifying ~~ing~~ and ~~even~~ ~~sanctifying~~ ~~ing~~ secular power.

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10 A prominent ~~writer-poet~~ in ~~late~~ ~~Goryeo's later years~~, Yi Gyu-bo, wrote ~~a drink song, titled~~ ~~a poem about~~ ~~drinking, known as~~ "Banter following with a Monk in Winter," in *Dongguk Yi sangguk jip* (Collected Works of Yi Gyu-bo), *gwon* 16, which follows:

~~As~~ ~~Liquor~~ protects ~~one~~ from ~~the~~ ~~coldness~~,  
~~the secular~~ ~~this~~ world calls a monk's head "winter crown."  
No reason ~~is there~~ for your baldness ~~head~~  
not to be able to protect you from coldness.

Buddhist View of State and ~~4. Buddhism~~ Buddhist views on's Views of State King

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Buddhism is not a political ideology, but ~~many Buddhist writings with regard to Buddhist clergy no few documents refer to~~ discuss ideal politics and ~~rulers~~ ideal rule. A prime example is the *Suvarna-prabhasa*, which has been studied for centuries by ~~Typical of them which Korean Buddhists had studied from early on is~~ Suvarna-prabhasa (金光明經). According to the *Suvarna-prabhasa*, ~~if thea king rules abides a country according to dharma or by the~~ “true principle” (jeongbeop), the sutra maintains, the then there can be free from will befall no natural disasters calamities, nature will cooperate and harvest will bumper crops be successful, providing the land and its people with enabling the nation to live in ease and comfort. Here, true principle Dharma represents is not strictly Buddhist in implication, but rather refers to not only Buddhism but universal rules that govern all creation. In the respect that it advocates its advocacy of ruling a country rule by just laws, and not not force or machination, but by right laws, true principle -dharma is closer to the Confucian principle of the Kingly Way (wangdo).

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~~As for the proper the political precept of Confucianism.~~

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~~What should be a desirable relationship between the a-king and the populace, then his subjects, the ?~~ *Suvarna-prabhasa* provides an interpretation likening this relationship to that between finds it in the ideal relationship between parents and -children, and interpretation long-engrained in, which Korean society accepted early. When aA Silla king in the mid-eighth8th century, when the height of Buddhist culture blossomed, asked a monk how he can make the general publieto provide subjects with a comfortable existence, the latter responded with a song live in ease and comfort. The monk responded with a song, meaning in essence: explaining that ““Tthe king is must play the role ofa father, his; ministers the mother, and the people; the populaceetheir children.” This corresponds to the traditional Confucian view that view sees theof identifying a king with as a father or and teacher.

An even clearer expression of Buddhist expectations of the king can be found in More Buddhist-oriented view of a king is expressed in the *Flower Adornment* or *Avatamsaka sutra (Sutra of Flower Garland)*, one of the most influential scriptures that exercised the greatest influence in the history of Korean Buddhism. The *Avatamsaka sutra* specifically deals concretely with the role of refers to the ideal enlightenment of a king under the hypothesis title, that ““If thea bodhisattva becomes aking.”” This offers the most can be regarded as the most

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generally typical notion of a kingship held by Buddhist monks at the time, as exhibited in the. The view is also evident in *Inwanggyeong* (Sutra for of the Benevolent Kings), a scripture based on which based on the Assemblies for Sutra Recitation by One Hundred Eminent Monks (Baekgo Jwahoe), were convened. The assemblies, a typical state ritual, were long held from the period of the Three Kingdoms through the Goryeo dynasty. Albeit beginning with the Three Kingdoms and till Goryeo. Hypothetical, as it was, the *Avatamsaka sutra* and *Inwanggyeong* notion reflect the view of the ideal king view of Buddhists in Buddhism. This vision is known also as the theory of “bodhisattva becoming a king” (*bosal wiwang*) in that it presupposes hypothesizes on the bodhisattva becoming a king, it may be dubbed as Buddha becoming a king theory (菩薩爲王說).<sup>11</sup>

The Buddhists' attempts to consecrate-sanctify royal authority by identifying thea king with a Buddhaas Buddha or bodhisattva emerged in-around in China in the fifth century the 5th century in China at the latest—and in Korea in the 6sixth century in Korea. Prior to the unification of the Three Kingdoms, for example, the Silla royal household prior to the unification of the Three Kingdoms, for example, claimed itself to be of the Sakyamuni clan. King Jinpyeong of Silla named himself, his queen and younger brothers after Sakyamuni's parents and uncles. Queen Jinpyeong regrettably failed to give birth to a son, whom the royal family intended to call Gautama Siddhartha, Sakyamuni's original name before his ordination. However, the fact that the queen was able to make her princess the first queen of Silla Faced despitewith strong objection, the queen managed to make her princess the first queen of Silla. It owedowes —largely—to the fact that the Jinpyeong royal household was consecrated by the Buddhist establishment. Sacred Buddhist lineage, called-is called—genuine lineage (*jinjong*), is—a Buddhist version of the shaman theory of “offspringoffspring from heaven,” a shamanic idea thatwhich prevailed before Buddhism was introduced into the countrythe introduction of Buddhism.<sup>12</sup>

From-After the mid-7th-seventh century, however, emphasis gradually shifted from the privileges given to those of hereditary-inherent factor of sacred blood to those who acquire the qualities such as character and capabilities of bodhisattva. In early years of Unified Silla, when the royal household was was-reinforcinging royal

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11 Nam Dong-shin, "Samguk tongil-gwa bulgyogyo-ui donghyang" (The Unification of the Three Kingdoms and the Trends of in the Buddhist Community), *Hanguk godaesa yeonju* (Journal of Korean Ancient History) 23 (2001).

