

Mobility of Korean Sangha and the place of married 'Monks' in Korean society: a Socio-anthropological study

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Abstract

This paper examines in brief the changing patterns of Korean Sangha and the place of married 'Monks' in Korean society from a Socio-anthropological point of view. Genesis and evolution of 'married priests' among Korean Sangha have been described within relevant historical context. The place of married Buddhist priests in the society is to be determined by the Korean Buddhists who are undergoing rapid social change.

Introduction

The Vinaya rules are traditionally considered to be lifespan of the Buddhasâsana (*vinayo nâma buddhasâsanassa âyu*).¹ On this premise, later on, different interpretations on the Vinaya rules by different sects were made. The *Dasa Vattûni*² was the first recorded interpretation on original rules that was however rejected by the elders. This caused a schism in Sangha giving birth to Theravâda and Mahâsanghika divisions. Traditionally, the Korean Sangha has observed the *Caturvarga Vinaya* originated from Dharmagupta School. This contains very strict Vinaya rules like Theravâda but during the Japanese occupation from 1910-1945 by the Japanese government the whole congregation of Korean monks was allowed to get married and rear children. This was unexpected happening to Korean Sangha but most of the Korean monks easily declined the policy. From that time onward, married priests were came to light and are still in existence in Korean Sangha.³ A conspicuous feature of the Korean Sangha is that they did not confine themselves to adhere to the Vinaya rules only but engaged in national politics in the capacity of war heroes, negotiators and so on.

Different Practices of Vinaya Rules and Lifestyles between Monks and Married Monks in Korea

Early monastic life

At the outset, a brief note on the term of "married monks" is necessary. According to the established meaning, the term "monk" does mean 'a member of a religious community of men living under certain vows especially of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Priest is an ordained minister or an official minister who can marry if he wishes. Except the Catholic priests all other priests of Christian faith can marry. Similarly, Hindu priests from the inception of Hinduism although they led a religious life and performed religious rites were called priests but monks. The Buddhist Sangha has its own character i.e. to observe chastity in the sense of complete abstinence from sexual intercourse by its members. It is well known that in the code of discipline both Mahâyana and Theravâda the first Parâjikâ rule is the abstaining from sexual intercourse. If any member breaks this rule he ceases to be a monk but he can be a priest who performs religious rites and observances.⁴ In Korean Sangha there are a substantial number of members who have married and engaged in religious and social activities. They have every right to do so not as monks but as officiating priests. Therefore we would like to suggest the term 'married priests' in place of married monks in Korean context.

Although there is evidence of earlier introductions of Buddhism, a northern Chinese monk, Sundo,⁵ definitively brought statues and texts to the northern kingdom of Goguryo⁶ in 372 A.D. Then in 384 A.D. Malananda, an Indian monk, traveled to Baekje.⁷ Buddhism was eagerly accepted in both Goguryo and Baekje and the kings supported it by building temples and many monks were ordained. Silla Kingdom was slow to receive the new teaching.⁸ There the royal family was the last to become Buddhists.⁹ At the time of arrival of Buddhism, thus, in the Korean Peninsula Shamanism – an ancient belief system of animism and nature spirit worship – was the autochthonous religion. Based on the conviction that human beings as well as natural forces and inanimate objects all possess spirits, Shamanism was not seen to be in conflict with Buddhism and so many of the special mountains believed to be the residences of spirits soon became the sites of Buddhist temples.

Korean Shamanism regarded three gods with special reverence and importance: the Mountain God, San-shin (who is usually depicted as an old man with a tiger at his feet), Toksong, or the recluse, and Ch'ilsong (the Big Dipper). Buddhism accepted and absorbed these three gods and, even today, special

shrines are set aside for them in most of the temples. And so Chinese Buddhism blended with Korean Shamanism to produce a unique form - Korean Buddhism. As in other Buddhist countries, the fundamental teachings of the Buddha remained the same, even though the form became uniquely Korean. Early Korean monks believed that the traditions they received from foreign countries were internally inconsistent. To address this, they developed a new holistic approach to Buddhism. This approach is characteristic of virtually all major Korean thinkers, and has resulted in a distinct variation of Buddhism, which is called Tongbulgyo (“interpenetrated Buddhism”) by Korean scholars. Korean Buddhist thinkers refined their predecessors’ ideas into a distinct form. Buddhism became state religion during the period of Three Kingdoms and in 668 A.D. the Korean peninsula was united under Silla and a golden age followed with some of the greatest Buddhist art in the world (Sokkuram Buddha in GyOnju) being created. The glory of the Silla Dynasty slowly declined and in 935 A.D. the Goryo Period began.

Korean Monks’ Lifestyle as Teachers, War Heroes, Propagators, National Politicians, etc.

Master Hyegong, who lived in the Silla period, chose to live in a small temple called Pu-gae-sa – “Thatched Temple”¹⁰ in that period of Royal Buddhism. He always sang and danced in the streets, carrying a basket, and so people called him Pugu-hwasang (meaning “A Monk carrying a basket). The fact that he carried a basket, as did the simple peasants, indicates that he had close contacts with peasants. His custom of dancing and drinking were also to make him more closely related to the people. Though these acts could be considered as a breach of conduct, in actual fact they showed that Hyegong had a lot of courage and he used these means to relate to the people; he was a true Bodhisattva.¹¹ Taeon and Wonhyo also showed a similar pattern. Taeon ignored the luxury-loving royal society, arranging everything so that he was closer to the people. This was the reason for his living in a market area and hitting the iron bowl and shouting, Taeon, Taeon. Wonhyo had a marital relation with a woman and begot a son. He moved from village to village singing and dancing, and introducing Buddhism. Therefore, even beggars and young children were able to know Buddhism.¹²

Biography and the practices of great Master Wonhyo are interesting: Master Wonhyo was born in 617, in the 39th regnal year of King Chinp’yO at a village called Puljich’on to the south Arayang Country. His surname was SOI and everyone realized that he was brilliant from very young age. He was well versed in the three teachings — Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism— without

having any instruction from a teacher. After he was ordained he gained a thorough knowledge of the Tripitaka and practices the three methods of learning: morality, meditation, and wisdom. When he was on the way to China to study with Master Lisang, he had a special experience.

