

Abstract No 32

Mahayana Buddhist Culture of Korean Peninsula

Chathurika Vivanthi Diddeniya

Junior Fellow, Department of Modern Languages, University of Kelaniya, Kelaniya

Buddhism has its origin in India and spread into other nearby countries. In 372, Korea received Buddhist teachings. As a result, the two main philosophical schools of the Mahayana, the **Mādhyamaka** and the **Yogācāra** can be observed as integral part of Buddhism in Korea. In this abstract, the basic concepts of Mahayana Buddhism in Korea are analyzed. Worshipping the Bodhisattva is a key practice in Mahayana tradition can be observed as it is in Buddhism in Korea. Bodhisattva is given a similar state to the Buddha by placing their statues together. Among great number of Bodhisattva, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva and Maithri Bodhisattva has given a powerful state. Among Buddhas, Amitabha Buddha has given priority in Korean culture and literature. According to the Bodhisattva concept, laymen and monks have given similar state and leaving the laymen state is not necessary to practice monastic life. Ascetic life was just a concept without meaning. Realizing Nibbana is considered as a selfish act and the unselfish Bodhisattvas becomes popular. ‘Arahath’ is given lower state and it is considered that one life is enough to realize spiritual mindfulness. Therefore it is believed that there are great numbers of Bodhisattvas in this world. Extremely important position was given to the worshipping activities as result of the relationship between the state and community life. Even though Mahayana tradition is based on Buddha’s teaching, it establish in different countries with their own unique characteristics. Still the Buddhism is embedded in the life of people in Korean peninsula.

Key Words: *Buddhism in Korea, Bodhisattva Concept, Mādhyamaka, Mahayana Buddhist Culture,*