12 Choe Byeong-hyeon, "Silla bulgyo sasang-ui jeon-gae" (Development of of Silla Buddhist Thoughts Thoughts in Silla), *Yeoksa dosi gyeongju* (Historical City Gyeongju,) (Seoul: Yeol Hwa Dang Publisher,

power, thea need arose to contain the king's arbitrary ruleiness increased:-

~~-If the King's administration is bright and benevolent, the people will not trespass so much as a line drawn on the ground but remain in the Kingdom to enjoy its blessings; if the King's administration is dark and tyrannical, even high walls of iron and stone will not restrain them, and there will be no way to avert evils from without.~~<sup>13</sup> ~~If a king ruled upright, the population wouldn't cross even a line drawn on a grassy hill, claimed to be a castle, and long live in peace, forgetful of disasters. If politics were horrible, a king wouldn't be able to thwart disasters even if he had built an expansive castle.~~

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The above is ~~an~~ advice eminent monk~~the eminent monk~~ Uisang gave King Munmu (661-681) who completed the unification of the Three Kingdoms, when he, in a bid to glorify the royal achievements, ~~was~~ indulged in constructing palaces and ~~mud~~ fortifications. ~~Hit goesearing this advice, the king promptly without saying that the king~~ suspended ~~the~~ the public-works.

In the middle period of Silla (654-780) the state attempted to place the Buddhist clergy establishment under the secular control ~~of secular power~~, while the Buddhist order endeavored to tame secular power through religion. The hypothesis "If a bodhisattva were to become king" clearly reflects the clergy's stance is apparent in this hypothetical wish: "If a Buddhist saint became a king," approach. The bodhisattva referred implies to here represents an here the ideal man in Mahayana Buddhism ideal man ~~in Mahayanist Buddhism~~, who strives to fulfill his Buddhist missions calling such as like enlightenment and salvation, while living a secular life. But bBecause ~~secular~~ principles like family lineage and power succession ~~to~~ governed the rules of success to the throne, however, it was practically impossible for a a bodhisattva saint to become a king. Instead, Buddhist monks could attempt work towards to cultivating the nurture an incumbent king or his heirs as towards becoming bodhisattva a possible saint. Rulers and aristocrats hence received bodhisattva precepts (bodhisattva sila).<sup>-14</sup>

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1984), pp. 369-370.

<sup>13</sup> "Munmuwang" (King Munmu), in *Samguk yusa* (Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms) *gwon* 2, tr. Tae-Hung Ha and Grafton K. Mintz (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1972).

<sup>14</sup> Chinese emperors began referring to themselves as "disciples receiving bodhisattva precepts" beginning Beginning in the 6th century, in China, some kings called themselves "Buddhist-elect's disciples." Typical among them are King Wudi- of Liang-, who converted from Taoism to Buddhism a Buddhist convert from

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Bodhisattva precepts, ~~that~~ which had gained influence in the Buddhist ~~community-establishment since after the mid-the~~ seventh century, emphasize ~~individuals'~~ internal motives ~~than over external their~~ deeds. ~~The~~ Brahmajala-sutra (Sutra of Brahma's Net) ~~or~~, a representative scripture dealing with bodhisattva precepts, stipulates that kings and senior government officials must receive bodhisattva precepts before they Buddhists not forsaking home should receive bodhisattva precepts before they become assume official responsibilities. Another scripture notes that ~~king or senior government official.~~ by adhering to ~~If one has fulfilled the~~ ten good deeds (sipseon), ~~that correspond to of the~~ bodhisattva precepts, people increase their chances of being reborn another scripture says, in future life he may be born into a noble family nobility and becoming a king. Having long been exposed to the ~~selfish collective~~ violence of war, the general population ~~craved~~ yearned for the emergence of altruistic and compassionate bodhisattva.

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Although only three of the Silla kings are verified to have accepted bodhisattva precepts, most Unified Silla kings protected Buddhism, and it became somewhat of a trend for the elite to receive bodhisattva precepts, with ~~Given that that~~ a considerable number of aristocratic officials took part in the practice of receiving the precepts, ~~however, it may well be said that~~ it was customary at the time for the elite to receive bodhisattva precepts. During the ~~G~~ Korvo dynasty, King T'aeco referred to himself as a disciple of bodhisattva precepts, and it became customary for monarchs following him to do the same. According to the ~~Goryeosa~~ History of "Goryeo. History," ~~all kings beginning following with~~ King Deokjong in the mid-~~eleven~~ th century received bodhisattva precepts, and in mid- ~~Goryeo's mid~~ years ~~the~~ kings received bodhisattva precepts as many as five to six times during their reign.

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By receiving bodhisattva precepts, the monarchs ~~kings~~ were able to adorn enhance their ~~acts of~~ legitimacy of rule ruling ~~as~~ as bodhisattva's ~~deeds acts~~ of enlightenment ~~on the one hand~~, but they were also burdened were tasked with fulfilling ~~such~~ religious duties such as observing the precepts and performing compassionate deeds ~~on the other~~. That The facts that ~~most~~ Goryeo ~~kings~~ received bodhisattva precepts at the Geondeokjeon (Virtue Nurturing Hall), and that ~~that~~

~~a Taoist, who and~~ is reputed to have enthusiastically protected Buddhism ~~enthusiastically~~, and Tang's founding King Taizong, who is said to have both best-realized Confucian political ideologies and maintained Taoism-based religion policy. See Yokochō Enichi, 1958, 『中國佛教に於ける國家意識』 ("View of State in Chinese Buddhism,"), 『中國佛教の研究』 (A Study of Chinese Buddhism,) (Kyoto: Hojo-yakata, 1958) ~~Kyoto~~, pp. 326-381.