One night Master Wonhyo and Master Lisang were overtaken by a severe storm and had to take refuge in a cave. Feeling thirsty during the night, Master Wonhyo searched around for something to drink in the dark. After a short time, he found a vessel containing cool, refreshing water. He drank it and went back to sleep. Then, in the morning he found that he had taken the water from a skull mistaking it for a gourd. He realized that everything depends upon the mind: according to the movement of the mind, various events happen; when the mind makes no distinctions, then this and that disappears. All worldly events occur in the One Mind and all the events are of consciousness only. Therefore one should not seek after truth outside the mind. Upon realizing this, Wonhyo gave up his intention of studying in China and immediately returned to Silla.

Towards the end, he lived his life according to the practice of the Bodhisattva precepts, setting an example for all to see. Thus he taught people that theory and practice are like two wheels of one vehicle and they should follow each other. To reveal the real meaning of Buddhism, he not only practiced it but also was constantly attentive to the creation of suitable ways of teaching according to people's capacity. To break with mere usage and formality of discipline, he even violated Buddhist rules: he had a son by the widowed princess, Yosok, the daughter of King (T'aejong) Muryol.

One day, Master Wonhyo roamed through the streets shouting "If somebody gives me an axe without a handle, I will cut down a tree and make it hold up the sky." Hearing this, the King understood, "The master must want to have a brilliant son. If a talented person is born, it will be of good benefit to the entire nation," he thought. And so he arranged the affair and a boy called Solch'ong later became one of the ten great people of Silla was born to the princess and the master. After the birth of his son he disrobed and took the name of Sosong-kosa (meaning "An Unimportant Layman") and devoted his whole being to helping the needy.

The belief in the future Buddha of Maitreya was originated in Korea for the first time¹³ by the Korean Sangha during the Silla period. The place where Maitreya Buddha is born is ideal: it is peaceful and comfortable; there are no thieves, no natural disasters such as poor harvest and no diseases; people are

virtuous. Live in harmony, respect one another, control desire, speak pleasantly and behave well. The whole system of belief in Maitreya represents a realizable, realistic form of human beings' deepest ideals. The people of Silla, were so fervent in their following of the ideals of Maitreya Buddha that they eagerly prayed for Silla to be the Land of Maitreya Buddha, an ideal country. It is to be noted here that Master Won-gwang during the reign of Chinp'yong, established national norms of ethics based on the Maitreya belief of the Buddha land.

In order to create the ideal country of Maitreya, the people of Silla not only prayed but they also tried to live righteously according to Buddhist morality. The rulers too, identifying themselves with Sangha, the universal monarch mentioned in the Maitreya Sûtra, devoted themselves to establishing an ideal rule based on the thought of the Sûtra. Thereby Silla people were united under the same ideology and many talented men emerged from this rich cultural heritage. Maitreya belief was the spiritual pillar of the hwarang and "it was Buddhist monks who trained and cultivated these young men. The monks were pioneers in the movement to popularize Buddhism...it was Maitreya belief which pushed Silla forward to the unification of the peninsula."¹⁴ Before Korea, Maitreya Buddha belief was current in Sri Lanka as we hear of that King DummhagâmaGî will be the first disciple of the sublime Metteyya, the king's father (will be) his father and the mother his mother. The younger brother Saddhâtissa will be his second disciple, but Sâliyakumâra, the king's son, will be the son of the sublime Metteyya.¹⁵

Master Wong-gwan kept the monks' precepts very strictly: whatever was given to him, he never kept it for himself but put it to the use of the temple. His private possessions were only clothes and his eating bowls. As he kept the monks' precepts strictly on the one hand, he educated people to live rightly on the other, for this purpose, he did not refuse any means necessary in order to help the people. When King ChinpyOng (679-632), decided to ask help from Sui to retaliate against KoguryO, he asked Master Wong-gwang to draft a petition for a foreign campaign in 608. Accepting the king's request, Master Won-gwang clearly pointed out he could not do it as a monk but he could do as a citizen of Silla. This clearly demonstrates that monks deviated from original precept for the sake of good of the country. This is further warranted by his teaching that lay people have to live correctly and sustain themselves well and concern with practicing Buddhism, not merely learning the precepts. In view of this thinking he introduced Sesok-ogye, the five precepts for laymen, which he gave to the young hwarang. These five are: 1) serve the king with loyalty, 2)

serve and tend parents with filial devotion, 3) treat friends with sincerity, 4) do not retreat from battle field, 5) be discriminating about the taking of life.

When Master Won-gwang found himself in the situation of advising the king as mentioned above, he was acutely aware of the conflict between the Buddhist ethical norms and the particular duties demanded by Silla society. But he ultimately found a compromise in these two contradictory norms of behaviour in patriotism. Sesok-ogye is an example of this, showing the master's patriotism and his strong belief in the idea of the Buddha Land.