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some ~~of them~~ received the precepts several times while on the throne, indicate that religious virtues were a required component of leadership.

~~When Upon achieving the same level as ranked the same as a Buddha, a kings were exempt from bowing had no need to bow before a Buddha statues;~~<sup>15-</sup> but when ranked ~~the same as a~~ bodhisattva, ~~a kings~~ had to bow before ~~the~~ statues of ~~not only both~~ Buddhas ~~but also other and~~ bodhisattvas. A painting from the early ~~fourteen~~ 4th century, the "Painting of Ksitgarbha Bodhisattva" on exhibit at the National Museum of Korea, depicted in "the Painting of Buddha on Earth," drawn in the early 14th century and now at the National Museum of Korea, is a shining mountain-sized bodhisattva, and larger than a mountain and glaring, juxtaposed tiny-sized King with Taejo, a minute figure making a performing a deep bow on his knees to bodhisattva from afar. Such depictions are common in Often found in Goryeo paintings, such a composition and well demonstrates how Buddhists of the periods' notion of the time, reverencing religious power more over than secular power one.

As rulers assumed the merciful face of bodhisattva by accepting bodhisattva precepts, so royal land was also consecrated as Buddha-land (*buddha-ksetra*). Buddha-land denotes the paradise where of Buddha and bodhisattva live, and it sowas naturally, the for a king ruling such a land to received bodhisattva precepts. In this regard interestingly, it is of interest to note that Goryeo kings, who graced the spirits of major mountains and rivers with honorable titles, refrained from doing so to Buddha and bodhisattva, considered to be ranked of equal or above superior rank to royalty them.<sup>-16</sup>

The concept of Buddha-land that emerged in Korea in the the later years of the late Three Kingdoms period contributed greatly towards pacifying the cultural resistance against foreign religion and enforced having the establishment of Buddhism take roots in Korean society, while pacifying Koreans' cultural resistance against the foreign religion. Manjusri Bodhisattva was believed to reside in the mountains named the county dubbed Mt. Odaesan, including the namesake and Mt.

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15 In this regard, there is a famous Chinese episode that recalls how Song's founding King Taizu, upon visiting a temple, and asked a senior monk accompanying him, "Must I bow before the Buddha statue?" to which the monk replied, "No, An incumbent Buddha does not bow before a past Buddha," replied the monk. The incident prompted the formalization of the practice. "Linjing-lu," (林間錄) *juan* 1, episode No.

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16 Kim Gi-deok, 1998 "Goryeo sidae seonghwangsin-e daehan bongjak-gwa sunchang-ui 'seonghwang daesin sajeok' hyeonpan-ui bunseok" (Gracing Tutelary Deities with Titles and An Analysis of the 'Great Tutelary Deity Site' Hanging Board in Sunchang, *Yeoksa minsokhak* (Historical Folklore) 7: p. 15.

~~Cheongnyangsan, and Mt. Cheongryang, and the Avalokitesvara (Buddhist Goddess of Mercy) was believed to reside in the Naksansa -temples, among them the namesake in (Gangwon-do pProvince), Naksan and Baekwasan mountains, as well as Gwaneumbong peak throughout the country. Many other mountains were given names named after of Buddha or bodhisattvas. Most famous is -GMt. Gkeumgangsan mountain or Mt. Ddiamond (or vajra), a -So seenie is the mountain famous for its beauty, to which allthat Koreans aspire to make a pilgrimage to the mountain-at least once in their lifetime. Not onlyA Mt. Kumgang itself, but also a number of its the mountain's major peaks, including the highest one, Biro (vairocana)-or vairocana, have named after Buddhist termsnames. As celebrated in a famous song for its "12,000 peaks and 89,000 hermitages," the mountain is home to Housing a large number ofcountless monasteries and hermitages, as represented by a passage of a popular song, and -"12,000 peaks and 89,000 hermitages," Mt. Gungang is tantamount to a Buddhist paradise. Geumgangsan mountain began to becomebecame Korea's uppermost-foremost Buddhist holy place in the late Silla period, which-peak in importance in lateed in Goryeo's later years.~~

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~~Collusion betweenAs secular and religious power developed a close and mutual relationship. Buddhist clergy resulted in a gradually became secularizedation- and stratifiedeation of Buddhist clergy. In principle, Buddhism advocated class equality: The clergy was supposed to be equal in class, in principle. Late in the 7th-seventh century, Uisang in fact achieved, in fact, realized class equality within the Avatamsaka order. But the overall trend of the the realities weretime was quite far from itdifferent. Since medieval the Korean states -directly controledcontrolled the Buddhist-monastic system, ordinary-only yangin ("good people") people alone were permitted to enter the systembe ordained, and; no slaves were allowed to do seabanned, in principle. Even among yangin, monks hailing from aristocracy climbed the promotion ladder much faster than othersthose from other backgrounds. Offsprings of aristocracy held-were able to grab leadership positions in the clergy, and it became widely accepted that fFamily backgrounds played a key role in determining ranks in the clergy, a practice generally-accepted. Uichon, a prince in mid-Goryeo, entered the Buddhist monastic system at the age of +eleven, was officially ordained a monk in within five months and climbed to the top of the Buddhist hierarchy in two years-later. Also Sohyeon, a royal royal-relative on the maternal side-at the time, renounced the secular life at ageentered the Buddhist hierachy at the age of +eleven~~

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and was ordained as a monk the following year. Such These speedy extraordinarily prompt promotions reflect the extent to which grip political power held on the clergy-controlled Buddhism.

As Buddhist clergy was became highly class-stratified, Buddhist theories on of men such as *indriya* (*geungi*) and *that of buddhata* (*bulseong*); both Buddhism's views of men,) supplied provided the ideological grounds to justifying individuals' social status.<sup>17</sup> The theory of *indriya* theory was first advanced initially intended to narrow the gap shortcomings of the *buddhata* theory, arising from its which broke alienation from the real reality world. According to *buddhata* theory, men all people are equal in that all have the potential of becoming buddha, but in reality, this was not the case, which, however, is not the case in reality. Holding that men's people's fates are determined by men's their inherent qualities, *indriya* theory classifieds men into three groups: men those of upper superior basic qualities, who are able to become Buddhas on their own; men those of lower inferior basic qualities who need help and guidance are able to become buddhas; with help from someone else, and men those in between. Those who can play the role of helping others attain enlightenment are none other than buddhas, bodhisattva and people with upper basiesuperior qualities. Accordingly, those with inferior qualities were submissive and had to be educated by those with superior qualities. And its relationship of religious education and obedience developed between them and people with lower basic qualities. It was the ruling class members who had received bodhisattva precepts, and who who were perceived to possessed qualifications to become buddhas, bodhisattvas or people with upper basiesuperior qualities. Even the second abbot of Suseonsa community, an agency established that aimed with the aim of at rectifying the abuses of the political-religious fusion collusion, a pernicious evil of Buddhist clergy in the later of late years of Goryeo, recognized identified military bureaucrats as belonging to upperhaving superior qualities basic qualities. It was widely believed that noble blood and high posts in this lifewere the indication are the rewards of pious deeds

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17 Views conflict on the historialhistorical nature of the "Buddha-nature theory" or "buddhata theory." A Chinese scholar representing China's Buddhism academic circle criticizesd that the theory advanced in the Southern Dynasties period (420-589) was nothing but merely the ideology of the feudal ruling class. Ren Jiyu, ed., 「中國佛教史」 (History of Chinese Buddhism), vol. 3, (北京: 社會科學出版社, 1988), pp. 392-393. On the other hand, a Korean scholar asserts that the "theory of Buddha-nature" by Wonhyo is progressive on grounds that it advocatadvocatesd equality in men. {Kim Yeong-mi, "Amita sinang-ui sasangsajeok uiui" ("The Significance of Amitabha Faith in Terms of thethe Intellectual History:-)," chap. 3 in *Silla bulgyeo sasangsa yeongu* ("AA Study of Silla Buddhist Thoughts) (Seoul: Minjoksa, 1994).

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they their holders accumulated in their previous lifetimes.

## 5.—Protection of the State and Protection of the Dharma

In discussing the historical nature of Buddhism in medieval Korea, scholars have cited “Buddhism protecting the state” (*hoguk bulgyo*), as one of its main traditionstrends. ~~Hoguk bulgyo is understood to mean that implies that~~ Buddhism “protects ~~the~~ state ~~so that it may be saved~~ from crises ~~like such as~~ natural disasters and invasions.” ~~However, this calls for a~~ review of the concept of a state ~~is needed, however. A typical dictionary~~ ~~Dictionaries~~ definition ~~seese~~ a state as being constituted of ~~three elements~~: a territory, sovereignty and people. In Indian society, where religion’s supremacy was voiced over the politics, the state signified ~~not the king, but~~ territory ~~r from the outset~~ ~~rather than a monarch. This became~~ Buddhism’s view of the state ~~ever since~~, and this perception was established as Buddhist view of the state.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, ~~in Buddhist scriptures, t~~ The protection of the state ~~referred to in~~ ~~Buddhist scriptures, therefore, means that~~ involves “~~the~~ the ruler protectings his territory from various disasters, ~~with the understanding that a~~.” ~~Emphasized here is~~ ~~that a~~ ruler’s protection of ~~the dharma, ie~~ Buddhism is prerequisite to the protection of territory. ~~On his deathbed~~, Sakyamuni Buddha ~~at his deathbed~~ entreated the ruler to protect the Buddhist community.

*Sutra of the Benevolent Kings* best describes the Buddhist view of the state, which ~~definitely puts clear emphasis on the~~ stresses the protection of the ~~the~~ dharma ~~rather than over~~ the protection of the ~~the~~ state. According to ~~its the~~ chapter ~~on~~ the ~~on~~ protection of the state ~~ng the state, a king must first protect the dharma for the king to~~ ~~protect in order to protect~~ his territory from enemies, ~~he first had to protect the~~ ~~dharma~~. To do so, it emphasizes ~~d~~ the holding of Assemblies for Sutra Recitation by One Hundred Eminent Monks. This magnificent ~~and serious~~ Buddhist ritual ~~called~~ ~~for~~ ~~required~~ the state to invite to an assembly and a banquet ~~of~~ 100 distinguished monks, ~~with light~~ 100 torches ~~lit, burn an assortment of all sorts of~~ incense ~~burnt, and erect~~ 100 statues each of ~~the~~ Buddha, bodhisattvas and ~~arhats~~ ~~installed~~. The king attending the occasion ~~had to personally~~ read ~~in person~~ the scripture ~~for the on~~

18 Kaneoka Hitetomo, *Bulgyo-ui gukgagwan* (~~translated by Kim Hui-oh~~, Buddhist View of the State), ~~trans. Kim Hui-o~~ (Seoul: Chonghwagak, 1978), ~~1978~~, pp. 118-119. Nakamura Moto, *Bulgyo jeongchi sahoehak* (~~translated by Cha Cha-seok~~, Political Sociology of Buddhism), ~~trans. Cha Cha-seok~~ (Seoul: Pul Kyo Si Dae Sa, 1993), ~~1993~~, pp. 204-208.