Of particular note is the fourth precept of the Sesok-ogye which is "not to retreat from a battlefield." Here the master teaches the people to protect the nation, the Buddha Land, for it is not merely protecting their own country but it is also training them to defend the right Dhamma of Buddhism. Then in the fifth precept, "discriminate when life should be taken," he, as a monk, warns to minimize killing. Won-gwang's idea can be interpreted as follows: though killing should be avoided, if killing in battle brings more advantages than disadvantages, then it is not wrong, in all events. One should fight courageously, taking life only when necessary.

These five precepts of Master Won-gwang are different from the traditional precepts. Ogye hence named "Sesok-ogye." These precepts are the direct outcome of belief in the protecting quality of Dhamma and the nation, and they rely directly on the altruism of Mahāyāna tradition. Here the spirit of his teaching is not killing but to save the religion and nation. Similarly, when King Dummhagāma Gī of Sri Lanka in the second century B.C. waged war to save the religion and the nation from the invaders from South India Buddhist monks went to the war front. When finally won the battle the king asked the monks 'How shall there be any comfort for me, O venerable sirs, since by me was caused the slaughter of a great host numbering millions?' The monks answered: 'From this deed arises no hindrance in thy way to heaven. Only one and a half human beings have been slain here by thee, O lord of men. The one had come unto the (three) refuges, the other had taken on himself the five precepts. Unbelievers and men of evil life were the rest, not more to be esteemed those beasts. But as for thee, though wilt bring glory to the doctrine of the Buddha in manifold ways; therefore cast away care from thy heart, O ruler of men!'¹⁶

Mainly because of the initiatives of the monks, Buddhism became the main force by which the peninsula was united in 668 A.D. under Silla. After unification, social harmony, so necessary in the building of defenses against the constant invasions, was fostered by them. It was in fact they who came to the rescue of the

country in the 16th century by routing the Japanese invaders. All through the history of Korea, Buddhist monks have taught the unity of all things in the universe. They taught that Buddhist teachings characterize openness and therefore as elsewhere, Buddhism on the peninsula readily absorbed the indigenous culture as shown above. As it now stands, Korean Buddhism consists mostly of the SOn lineage of a galaxy of celebrated SOn Masters who led the nation to a successful end. SOn has a strong relationship with other Mahāyāna traditions that bear the imprint of Chinese Ch'an teachings, as well as the closely related Japanese Zen.

The Invasion of Japanese Buddhism and Buddhist Reform Movement introduced by Korean Monks and its Influence on their Life Pattern

After Unyo incident in 1875 in the following year the treaty of Friendship (or treaty of Kanghwa) was signed. The Japanese then sought to invade Korea with Japanese Buddhism in order to psychologically subordinate the Korea people to Japan through Buddhism. Thus, in 1876, the Shin, Nichiren, Pure Land, Shingon, Soto and Rinzi sects were introduced to Korea. So from 1876 to 1897 six main centers by Japanese monks opened in different parts of Korea. This development in the history of Buddhism in Korea influenced in great deal the lifestyle of the Korean Sangha and also to deviate from certain Vinaya rules.

Traditionally, Korean Sangha observed very strict Vinaya rules in their daily life. Monks should meditate in remote temples twice a year known as summer retreat and winter retreat. In addition, in Korea many particular temples are there identified as 'Gidocheo' [Praying place] in which many monks are playing to Buddha. Each meditation hall has strong rules for meditation monks to be kept.

Japanese invasion changed Korean monk's lifestyle by force. Even though, some bhikkhu who have strict Vinaya rules against them many monks of Korean Sangha have been influenced by them. During Japanese occupation it was so difficult for pure monks to keep Korean Sangha tradition. After independence from Japan in 1945, some pure bhikkhus started purifying the Sāsana.

Married priests did not want to give up their rights at once. Therefore, the most Venerable Song Manam following a moderate way suggested to allocate seats in the dharma hall of same temple separately for unmarried monks as seats for Jeongbeopjung [Right dhamma group] and seats for married monks as Hobeopjung [protecting dhamma group] for the first time.¹⁷ Nevertheless,

many married priests were expelled by force from the Order with the patronage of President Lee Seong Man.

President Lee Seong Man stated Japanese influenced married monks should leave the traditional temples and the monk-hood and if they don't follow his order he would use law enforcement authorities.

Buddhist Reform Movement

Under this invasion of Japanese Buddhism educational facilities were made available to the Korean Sangha and laymen. Lectures were held for the people of all walks of life to indoctrinate to the Japanese Buddhism and way of life. With the Korea became a part of Japan in 1910 vast missionary effort was put into action in order to assimilate Korea to Japan.

The Nichiren sect was very active in Korea which established a number of centers in different parts of the country. Then Sano-zen rei from the Nichiren carried out a campaign to repeal the restriction against Korean monks entering the capital in 1894. In this way, they sought to convert Korean Buddhists to the Nichiren sect.

This sudden invasion of Buddhism came as a great shock to the Korean Buddhist world. The monk's Order was shaken in this light; the following points may be noted. Firstly, Japanese propagation was not aim solely at Japanese residence of Korea, but it also targeted Koreans. In actual fact, Japanese used every method available in order to convert Korea. Secondly, Korean temples and the property which belonged to them were often confiscated. Thirdly, Japanese Buddhist sects maintained as a doctrinal tenet that Korean should be confined with the Buddhism of Japan.

The Japanese effort to combine the two intensified after the Protectorate Treaty of 1905.¹⁸ According to the fourth article of the Resident General's regulation, number 45, 'Each Japanese sect's administrator, preacher, and other Japanese nationals must procure the necessary document with authorization when subscribing to Korean temple management commission.' This was actually just a ploy by the General to encourage the Japanese to take over Korean temples. Their secret plot failed, however, because of the rebellion of the Korean Buddhist led by the Sangha. The provisions of the Treaty and the monks' response it clearly demonstrate the crux of the Buddhist politics was nothing but the quest for temporal power.