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a daily basis Benevolent Kings everyday. The basic message of the scripture, it can be said, lies not in asks not " what Buddhism can do for the state," but "what the king can do for Buddhism."

In Chinese and Korean societies, n societies which had long experienced, where a centralized power structure centralized, an authoritarian monarchy, long persisted, the state became synonymous with the king, the ruler, its the sole sovereign. An occasion begun in the early 7seventh century, Silla in the early 7th century to began to honor the its war dead, and the Assemblies for Sutra Recitation by One Hundred Eminent Monks continued to honor the state or King over 700 years until the mid-fourteen14th century or the late Goryeo to honor. In general, from the later years of the Three Kingdoms to the end of Goryeo, All in all, acts of the state to state protection of protect the dharma, ie Buddhism and activities of Buddhist elergy protection of to protect thethe state can be said to have were two sides overlapped with each other like the two sides of the same coin from the later years of the Three Kingdoms to the close of Goryeo. Particularly in during Goryeo, the intellectuals were aware that evidently recognized the fact that the state treated considered Buddhism preferentially as a collaborator in ruleing the nation and treated it preferably. Accordingly, the established pereception is still valid that Buddhism then enjoyed the its status of as thea state religion and functioned as the dominant system of thought ideology during the Goryeo dynasty.

Formalizing Buddhist rituals into became institutionalized as state festivals, the and were presided over by the king presided over them. As a result, the protection of Buddhism enhanced national interests and consecrated the royal power. The largest state Buddhist festivals were Yyeondeunghoe (Lantern Festival) (燃燈會) and palgwanhoePalgwanhoe.

— I [King (Taejo)] have a great interest in Yyeondeunghoe and Ppalgwanhoe. At Yeondeunghoe, is to the Buddha is worshipped, and Ppalgwanhoe celebrates the spirits residing in of heaven, the five major mountains, other famous mountains, big vast rivers, and dragons. No officials shall be allowed in future to recommend any additions to or deletions from the set rulesrituals set. I too have committed myself at the outset to seeing to it that Yyeondeunghoe and Ppalgwanhoe won't breach any state memorials, and that the king and his subjects enjoy themselves the celebrations together. You shall observe the rituals



as set forth.<sup>19</sup> ("Goryeo History,"

These two Buddhist rituals that began in Silla, and under Taejo's deathbed injunction were held regularly in in Goryeo under Taejo's deathbed injunction. The Yeondeunghoe festival was held nationwide for a two-day nationwide festival on around the fifteenth day of the second lunar month, with the beginning of lunar February 15 when farming starts. With thousands of lanterns were lit and all sorts of assorted delicacies were offered to the Buddha, in prayer for s, they entreated Buddhas and the spirits of heaven and earth to bring tranquility to the nation and happiness to for the people. On that day, the king and his subjects paid respect to King Taejo's portrait at Bongeunsa Temple. The Palgwanhoe festival was originally an occasion for layman practitioners to perform acquire Buddhist virtues by residing at monasteries an entire whole-day long and observing Buddhist commandments. Later during the In Goryeo dynasty, this, the festival was changed into a ritual, held for two days in the eleventh month of the lunar year, lunar November, in which offering food was offered to Buddhas the spirits of heaven, and earth, mountains and rivers. On that day, The king on that day accepted felicitations from his subjects and foreign diplomats, displaying the nation's prestige at home and abroad.<sup>20</sup>

There is mNot a fewuch evidence of in medieval Korean Buddhism in medieval Korea is available that shows reflects the identification of the state with a with the king and the simultaneous protection of Buddhism with that of the and the state. Royal monasteries<sup>21</sup> of Unified Silla and Goryeo like as primarily performed memorial servicess for late kings. Attached to each of these monasteries was an official administrative office manned by high-ranking officials, and this office was

19 "King Taejo," in *Goryeosa* (History of Goryeo), *gwon* 2

20 In a study of Goryeo Buddhist rituals in Goryeo, Kim Jong-myeong a scholar recently criticizedcriticizes the established concepts of "Buddhism protecting the state" and "Buddhism as a state religion," adding noting that they these should be reevaluated anew as royal house Buddhism. (Kim Jong-myeong, 2001, *Hanguk-ui jungse bulguo uirye: sasangjeok baqaeong-gwa yeoksajeok uimi* ("Buddhist Rituals in Medieval Korea: Its Ideological Background and Historical Significance) (Seoul: Moonhak Kwa Jisung Sa, 2001). Seoul. The This book is a revised and supplemented version of the author's unpublished Ph.D. dissertation of the University of California, Los Angeles, "Buddhist Rituals in Medieval Korea (918-1392-"). On the other hand, some studies further stress the role Buddhism played as a state religion. (An Ji-won, "Goryeo sidae gukga bulgyo uirye" (A Study of State Buddhist Rituals in Goryeo--Centered Focus on Yeondeunghoe and Palgwanhoe) (" a Ph.D. dissertation of Seoul National University); Sem Vermeersch, 2001op. cit.

21 Yi YoungYeong-ho, 1983 Functions of "Silla jungdae wangsil sawon-ui gwansajeok gineung" (Royal Temples as Official Monasteries in Middle Period of Silla, " ), *Hanguksa yeonqu* (Journal of Korean History) Study"Vol. 43 (1983): -

—Yun Seon-tae, "Silla-ui sawon seongjeon-gwa gumhasin" ("Administrative Offices of Silla Temples and

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responsible for memorial services for late kings as well as the construction, maintenance and management of the Buddhist temples, pagoda, and Buddha's statue. ~~In 771, for example, —Bongdeoksa temple administration office, for example, cast the in 771—~~Divine Bell of King Seongdeok", ~~or' the so-called—~~Emille Bell, to posthumously honor King Seongdeok and pray for the prosperity of the royal house and ~~the~~-nation. ~~Now classified as a~~A national treasure, the ~~bell is~~ three-meter-tall ~~bell~~, featured by ~~its~~-elegant sculptures, engravings, and sublime and clear sound, ~~and~~ has moved the hearts of ~~numerous people~~many in the past ~~12,000-odd years~~1200 years. The ~~Bongdeoksa sa temple~~ administration was composed of top-level bureaucrats including ~~one a man~~ who later ascended the throne through a coup ~~d'etat~~. The administrative office for ~~Hwangryongsa Hwangnyongsa t~~Temple, the largest temple in Silla, ~~engaged in major repair and reconstruction of rebuilt~~ a nine-story wooden pagoda ~~in 872~~. The wooden pagoda, presumed to have been between 67 and 80 meters high, is said to have been built in 645 ~~amidst at the peak of the~~ wars ~~involving over~~ the unification of the Three Kingdoms under ~~this the~~ divine message, ~~∴—"A~~ nine-story pagoda built at ~~Hwangryong Hwangnyongsa temple~~ would ~~will~~ repel invaders." ~~—~~The pagoda was one of Silla's three treasures. ~~Members of t~~The Hwangnyongsa ~~temple~~ administration office ~~also included the too king's younger brother and later the defense minister,— had a number of~~among other senior bureaucrats, ~~including the then king's younger brother who later became a defense minister.~~

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~~The Goryeo Tripitaea~~Tripitaka Koreana, woodblock printing of the Buddhist canon, a representative of Goryeo culture and UNESCO world heritage, was also carved to protect the nation. ~~The project began in 1231, and was aimed at by~~ repelling the ~~13th century—~~Mongolian invasions with ~~the the help of the aid of the —~~"power of Buddha."~~"~~ The first set of the woodblocks covering over 6,000 volumes of ~~Tripitaea Tripitaka~~ was carved under the order of ~~the~~ king, who took refuge from the Khitan invasions in the early ~~11~~eleventh century. ~~This set was kept hidden and kept at a provincial at a temple, but was promptly—~~ The set was burned by Mongolian invaders in 1232, ~~after which the project was taken up again from the beginning. —~~This project against ~~a destructive Mongol expedition was~~ initiated ~~by the court, that took refuge on Ganghwado —island off the west coast and south of Gaeseong. —~~Goryeo Tripitaea represents a new edition, ~~which began on Ganghwa Island off the west coast and south of Gaeseong, where the court had taken refuge from the Mongorian scourage.~~

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Senior Bureaucrats), "~~Hanguksa yeonqu~~"(Journal of Korean History) ~~Study~~"108 (2002).

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Over a period of 17 years, they carved 80,000 woodblocks covering some 1,500 kinds of kinds, and 6,800-odd volumes of Tripitaca Tripitaka, with and 50 million characters were carved on both front and back sides of 80,000 woodblocks--of them a. This is a monumental achievement in the history of world printing.

Such Buddhist cultural heritage of Silla and Goryeo vividly demonstrates how much the extent to which Buddhism was protected under the banner of protecting the state. Having been incorporated into the ruling class under state protection and exempted from tax and corvée labor duties, particularly the Goryeo Buddhist clergy grew—expanded—markedly in size,—but and meanwhile—was underwent secularized secularization. Exact numbers are unavailable, but GKoryeo is presumed to have had between 2,000 and 3,000 temples across the country, including some 300 in the capital. Large royal—temples like Hyeonhwasa and Heungwangsa or "Temple of the Flourishing King", both royal temples, housed over 1,000 monks each. A record of the early 11th century has it that notes that some monasteries fed 100,000 monks at a time; according Chinese records, a third of Goryeo's 2.1 million population were monks,—according to a Chinese document; and a writer in the from late Goryeo remarked that more than half the population were that those—wandering with shaved heads numbered a half of grown-ups. Exaggerated as they may be, these descriptions indicate that the actual number of monks then far surpassed the number of public servants, which stood at 4,400, the quorum of public servants. Monasteries possessed huge tracks of land—To in order to feed all their monks,— and one record notes— that, monasteries possessed huge tracks of land. A record has it toward the end of Goryeo, temples owned that land belonging to temples toward the end of Goryeo reached 100,000 gyeol, equivalent to or one sixth of the nation's land. —Close to By the end of Goryeo, moral degradation and corruption were rampant in the clergy,; Monks were living with their wives and children in the breach of the celibacy mandate, and were selling and buying monk titles. The Buddhist clergy that had sunk deep into paradox— the religion that preached for thee and renouncement of the material world in order to achieve true enlightenment through forsaking the world committed the self-contradiction of getting secularized itself was instead secularized.