Korean temples were replete with enormous wealth fortified with lands, magnificent infrastructure facilities provided for.¹⁹ This paved the way to embark on a Buddhist Reform Movement focused on ownership of propriety rights over the temple and their assets though it was not openly said so. The first such movement was the Buddhist Research Society Reform Movement. Master Podam from Pongwon-sa and Master Walch'o from Hawgye-sa formed nucleus of the movement for Buddhist reform. They felt that only way to achieve their end was to modernize Buddhist education and propagation with the assistance of Japanese Sangha.

To this end they established the Buddhist Research Society at Wonhung-sa²⁰ in 1906. They submitted to the Interior Ministry stating their intention: 'To establish a school focusing on research into modern scholarship.' In essence, their primary aim was to amalgamate the Korean Buddhism with Japanese Buddhism through which aiming at reaching the temple property. This research society was therefore strongly under the influence of Japanese Buddhist sects. The proposal calling for the merger of Korean Buddhism with the pure land sect caused voices of opposition to be heard through Korea and the BRS's reputation was there by irreparably weaken, bringing effort nothing.

The second reform movement namely; the Won-jong Reform Movement was also to merge Korean Buddhism with the Japanese Buddhism.²¹ By knowing the dangers of the aim and result of the annexation Korean Buddhist formed a movement to oppose the annexation. Thus, the effort of this Buddhist reform movement was also weaken and came to nothing.

The third was the Imje-jong²² Reform Movement. Some monks led by Masters Han-yong (1870-1948), Chinung, Chongnae, Manhae (Han Yong-un) (1879-1944). Songwol who reject the above movements held a meeting at Songwang-sa in 1911 to form a new movement. This is the birth of Imje-jong. The result of this movement was that Korean Buddhism was divided into Won-jong in Seoul; and Imje-jong centered on Beoma-sa. They were also called Puk-dang (northern part) and Nam-dang (southern part) respectively. Each one claimed to be the legitimate heir of Korean Buddhism. The Imje-jong movement was basically that of sustaining the tenet of orthodoxy, but it was also a movement of the separation of political and religion.

The Japanese Department for overseeing Korean affairs assumed a passive position concerning the conflicts and confrontation of the two sects. In addition, the Department wanted to postpone the official confirmation of the union of Won-jong with Japanese Soto sect. Then on June 3, 1911, the Department

established and promulgated the temple ordinance as ordinance no. 7 which was a basic order of Japanese policy dealing with Korean Buddhism. Soon after the enforcement regulation of the temple ordinance was proclaimed and an additional ordinance, no 84, was created on September 1. As a result, the signboards of the office of Won-jong and Imje-jong were removed and the argument between the two sects went up in a puff of smoke. Finally, Korean temples lost their self-governing power and were subordinated to the Japanese Department for Overseeing Korean Affairs. The main points of the ordinance and the enforcement regulation were as follows:

Firstly, 30 temples were to be chosen as the main temples of Korea, and about 1,000 other temples were divided up and administered by the main temples. Any independent monastery, main or branch, had to have a chief monk who managed the temple, and who had to be officially recognized by the Japanese Governor of the province.

Secondly, even a chief monk was not allowed to dispose of any temple property, such as land, woods, building, and other precious things, unless they had permission from the government-general. Although it is said that the purpose to introduce this ruling was to protect the temple property, but in actual fact, the ruling was made in order to prevent the sale of property for raising funds for the Korean independence movement against Japan. Virtually more than 1,300 Korean temples were in the hand of Japanese Government. Thus the real control of Korean Buddhist treasures was owned by them.

Confederation of 'the Thirty Mountains' and the Central Affairs Bureau, Kyomuwon

From 1914, four years after the Temple Ordinance was put into effect a reconstruction movement was started by the Korean Sangha. This was called the Confederation of 'the Thirty Mountains' and the Central Affairs Bureau, Kyomuwon.²³ This was established in order to strengthen the relationship between the 30 main temples and to set up a propagation and education project. Its regulation contained 24 articles and it was authorized by the Japanese Government in 1915. So the thirty mountains established a Bureau Kakhwang-sa and elected Master Taeyon from Yongju-sa as the head. The Confederation held Dhamma talks and lectures at Kakhwang-sa using it as a propagation center. In addition, the Confederation spread to establishing modern education centers. In July, 1915, a local school, a primary school and central school were established financed by the Thirty Mountain Temples and other two Temples. Hence this movement set the ground for the modernization

of Korean Buddhism. This influenced in great deal on to fashion the modern lifestyle of Korean Sangha.

Although the Japanese Government took measures to restrict the freedom of Confederation, on March 1, 1919 a movement led by the Sangha and other patriots proclaimed the independence of Korea. Master Manhae's sincere concepts of freedom and equality played a great role in the March First Movement. In this connection a word about Master Manhae's Buddhist Movement and its influence on this development is not inappropriate. Master Manhae's movement was a people's movement, it was a movement of masses. He maintained that the welfare of one's neighbours and one's society are the *raison d'être* of Buddhism. He consistently urged both by Buddhists and monastic to develop a positive interest in the concerns of the people and the problem of society. He often visited 'righteous soldiers' (soldiers in the resistance armies fighting Japan) and gave them encouragement.

In doing so he risked his life. Once being misunderstood as a Japanese spy, he suffered hardships and came close to being killed. Master Manhae when went to Japan in 1908 met Ch'oe In, who fought for Korean Independence from Japan as one of the 33 Korean Representatives of the March First Movement. Upon his return to Korea the master started the deep study into the *Pragnāpāramitā Sūtra* and the *AvataCsaka Sūtra*. He also gave lectures on Buddhism at several places. All his teachings aimed at freedom of society. Through his experiences and research he led about the changing world and to obtain much knowledge and understanding of modern thought from the Chinese philosopher named Liang chi- chao's (1873-1030) *Yin-bing-huan-wen-ji*.

Thus he was able to develop a far reaching critical perspective on Korean Buddhism. Most significantly this enabled him to obtain a profound, analytical understanding of the stagnation, backwardness and hermit-life nature plaguing Korean Sangha. He compiled very interesting books. From his books he persuaded the Korean monks to change their style towards realization of the human welfare. He directed his efforts at readily reforming Korean Sangha which was on the road to declining itself. The revision of Korean Sangha's lifestyle for him was to destroy, deny and exclude accumulated traditional inconsistency and corrupted mentality of the Korean Buddhist Community.

He believed that Buddhism came to life with the realization that Buddhism is not in the temples where the monks live but rather in each individual's life where monk has to go. Japan sent Japanese monk into Korea to make Korean Sangha into Japanese. In this way, they planned to paralyze and destroy Korean Sangha's lifestyle. Thus the Japanese aim was to destroy the traditional of

Korean Sangha. In this sense master Manhae's anti Japanese ideology was not merely an emotional rebellion or refusal, it was based on the idea that the Buddha nature is free. In his writing, *An Abstract of Thoughts on Chos On Independence* he stated:

"Freedom is the life of all things and peace is the happiness of life. Therefore, a person without freedom is dead and a person whose peace taken from him is a man of despair. The circumstances of suppressed man are those of a tomb, the surroundings and the whole life of a person whose struggles all the time are nothing but hell. ... And in order to get freedom, people are willing to give up their lives as worthless dust: to sustain peace they willingly accept any sacrifice. This is both the right of life and its responsibility."²⁴

From this passage it becomes abundantly clear that he wanted to fight for freedom of the Korean people. Yet again in his *The Reason of ChOsen Independence*, he showed his strong aversion to the deprivation of civil liberties thus:

"The weak are not essentially the weak, and strong cannot be strong forever. When the fortune of the world changes, the heel of the invader is bitten and a war of revenge follows: invasion always causes war. Therefore, how can they be a war for peace? And how can anyone consider there to be any happiness in the cutting off of several thousands of years of history by the invasion of his own country by another country. In addition, invasion means that hundreds and thousands of his people become slaves, mere cattle and horses under the mistreatment of the oppressor."²⁵

As a freedom fighter his assertions are quiet praise-worthy. Naturally, weakness and strength cannot simply be concerned innate factors. But freedom which is the right of every living thing has always existed. When such freedom whether it is that of individuals or that of nation, is restricted ordained, a countermove is divided to protect the intrinsic civil liberty of the individual. This counter measure can even take the form of combat. And so Manhae's concept of freedom and equality are the enjoyment of freedom and the acceptance of equality, the original state of human beings. Master Manhae's thought that individual or social freedom and equality could not be persuade merely by inner world stability and so he claimed that one should have a means to struggle for this fundamental values.

Just as Anagārika Dharmapāla's writings and thoughts influenced Sri Lankan society for a renaissance movement Master Manhae's sincere concept of

freedom and equality played a great role in the March First Movement of Korea led by the Korean Sangha. Furthermore, these concepts were converted into a philosophy of non resistance and of non violence. Along with Ch'oe In Manhae was in charge of the preparation for this movement. The Korean Declaration of Independence which was put into writing by Yukdang Ch'oe Nam sun had three articles of public commitment which supplied and strengthened the content of the Korean declaration of independence; these articles were added by Master Manhae. He was also the representative of the 33 patriots who gathered at Taehwegwan restaurant to make the declaration of independence on March First 1919. He, as the representative, announced as follows:

“Today we are gathered here to declare the Independence of ChosOn, and we are really happy and glorious in that act. We, as the representatives of our people, have an important responsibility in this declaration in that we should unite the people and try to realize our independence. Now, we have nothing to regret, nothing to regret even were we to die right now. So, let's cry hurrah for Independence!”

Students march through the streets in peaceful procession shouting ‘Long live Korean Independence. Following this incidence, the Government closed the schools by force and the Korean Buddhist Projects were ruined. In the 1920s, young Korean monks who were influenced by the new trend or who had returned from studying in Japan pointed out the irrationality of the system of Thirty Mountains and Confederation regulation. They urged that there be a reorganization of a strong central controlling system of the Buddhist community. Also, these young monks who came from ChosOn Buddhist Youth Group, demanded a separation of politics and religion and that the Temple Ordinance of Japanese rulers be removed. The Confederation at its meeting held in December 1920 agreed to change the structure of the Confederation and to make a bureau of central affairs, Chongmuwon, and they submitted the application on the excuse that it was against the Temple Ordinance.

Undaunted, the young monks tried hard and so, with the help of their seniors, they organized a Central Affairs Bureau of the two sects Son and Kyo at Lakhwang-sa. The Bureau was set up as a central organization for controlling all temples. But some monks of the thirty temples were against that. They did not join the Bureau but formed their own organization that was recognized by the Government. The two were against each other, each one claiming their orthodoxy. But eventually in 1925 they united together.