The concept of "protecting the state through the protection of the dharma," needless to say, was based on the common belief in salvation through good works deeds, which the majority of people embraced. But However, while the common attitude of monks was that "The construction of temples on behalf of Buddha accumulates boundless merit and virtue. Even if this puts people to hard

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labor, how could this possibly be seen as harmful?" the ruling class' pious activities by the ruling class sometimes went too far, were often a source of great suffering to-for the population. So much so that one monk even protested: "The construction of a temple on behalf of Buddha would accumulate boundless merit and virtue. What disadvantage would befall people even if some of them underwent hardship in that course?" Despite the fact that marriage and farming were forbidden under the Buddhist commandments, the Buddhist clergy was still able to secure manpower and resources needed for its sustenance from the secular world, because the people they were believed to pursue the religious doctrines and attained a morality high enough to receive such resources. By the end of Goryeo, however, such a public trust in the ruling class crumbled at the end of Goryeo, however had disintegrated. The clergy sought secular benefits, while professing the renouncement of the secular world, and distanced itself from virtues, while preaching them. When With an attempt at internal reform drives failed, the Buddhist clergy not only ruined itself became not only morally corrupt but also but further aggravated social contradictions by expanding its farmland. The Buddhist clergy came to be seen as a consequence, the public censored the Buddhist clergy as a group of good-for-nothing and hypocrites.

Confucian scholars, who had always placed great importance on stressing secular realities, from early on, were traditionally critical of of-the Buddhist's "causes and effects theory" and "belief in salvation through good deeds." The criticism intensified toward the end of Goryeo:

King Taejo's —The instruction to "practise practice Buddhism" Taejo issued in the third year of his reign, —brought about enormous evils to his posterity. Rite—dDevout Buddhist praitionerspractitioners offer —to Buddhist deities amount to no less than 70,000 *seok* of rice; as many as 30,000 monks a year —held Buddhist— rituals —for the —dead 해마다 공양한 중이 3만명이나 되며? 공양은 식사를 대접한다는 의미입니다. 30,000 a year; few temples and portraits lack gold or silver are not decorated in gold or silver; and few letters of Buddhist scriptures —are left are not gilded in gold or silver. The palaces have been —converted into places of praying to Buddhas; monks have —become the kings' teachers. Buddhism, — however, has failed to save the nation —when it —was unstabilized—unstable and ruineddestroyed. Buddhism— has proved to be aa —curse to the state, and has —wrought

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terrible harm to the \_population. How can we not \_guard \_\_\_\_\_against it?<sup>22</sup>

The ~~a~~above is a criticism of King Taejo's Buddhism protection policy made by Confucian officials of the in the early ~~Yi Joseon dynasty-dynasty made~~. Intellectuals who embraced Neo-Confucianism ~~didn't stop~~not only ~~pointed~~ing out rampant evils perpetrated by the Buddhist clergy, but also attempted to uproot Buddhism. Citing numerous historical instances, they attempted to prove the failure s in reality of in Buddhism's theories of causes and effects concomitant in ~~their~~retribution, transmigration, and salvation through good ~~works~~deeds. They attributed the fall of Goryeo to the excessive protection of Buddhism the state enforced ~~since since~~ Taejo's rule. It became evident that the protection of the dharma ~~does no longer guaranteed~~ the protection of the state. Buddhism, to ~~them~~Neo-Confucianists, ~~was~~ nothing but an impediment to the ~~well-being~~well-being of individuals and the state. They began to attack Buddhism based on \_\_\_\_\_Confucian values and eventually ~~pulled down~~degraded Sakyamuni Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, from a sacred being to a cultural barbarian.<sup>23</sup>

Because Neo-Confucian scholars played a vital role in inaugurating the Joseon dynasty, "suppression of Buddhism and promotion of Confucianism" (*eokbul sungyu*) became the state policy. Buddhism dominated Korean society for nearly a millennium, but Neo-Confucianism ~~Buddhism that dominated Korean society for nearly a millennium was~~ deprived it of its cultural hegemony ~~by neo-Confucianism~~, and Buddhist monks ~~fell were degraded~~ from the their ruling class status to one ~~of the~~ eight kinds of lowly ~~positions~~people. Grounding itself in Confucian rationalism, The the new ruling class, ~~based on Confucian rationalism~~, suppressed Buddhism, calling it as a heretical ~~doctrine~~ and ~~shamanistic~~. The ruling class rejected Buddhism, ~~placing it under the premises of a~~ Rejected by the ruling class, ~~Buddhism barely managed to survive~~ popular, superstitious religion. Identified thus as a unstable, popular religion, it thereafter barely survived on the sidelines, by meeting conforming to some basic to religious needs of the masses' religious needs in collusion with popular beliefs, praying for one's good luck and chanting incantations.

22 *Goryeosa jeoryo* (Essentials of Goryeo History), *gwon* 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> month, 2<sup>nd</sup> reign of \_King Taejo.