In 1929, a conference for monks was held at which the constitutional law of the sect (12 chapters and 31 articles), the regulation of the Central Affairs Bureau (7 chapters and 19 articles), and the bylaws of the sect were framed. In 1930, according to the constitutional law of the sect, laws of monks' education, of monks' census registration, and of propagation were established and promulgated. Now the Central Affairs Bureau was in accordance with formalities.

Japanese Occupation, Monks and Married Priests

Buddhism has been in Korea for about 1,600 years and through that long history, it has achieved a deep religious tradition and created a unique culture of which the lifestyle of the Sangha forms part. Even though the basic tenets and ideas of the Vinaya amongst them remain the same as those of Sri Lanka and Thailand more significantly the First *Pârâjikâ* rule is not practiced by the members of certain Sects since Japanese occupation in their country. The second important development in the Korean Sangha is the overwhelming practice of SOn Meditation since. This has two practices, namely; Tathâgata SOn and Patriarchal SOn²⁶.

In 1910, the Japanese colonized Korea and they remained until 1945 as mentioned above. They brought their own married priests with them and so all the large temples in Korea came to be inhabited by married priests. The Japanese Buddhist custom of allowing Buddhist monks to marry contradicted the lifestyle of Korean Buddhist monks and nuns, who traditionally lived in celibacy. The Japanese occupational authorities encouraged this practice. They appointed their own heads of temples, and had many works of art shipped to Japan. Negotiations for the repatriation of Korean Buddhist artworks are still ongoing. Japanese Buddhists demanded the right to proselytize in the cities, lifting the five-hundred year ban on monks and nuns entering cities.²⁷ The formation of new Buddhist sects, such as Won Buddhism, and the presence of Christian missionaries during this period led to further turbulence in traditional Korean Buddhism.

Struggle between the Jogye Order Monks Priests and Married - the Buddhist Purification Movement

The Buddhist Purification Movement during 1952-1962 among the fading Korean Buddhism under the Japanese colonial period was the major historical event for the shaping of the lifestyle of modern Korean monks as well as a significant moment of the traditional lifestyle of Sangha. The movement was

led by ideas such as Bhikkhunî taking the leadership, exclusion of married Buddhist priests, folk or traditional Buddhism rehabilitation and modernization of Korean Buddhism. For a long period of time, some people viewed the Buddhist Purification Movement to be the decision of the 1st President of Korea, Lee Seung Man, who planned the Buddhist Purification Movement. However, many people weren't so content with this idea and even worried that it ignores autonomy of the movement. The movement was concluded on April of 1962 by integrating the total religious order: both Bhikkhunî and Daecheo - the married priests - consented with new ideas the liberation on a memorial service was newly implemented; and executive organs of both parties equally participated too.

The cause of this movement can be divided into the inner and outer case. One of the first inner causes was the political aim of President Lee Seung Man, who viewed religion as a way to gain votes; meanwhile, the president Lee was also a Christian, believed that there was a political suppression of Buddhism at the same time. However, other inner causes can be seen in both ideological and economical aspects. In ideological aspects, there was a strong belief among the most SO practicing monks that the folk Buddhism should be rebuilt and reorganized, since its true ideology collapsed during the colonial era by Japanese. In economic aspects, it was against the farmland reform which withered financial foundations of every temple and took away places for the ascetic practice of monks and nuns.

The main problems which existed around the modern eras' are the succession of the traditional Korean Buddhism. And here, the main point is how to view the Buddhist Purification Movement. If the main point is focusing on exclusion of the married priests, this type of view point or evaluation should go in presence; married priests and depraved monks should be eliminated from the brotherhood. These also include the ideas of purifying the Bhikcunî organization, which is also another aim of the Buddhist Purification Movement.

Officially in 1926 Korean monks were allowed to marry and procreate children by the Japanese government in Korea.²⁸ Before this a Korean monk named Master Hanyougun expressed his view that the importance of marrying among Korean monks. His view is found mentioned in his masterpiece ChosOn Bulgyo Yu Sinlon²⁹ that if monks marry and procreate siblings that would help in great deal propagate Buddhism. He further emphasized that marrying does not bring any bad results. His main idea is to grow the Buddhist population. It was the trend at that time to increase the population in the world and following the

initiatives of the Korean Sangha the other communities in world would take similar measure to have the population growth.

Although the celibate monks opposed to the move neither Government nor some monks did not pay heed to this and commence the system of marriage among Korean monks. So before this official arrangement there were many monks who started to marry and there were a large number of married priests. However, to keep the tradition of Korean monks intact Son Hakoon Temple was built by pure Bhikkhus in 1921.³⁰ In 1941 the Jogya order emerged and started a campaign to purify the order with the Son Hakoon as its headquarters. Following the independence there were many married priests who were so powerful as to capturing even the head quarters of the Jogye Order.

This resulted in a situation where both sections of monks to quarrel each other. This attracted the attention of the President Lee Seung Man to support the Jogye Order monks. As a result many married priests were chased out from the Order and purified the Sāsana. So the married monks were limited to a few and occupied only two important temples, i.e. Sonam-sa and Bongwon-sa. Even at the present time these two temples are under them and Sonam-sa is the headquarters of the Taego order of married priests. All the attempts made by the Jogye Order to regain them for the traditional order proved to be no success.

The position of married priest was too high in terms of their number and power to expel them from the order and to regain all the temples back from them. So, traditional monks sought the help of the government and the lay people for their campaign. When Lee Seung Man visited Pongguk-sa located near Seoul was scandalized to find a woman asleep. It was his wife, explained the monk, and there were four children. "I thought," snapped Lee, "those Buddhist monks are supposed to be unmarried. How long has this been going on?"³¹ The embarrassed man muttered the classic excuse: "All the monks are doing it." Yet again he witnessed in Toung juw—an one monk was living with a Japanese wife. In addition he was shocked to see the temple was full of laymen dresses and the Shrine room was adorned with the photographs of the Japanese king and his army provided for the worship by the monks and the laity. In Kaonchok-sa another ugly scene to his eyes was that the chief priest of the temple was neither a monk nor priest from his outward appearance as he was wearing layman dresses and having fully grown hair. The President inquired 'do you have two wives'? Though he kept silence truly enough he had two wives. The President asked all those to leave the temples. Lee vehemently opposed to propagation of Japanese Buddhism and encouraged the traditional Korean faith to flourish.

Back in Seoul, Methodist Lee discovered that some 5,000 Korean Buddhist monks are married. This, he decided, was another example of the sinister influence that the Japanese exerted during their occupation of Korea. Lee promptly issued a statement of policy, "to restore the old Korean traditions" and the celibate priesthood. To about 700 of the 1,800 Buddhist monks and nuns in Korea who have stayed single, Lee's stand opened vistas of power, prestige and the best priestly accommodations instead of the worst. Some 500 of them trudged down Seoul's main street to Lee's mansion behind a taxicab with a loudspeaker blaring: "We will fight to the last man for the purification of Korean Buddhism, even if we may die from cold and hunger." When the police interfered with the monk assembly, Venerable Kusan wrote a petition in his blood, claiming the legitimacy of the Purification Movement. At that time, Venerable Seungsahn also took part in the Purification Movement actively.

In the following week Korea's Ministries of Home and Education ordered that "married monks should repent their past and become laymen." The badly frightened family men, who claim that Buddhist priests have been marrying for 300 years, met with representatives of the protesting faction of celibates and offered to cede them the top temple priesthoods and move their families out of the priestly residences and into village quarters. At week's end the unmarried 700 were still insisting on out-and-out expulsion.³²

Thus it becomes clear that the purifying the order from married priests was not successful to the full. In the history of Korean monks there were at least two leading monks whose begotten children were held in high esteem. One is Wonhyo,³³ the other is Manhae. Manhae was divorced from his first marriage and became a monk and then after becoming monk he contracted a second marriage of 46. They are still regarded as great sons of Korea. At present the Jogye order is the main sect but there are at least two main sects belonging to married priests.

After Independence, there was a steady increase in celibate monks. As mentioned above, SOon Buddhism started playing a vital role in the lifestyle of Buddhist monks. Many men and women were ordained and they took back most temples from the married priests. Today by far the largest is the Jogye Order counting over 2,500 temples about 12,000 ordained members and at least 10 million registered lay people. Other sects, such as the Taego, the modern revival of the Cheontae lineage, the "Jingak" order (a modern esoteric sect), and the newly formed Won, have also attracted sizable followings.

Today, it has become a feature of the lifestyle of Korean monks either married or not to devote much time to engage themselves in the conduct of Dhamma Schools and sermons in their temples for the laity with a view to propagate Buddhism and the character of Korean Buddhism and thereby strengthening further the relations between the temple and the community. Main Features of Korean Buddhism are the Bodhisattva Principle, unification and openness as explained in the Brahmajāla Sūtra.³⁴ From the very beginning, the way of the Bodhisattva became a central feature of Korean Buddhism. A Bodhisattva is Brahmajāla Sūtra and the Bodhisattva who breaks this rule like other rules will lose his monkhood. In the present state of research there is, however, one important conclusion that may be safely drawn: the existence of married priests has not constituted an impediment to the way of life of Korean Sangha, as a whole in Korean society. This societal recognition is perhaps owing to the fact that Korean society ensures the human rights and respects the freedom of individual to act independently, in general, and adheres to the Bodhisattva ideals predominantly. On the other hand, Korean legacy is to compromise the rigorous religious sanctions when required in the interest of national security and well-being of the people. Korean People lay emphasis on worldly affairs than religious life and concern predominantly economic prosperity. They don't give much attention to the civil status either married or not. In a similar vein, they don't seriously care whether monks should get married or not. Their view is influenced by the social conditions they live. Korea is a democratic multi-religious secular country. As long as the members of society, in particular Buddhists, consider married priests form part of Korean Sangha they have little problem to survive in society.

In the light of the foregoing study it may be concluded that the place of married priests in Korea has become a matter to be determined by the members of Korean Buddhists not by the rules laid down in the Vinayapitaka. Korean Buddhists are in the midst of modernity which requires changing monk's lifestyle. This wave of modernity made a renowned Korean monk known as Han yong-un to express the view that Korean monks should be allowed to be get married for better future of Korean Buddhism.

The justification given by society for married priests is insufficient to call married priests as the real members of the Sangha because monkhood is determined in terms of Vinaya rules but not the assumptions of society. Therefore, we would like to suggest the married monks to be called married priests in the spirit of the terms and within the gamut of their structure and stipulations in the canon. Nevertheless, the whole issue is open for discussion by further researches. In Korea, the number and influence of married priest is limited but

in Japan and some other parts of the world is formidable. Therefore, what may be more important is that we should not be prejudiced and have to work in oneness while respecting unity in diversity to foster and promote Buddhism for the well-being of the sentient beings.

(End notes)

¹ Samantapāsādikā, (PTS) I, 13.

² Ten points were suggested by Vajjin monks.

³ There is no a statistical analysis but it is a well known fact to Korean monks.

⁴ Normally, married priest is good in performing ceremonies than monks in Korea (This information comes from my field work).