23 Jeong Do-jeon, who led a dynastic transformation from Goryeo to Joseon, was ~~most strongly~~the most adamant critic-critical of Buddhism. His ideas are ~~presented in his~~ "Bulssi japbyeon" (Array of Critiques against Buddhism) in *Dongmunseon* (Anthology of Korean Literature), *gwon* 105. See Han Yeong-wu, *Jeong Do-jeon sasang-ui yeongu* (A Study of Jeong Dojeon's Thought), ~~Thoughts~~, rev. ed. (Seoul: Seoul National University Press, 1989), pp. 51-102; Do Hyeon-cheol "Goryeo mal sadaebu-ui jeongchi sasang yeongu" (A Study of Political Thought of Scholar-Officials in ~~the~~ Late Goryeo)," (Seoul: Ilchokak Publishing ~~jo-gak~~, 1999) ~~Seoul~~, pp. 156-173.

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In this way, Buddhism proved itself to This indicates that Buddhism supplemented supplement the religious limits on the part of Confucianism as an the ideology of the upper classes superstructure.

## 6. Conclusion

Buddhism dominated Korean society for over eight centuries, from the first half of the 6th-sixth century to the second half of the 14th-fourteenth century. While Shamanism was based on the dominant system of thought that preceded it, was characterized by a spirit-centered worldview, advocated centered world view discriminatory views of men-people, and saw one's the next lifetime as a in the form of repetition of one's prior existence, Buddhism advocated a manhuman-centered world-view, men-are-equal-views pousing people's equality and the and transmigration in future life. Transmigration follows the principle of retributive justice in the universe; humans may expect happiness at a future date by accumulating pious acts in the present. The Buddhist clergy was regarded as a "field of blessings" where people, if they sow the seeds of pious acts, and then harvest fruits of happiness later. Thus, Buddhists believed that rewards multiply by tens of thousands of times, they believed. The "cause and effect theory" of causes and effects concomitant in their retribution and the "idea of meritorious virtues" prevailed among the population most deeply and for the longest period of time in medieval Korea most widely, most deeply and for the longest period of time in Korean history.

Rulers Over generations, monarchs had relied on needed the help of Buddhism in the building construction and sustaining maintenance of a centralized power structure. Medieval states The state Buddhism policy in medieval Korea was basically to "protect but control" Buddhism. Through By controlling the bureaucracy and clergy administration, the king became the only entity exercising both secular and religious power. At the same time, Buddhism's strove for an ideal in which ideal was for a bodhisattva to become a became king-ruler. In reality, however, by providing bodhisattva precepts, Buddhism provided religious authority to the secular posts of rulers, noblemen and senior government officials by giving them bodhisattva precepts. The clergy in return was able to expect secular rulers to perform religious duties befitting those of bodhisattva.

The Buddhist clergy cooperated with, rather than confronting ing secular power;

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it often shared the same fate with the state, ~~as with~~ the protection of Buddhism and the protection of the state ~~forming-developed~~ a ~~close~~-mutual relationship likened to ~~the~~ two wheels of a bicycle. Bulguksa ~~Temple~~, Seokguram grotto, the Divine Bell of King Seongdeok, and ~~Goryeo~~-Tripitaka ~~Koreana~~, the ~~cream-zenith~~ of Buddhist arts, are all heritage of this period. By ~~formalizing-establishing~~ major Buddhist rituals such as ~~Yeondeunghoe~~ and ~~Ppalgwanhoe~~ ~~into-as~~ state festivals, the ~~state-led-the~~ protection of Buddhism ~~to~~-naturally enhanced national ~~-~~interests and deified royal power. ~~Particularly~~ ~~During~~ ~~Goryeo~~, when Buddhism was the state religion, ~~in particular~~, becoming a monk ~~-~~was a shortcut to social advancement, ~~no-lessequally~~ favorable ~~than-as through the~~ bureaucracy. ~~-~~Hence ~~the aspirations to enter monastic life exploded among the entire population, from the royal household down to the common classes. aspirations to be ordained monks got quite heated in the royal household and among aristocrats and commoners.~~

As corruption and ~~contradictions-hypocrisy of-in~~ the Buddhist establishment peaked in the later years of Goryeo, Confucian scholars advocated a forceful reform of Buddhism. Confucian theorists, long critical of the Buddhist “~~cause and effect~~ theory” ~~of causes and effects concomitant in their retribution~~ and belief in well-being through the accumulated effect of pious acts, ascribed the fall of the Goryeo dynasty to its excessive protection of Buddhism. ~~They advocated that~~ ~~The~~ protection of ~~the dharma,~~ ~~ie~~-Buddhism no longer protected the state, but rather prompted ~~the state's~~ destruction. The Joseon dynasty suppressed Buddhism and promoted Confucianism for five centuries ~~to follow~~. Buddhism was ~~finally~~ deprived of its status as a dominant system of thought by ~~neo~~Neo-Confucianism and Buddhist monks fell from ~~the~~-ruling class ~~status~~ to ~~one-a status of one~~ of eight kinds of lowly people.

Buddhism and Confucianism ~~both-belong-to~~share spiritual idealism in that ~~both~~ they attach the greatest emphasis on ~~moral and religious self-cultivation~~nurturing individuals' ~~moral and religious aspirations~~. ~~But~~-Buddhism, ~~is founded on~~ ~~-~~based on the dualism of sanctity and secularity, ~~denying~~ies the independence of any ~~form of~~ ~~any kind of~~ objective world that transcends man's- subjective cognition. By contrast, Confucianism, ~~from-the-perspective-of-ain its~~ unitary world-view, ~~-~~accepts the independent existence of the objective world. ~~-~~The transition from Buddhism to Confucianism in the second half of the ~~14th-fourteenth~~ century, accordingly, represents an immense shift- in the country's history of the dominant system of thought, reflecting drastic socioeconomic ~~alterations-transformations~~ that ~~had-took place in this period~~taken place.

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