⁵ Samgukyusa, Gyogamyekju, Critical Study of Samgukyusa with a Korean Translation, Ha Jung yong, Seoul: Sigongsa, 2006, p.329.⁶ The term Korea is derived from Goguryo.

⁷ Samgukyusa, Gyogamyekju, Critical Study of Samgukyusa with a Korean Translation, Ha Jung yong, Seoul: Sigongsa, 2006, p. 331.

⁸ Id. p.332.

⁹ Samguksagi, Ancient History of Three Kingdoms (tr.), Choe ho, Seoul: Heungsunmunhwasa, 2007. pp.77 ff; In 527 A.D., the minister I'chadon told the king that he was a Buddhist and to be beheaded him. When his head was cut off, white blood poured out instead of blood. (You can sometimes see a painting of this on temple walls); the court was impressed by the miracle.

¹⁰ Cf. PaGGasālā (Pali) Pansala (Sinhala).

¹¹ The History and Culture of Buddhism in Korea, (hereafter HCBK), ed. The Korean Buddhist Research Institute, Seoul: Dongguk University Press, 1995, p.66.

¹² Sin Hyeon suk, (tr.) Hangukbulgyosa (Korean) [History of Korean Buddhism], (Seoul: Minjoksa, 1991), pp. 78-84.

¹³ The Maitreya Bodhisattva concept was in prevalence in Sri Lanka during the second century B.C. MahāvaCsa, (hereafter Mv.) XXXII 81-83.

¹⁴ HCBK, p.78,

¹⁵ Mv. XXXII 81-83.

¹⁶ Mv., XXV108-111.

¹⁷ Gangseokju and Bakgyeonghun, *Bulgyogeunsebaeknyeon*, [100 years of Buddhism of Modern Time], Seoul: Minjoksa, 2002, p.63.

¹⁸ Written by Han Young Woo translated by Hahm Chaibong, *A Review of Korean History*, Kyongsaewon: Korea, 2010 Vol III, pp.82 ff.; see Gangseokju and Bakgyeonghun. *Bulgyogeunsebaknyeon*, op.cit., p. 257.

¹⁹ HCBK, pp. 224 ff.

²⁰ HCBK, pp. 225 ff.

²¹ Imhaebong 임해봉, *ikminjisidaebulgyouichinilgunsangchinilbulgyoron* (Korean) [A large Group of People for pro Japanese under Japanese Occupation], (Seoul: Minjoksa, 1993), pp.117-118.

²² Gangseokju and Bakgeounghun 강석주·박경훈, *Bulgyogeunsebaknyeon* op.cit pp. 43-45.

²³ HCBK, pp. 230-231.; see *Daehanbulgyojogyejonggyoyukwon 대한불교조계종 교육원*, (Seoul: 2001), *The History of the Chogye Order*, pp. 93-95.

²⁴ HCBK, p.236.

²⁵ Ibid., p.237.

²⁶ KimTaehwan 임태환 *Junggukjosasonuiyeongu-with Special Reference to Majo line* (Ph.D.thesis), 김태환, Busan National University, 2000, pp.37-46; see Jungseongbon *Junggukseonjonguiseongripsayeongu [Research on Evolution of China Chan]*, (Seoul: Minjoksa, 1993), p.818.

²⁷ HCBK, p.176.; see *Jogyejongsa 曹溪宗史, 고종세편*, (*The History of Chogye Order*), pp. 275 ff.; This ban imposed by king Se jong (1418-1450) was lifted by King Go jong with help of Japanese monk called Sano on his 32 regnal year (1895).

²⁸ Gang Seok ju and Bak Geoung hun, op.cit., pp. 58-60.

²⁹ Lee Won seop 이원섭 tr, *Joseon Bulgyo Yu Sin Ron*, Seoul, 1992, pp. 117-125.; This text was published in 1913 one year prior to the World War I.; see also Robert E. Buswell, Jr. 'Buddhist Reform Movements in Korea During the Japanese Colonial period: Precepts and the Challenge of Modernity', edited by Charles Wei-hsun Fu And Sandra A. Wawrytko, et, al, *Buddhist Behavioral Codes and the Modern World*, an International Symposium), pp.146-153.

³⁰ Gangseokju and Bakgeounghun op.cit., pp.114-115.

³¹ Id., pp. 208-209.

³² <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,892906,00.html#ixzz0o3Q676Pt>
retrieved January 4, 2011

³³ HCBK, pp.85 ff.

³⁴ This is a Mahâyâna Text and not the famous Sutta of the *Dîgha Njkâya*

³⁵ P.V. Bapat, ed. *2,500 years of Buddhism*, 1956, New Delhi: Publications Division Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, pp. 422 ff.

³⁶ s.v. *Brahmajâla Sûtra*, vol. I.1, Killing, 2. Stealing, 3. Sexual Misconduct or intercourse, 4. Lying and False Speech, 5. Selling Alcoholic Beverages, 6. Broadcasting the Faults of the Assembly, 7. Praising Oneself and Disparaging Others, 8. Stinginess and Abuse, 9. Anger and Resentment, 10. Slandering the Triple Jewel

³⁷

舍利佛白佛言 世尊 菩薩摩訶薩 要當有父母妻子親族知識耶 佛白舍利佛 或有菩薩
有父母妻子親族知識 或有菩薩 從初發心 斷淫承 修直真行 乃至
兩摩訶 不犯色慾 或有菩薩 方便力故 受五戒已
斷摩訶

Taisho Tripitaka.vol 8.*Daepumgyeong* (Chinese)정성본] ,p.221middle[-N].